



County of Fairfax, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 15, 2020

TO: Consumer Protection Commission

FROM: Michael S. Liberman, Director
Department of Cable and Consumer Services

SUBJECT: Consumer Protection Commission Meeting for October 20, 2020

Attached is the Consumer Protection Commission agenda packet. The next scheduled meeting is **Tuesday, October 20, 2020, 7:30 p.m.** This meeting will be held via video connection due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To join the meeting:

Click: <https://zoom.us/j/97146852106?pwd=dFBMNlVqbJFHMTE5Z29pZmFrMGp4Zz09>

Enter Password: 402536

Audio-only participation:

Dial: 888-270-9936

Enter Code: 584548

Please RSVP with your attendance to Susan Jones by COB on Monday, October 19, 2020, at Susan.Jones@fairfaxcounty.gov or 703-324-5877.

Enclosures

cc: Joseph M. Mondoro, Chief Financial Officer
Office of the County Executive

Rebecca L. Makely, Director, Consumer Services Division
Department of Cable and Consumer Services

Department of Cable and Consumer Services
12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 433
Fairfax, Virginia 22035-0045
Phone 703-324-5949 Fax 703-653-1310 TTY 711
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cableconsumer/



**FAIRFAX COUNTY
CONSUMER PROTECTION COMMISSION
October 20, 2020 AGENDA**

Call to Order by the Chairman (7:30 PM)

Minutes

- Draft of the July 21, 2020, meeting minutes attached.
- Draft of the August 18, 2020, meeting minutes attached.

Report of the Chairman

Report of the Director

Commission Matters

Old Business

New Business

General Interest

- Consumer Protection Commission Calendar
- Consumer Protection Commission Membership
- Consumer Affairs Statistics
- Community Outreach
- Consumer Resources

Minutes of the Fairfax County Consumer Protection Commission

July 21, 2020

7:30 PM
Government Center, Conference Room 9/10
12000 Government Center Parkway
Fairfax, Virginia 22035
Chairman Fee presiding

Attendance:

Commissioners: Belkowitz, Fee

Absent:

Commissioners: Callender, Gulakowski,
Hargraves, Hine, Kratovil, Kirk, Javed, Lynch,
Roark, Rosier

Staff:

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:34 PM by Chairman Fee.

Minutes

The minutes for the February 18, 2020, meeting were not approved due to a lack of quorum.

Report of the Chairman

Chairman Fee had no new matters to bring before the Commission.

Report of the Director

Director Liberman provided an overview of the status of Fairfax County Government.

- March 27, 2020, Government Center closed to the public.
- April 14, 2020, Board of Supervisors meeting was held in Government Center Conference Room 11.
- April 28, 2020, Board of Supervisors began fully electronic meetings.
- May 2020 Planning Commission began fully electronic meetings.
- June 2020 Board of Zoning Appeals began fully electronic meetings.
- July 14, 2020, Board of Supervisors returned to in-person meetings.

Director Liberman provided an overview of the work performed by the Department of Cable and Consumer Services.

Communications Policy and Regulation Division:

- Comcast franchise agreement to end in July 2020. Requested a six-month extension from the Board of Supervisors.
- Verizon franchise agreement to end in October 2020 and will request an extension in September from BOS.
- Staff 100 percent teleworking.

Communications Productions Division

- Produced virtual budget town hall meetings, and COVID-19 messaging.
- Staff on rotating schedule, with teleworking and in-person productions.

Consumer Services Division (update provided by Rebecca L. Makely, Director, Consumer Services Division.)

Accounting and Finance:

- Completed year-end budget for FY 2020.
- 100 percent teleworking.

Meeting Space Management and Event Support:

- Assisting customers with rescheduling, cancelling, and modifying reservations.
- Staff on rotating schedule with teleworking and meeting support.

Regulation and Licensing:

- Processing in-person license applications on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. (Office hours are Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)
- Staff on rotating schedule.

Consumer Affairs:

- Processing complaints electronically.
- Posting COVID-19 updates on Consumer Affairs Facebook page.
- *Your Community, You're Connected* Legislative Review 2020 on July 7, 2020.
- *Consumer Connection* program on COVID-19 Scams on July 20, 2020.
- Staff 100 percent teleworking.

Commission Matters

Commissioner Belkowitz asked that the *YCYC* and *Consumer Connection* links be shared with the Commission.

Chairman Fee had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Old Business

There was no old business before the Commission.

New Business

- 1. August 18, 2020 CPC Meeting.** Michael S. Liberman, Director, Department of Cable and Consumer Services outlined two options, in person or electronic, to hold the next Consumer Protection Commission meeting in August. Chairman Fee made the decision to hold an electronic meeting in August. Staff will provide meeting set-up.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Minutes of the Fairfax County Consumer Protection Commission

August 18, 2020

7:30 PM
Audio Bridge Electronic Meeting
Chairman Fee presiding

Attendance:

Commissioners: Belkowitz, Callender, Fee,
Gulakowski, Hargraves, Hine, Kirk, Kratovil,
Lynch, Roark, Rosier

Absent:

Commissioners: Javed

Staff:

Michael S. Liberman, Director
Cable and Consumer Services
(in Conference Room 11)
Rebecca L. Makely, Director
Consumer Services Division
(on audio bridge)
Susan C. Jones, Branch Chief
Consumer Affairs Branch
(in Conference Room 11)
Heidi Baggett, Administrative Assistant IV
Consumer Affairs Branch
(on audio bridge)

The electronic meeting was called to order at 7:31 PM by Chairman Fee.

Quorum, Location and Audibility of Members' Voices

Chairman Fee conducted a Roll Call to verify that a quorum of members were participating; and that each member's voice was clear, audible, and at appropriate volume for all of the other members; and the location from which member was participating. The roll call was as follows:

Chairman Fee, Fairfax County Government Center
Commissioner Belkowitz, Fairfax Station
Commissioner Callender, Great Falls
Commissioner Gulakowski, Burke
Commissioner Hargraves, Alexandria
Commissioner Hine, Fairfax
Commissioner Kirk, Falls Church
Commissioner Kratovil, Mount Vernon
Commissioner Lynch, Oak Hill
Commissioner Roark, Lorton
Commissioner Rosier, Great Falls

Chairman Fee passed the virtual gavel to Vice Chairman Gulakowski. A motion was made by Chairman Fee that each member's voice was adequately heard by each member of the Consumer Protection Commission (Commission). This motion was seconded by Commissioner Gulakowski. This motion passed unanimously.

Need for an Electronic Meeting

A motion was made by Chairman Fee that the State of Emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic made it unsafe for the Commission to physically assemble and unsafe for the public to physically attend any such meeting, and that as such, FOIA's usual procedures, which require the physical assembly of the Commission and the physical presence of the public, could not be implemented safely or practically. Chairman Fee further moved that the Commission conduct the meeting electronically through a dedicated audio-conferencing line, and that the public access the meeting by calling 1-877-336-1829 and entering access code 8628844. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gulakowski. The motion passed unanimously.

Need to Dispense with FOIA's Usual Procedures to Assure Continuity in Government/Continue Operations

A motion was made by Chairman Fee that all of the matters addressed on the agenda addressed the Emergency itself, were necessary for continuity in Fairfax County government, and/or were statutorily required or necessary to continue operations and the discharge of the Commission's lawful purposes, duties, and responsibilities. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Gulakowski. The motion was passed unanimously.

Minutes

A motion was made by Chairman Fee and seconded by Commissioner Gulakowski to approve the minutes from the February 18, 2020. The motion passed unanimously.

Report of the Chairman

The Chairman had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Report of the Director

Director Liberman discussed the Fairfax County FY 2021 budget process and the Countywide Strategic Plan. He explained how the Fairfax County FY 2021 budget aligned with the Fairfax Countywide Strategic Plan.

Director Makely discussed the Consumer Protection Commission Draft FY 2020 Annual Report to be ready for review by the Commission in September. She discussed the options for a commission photo and stated the delay in the report would not impact the FY 2020 statistics.

Commission Matters

Commissioner Belkowitz expressed concerns about the COVID-19 related fraud scams to consumers.

Commissioner Callender agreed on the ingenious ways COVID-19 scams took money from consumers.

Commissioner Gulakowski had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Commissioner Hargraves had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Commissioner Hine had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Commissioner Kirk congratulated everyone on the ability to have this meeting.

Commissioner Kratovil asked how COVID-19 information was being assimilated to consumers. Director Liberman addressed how Consumer Affairs was providing the information.

Commissioner Lynch had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Commissioner Roark had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Commissioner Rosier stated she spoke with several different groups who asked why the cost of food has gone up so much and asked if anyone else had seen this. Director Liberman stated he had heard about the cost of food rising and saw several articles addressing this issue.

Chairman Fee said he had used delivery services during the pandemic. He also stated he had issues with his bank bouncing two of his checks despite having money in the account. He is working with the bank to waive the returned check fees. He had success in doing so with one check and may have Consumer Affairs assist him if the other fee is not waived.

Old Business

There was no old business before the Commission.

New Business

1. COVID-19 Pandemic:

Director Liberman provided an overview of the work performed by the Department of Cable and Consumer Services.

Communications Policy and Regulation Division:

- Working on franchise negotiations.
- Provides online information for low-cost internet connection options.
- In June 2020 requested an extension of the Board of Supervisors on Comcast franchise agreement.
- Staff 100 percent teleworking.

Communications Productions Division:

- Produced virtual budget town hall meetings, and COVID-19 messaging.
- Staff on rotating schedule, with teleworking and in-person productions.

Consumer Services Division (update provided by Rebecca L. Makely, Director, Consumer Services Division):

Accounting and Finance:

- Completed year-end budget for FY 2020.
- 100 percent teleworking.

Meeting Space Management and Event Support:

- Assisting customers with rescheduling, cancelling, and modifying reservations.
- Staff on rotating schedule with teleworking and meeting support.

Regulation and Licensing:

- Processing in-person license applications on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. (Office hours are Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)
- Worked with the County Attorney's office to issue temporary licenses.
- Staff on rotating schedule.

Consumer Affairs:

- Processing complaints electronically.
- Posting COVID-19 updates on Consumer Affairs Facebook page.
- *Your Community, You're Connected* aired on July 7, 2020, was an electronic segment with guests appearing virtually to discuss the 2020 Legislative Review for HOAs.
- *Consumer Connection* program is live every month. The August 27, 2020, topic is Tenant- Landlord Rights and Responsibilities as it Relates to COVID.
- Consumer Affairs sends information to the Office of Emergency Management blog and has posted information on anti-price gouging, landlord-tenant rights, frauds, and scams.
- Working with Fairfax County Public Schools on a virtual curriculum.
- Staff 100 percent teleworking.

Director Liberman gave an overview of different methods the Board of Supervisors used to hold meetings and obtain public input.

Director Liberman gave an overview of the options to meet for boards, authorities, and commissions. A discussion ensued on these options.

Commissioner Hargraves expressed concern over absentee applications with incorrect information that were mailed to residents of Fairfax County and whether it was in the Commission's purview to address. Staff reported that the Office of Elections was coordinating with the City of Fairfax to ensure that Fairfax County absentee applications were properly received.

Fee made a motion to adjourn, Commissioner Gulakowski seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

CPC Calendar

Fairfax County
Consumer Protection Commission
2020 Yearly Planning Calendar
October 20, 2020

- January 21 • Election of Officers
- February 18 • Commission Planning
- March 17 • Cable Franchise Presentation
- April 21 • Meeting canceled
- May 19 • Meeting canceled
- June 16 • Meeting canceled
- July 21 • COVID-19 Pandemic Response
- August 18 • COVID-19 Pandemic Overview
- September 15 • Meeting canceled
- October 20 •
- November 17 •
- December 15 • Year-End Review
Officer Nominations

CPC Membership

Name	Staff
<p>Harold G. Belkowitz <i>Appt. Expires 7/31/2021</i></p> <p>Wes Callender <i>Appt. Expires 7/31/2021</i></p> <p>John Fee (Chairperson) <i>Appt. Expires 7/31/2021</i></p> <p>Denis Gulakowski (Vice-Chairperson) <i>Appt. Expires 7/31/2021</i></p> <p>Dirck A. Hargraves <i>Appt. Expires 7/31/2023</i></p> <p>Scott Hine <i>Appt. Expires 7/31/2021</i></p> <p>Umair Javed <i>Appt. Expires 7/31/2021</i></p> <p>Dennis D. Kirk <i>Appt. Expires 7/31/2022</i></p> <p>Jason J. Kratovil <i>Appt. Expires: 7/31/2021</i></p> <p>Daton Lynch <i>Appt. Expires 7/31/2021</i></p> <p>Michael J. Roark <i>Appt. Expires 7/31/2023</i></p> <p>Jacqueline Rosier (Secretary) <i>Appt. Expires 7/31/2022</i></p>	<p>Michael S. Liberman, Director Department of Cable and Consumer Services michael.liberman@fairfaxcounty.gov</p> <p>Rebecca L. Makely, Director Consumer Services Division 703-324-5947 rebecca.makely@fairfaxcounty.gov</p> <p>Susan Jones, Chief Consumer Affairs Branch 703-324-5877 susan.jones@fairfaxcounty.gov</p> <p>Main number: 703-222-8435 Fax number: 703-653-1310 consumer@fairfaxcounty.gov</p>

CAB Statistics



Consumer Affairs Branch
Monthly Summary - All Activities
September 2020

	Current Month		Fiscal Year-to-Date		Prior Fiscal YTD	
Cases Received	89		266		274	
Cases Closed	67		206		226	
Favorable	33	49%	111	54%	160	71%
Unfavorable	4	6%	17	8%	16	7%
Invalid	5	7%	9	4%	8	4%
Other	25	37%	69	33%	42	19%
Total (Checks column totals)	67	100%	206	100%	226	100%
Advice Inquires (closed)	363		1164		1688	
Case Inquires over 90+days (open)	12		32		112	
Amount Received	\$23,191.00		\$139,471.00		\$97,490.00	

CLOSED COMPLAINT CATEGORIES

	FISCAL YEAR-TO-DATE	% FYTD	PRIOR FISCAL YTD	% PRIOR FYTD
Tenant-Landlord		20%	Tenant Landlord	32%
Towng		6%	Retail Stores	9%
Communications Media		4%	Housing Services	7%
Retail Stores		4%	Professional Services	6%
Cable Television (Regulated)		4%	Cable Television (Regulated)	6%
Other		62%	Other	40%

Community Outreach

OUTREACH EVENT CALENDAR October 2020

<i>DATE</i>	<i>EVENT</i>	<i>LOCATION</i>	<i># of Guests</i>	<i>Event Time</i>	<i>Staff</i>
10/1/2020	ID Theft and Financial Crimes	OLLI Zoom Workshop	48	11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.	VFJ
10/6/2020	Consumer Knowledge	Chantilly High School (Virtual) 4201 Stringfellow Road Chantilly, VA	90	8:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.	MM
10/7/2020	Scam Presentation	NOVA Lifetime Learning Institute (Virtual)	60	10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	MM
10/7/2020	Building a Better Credit Report	Zoom OLLI	15	12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	VFJ
10/8/2020	Credit Reports	OLLI Zoom Workshop	42	11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.	VFJ
10/9/2020	Consumer Knowledge	McLean High School (Virtual) 1633 Davidson Road McLean, VA	30	11:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.	MM
10/13/2020	Consumer Knowledge	Cedar Lane School (Virtual) 101 Cedar Lane Vienna, VA	14	8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	MM
10/14/2020	Consumer Knowledge	Justice High School (Virtual) 3301 Peace Valley Lane Falls Church, VA	14	8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	MM
10/14/2020	Consumer Knowledge	Cedar Lane School (Virtual) 101 Cedar Lane Vienna, VA		11:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.	MM
10/15/2020	Consumer Knowledge	Falls Church High School (Virtual) 7521 Jaguar Trail Falls Church, VA		8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.	MM
10/15/2020	How to Recover from ID Theft	OLLI Zoom Workshop		11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.	VFJ
10/16/2020	Consumer Knowledge	Falls Church High School (Virtual) 7521 Jaguar Trail Falls Church, VA		9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.	MM
10/16/2020	Financial Planning Today for Tomorrow	Employee Financial Program Zoom		10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	VFJ
10/20/2020	Consumer Knowledge	Chantilly High School (Virtual) 4201 Stringfellow Road Chantilly, VA		9:15 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.	MM
10/20/2020	Consumer Knowledge	Chantilly High School (Virtual) 4201 Stringfellow Road Chantilly, VA		9:15 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.	MM
10/29/2020	Consumer Connection Facebook Live	12000 Government Center Parkway Fairfax, VA		3:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.	SCJ

OUTREACH EVENT CALENDAR
September 2020

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	# of Guests	Event Time	Staff
9/2/2020	Employee Fitness Virginia529	GoToWebinar	22	11 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	VFJ
9/3/2020	Building a Better Credit Report	Zoom Hosted by Britepaths	9	1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	VFJ
9/8/2020	YCYC: Maintaining a Sense of Community	Fairfax County Government Center 12000 Fairfax County Parkway Fairfax, VA	0	7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.	MLT/ MM
9/17/2020	Scam Presentation Silver Shield	US Citizenship and Immigration Services WebEx	20	11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	SCJ
9/17/2020	Department of Treasury Unclaimed Property	Virtual Richmond, VA	438	9:00 a.m. - 5:00 .m.	SCJ
9/23/2020	Setting Financial Goals	ZOOM ACT/FEC	17	12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	VFJ
9/24/2020	How to Minimize Your Risk for ID Theft	Zoom OLLI	47	11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.	VFJ
9/29/2020	Financial Fitness Legal Information During Covid-19	Zoom	27	10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	VFJ
9/28/2020	Consumer Connection: Scam Trends During COVID-19	Fairfax County Government Center 12000 Fairfax County Parkway Fairfax, VA	0	3:00 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.	SCJ/MM
9/29/2020	Consumer Knowledge	South Lakes High School (Virtual) 11400 South Lakes Drive Reston, VA	30	9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.	MM

Consumer Resources

Resource Items

Fairfax County Department of Cable and Consumer Services

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cableconsumer>

Fairfax County Consumer Affairs Branch

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cableconsumer/csd/consumer>

Fairfax County Consumer Affairs Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/fairfaxcountyconsumer/>

Information Items

Fairfax County Coronavirus (COVID-19) Updates

[Fairfaxcounty.gov/covid19/](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/covid19/)

Ways to Stay Informed About Coronavirus (COVID-19)

<https://fairfaxcountyemergency.wpcomstaging.com/>

Ways to Donate and Help During COVID-19

<https://fairfaxcountyemergency.wpcomstaging.com/2020/03/25/ways-to-donate-and-help-during-covid-19/>

4 Things to Know About Tenant-Landlord Rights During COVID-19

<https://fairfaxcountyemergency.wpcomstaging.com/2020/04/03/things-to-know-about-tenant-landlord-rights/>

DCCS Operating Status

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cableconsumer/status>,

Consumer Connection: COVID-19 Scams (July 20, 2020)

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=287643635890687>

Your Community, You're Connected: 2020 Legislative Review (July 7, 2020)

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cableconsumer/channel-16/your-community-youre-connected>

Consumer Connection: Tenant Landlord Rights and Responsibilities During COVID-19 (August 27, 2020)

https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=351904732844721&external_log_id=113676d7b70e5aa2ce0b4571f018479c

Consumer Connection: Scam Trends During COVID-19 (September 28, 2020)

https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=2921397914626535&external_log_id=283262e394c3b8963fd0e2da4d5fae3f