

# Appendix N: #AD-04, Agenda Process

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**HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY**  
**Office of the County Administrator**

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**ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVE #AD-04**

**SUBJECT:** AGENDA PROCESS

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** November 5, 2007

**EXPIRATION DATE:** September 13, 2010

**SUPERSEDES:** September 13, 2005

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**Purpose:**

The purpose of these procedures is to establish uniform guidelines and implementing instructions for the preparation and submission of agenda items and follow-up for regularly scheduled meetings of the Board of County Commissioners.

**Responsibilities:**

It is the responsibility of all Assistant County Administrators, Officers, Departments under the County Administrator, and all other governmental agencies involved in the agenda process to comply with guidelines and procedures outlined in this Administrative Directive. Individuals who are involved in creating, submitting, and/or approving Agenda items must undergo proper training by Information & Technology Services and/or the County Administrator's Office in order to receive a password to use the system for creating, submitting and/or approving agenda items in the Agenda Item Workflow (AIW) System.

**Preparation and Submission of Agenda items:**

This section contains the standard procedures for submitting agenda items and staff reports to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) for its consideration. Departments that initiate agenda items must prepare each item in advance, allowing sufficient time for adequate reviews by all external reviewers in the agenda item approval path, including the initiating department's Assistant County Administrator. The schedule of regular meetings, agenda deadlines, and agenda review meetings is published separately prior to the beginning of the calendar year, as approved by the Board of County Commissioners. Board meetings are scheduled for the first and third Wednesdays of each month, pursuant to Board policy, unless a conflict caused by other scheduled commitments necessitates the absence of Board members. If a Board meeting is postponed or rescheduled, notification of the revised agenda item submission deadline will be provided by the County Administrator's Office.

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The Staff's Recommended Board Motion section, the Background section, and the Financial Impact section must be written in a manner that the reader finds concise, complete, and understandable.

A contract approval block will be included on the contract document by the originating department. These contracts currently will be routed by the agenda department coordinator prior to initiating the agenda item in the AIW System. For non-procurement contracts, the Department Director will initial an "N/A" for Department of Procurement Services. The block will be included on the signature page of the agreement and have the appearance as follows:

	Approval	Date
Dept.	_____	_____
Procurement Svcs.	_____	_____
County Atty.	_____	_____

Any agenda item, which has been deferred by the Board to a date specific, will automatically be placed by the County Administrator's Office on the agenda for that date, using the originally submitted agenda cover sheet, unless advised otherwise by the initiating department.

Training documents for document input and approvals by the Department Director, County Attorney, Management and Budget, and Assistant County Administrators are available on COIN. These training guides illustrate how to initiate and/or approve a BOCC Agenda Item.

All Agenda items initiated by departments under the County Administrator must be submitted through the Workflow Application for review and approval. Original documents (e.g., contracts with original signatures by other party) that require the BOCC Chairman's signature must be provided by the department directly to BOCC Records for processing, signature and recording by 3:00 p.m., Friday, before the Board meeting in order to allow sufficient time for processing for the Chairman's signature. For tracking purposes, the Agenda Item Tracking Number must be noted on the document. Once the agenda item is approved by the BOCC, the original signature documents for official BOCC Records and every other party are executed by the Chairman and returned to the department accordingly.

Agenda items submitted for the regularly scheduled Board meetings must be received by the County Administrator's Office no later than the 3:00 pm Friday agenda deadline. Items not meeting this deadline will not be entered onto the Draft Agenda. If an Item is time-sensitive and cannot be deferred to the next Board meeting date, the "time sensitive" block on the agenda cover sheet must be checked, and a note added providing an explanation.

If agenda items are directly related to any of the Board's Strategic Plan objectives, the specific objective(s) is to be identified within Staff's Recommended Board Motion. In addition, there is a checkbox on the agenda item cover sheet, labeled "Strategic Objective Link" that is to be selected when initiating the agenda item. By selecting the checkbox, the system will print a star icon in the

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right-hand margin next to the item on the draft and final agenda documents that will identify Strategic Plan-related items.

Once an agenda item has been through the approval path and included on the Draft Agenda, any changes to the agenda item or backup material must be made by resubmitting the agenda item through the AIW System. Any changes to an agenda item on the Final Agenda must be handled as a revision to the agenda item. Revisions to agenda items shall be uploaded on COIN and sent via e-mail to the BOCC and other designated departments involved in the agenda process. This procedure provides the integrity needed to insure that no changes are made to agenda items following approval of the agenda item.

Printing Services shall be responsible for providing a complete set of hard copy agenda documents to the BOCC and BOCC Records by the Friday prior to the next week's BOCC meeting.

Initiating departments of agenda items should prepare their item sufficiently in advance to allow adequate review by all departments and the Assistant County Administrator in the approval path of the AIW System.

### **Sign-off Requirements:**

All agenda items submitted require approval by the appropriate Assistant or Deputy County Administrator, except County Attorney items, which will be submitted directly by the County Attorney's Office to the County Administrator's Office. All approvals must be completed prior to submission of the Agenda item.

### **The Consent Section**

All Agenda items that are routine in nature and are not anticipated to generate BOCC and/or public discussion should be marked for the Consent section of the Board's agenda. This section should not be used for new board policy or any major policy decisions by the BOCC.

### **The Regular Section**

Agenda items that require explanation by staff, that are of a controversial nature, or that may create discussion by the Board and/or the public, should be marked for the Regular section of the Board's agenda. This Section should be used for new board policy or any major policy decisions by the BOCC.

The originator is to enter the anticipated BOCC meeting date on the appropriate field of the AIW System.

The **Subject** line is a brief description of the agenda item used for the purpose of immediate identification. If the item pertains to a procurement item, the Bid (RFP,RFQ,RPS) number is to be included. Try to limit to one line, if possible.

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The **Staff's Recommended Board Motion** block should clearly state what is involved in the item and what specific motion or action needs to be adopted by the Board. Begin the recommendation with an action verb and include the elements of who, what, when, where, why, how much, and funding source. This statement is the language that appears on the BOCC Agenda and should be the BOCC action intended by staff. The cost and budget impact should be included. If there is no cost or budget impact, a statement should be made to that effect. Items not describing the cost, budget impact and funding source will be rejected by the County Administrator's Office for resubmission. The motion is limited to six (6) lines of text. The detail needed for the recommended board action should be included in the Background Section. The detail needed for the budget impact should be included in the Financial Impact Statement Section.

Address the following topics when developing the Staff's Recommended Board Motion section:

**WHO** - Who is involved in the action or the item? (Board, Assistant County Administrator/ Department/Outside Agency, Consultant Firm, etc.).

**WHAT** - What specific action needs to be taken by the Board? (To approve an agreement, contract, payment resolution, grant application, etc.).

**WHEN** - Is there a time element involved? Will the recommended action cover a specific period?

**WHERE** - Is the location of the subject recommendation a factor to be considered?

**WHY** - Why is the action being requested?

**HOW MUCH** - What are the costs involved to the County?

**FUNDING SOURCE** - What fund will be used to pay for the requested item?

### **Example of Correct Motion:**

A) Approve staff's recommendation of Option 1 of the report as indicated in the background as the method to be used for computing County Transportation Revenue and Expenditure Projections through FY 25, B) Authorize staff to release these revenue and expenditure projections to the Metropolitan Planning Organization for their use in updating the 2025 Long Range Transportation Plan. There is no cost or budget impact associated with this item. (If there is a cost, identify the cost, budget impact and funding source).

### **Example of Incorrect Motion:**

That the Board consider staff's recommendation in the report as the method to be used for computing County Transportation Revenue and Expenditure Projections through FY 25 and release these revenue and expenditure projections to the MPO for updating the Long Range Transportation Plan.

The block containing the **Background** section should include illustrative background or technical information that explains and supports the Staff's Recommended Board Motion. The Background section allows great latitude for presenting information to the Board and the public. Write this

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section as if the reader is unfamiliar with the content, balancing the reader's need to know with the need to be concise. Explain why the requested Board action is necessary and detail the benefits and drawbacks that will result therefrom. Identify the options that were considered in developing Staff's Recommended Board Motion and how the various options were reduced to a single recommendation.

Whenever necessary, pertinent historical information should be included in the Background section. Potential questions should be anticipated and answered in the narrative. Jargon and acronyms should be avoided. Where appropriate (e.g., major policy decisions or contracts that contain options), the Background section may include optional Staff's Recommended Board Motion(s). In those instances where various recommendations are presented, the County Administrator's Office will indicate which option was selected by the Board in the Recap Memorandum from the meeting.

The Financial Impact Statement Section is a detailed narrative description that identifies the cost and/or budget impact that may occur if the Board approves Staff's Recommended Board Motion. When appropriate, the financial impact that may occur if Staff's Recommended Board Motion is not approved should also be included. All direct costs, indirect or delayed costs, or revenues related to the Staff's Recommended Board Motion should be detailed in the Financial Impact Statement section. The writer should indicate the frequency of the anticipated financial impact. It should also be indicated in the Financial Impact Statement section whether the cost or revenue will occur once or if it will recur periodically over a specified period of time.

**Signature** blocks are included on the Agenda Item Cover Sheet for Department Director, Management and Budget (approved as to financial impact accuracy) and County Attorney (approved as to legal sufficiency only). The appropriate Assistant or Deputy County Administrator will be the final signature approval, following the aforementioned approvals.

Approval by a Department of Procurement Services' staff member is no longer required on the agenda item cover sheet. However, Procurement Services still needs to approve the contract document itself for all procurement items by way of initials in the approval box (formerly known as the "block stamp"). This requirement applies to all modifications or other actions being taken that was originally awarded as a "procurement" (Bid, RFP, RFQ, RPS, sole source, etc.), and NOT the non-procurements such as Interlocals, grants, RFA's, etc.

Departments no longer have the ability to N/A approval for Management and Budget and the County Attorney. All items will automatically be routed to both offices allowing them to either approve or N/A the item. If either Department rejects the item back to the initiator, they will be required to add a note indicating the reason for the rejection.

If **Attachments** are scanned as supporting information or background information, list the attachments in the Attachments section of the Agenda Item Cover Sheet.

If the item contains materials depicting a graphical representation of new building construction as a requirement of the professional services contract, (fire stations, libraries, park buildings, water and wastewater treatment plants, solid waste buildings, service centers, social service buildings, and

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other similar buildings that are expected to be visited by or readily visible to the general public) the aforementioned graphical representations shall be scanned and made a part of the Agenda materials.

If item is a **Budget Amendment**, the Line Item Detail form is to be completed by the department as part of the Agenda Item. All Budget Amendment Agenda items require the approval of the Management and Budget Department.

Note that an item that also requires a Budget Amendment in conjunction with an agreement or resolution should be combined as a two-part agenda item. Part one of the recommendation should be approval of the item and part two should be approval of the Budget Amendment.

Use whatever back-up materials are necessary to document and accompany the agenda item, but use only those documents that directly relate to and substantiate the requested action.

### **Preparation of Staff Reports:**

Staff reports must follow the same approval path as agenda items. Staff reports marked for the Consent section of the Board's agenda are informational reports and are not subject to discussion. Staff reports marked for the Regular section of the Board's agenda provides for Board, staff, and public discussion. Staff reports will not contain recommendations for Board action.

### **County Administrator Briefings:**

County Administrator briefings will be for information only and require no action by the Board. Samples of such briefings include but are not limited to:

- Advising the Board of a "work in progress" item that may require future Board direction or discussion.
- Providing a brief update on an item that may have future impact on County Government of which the BOCC was previously unaware
- Advising of actions taken by other governmental agencies which may impact Hillsborough County.

The format will be a one-page memorandum prepared for the County Administrator's signature, with no cover sheet. The closing paragraph will state that the briefing is for informational purposes only and requests no Board action.

### **Draft Agenda Distribution and Agenda Review:**

The County Administrator's Office will forward an electronic copy of the Draft Agenda via e-mail to interested parties no later than close of business on Tuesday the week preceding the corresponding Board meeting. The Draft Agenda is assembled in anticipation of the Agenda Review meeting.

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The Agenda Review meeting is typically held on Wednesday one week prior to the next week's regularly scheduled Board meeting. Its purpose is to discuss potential problems or controversial agenda items in order to insure that all agenda items presented to the Board are properly constituted.

If an agenda item is not submitted to the County Administrator's Office by the agenda item submission deadline, it may be submitted for consideration by the County Administrator at the Agenda Review Meeting. If approved by the County Administrator for inclusion in the Board's agenda, the Agenda Item must be created and submitted through the AIW System in order to be included in the Board's Final Agenda.

Exceptions to these submission requirements must be approved by the County Administrator.

### **Off-the-Agenda items and Supplemental Materials for the Agenda:**

Off-the-Agenda items are to be avoided and will not be accepted as late submission without adequate justification as to the urgency involved and an explanation as to why it was not submitted prior to deadline. However, it is recognized that emergency conditions do arise requiring an action out of original channels. Off-the-Agenda items must be approved by the County Administrator to be processed for Board action. Signatures must be obtained on the cover sheet, as well as any contract/agreement requiring the Chairman's signature, prior to submission of the item. It is not necessary to enter an Off-the-Agenda item into the AIW system. Finalized versions of agenda item back-up materials should be submitted prior to the publication of the Board's Final Agenda. However, it is recognized that occasionally the inclusion of additional documentary information may be necessary. In those cases, the additional back-up materials will be added as off-the-agenda items to the Final Agenda. This supplemental information will be e-mailed to each Board member and uploaded to COIN as a supplement to the Final Agenda by the County Administrator's Office.

### **Follow-up from the BOCC Meeting:**

A recap of the Board of County Commissioners' meeting shall be prepared by the County Administrator's Office for review by the County Administrator and Deputy County Administrator the day following the meeting. The recap shall be a brief synopsis of staff's understanding of items approved by the Board, and public comments. All directives by the Board will be entered into a Suspense Calendar which will automatically generate an Administrative Assignment that will include dates to report back to the Board. This will help insure compliance by the affected department's staff.

The recap memorandum will be sent via electronic mail within two days following the meeting. It is the responsibility of each department director to read the recap memorandum to insure that staff assignments are tracked and followed through to completion. Administrative assignments that emanate from BOCC meetings will be entered by the County Administrator's Office into a tracking system to help insure compliance by the affected departments.

### **Posting of Agenda, Recap, and Captioning on COIN:**

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For all BOCC meetings the County Administrator's Office will post the meeting agenda, each agenda item with electronic links to its corresponding back-up material, the meeting recap, captioning, and meeting minutes on COIN. BOCC meetings include Public Hearings, Workshops, Land Use Meetings, and Joint Meetings with outside organizations, and regularly scheduled Board meetings.

**Responsibility:** Office of County Administrator

Approved by: /S/ \_\_\_\_\_ November 5, 2007  
County Administrator Date