

**MINUTES OF THE
TWO HUNDRED THIRTY-SIXTH MEETING
OF THE CONSUMERS' COUNSEL GOVERNING BOARD
January 22, 2003**

Members Present: Mark Gehri
 Rhonda Johnson, Vice Chair
 Herman Kohlman
 Dorothy Leslie
 Helen Mac Murray
 James Rarey
 Jerome Solove, Chair
 John Steinberger

The meeting was called to order by Chair Solove at approximately 9:04 AM. Chair Solove asked Board members if there were any additions or corrections to the November 20, 2002 meeting minutes. The minutes were approved by consensus.

On a motion by Mr. Kohlman, seconded by Mrs. Leslie, the Board voted to re-elect Mr. Jerome Solove as Chair and Ms. Rhonda Johnson as Vice Chair of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel Governing Board.

Mr. Eric Stephens shared with the Governing Board a video of Mr. Robert Tongren receiving a resolution from the Ohio Senate honoring him on his recent election as President of the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates (NASUCA). Mr. Stephens announced that Mr. Tongren also received a resolution from the Ohio House of Representatives.

Chair Solove congratulated Mr. Tongren and stated that the Board is pleased to have Mr. Tongren as the steward of the OCC and is certain that inroads will be made for NASUCA with Mr. Tongren's leadership.

Mr. David Bergmann reported on recent activities in the telecommunications industry. He discussed:

1. The status of the appeal of the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio's elective alternative regulation rules in the Ohio Supreme Court;
2. Status of the appeal of Sprint's application for elective alternative regulation;
3. PUCO's approval of SBC's application for elective alternative regulation;
4. Do-Not-Call proceedings at the federal level and
5. Unbundled network element platform (UNEP) effects on competition.

Mr. Tongren introduced Mr. Mike Gonidakis. Mr. Gonidakis is the Senior Deputy Attorney General for Policy and Legislation with new Attorney General Jim Petro.

Mr. Stephens announced that Ms. Beth Hixon has been named team lead for both the electric and gas teams.

Ms. Beth Hixon reported on recent activities in the gas and water industries. She reviewed:

1. Statistics of Ohio's gas choice programs;
2. Status of the phase in of the Vectren gas choice program; and
3. CG&E's accelerated main replacement program.

The Honorable Jim Petro, Ohio Attorney General, joined the OCC Board meeting. Board members were introduced to Attorney General Petro and Chair Solove welcomed him to the meeting. Chair Solove stated that the OCC has a good working relationship with the Attorney General's office and looks forward to continuing that relationship under Attorney General Petro's leadership.

Attorney General Petro thanked the Board for their willingness to become engaged in governmental oversight and stated he looks forward to working with and learning more about the OCC.

Ms. Hixon also reported on recent activities in the electric industry. She discussed:

1. Statistics of residential customers who have switched electric suppliers and
2. End-of-year Update Report on Ohio's electric market.

Ms. Linda Walls Rominski reviewed outreach events and topics for November and December and included a year-end summary of events.

Mr. Jim Williams introduced Ms. Maria Durban and Ms. Jackie Stephens, compliance investigators in the Consumer Response Center (CRC). Both have done outstanding work in resolving difficult consumer complaints and Mr. Williams wanted to take this opportunity to commend their extraordinary efforts.

Mrs. Leslie noted that Mr. Williams recently resolved an issue for her and thanked him for his hard work on her complaint resolution.

Mr. Ryan Lippe reported on electric choice education. He discussed:

1. An update on community based aggregation and
2. Ohio Electric Choice Year-End newsletter.

Ms. Carah Brody reported on new consumer resources developed by OCC. They include:

1. The Gas Choice 101 brochure;
2. Supplier bios and
3. Online tools that include an aggregation map and natural gas calculators.

Ms. Brody also reviewed statistics on use of OCC's website. Mr. Lippe reviewed media placements for November and December and also discussed issues associated with the statistics.

Mr. Williams reported on compliance activities. Calls into the CRC reached a record number of 136,606 during 2002. During the months of November and December the CRC handled 20,617 calls. Mr. Williams reviewed the most common gas and electric issues.

Ms. Monica Hunyadi discussed the following CRC issues:

1. CRC continued to evaluate and improve investigative documentation;
2. Completed improvements to the complaint escalation process;
3. Streamlined the e-mail function used to send complaints to companies;
4. Began analysis of the customer satisfaction survey results and
5. Plan to hire two additional compliance investigators.

Mr. Matt Forney returned from the Governor's State-of-the-State address and gave a brief summary. Mr. Forney noted that all agencies are expected to receive cuts during the budget process. Ms. Hunyadi discussed OCC's current budget request and noted that OCC has been fiscally responsible and is currently operating under budget.

The Board members set their calendar for 2003. The dates are: January 22, March 19, May 7, July 9, September 10 and November 5.

Ms. Karen Hardie gave a presentation looking back at 2002 and forward to 2003 in the telecommunications industry. Ms Hardie discussed:

1. Unbundled network elements;
2. Elective alternative regulation and

3. Challenges in 2003 which include: competition, SBC Ohio long distance authorization, elective alternative regulation and access charges and small telephone companies.

On a motion by Mr. Steinberger, seconded by Mr. Kohlman the Board voted unanimously, by a roll call vote, to adopt an ethics policy for the Consumers' Counsel and Deputy Consumers' Counsel. Mr. Solove thanked Mr. Martin Susec of the Attorney General's office for his counsel in developing the policy.

Ms. Mac Murray and Mr. Gehri departed the meeting at approximately 4:20 p.m.

At approximately 4:40 p.m. on a motion by Mrs. Leslie, seconded by Mr. Kohlman the Board voted to adjourn the meeting.

Jerome G. Solove, Chairman
Ohio Consumers' Counsel Governing Board

Donna Mucci, Secretary
Ohio Consumers' Counsel Governing Board