

## **Policy on Consent Agendas**

### **I. Purpose**

To allow the Bergen County Workforce Investment Board (Bergen WIB) and its Committees the use of a consent agenda in order to provide an efficient process for approval of items by grouping routine, informational, self-explanatory, and non-controversial items, where no debate is anticipated, whereby all are passed with a single motion and vote.

### **II. Objective**

To engage Board Members (Members), and liberate board meetings from administrative details, repetitious discussions, and misdirected attention in order to use allotted meeting time to focus on serious deliberation and deeper organizational discussions on strategic issues.

### **III. Policy**

#### **A. Consent Agenda Procedure**

- 1. Set the meeting agenda.** The Chairperson, in consultation with the Executive Director, may place items on the consent agenda. Any Member may seek to have an item added on the consent agenda by contacting the Chairperson in advance of the meeting agenda being distributed.
- 2. Distribute materials in advance.** The full agenda, including the consent items, shall be disseminated sufficiently in advance of the meeting along with supporting documents so that Members do their due diligence prior to voting.
- 3. Read materials in advance.** Preparation is an absolute prerequisite. It is required that all Members read the consent agenda materials prior to the meeting. The expectation is that no discussion on consent items will take place during the board meeting.
- 4. Introduce the consent agenda.** The Chairperson notes the items on the consent agenda and asks if any Member wishes for an item to be removed. This is the final moment for Members to raise their concerns. Members are encouraged to ask, prior to the meeting, all the questions that they want answered related to consent item(s). It is not necessary to remove an item from the consent agenda for simple questions or to clarify small matters of fact, which must be asked after the motion, but before the vote.
- 5. Remove (if requested) an item from the consent agenda.** Members have the opportunity to remove items, for any reason, from the consent agenda for substantive discussion and debate, by a timely request to the Chairperson prior to the meeting or prior to the vote on the consent agenda. If requested, it does not require a second or vote, and it must be moved to the full agenda for discussion. Removed items may be taken up either immediately after the consent agenda or placed later on the full agenda at the discretion of the Chairperson. Any such decision may be subject to challenge and reversed by the Members. If a Member needs to abstain from voting on a particular item in the consent agenda, he or she can make this explicit ahead of time and the item need not be removed.
- 6. Approve the consent agenda.** Items not removed are adopted in their entirety, without debate or amendment, require a simple unanimous yes vote for approval. The Chairperson asks the Members for a motion to approve the consent agenda in its entirety. After a motion

and a second, the Chairperson asks the Members for approval of the consent agenda. The Members vote on the consent agenda items as a whole. The vote will, of necessity, be unanimous since any disagreement with an item should have been expressed earlier and the item removed from the consent agenda.

7. **Document acceptance of the consent agenda.** The minutes of the meeting shall state that the consent agenda was approved unanimously and indicate which, if any, items were removed and addressed separately. All supporting materials should be saved with the agenda to demonstrate the information on which the board based its decision.

## **B. Content of Consent Agenda**

Consent agenda items shall include routine procedures, issues where unanimous consent agreement has already been made in person or electronically, items which have already been discussed and/or explained, that do not require further detailed discussion or explanation.

Such items may include, but not limited to:

- Board and committee meeting minutes;
- Routine committee and staff reports;
- Updates to organizational documents;
- Informational materials;
- Correspondence requiring no action;
- Staff and committee appointments requiring Board confirmation;
- Board ratification of Executive Committee actions;
- Final approval of items have been thoroughly discussed previously, where the Members are comfortable with its implications;
- Routine contracts that fall within applicable laws;
- Confirmation of documents or items that need no discussion but are required by the Bylaws;
- Dates of future meetings;
- Minor changes in a procedure and routine revisions of a policy;
- Other non-controversial items not requiring discussion or independent action as one agenda item.

## **C. Placement of the Consent Agenda**

Consent agenda items should appear very near the beginning of the regular meeting and at least preceding committee reports.