



THE WOODLANDS TOWNSHIP MEETING ROOM POLICY

Adopted June 27, 2012

I. POLICY STATEMENT

The Woodlands Township provides meeting space to the community as a public service with the following intended purposes: the exchange of ideas, to access and share information, and for patrons to participate in programs created for the enjoyment of families and the community. Meeting space may be used by organizations engaged in educational, cultural, intellectual or charitable activities. Meeting rooms are not available for purely social purposes or for the benefit of self-promotion of individuals or commercial concerns. Use of the facilities must also comply with Resolution 020-10 (Election Policy), as may be amended from time to time by The Woodlands Township Board of Directors.

II. REGULATIONS

The Township meeting rooms are intended for use primarily by the Township for Township sponsored or co-sponsored programs, and priority use will be given to these meetings or programs. When the meeting rooms are not in use by the Township, they will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis to qualified outside non-profit organizations, subject to cancellation at any time.

A. Eligibility to Use Meeting Space

1. Meeting rooms are available for use in the following priority order:

a) Township and affiliate meeting use (*Township Board of Directors, CVB, RDRC, DSC*)

b) Village Associations (*per service agreement*) **and governmental or quasi-governmental** (*MUDs, WJPA, SRJA, etc.*)

c) Non-profit organization or group with similar community-oriented purposes as the Township

2. In order to reserve a meeting room, applicants must be at least 18 years old and a member of or affiliated with the non-profit group or organization. The Applicant is subject to any applicable rental or penalty fees listed in the attached Fee Schedule.

3. Only meeting rooms listed on the meeting room application are available for reservation by the public.
4. Meeting rooms are not available for individual use. The applicant must be a member of and acting on behalf of a non-profit a group or organization. Any exceptions must be authorized by the President / General Manager.
5. The Applicant must be in attendance for the duration of the scheduled meeting.
6. Personal events including, but not limited to, birthday parties, wedding receptions, baby showers, and reunions are not considered appropriate use of the meeting rooms at Town Hall, but are allowed at The Woodlands Recreation Center and the Parks and Recreation Environmental Services Building II (PARDES II).
7. Religious based study groups will be permitted provided other policy criteria are met.
8. Monetary offerings cannot be collected in Township meeting rooms.
9. The meetings rooms are not available for political campaign or rally events. Community groups with political affiliations are permitted to meet provided they are not engaging in campaign promotion.

Notwithstanding Resolution No. 020-10 relating to election materials, nothing herein shall be deemed or construed to prohibit any Village Association from holding or conducting a political forum or debate in a rented meeting space so long as, in the case of an election of candidates, all declared candidates are invited to participate and distribute election materials, and in the case of a ballot proposition, all attendees are permitted to speak or distribute election materials for or against the ballot proposition, and provided that, in either case, election materials are not to be distributed outside of the rented meeting room, and the parking areas, entry walkways, lobby and Board Chambers are not to be used or disturbed.

10. Recruitment or hiring for business ventures is not allowed in Township meeting rooms or on Township property, except as part of a Township sponsored job fair or other partnership.

11. The meeting room facilities may not be used for any commercial purposes, including but not limited to, the sale of goods or services, executing fee-for-service agreements or contracts to perform services elsewhere, accepting membership dues, selling raffle tickets, and collecting fees for classes or tutoring.
12. Outside organizations may not conduct fundraising events in Township meeting rooms without first establishing a concession agreement with the Township, the proceeds of which will go to the direct benefit of the Township. Not-for-profit fundraising organizations may reserve a meeting room for planning purposes only, provided the fundraiser itself will not take place at the Township facility.
13. No subleasing to outside vendors is permitted.
14. Activities in the room must not disrupt regular Township operations including, but not limited to, soliciting or conducting surveys, making loud noises, blocking entries, fire lanes or walkways, etc.
15. Use of meeting rooms shall not be allowed for the purpose of advancing any doctrine or theory subversive to the Constitution/laws of the State of Texas or the United States.
16. The use of the lobby, parking lots or other outdoor spaces as an extension of the meeting room requires President/General Manager approval.
17. Due to liability issues, permission to use the meeting rooms will be denied to any outside group whose primary purpose involves physical activity or exercise, including but not limited to, cheerleading, dance class and martial arts.
18. Health organizations conducting free clinic-related activities in Township meeting rooms must provide proof of current liability insurance prior to reserving room. At the discretion of the Township, proof of insurance may remain on file with the organization's meeting room application as long as it is up-to-date. Clinic related activities include vaccinations, blood drives, health screenings, massage, alternative medical treatments, etc. No clinic related activities that require a charge will be permitted on Township property.
19. In applying for use of the meeting room, an organization using the facilities shall agree to release the Township from liability for personal injury and/or damages to personal property.

20. The meeting rooms at Town Hall and PARDES II are not private. All functions at these Township facilities meeting rooms must be free and open to the general public.
21. The Woodlands Recreation Center does allow private function meetings as rooms are rented or the entire facility is rented which is limited to Friday and Saturday evenings after regular hours and on Sundays.
22. Township staff must have unrestricted access to meeting rooms at all times.
23. Only authorized employees of the Township shall be permitted to have keys and keyless access passes.
24. If a Township employee is not available, the meeting room shall not be used. All assigned employees shall be in charge of the building and will remain on the premises during the rental period.
25. Only qualified Township personnel shall be allowed to operate the air conditioning and heating equipment. At no time shall anyone alter or retrofit any electrical panels, circuitry, or audio/visual systems.
26. The Township reserves the right, when it deems necessary, to require a security presence for any facility rental at the sole cost of the user.
27. Failure to conform to these regulations will result in immediate termination of meeting room use and revocation of facility use privileges. Fees will not be refunded.
28. A service agreement is required for all approved room use.

B. Applying to Use Meeting Space

1. Requests for the use of meeting spaces will be approved according priorities named in Section A.1 of this policy.
2. A current, signed application must be on file before reserving the meeting room.

3. Meeting space requests must be submitted at least 14 days prior to the requested meeting time. Requests are received by in person at the facility or can be emailed to reservations@thewoodlandstowship-tx.gov. Requests for space at The Woodlands Recreation Center can be made via the Township's website under Parks and Recreation / Program Registration and Facility Requests or <http://activenet11.active.com/wcscparksandrec/?redir=1>.
4. Groups should reserve the meeting room well in advance of the date needed but may not reserve a space more than 90 days in advance. To give all eligible local non-profit organizations an opportunity to use the rooms, reservations shall not exceed two meetings per month, except for team practices at the Recreation Center Interior Gymnasium which is limited to *four practices* per month.
5. Meeting space will be available only during the hours established for the Township facility unless otherwise stated herein or approved by the President/General Manager. This includes time allotted for set-up and clean-up.
6. All meeting room usage is subject to the attached **Fee Schedule**. Township sponsored programs or activities are exempt from meeting room charges. The fee schedule may be amended annually or as deemed appropriate.
7. Fees will not apply when a meeting room is used as a polling place for public elections.
8. Village Associations in compliance with their Village Association Service Agreement with the Township are exempt from meeting room charges for one meeting per month. Other charges do apply.
9. The Applicant accepts financial responsibility for any fees incurred by the organization, including room use fees and penalties. Any organization with outstanding penalty fees will not be able to reserve future meetings until all fees have been paid in full. Access to the meeting rooms for any existing reservations will be denied until all fees are paid. The Applicant is responsible for reading and conforming to this meeting room/facility use policy.
10. The Township President/General Manager shall be the final authority in granting or refusing permission for use of Township meeting spaces.

C. Before Scheduled Meeting:

1. Notification of cancellation must be received prior to the scheduled meeting time. Any cancellations will be noted in the account and will not count against the number of meetings scheduled for the month. No-shows, i.e. not showing up and not giving notice, will result in a 90 day suspension of meeting room privileges.
2. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to schedule time needed to test any reserved audio-visual equipment prior to the scheduled meetings. Training sessions are free for all meeting room users and would not count against the Organizations' total number of meetings per month. Technical assistance for A/V equipment will not be available during a scheduled meeting.
3. The Township will not advertise or publicize scheduled meetings.
4. All advertisements from outside organizations must include the following disclaimer: **This event is not sponsored or endorsed by The Woodlands Township.**
5. For organizations or meetings composed primarily of minors, the Applicant agrees to have one adult in attendance in a supervisory capacity for every ten minors.
6. Due to the public nature of meeting rooms, the meeting room schedule may be made available to the public.
7. Any applicable fees must be paid prior to or at the time of check-in. The Township does not accept credit cards for meeting room fees, exact change is required – cash or check only.

D. Day of Scheduled Meeting:

1. Applicant must check in at the front desk of the facility and sign the Meeting Room Checklist prior to gaining access to the meeting room.
2. No early access to meeting rooms will be permitted prior to the opening hours of the Township facility. Meeting rooms must be vacated at least 30 minutes prior to the established hours of the facility closing.
3. Room arrangement and cleaning of the room following the meeting are the responsibility of the organization requesting the room. The Township does not provide equipment or staff to assist in moving materials or furniture.

4. The group accepts financial responsibility for any and all damage caused to the room, building, furniture or equipment beyond normal wear. The Applicant will be responsible for any charges incurred by the group. A group renting the premises will be held responsible for the treatment of the property on the part of all members, guests and attendees.
5. Approval shall not be granted for any purpose that would damage Township property or to groups that are known to have damaged other rented property.
6. Penalty fees listed in the Fee Schedule will be assessed where staff intervention is necessary as a result of a scheduled meeting. These penalties may include the following:
 - a) Cleaning Fee – to be charged when additional cleaning is necessary to return the room to its original condition.
 - b) Room Configuration Fee – to be charged when tables, chairs and other equipment are not properly put away after a meeting.
 - c) Late Fee – to be charged when groups exceed scheduled meeting ending time.
 - d) Damage Fee – to be charged when a scheduled meeting results in damage to the meeting room, building, furniture and /or equipment.
7. Meeting room users who have deliveries to the facility must have a representative from the organization present to accept the delivery.
8. Alcoholic beverages may not be dispensed or consumed in any part of the Township facility. Smoking is not permitted inside any Township facility.
9. The Township cannot store materials for meeting room users. The Township is not responsible for items lost, damaged, or stolen.
10. Applicant and persons attending the meeting are prohibited in areas not designated by the rental agreement.
11. Township staff cannot provide unfiltered access to the internet within a meeting room. The Township is not responsible for any failures in the Wi-Fi connection during scheduled meetings. *Wireless Internet use inside Township meeting rooms is subject to the Township Internet Use Policy.*

12. The Township does not provide telecommunication services for meeting room users, including but not limited to, receiving or sending faxes, telephone calls or emails. Photocopying and public access computer terminals are not available.
13. Organizations using the meeting space must bring their own supplies, including but not limited to, coffee supplies, pens, pencils, paper, decorations, etc.
14. All meetings must adhere to designated/posted maximum occupancy.
15. The use of hazardous materials, including materials that give off fumes or are highly flammable, are prohibited. Open flames are prohibited in meeting rooms and on Township property.
16. Animals, insects and other living organisms may not be brought into the Township facility without prior written approval by the President/General Manager. Animals may be used in Township programs, but only under certain conditions that address the safety of guests and care of the facility. Trained guide animals are allowed.
17. No refunds will be given. In the event of an emergency Township closure occurring after the fees have been paid, the money received will be applied toward a rescheduled meeting.
18. At the conclusion of a scheduled meeting, Applicant must check out at the front desk.
19. Applicant will be billed for any applicable penalty fees.

The Woodlands Township Meeting Room Fee Schedule

Proof of non-profit status may be required.

Town Hall

Public Meeting Rooms 114, 120, 122, 124, 150 & 152 are each \$25 per hour

150 & 152 can be combined into one room for \$30 per hour

The Board Chambers room is not available for use except by The Woodlands Township and its affiliates. Use may be permitted by governmental partners, subject to approval by the President/General Manager.

Based on priority schedule availability, meeting rooms are available for use Monday through Thursday, from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. No weekend or holiday use.

Parks, Recreation and Environmental Services

PARDES II is \$30 per hour – includes up to 50 chairs, podium, and three eight foot tables

Woodlands Recreation Center

Entire Recreation Center (only available Fridays & Saturdays after regular hours and on Sundays)

- 10,741 Square Feet – 716 max occupancy
- Minimum of 3 hours
- Fee: \$150/hour

Interior Gymnasium

- 4,400 Square Feet – 300 max occupancy
- Fee: \$100/hour for group meetings and includes up to *150 chairs and 15 tables*
- Fee: \$25/hour for organized team practices

Large Activity Room

- 1,110 Square Feet – 70 max occupancy
- Fee: \$20/hour

Multi-Purpose Room

- 600 Square Feet – 45 max occupancy
- Fee: \$10/hour

Conference Room & Pre-School

- 234 Square Feet – 15 max occupancy
- Fee: \$10/hour

Audio/Visual Equipment is available to any organization at the following rates:

Town Hall

Overhead projector \$50

PARDES II

Overhead projector & screen \$100

Woodlands Recreation Center

Overhead projector & screen \$100.00

Kitchen facilities are available to any organization at the following rates:

Town Hall (refrigerator, ice machine, microwave, sink, coffee pot) \$20.00

PARDES II (Coffee Pot, micro wave, sink) \$5.00

Woodlands Recreation Center (refrigerator, stove, sink, micro wave, coffee pot) \$20.00

Penalty Fees are assessed as follows:

- a) Cleaning Fee – to be charged when additional cleaning is necessary to return the room to its original condition. \$50.00
- b) Room Configuration Fee – to be charged when tables, chairs and other equipment are not properly put away after a meeting. \$25.00

- c) Late Fee – to be charged when groups exceed scheduled meeting ending time.
 - \$25.00 5 minutes to 29 minutes late
 - \$40.00 30 minutes to 59 minutes late
 - \$10.00 for each 5 minute increment 60 minutes and later

- d) Damage Fee – to be charged when a scheduled meeting or activity results in damage to the meeting room, building, and /or equipment. The actual cost to repair the damage plus an additional 15% will be assessed.

Note: The Woodlands Emergency Training Center is available for rental from public service agencies and private agencies for public/employee safety related classes. The classrooms and the Emergency Training Center facility may only be used for Township sponsored meetings and programs and by service agreement/contract partners, including the College Park Village Association in accordance with its service agreement.