



Howard County Office of
Consumer Protection
Department of Community Resources and Services
Consumer Protection Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 13, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM by Sandra Price, Board Chairperson.

Present:

Sandra Price - Board Chairperson
Richard Weisenhoff – Vice Board Chairperson
Patricia Branch – Board Member
Judy McCormick – Board Member
Young Smith – Board Member
Jerome Rollerson – Board Member
Cheryl Mattis - Deputy Director, Department of Community Resources and Services
Lila Boor - Investigator, Office of Consumer Protection

Business Discussed:

- The minutes from the last meeting, held on Tuesday, March 9, 2021 were approved.
- Lila Boor reviewed the Office’s quarterly statistics. Sandra Price stated that she would like to see more detail to better explain open and closed cases. Cheryl Mattis discussed the new data system the Office will be using and asked the Board what meaningful information they would like to see. Sandra Price said she wants to see a breakdown of opened and closed cases. Judy McCormick, Jerome Rollerson, and Patricia Branch stated that they need time to think about what they want to see in the data. Cheryl Mattis explained the current information collected for open and closed cases. Jerome Rollerson suggested a hyperlink that can show case specifics. Sandra Price wants to see the nature of each complaint and the resolution of complaints.
- Judy McCorkrick asked Lila Boor for details involving the complaint process. Lila Boor explained the details involving the process of mediation and gave some specific details. Lila Boor also explained the investigation process for complaints that require investigation and gave specific details of cases handled. To give the Board a better understanding of the work of the Office, Lila Boor provided them with in-depth information on what is involved in the handling of various complaints, and some enforcement actions taken by the Office. She also explained education provided by way of presentations, TV, printed materials, etc.

She explained the skills that both herself and Investigator Beth Silverman need to perform their job; including the negotiating of settlements with business owners and attorneys, as well as possessing the knowledge of various County, State and Federal laws. She also explained peddler/solicitor and trespass-towing Companies licensing processes, as well as the investigation process for trespass-towing complaints.

- Sandra Price wants Lila Boor to do a training presentation for the Board on the Office functions so that they can do them for Community groups. Cheryl Mattis and Lila Boor will discuss details and create a PowerPoint. Sandra Price said that she and Richard Weisenhoff have discussed creating a library of recording presentations. Sandra also spoke about the possibility of having the presentations translated into other languages. Cheryl Mattis stated that this is very expensive.
- Sandra Price inquired about events listed in the Department of Community Resources and Services calendar, “National Law Day,” and the County fair. Lila Boor said the Office doesn’t do anything for “National Law Day” at the present time. Cheryl Mattis said the Office on Aging Independence does something, and she’s not sure if the County fair will go on this year due to COVID. Sandra Price stated the Board should plan an event for “Resident’s Rights” month in October. Lila Boor suggested they start planning now. Judy mentioned that there will be many upcoming tenant evictions, and would like a brochure written regarding where evicted tenants can go to get help, and that it would be good to give to the Sheriff’s Office so they give them to evicted tenants. She said that she will write up a draft for the Board to review. Cheryl Mattis stated that there is a great deal of monetary assistance being provided by County agencies to tenants for payment of back rent.
- Lila Boor spoke about new landlord/tenant legislation going into effect on 6/6/2021. The Office will make the appropriate changes to printed materials to incorporate the new changes after seeking clarification from an attorney.
- Sandra Price spoke about Jerome Rollerson’s research on possible changes for the Office webpage. He will send them to Lila Boor. Sandra Price inquired about filling the vacancy left by former Board member Ellen Kuhn. Cheryl Mattis said that she has spoken with Kimberly Prui in the County Executive’s Office about putting out a press release to advertise for the position.
- Cheryl Mattis suggested that the Board start thinking about what they want to do in October for “Residents Month.” She mentioned that they could partner with other agencies. Lia Boor mentioned the Office on Human Rights, Housing, and the Department of Licenses, Inspections and Permits. Sandra Price stated that she would like to organize work groups and will reach out to members for participation.

- Judy McCormick stated that she will work on a brochure for evicted tenants. Cheryl Mattis suggested that the Board look at the Montgomery County Consumer Protection Office's webpage to see what they put in their reports. Cheryl Mattis said the Board's recommendations for SharePoint need to be given by the next meeting. Sandra Price asked members to send her their list by May 4, 2021.
- The next Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 11, 2021 at 7:00 PM.
- The meeting was adjourned at 8:26 PM by Sandra Price, Board Chairperson.