Consent Agendas

What is a "Consent Agenda" and how will it make our meetings go faster?

At every board meeting, at least a few items come to the agenda that do not need any discussion or debate either because they are routine procedures or already have unanimous consent. A consent agenda allows the board to approve all these items together without discussion or individual motions.

What belongs on the consent agenda?

Typical consent agenda items are routine procedural matters and decisions that are likely to be noncontroversial, including:

- Approval of minutes;
- Reports for information only;
- Routine matters such as appointments to committees;
- Staff or volunteer appointments requiring board confirmation;
- Matters which do not appear to warrant discussion

How are consent items handled?

A consent agenda can only work if the reports and other matters for the meeting agenda are known in advance and distributed with the agenda package in sufficient time to be read by all members prior to the meeting. A typical procedure is as follows:

- At the agenda approval stage, the Chair will confirm whether an item belongs on the consent agenda;
- Under the heading ‘Consent Agenda’ staff provide a list of the items, along with hyperlinks to any supporting documents, to be approved as part of a single resolution;
- The agenda is distributed with sufficient time to be read by all members prior to the meeting;
- At the beginning of the meeting, under ‘Adoption of the Agenda’, the Chair provides an opportunity for members to request specific items to be removed from the consent agenda and discussed individually.
- If any individual member requests that an item be removed from the consent agenda, it must be removed and placed in the appropriate section of the regular agenda for discussion. A vote or consensus of the Board is not required for an item to be moved to the Regular meeting. Members may request that an item be removed for any reason.
- When there are no more items to be removed, the Chair will advise that if there is no objection, the items on the consent agenda will be adopted. After pausing for any objections, the chair declares the items adopted. It is not necessary to ask for a show of hands.
- When preparing the minutes, the full text of the resolutions, reports or recommendations that were adopted as part of the consent agenda will be included.