

## **THE USE OF A CONSENT AGENDA**

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A consent agenda is a meeting practice which packages routine committee reports, Board meeting minutes, and other non-controversial items not requiring discussion or independent action as one agenda item. This can save precious meeting time by allowing the Board to approve this 'package' of items together in one motion.

Reports and information can be grouped together under a consent agenda only if all Board of Directors agree. If only one Director selects a specific item for discussion, it must be removed and placed on the regular Board meeting agenda.

### **What types of items can be found on the consent agenda?**

Typical consent agenda items are routine and should not require any Board discussion. Typically the following things are considered for grouping in consent agenda.

- Board and committee meeting minutes
- Committee and staff reports
- Updates or background reports provided for information only
- Correspondence requiring no action
- Staff appointment requiring Board confirmation
- Final approval of proposals or reports that Directors have been dealing with for some time and are familiar with the implications
- Routine contracts that fall within policies and guidelines.
- Confirmation of documents or items that need no discussion but are required by the bylaws

### **How does a Board begin using a consent agenda?**

The first step in using a consent agenda is to have the Board approve a motion to adopt the consent agenda format for Board meetings. The Board should also craft and approve a policy of what may or may not be included in the consent portion of the agenda. It is important to make sure that all Directors know what items belong on the consent portion of the agenda, and how to move items to and from this overall consent area.

### **What is the process for using a consent agenda?**

A consent agenda can only work if the reports and items are known in advance and distributed with the agenda package allowing sufficient time to be read by all Directors prior to the meeting. As the first item of business, the President/Chairperson asks Directors if any one wishes to remove any item under the consent portion of the agenda to be discussed. They can request to discuss the item, question the item or register a vote against the item. If an item is removed from the consent portion, the President/Chairperson will place it on the regular meeting agenda.