

Minutes of the Fairfax County Consumer Protection Commission

May 16, 2017

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, Javed, Kirk, Roark,
Woodruff

Absent:

Commissioners: Gulakowski, Kazmi,
Nguyen, Rosier

Staff:

Michael S. Liberman, Director
Cable and Consumer Services
Rebecca L. Makely, Director
Consumer Services Division
Susan Hafeli, Senior Utilities Analyst
Public Utilities Branch
Susan C. Jones, Branch Chief
Consumer Affairs Branch
John W. Burton, Assistant County Attorney

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

Minutes

The minutes for the April 18, 2017, meeting were approved.

Report of the Chairman

Chairman Fee inquired about Celebrate Fairfax. The fair will be held June 9-11. In addition, he commented on Reston Town Center and the difficulty of the parking situation and ticket validation.

Report of the Director

Director Liberman informed the Commission that the Board of Supervisors (BOS) approved the FY 2018 budget. Also, County Executive Ed Long will retire on September 15, 2017, and BOS will begin a nationwide search for his replacement.

Commission Matters

Commissioner Belkowitz mentioned the method to pay for parking at the Reston Town Center was not consumer friendly.

Commissioner Hine had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Commissioner Roark had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Commissioner Hargraves spoke about Net Neutrality and that the FCC is soliciting comments on this issue.

Commissioner Woodruff inquired about information being made to the public on hacker and ransomware. Staff reported they have given presentations and provided information on Identity Theft and Privacy.

Commissioner Callender expressed the need to provide information to the public and applauded CAB's outreach efforts.

Commissioner Kirk had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Commissioner Javed had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Old Business

There was no old business before the Commission.

New Business

1. 2017 Taxicab Demand Analysis and Biennial Determination. Susan Hafeli, Senior Utilities Analyst, Public Utilities Branch, presented the staff's 2017 Certificate Demand Analysis and Recommendation. Ms. Hafeli provided an overview of the Fairfax County Taxicab Industry, the authorized county taxicab fleet, applicable code provisions regarding the BOS biennial determination, staff's taxicab demand formula, demand formula results for 2013, 2015, and 2017, and staff's recommendation for 2017.

A discussion followed on the impact of the taxicab revisions on taxicab drivers, Department of Motor Vehicles no longer tracking Transportation Network Company (TNC), the General Assembly's elimination of the requirement that TNC vehicle plates include a decal to identify TNC drivers, no wheelchair accessibility requirements by TNCs, concerns over insurance coverage for TNCs, certificate reduction, registering complaints, and regulation by the state.

Charlie King, Vice President, Transportation General, Inc., expressed his appreciation for the CPC's input on the Taxicab Ordinance revisions to Chapter 84.1. Mr. King spoke about challenging times in the industry, the commitment to invest in technology to better serve customers, wheelchair accessibility, and customers not served by TNCs, such as unbanked and cash and carry clientele.

A discussion followed on drivers' leaving the taxicab industry for TNCs and returning to the industry, trip reduction, wait time, and replacement of vehicles.

JB Marti, General Manager, Envirocab, Transdev on Demand, Inc., spoke about bringing new technology, zTrip, to the area, taxicab operations outside of Fairfax County, and recruiting drivers to its fleet in Fairfax County.

Chairman Fee moved that the Consumer Protection Commission (CPC) vote to recommend to the BOS that no additional taxicab certificates be made available for award in 2017.

Commissioner Hargraves seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Director Liberman informed the Commission the draft CPC Annual Report will be discussed at the June meeting along with taking a photograph of the Commission.

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 PM.