

Abstentions

An abstention is a non-expression and cannot be considered a vote in favor of or against a motion. Not to vote is to abstain.

Each member of a public body has the duty to express a choice or preference by voting on the issues, but can legally abstain from doing so when there is a statutory or ethical conflict of interest. Abstentions are also intended for situations where a member may have a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in the matter being voted on. A board member may also abstain if s/he believes there was insufficient information before making a decision. If a board member believes there is insufficient information for making a decision, s/he must state so before the vote is called. This gives the chair an opportunity to allow further discussion or postponement of the vote.

A board member should always state a reason for abstaining prior to doing so. Otherwise, board members should cast votes on all issues before them. Failure to do so could be deemed a breach of their duties.

Cross Reference:

Policy BCB – Board Member Conflict of Interest
Policy BED – By-laws of the Board of Directors Policy

First Reading: January 9, 2012

Second Reading: February 13, 2012

Adopted: February 13, 2012