
CONSENT AGENDA POLICY

1. PURPOSE

To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Council meetings; provide an efficient process to acknowledge receipt of reports or correspondence where an action requiring Council approval has been requested; approve regular, non-controversial routine items that come before Council, or matters where no debate, discussion or explanation is expected or required; and help to manage time, as Council addresses all items listed within or under the Consent Agenda as a single item with one vote.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to regular Council meetings where the Consent Agenda appears as a standing item. Although Council receives electronic copies of all correspondence addressed to them (via the Council@northcowichan.ca email address), not all correspondence received is included in the Consent Agenda. Sections 4 and 5 of this Policy specify which items are included and those that are expressly excluded from the Consent Agenda.

3. DEFINITIONS

"Consent Agenda" groups routine business items and reports which require no discussion or debate into one agenda item called the Consent Agenda. This practice allows Council to approve or acknowledge receipt with one vote instead of introducing multiple motions.

4. CONTENT OF CONSENT AGENDA

4.1. All materials and items proposed in the Consent Agenda shall be clearly identified as such in the meeting packages. All Council members must review the Consent Agenda items prior to the meeting, with the expectation that no discussion shall take place during the Council meeting.

4.2. Consent Agendas may include:

(a) Items for decision

- (i) approval of Council meeting minutes;
- (ii) endorsement of Committee of the Whole, Council committee and/or advisory body recommendations, subject to Section 4.5.;
- (iii) routine contract renewals.

(b) Items for information

- (i) correspondence requiring action that is not subject to exclusion under Section 5.1.;
- (ii) correspondence from the provincial or federal government, or other local government body;
- (iii) reports provided for information only;

- (iv) draft minutes from Committee of the Whole, Council committee and/or advisory bodies of Council for information only.; and
 - (v) other items that require no discussion or decision.
- 4.3. Subject to Section 5.1., correspondence requiring action received, at least one week before the meeting, from a member of the public will be placed under '*Items for Information*' with the subject description identifying what is being requested in general terms. If a member of Council wishes to consider the individual's request, the item must be removed from the Consent Agenda for consideration in accordance with Section 7.2., otherwise the item is received for information only. An acknowledgement email will be sent to the author, and copied to Council, advising that Mayor and Council has received their correspondence and that their correspondence will be placed in an upcoming Consent Agenda.
- 4.4. With the exception of author name, all personal information shall be redacted from correspondence received from members of the public prior to inclusion in the Consent Agenda in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.
- 4.5. Items where the recommendations from a committee or advisory body of Council are contained in a staff report, the minutes from that committee or advisory body will be placed under the '*Items for information*' section of the Consent Agenda.
- 4.6. Minutes from a Committee of the Whole, Council committee or advisory body meeting shall be placed under:
- (a) *Items for Decision* if they include recommendations for Council's endorsement; or
 - (b) *Items for Information* if no action by Council is required or where recommendations are contained within a staff report as per Section 4.5.

5. EXCLUDED CORRESPONDENCE ITEMS

- 5.1. The following correspondence addressed to Council, which have been delivered electronically to Council, will not be included in the Consent Agenda. An acknowledgement email will be sent to the author advising that Mayor and Council has received their correspondence and will only be copied to Council where identified.
- (a) Items that are of a **technical or operational in nature**, and where a response has been provided by municipal staff. The acknowledgement email and the staff response will be copied to Council.
 - (b) Items that are **informational in nature**, which includes personal opinions submitted by individual citizens or organizations, media releases, newsletters, and unsolicited mail;
 - (c) Correspondence which **relates to a person who is not the author** and which would be a breach of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*;
 - (d) Correspondence which **relates to an in-camera decision or a confidential matter** that has not been released to the public;

- (e) Emails submitted as '**public input**' on an agenda item. The acknowledgement email will be copied to Council.
 - (f) Correspondence that includes **profane language** or is regarded as harassment or intimidation, or is abusive, defamatory or **disrespectful to Council or staff** or would constitute a breach of Respectful Spaces Bylaw No. 3796, 2020;
 - (g) Correspondence content that **endorses, promotes, or perpetuates discrimination** or mistreatment on the basis of race, religion or belief, age, gender, marital status, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation;
 - (h) Correspondence where **Council is not the principal recipient**;
 - (i) **Anonymous** correspondence.
- 5.2. If the correspondence that has been excluded under Subsections 5.1. (c), (d) or (i) would have been included in the Consent Agenda in accordance with Section 4.3, the author may be provided with an opportunity to resubmit their correspondence.
- 5.3. A member of Council may bring forward an item that is excluded under Section 5.1 as a notice of motion. Such notices of motions are subject to the rules established under Council's the Notice of Motion Policy.

6. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

- 6.1. The Consent Agenda shall be approved by Council at the beginning of each meeting.
- 6.2. Approval of the Consent Agenda by Council constitutes approval of each of the motions listed under the Consent Agenda portion of the meeting, subject to any items being removed from the Consent Agenda under Section 7.1.

7. REMOVAL OF AN ITEM

- 7.1. Any item may be moved out of the Consent Agenda at the request of any Council member, before approval of the Consent Agenda. A member may request to move an item to further discuss it, inquire about it, or vote against it after the Consent Agenda has been approved.
- 7.2. A motion or vote of Council is not required to request to move an item out of the Consent Agenda.
- (a) When a Council member requests that an item be moved out of the Consent Agenda, the Mayor or presiding member shall decide whether the item shall be placed under "New Business" in the regular agenda.
 - (b) If a Council member wishes to challenge a decision of the Mayor or presiding member under Section 7.2. (a), a resolution of Council must pass by a majority vote for the item to be removed from or remain in the Consent Agenda.
- 7.3. When an item is requested to be removed, that item shall be moved out of the Consent Agenda in accordance with Section 7.2., and the rest of the items shall remain on the Consent Agenda.

8. MOTION TO APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

- 8.1. When the requested changes have been made to the Consent Agenda:
- (a) The Mayor or Corporate Officer shall read the items removed from the Consent Agenda.
 - (b) A motion must be made to approve or reject the Consent Agenda.
 - (c) The motion to approve the agenda must be worded "that Council approve the Consent Agenda."

9. MINUTES

- 9.1. Minutes of the meeting shall include the full text copy of approved resolutions, recommendations or correspondence and reports received under the Consent Agenda portion of the meeting to ensure a record is kept for future reference.

APPROVAL HISTORY

WRITTEN BY: Michelle Martineau, Manager, Legislative Services	APPROVED BY: Council	DATE: September 21, 2021
	AMENDED BY: Council	DATE: February 1, 2023

Related Legislation: Sections 22 and 30 of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*
Section 123 of the *Community Charter*

Related Bylaws, Policies, Procedures, Strategies, Agreements, etc.:	Conference Attendance Policy	Public Input and Meeting Conduct Policy
	Council Correspondence Procedure	Privacy Management Policy
	Council Procedure Bylaw No. 3602, 2015	Respectful Spaces Bylaw No. 3796, 2020
	Council Strategic Plan	Standards of Conduct Policy
	Notice of Motion Policy	
