

## **Annual Members Meeting Agenda - Ethical Humanist Society of Asheville June 23, 2024**

Welcome

Process Items

- Quorum Determination (5 members or 10% of the membership, whichever is >)
- Review of Consensus Voting
- Approval of Minutes of 2023 Annual Meeting

EHSA Reports

- Presidents Report
- Treasurers Report
- Program Committee
- Publicity
- Ethical Action
  - Christmas Gifts for Children
  - Afghan Refugee Assistance
  - Scholarship via Asheville City Schools Foundation
  - YMI Endowment Fund Contribution
- Membership Committee
- Caring Committee

New Business

- Budget 2024-2025
- Election of Board of Trustees (followed by a brief Board Meeting at the end of this meeting for the Board to elect officers)

Discussion about our Future

- Things Going Well
- Things We Wish For
- Other Actions and/or Suggestions

Adjournment

*We endeavor to nurture the capacity and responsibility of human beings to act in their personal relationships and in the larger community to help create a better world. We are inspired by the ideal of working to create a more humane society, recognizing each person's worth and dignity and helping to bring out the best in each other.*

**Social Justice | Personal Growth | Community  
Ethical Humanist Society of Asheville  
c/o 11 Woodmere Road, Arden, NC 28704**

## Consensus Voting

In the late 1980s the American Ethical Union started using the consensus model rather than the more traditional voting methods to try to improve the decision-making process. Striving for consensus is very much in consonance with the principle of respecting each other's worth and dignity, more so than the discussion/voting process to which they were more accustomed. The object is to reach common ground for agreement rather than trying to convince others to support one's position. The AEU Board has been using it regularly, and highly recommends it for the decision-making process in Ethical Societies.

In the AEU Board meetings, the formal procedures of motions and seconds before discussion are not used. As discussion progresses, it often turns out that, even when a vote has to be held, the proposal as it evolved during discussion is more satisfactory to more participants than the original motion. During the discussion it is sometimes necessary to have alternating speakers, for and against, until there are no more speakers for one side or the other, or until the presider believes that the same arguments are being presented again and again.

In the CALL for CONSENSUS, we define THREE POSSIBLE POSITIONS for members to take:

- In Consensus: In favor of the proposal;
- Stand Aside (also known as Out of Consensus): Not in favor because of reservations, but not so opposed as to prevent the group from adopting the proposal;
- Blocking Consensus: So firmly opposed that even if the overwhelming sentiment of the group is in favor, one believes, for deeply held reasons, that it cannot be supported.

If just one person blocks consensus, then the proposal is not adopted. Further limited discussion is held and consensus is again sought. If one or more persons still block, then a traditional vote is held with the majority opinion prevailing.

Reporting the Results: If consensus was achieved, report how many were standing aside. Those standing aside have the opportunity to write out their reservations, which become part of the record. If the group fails to reach consensus, the number blocking is reported as well as the result of the subsequent vote, and their written reservations are part of the records.

(Adapted from Consensus document AEU Office 3/01)