

**Fairfax County Consumer Protection Commission - Community Engagement Committee
Meeting Minutes**

March 4, 2024	7:30 p.m. Meeting held virtually via Microsoft Teams. All members were in attendance from their home residences in Fairfax County, Virginia.
Attendance:	Commissioners: Gasimov, Kratovil, Gulakowski, Kharat, Rosier
Absent:	Commissioner Belkowitz
Staff:	Amanda Kastl, Division Director, DCCS

The meeting was called to order at 7:39 p.m. by Chairman Gasimov.

New Business:

Proposed Agenda & 2024 Meetings

Chairman Gasimov opened the first meeting of the Fairfax County Consumer Protection Commission – Community Engagement Committee meeting to discuss the meeting agenda to include an agreement on how to proceed on the committee. Chairman Gasimov suggested the agenda include the meeting schedule for 2024 and suggested that the meetings be held the first Monday of every month.

Current Communications & Engagement

Chairman Gasimov discussed his opinions on the current engagement of consumers in Fairfax County. In his opinion, based on his preliminary research on the Fairfax County website, agencies promote engagement with limited coordination with other agencies and the way in which consumers are currently becoming informed about consumer affairs can be improved.

Chairman Gasimov stated that all events related to consumer affairs are not centralized on a calendar available to the public and suggested that a resource page be made available to consumers on the Department of Cable and Consumer Services (DCCS) website.

Division Director Kastl commented that while the county indeed has a centralized calendar that includes the public meetings held by public bodies, specific outreach events conducted by DCCS may not be included on that calendar. Division Director Kastl also noted that the DCCS – Consumer Services Division webpage lists consumer affairs outreach events.

Chairman Gasimov, Commissioner Rosier, and Commissioner Kratovil discussed resources and outreach events available to residents, an interest in learning more about how agencies are interconnected, and the marketing efforts and communications made available to Fairfax County community.

Fairfax County Consumer Protection Commission - Community Engagement Committee Meeting Minutes

Division Director Kastl stated that the upcoming National Consumer Protection Week (March 3, 2024 – March 9, 2024) and Consumer Affairs Day in Fairfax County (March 7, 2024), strengthens internal partnerships with Fairfax County agencies (Silver Shield, Fairfax County Police Department, and more) and also provides training and outreach opportunities to consumers in Fairfax County.

Commissioner Kratovil asked Division Director Kastl if DCCS has a communications professional who solely supports DCCS communications. Division Director Kastl responded that while DCCS does not have a dedicated public information officer, certain DCCS staff are tasked with ensuring the marketing and communications needs of the department are met. Division Director Kastl also stated that DCCS is supported by two public information officers in the Fairfax County Office of Public Affairs who just recently, for example, supported DCCS in posting Consumer Affairs Day outreach opportunities on NextDoor (a social media application). Commissioner Kratovil requested that staff provide additional information on the CSD at a future CPC meeting.

A discussion ensued on the challenges (i.e., language barriers) of creating a new centralized webpage that represents several agencies' consumer affairs initiatives, in addition to providing information on the duties of the Consumer Protection Commission (CPC).

A further discussion ensued among commissioners on the availability of short, easy to access information on both the roles and responsibilities of the CPC, as well as the consumer affairs services offered by DCCS. Commissioners Kratovil and Kharat discussed working together to create marketing materials, including consumer affairs "tips of the month," and a one-page document on the roles and responsibilities of the CPC.

Upcoming Topics for CPC Meetings

Commissioner Kratovil asked Division Director Kastl to confirm the upcoming meeting topics for the Consumer Protection Commission. Division Director Kastl confirmed the upcoming CPC meeting topics and presentations:

- June 18, 2024 – Fairfax County Office of Public Affairs.
- March 19, 2024 – Department of Cable and Consumer Services – Communications Policy and Regulation Division (CPRD).

2024 Meetings

Chairman Gasimov discussed the meeting schedule for 2024. Commissioner Kratovil expressed interest in holding all meetings virtually. Division Director Kastl commented how the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (VFOIA) restricts the frequency of all virtual public meetings – held by public bodies (including the CPC Community Engagement Committee) – to no more than two all-virtual public meetings per calendar year, or more than 25 percent of its meetings rounded up to the next whole number, whichever is greater, during the calendar year.

**Fairfax County Consumer Protection Commission - Community Engagement Committee
Meeting Minutes**

Commissioner Rosier asked whether the in-person meeting location is required to be the Fairfax County Government Center. Commissioner Kratovil commented that the meeting may be at an alternate location, but that the Fairfax County Government Center may be the most convenient. Commissioner Gasimov commented that the default meeting location should be the Government Center, but should other locations be preferred by the committee they will consider the same at a later time.

Chairman Gasimov moved for the meetings to take place the first Monday of every month at the Government Center. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kratovil. The motion was approved, 4-0-1, with Commissioner Gulakowski abstaining. Chairman Gasimov asked staff to coordinate the posting of the meeting and the room reservation. The next meeting will be held in person on April 1, 2024, at 7:30 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center.

Commissioner Gasimov motioned to adopt the All-Virtual Public Meetings Policy for the Consumer Protection Commission Community Engagement Committee. Commissioner Gulakowski seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously, 5-0-0.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Chairman Gasimov and seconded by Commissioner Gulakowski. The motion was approved unanimously, 5-0-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.