

**MINUTES OF THE
TWO HUNDRED THIRTY-SEVENTH MEETING
OF THE CONSUMERS' COUNSEL GOVERNING BOARD
April 8, 2003**

Members Present: Mark Gehri
 Rhonda Johnson, Vice Chair
 Herman Kohlman
 Dorothy Leslie
 Jerome Solove, Chair
 John Steinberger

Members Absent: Helen Mac Murray
 James Rarey

The meeting was called to order by Chair Solove at approximately 9:05 AM. Chair Solove asked Board members if there were any additions or corrections to the January 22, 2003 meeting minutes. The minutes were approved by consensus.

Mr. Tongren stated he is very pleased with the 2002 Annual Report, which was submitted to the state legislature. He noted that Ms. Maureen Miller and her staff spent many hours on this project and deserve accolades for a job well done.

Mr. Tongren introduced Mr. Larry Sauer, Mr. Matthew Jones and Ms. Caroline Burns to the Governing Board members. Mr. Sauer joins the OCC as an attorney and both Mr. Jones and Ms. Burns work in the Consumer Response Center (CRC) as investigators.

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

1. The appeal from the PUCO's rulemaking on elective alternative regulation;
2. The appeal of the Commission's approval of elective alternative regulation for Sprint;
3. The complaint against Sprint rate increases;
4. Commission approval of SBC Ohio's application for elective alternative regulation;
5. Cincinnati Bell alternative regulation;
6. Do-not-call activities at the state and federal levels and
7. FCC universal service activity.

Mr. Solove stated that the Board is very supportive of the work of the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates (NASUCA). The Board acknowledged that resolution of many concerns for residential utility consumers of Ohio are best pursued on a national platform, particularly given the nature of most providers' interstate business practices and economic dependency. Mr. Tongren, as President of the organization, and the staff of the OCC are encouraged by the Board to continue working diligently to make NASUCA's national presence known on residential utility issues.

Mr. Solove stated that he appreciated the OCC staff rescheduling the Governing Board meeting. He is aware of the time and effort that goes into preparing for the meeting and appreciated the staff's willingness to reschedule. Mr. Solove thanked the Board members for their attendance.

Ms. Beth Hixon reported on recent activities in the energy industry. She discussed:

1. Ohio's gas choice programs;
2. Details of the Vectren gas choice phase-in;
3. The basics of the gas cost recovery rate;
4. A review of electric and energy issues during 2002;
5. A look into the issues OCC will be facing during 2003,
6. Electric restructuring and the market development period (MDP) and
7. Electric generation service options after the MDP ends.

Mr. Jim Williams reported that OCC's CRC received 22,139 calls during January and February 2003. Approximately 60 percent of the calls pertained to with telecommunication issues, 23 percent natural gas and 10 percent electric.

Ms. Monica Hunyadi reported that the CRC has been working on training initiatives, which include GroupWise, complaint handling process, database enhancements and Crystal Report Writer. A comprehensive training schedule has been developed that reflects needs throughout the remainder of the year and the CRC has developed other operational initiatives such as a weekly call summary report, call coaching and documentation review.

Ms. Linda Walls Rominski reported that during January, February and March Outreach and Education presented 331 speeches, made 114 site visits and distributed approximately 60,493 educational materials. Ms. Rominski reported that OCC partnered with the U.S. Postal Service and the Ohio Attorney General for activities during the National Consumer

Protection Week. The OCC is also partnering with the Ohio Attorney General, Ohio Department of Aging and AARP for activities regarding the do not call campaign.

Mr. Ryan Lippe reported that the Ohio Electric Choice Campaign will have no paid media for 2003 due to the lack of market development. The campaign is actively working on outreach to Hispanic communities.

Mr. Lippe reported that OCC has published an updated aggregation manual that will be distributed to communities. Mr. Lippe noted that 22 communities have aggregation on their May ballot.

Ms. Carah Brody discussed statistics on the use of OCC's website and noted that OCC is now able to track unique visitors to the website. Ms. Brody also reviewed media placements for January and February with OCC appearing in 43 percent of the articles. Mr. Lippe discussed the utility topics reported in these articles.

At approximately 12:30 p.m. the Board broke for lunch and at that time Vice Chair Johnson left for the day. At approximately 1:15 p.m. the Board reconvened the meeting.

Mr. Tongren reported on recent activities of the NASUCA. Mr. Tongren stated that Deb Berlyn has been contracted to assist NASUCA with strategic planning, new member orientation, leadership development and also to make recommendations for the future of the organization. Mr. Tongren noted that NASUCA launched a new internet site with the assistance of OCC staff and an intranet site is being developed which will aid in communication between NASUCA offices. Mr. Tongren also discussed funding for NASUCA projects.

Mr. Tongren reminded the Board that financial disclosure forms are due to the Ethics Commission by April 15, 2003.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for May 7, 2003 which will include a field trip to local facilities of Columbia Gas of Ohio. The tour will begin at 1:00 p.m. and the day will conclude at approximately 4:30 p.m.

At approximately 2:35 p.m. on a motion by Mr. Kohlman, seconded by Mr. Gehri and by a roll call vote, the Board voted to meet in executive session for the purpose of discussing compensation of a public employee.

At approximately 4:20 p.m. on a motion by Mr. Steinberger, seconded by Mrs. Leslie, the Board voted to return to open session and adjourn the meeting.

I verify that the above meeting minutes have been approved and ratified by the OCC Governing Board on this _____ day of May of 2003.

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

Donna Mucci, Secretary
Ohio Consumers' Counsel Governing Board