

Minutes of the Fairfax County Consumer Protection Commission

April 16, 2016

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

Attendance:

Commissioners: Belkowitz, Callender, Fee,
Hargraves, Hine, Roark, Roth

Absent:

Commissioners: Kazmi, Kirk, Nguyen, Rosier

Staff:

Michael S. Liberman, Director
Cable and Consumer Services
Susan C. Jones, Branch Chief
Consumer Affairs
Andrea S. Khoury, Consumer Specialist I
Consumer Affairs
Rebecca Makely, Fiscal Manager
Mail and Administrative Services

Guest:

Thomas B. Bash, Fairfax Area Commission
on Aging, Springfield District

The meeting was called to order at 7:29 PM by Chairman Fee.

Minutes

The minutes of the March 15, 2016, were approved.

Report of the Chairman

Chairman Fee had no matters to bring before the commission.

Report of the Director

Director Liberman stated the Board of Supervisors (BOS) approved the FY2017 proposed budget. BOS approved a 4 cent real estate tax increase, Mail Services will move from the Department of Cable and Consumer Services (DCCS) to the Department of Information Technology on July 1, 2016.

Director Liberman announced DCCS presented the Lines of Business on March 29, 2016. DCCS has 10 lines of business and the presentation was well received by the BOS. A copy of the presentation was provided to the commissioners.

Director Liberman informed the commission that DCCS received another hacker license appeal that will be heard at the May meeting along with the advertised Precious Metal and Gem/Pawn

ordinance revision hearing. At the June meeting, the CPC Annual Report will be reviewed by the commission.

Commission Matters

Commissioner Roark had no matters to bring before the commission.

Commissioner Callender stated poor workmanship by cable companies on and below utility poles is evident throughout the county. This lack of adherence to proper installation standards is widespread and presents numerous safety hazards as well as public eyesores. The industry does not appear to be policing itself adequately. He will provide examples from the Walker Road area in Great Falls to the Fairfax County Policy and Regulation Division for inspection.

Commissioner Belkowitz discussed the towing of his wife's car within the City of Fairfax and the fact the towing company did not provide a receipt for the charges and the lien letter did not have any contact information. Landlord of the property did reimburse him for the towing/storage fees. Regulatory and Licensing Branch will follow up on this issue.

Commissioner Hargraves mentioned he also received a parking ticket in Baltimore, Maryland even though the sticker was clearly visible and plans to pursue the matter in court. He also mentioned he was on the Consumer Action Advisory Board and spoke about their consumer friendly complaint process and that many companies are using Facebook to take complaints.

Commissioner Roth had no matters to bring before the commission.

Commissioner Hine had no matters to bring before the commission.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

1. Woodchucks - Tom Bash, Fairfax Area Commission on Aging, Springfield District. Mr. Bash presented information on Woodchucks and the targeting of senior citizens in his area. He is trying to get the word out to the seniors to stop the abuse and looking for any possible suggestions from the commission. He plans to work with the Fairfax County Police Department on possible enforcement action.

2. High School Education Presentation - Andrea S. Khoury, Consumer Specialist I, Consumer Affairs Branch. Consumer Specialist Khoury had the commission take a quiz on consumer issues. She provided a presentation about what a consumer is, and discussed each answer on the quiz along with case information, personal stories, and laws used to protect consumers.

Commissioner Roth made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Hine seconded the motion.

The meeting ended at 8:49 PM.