

Minutes of the Fairfax County Consumer Protection Commission

March 21, 2017

7:30 PM Conference 4/5
Government Center
12000 Government Center Pkwy.
Fairfax, Virginia 22035
Chairman Fee, presiding

Attendance:

Commissioners: Belkowitz, Fee, Gulakowski,
Hine, Javed, Kazmi, Kirk, Nguyen

Absent:

Commissioners: Callender, Hargraves, Roark,
Rosier, Woodruff

Staff:

Michael S. Liberman, Director
Cable and Consumer Services
Rebecca L. Makely, Director
Consumer Services Division
Susan C. Jones, Branch Chief
Consumer Affairs
Michelle L. Thompson, Consumer Specialist
Consumer Affairs Branch
Michelle Margeotes, Consumer Specialist
Consumer Affairs Branch

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Chairman Fee.

Minutes

The minutes for the January 17, 2017, meeting were approved.

Report of the Chairman

Chairman Fee mentioned there is a Trespass Towing Advisory Board meeting tomorrow night.

Report of the Director

Director Liberman spoke about towing legislation which requires towing advisory board to establish a rotating chairman every year between the citizen, public safety, and towing members.

Director Liberman informed the commission of the Board of Supervisor's advertised rate on tax assessments at the current rate of \$1.13 per \$100 assessed for FY 2018.

Director Liberman announced the Budget Public Hearings will be held on April 4, 5, and 6, 2017.

Commission Matters

Commissioner Nguyen spoke about advertisements regarding unlimited data plans and educating the public on reading the fine print on the contract.

Commissioner Belkowitz had no matter to bring before the Commission.

Commissioner Hine had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Commissioner Gulakowski attended a board appointee appreciation gathering at Supervisor Cook's office. In reviewing public information on the county website, he spoke about getting the word out about the Commission and other consumer information by using HOA newsletters or through the Connection newspapers. Commissioner Gulakowski attended the Fraud seminar doing National Consumer Protection Week.

Commissioner Kazmi spoke about a relative getting a job as a telemarketer and then the company requested the relative go door to door soliciting in Fairfax County. It appeared the company was unaware of the licensing requirements for solicitors in Fairfax County and the need to educate businesses on code requirements. Staff will follow up with businesses if they are reported by consumers to make sure the business is in compliance.

Commissioner Javed had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Commissioner Kirk had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Old Business

There was no old business before the commission.

New Business

1. Protecting Seniors from Fraud. Raymond Campbell, Postal Inspector, NOVA Fraud Unit, US Postal Inspection Service, spoke about who are the postal inspectors, criminal schemes, general tips and warning signs, the Deceptive Mail Prevention and Enforcement Act, scams targeting seniors like psychic scams, telemarketing scams, investment scams, and charity scams, how to protect family or friends, reasons for believing an obvious scam is legitimate, mail fraud, and contact information to report suspected fraud.

A discussion ensued about scanner identification code, civil vs. criminal prosecution, and what obligation does a postal worker have to report possible scams.

Chairman Fee made the motion to end the meeting. Commissioner Kirk and Gulakowski seconded the motion.

The meeting adjourned at 8:49 PM.