

Advisory Committee on Consumer Protection

Virtual Meeting Minutes

February 25, 2025 – 9:00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Ira Rheingold, Timothy Robinson, Ingmar Goldson, Aemish Rao, Savitri Taneja, Lesley MacDonald, Linda Perlman

OCP STAFF PRESENT

Brittany Freeman, Patty Vitale, Maurice Valentine, Brian Shin, Marilen Bayani, Shaun Carew

CALL TO ORDER AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The meeting was called to order by Ira Rheingold. Timothy Robinson motioned to adopt the agenda. Ingmar Goldson seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

I) OLD BUSINESS

- No significant updates; moved directly to new business.

II) NEW BUSINESS

a. Data Analysis Subcommittee

- Aemish Rao confirms that data from OFC LA (since 2013) is available and was sent in December. The group must assess what can still be collected amid CFPB database access challenges. They will proceed with the OFC LA and CFPB data sources.
- Ira Rheingold emphasizes the need for a subcommittee meeting to assess what data can still be collected, particularly given potential challenges in continuing data collection. They had a good understanding of the Montgomery County complaint database but need to organize it into a useful format.

b. Educational Programming

- Proposed collaboration with **state regulators** to enhance consumer protection.
- Suggestion to invite **Kat Hyland**, Deputy Commissioner for Financial Services & Consumer Protection, to a future meeting to discuss financial services oversight.

c. Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Shutdown: Implications for Montgomery County Residents and Office of Consumer Protection

- Concerns about the **CFPB and FTC's reduced role in consumer protection**.
- Immediate action needed to assess what data and resources will be available moving forward.
- Plan to increase reliance on state-level consumer protection agencies.

- Concern over rising scams, financial distress, and debt issues affecting Montgomery County residents.
- Coordination with mortgage companies and financial institutions to assist residents facing financial hardship.
- Increase education efforts planned for debt protection and scam prevention.
- Participation in Consumer Protection Week (March 2–8, 2025) with social media outreach and a special Consumer Connection podcast episode featuring an FTC guest.
- Consider developing public guidance on financial rights, mortgage protections, and scams targeting vulnerable residents.

III) OFFICE REPORT

- The Magpie Conference (Sept. 14–17, 2025, in Bethesda) will focus on post-CFPB consumer protection measures.
 - Plans to invite speakers, including state regulators and consumer protection advocates.
- National Consumer Protection Week is March 2-8. OCP will be posting consumer tips on social media and releasing a new podcast episode with staff from the FTC as a guest.

IV) ADDITIONAL UPDATES

- Topics for discussion next meeting:
 - Updates on **CFPB litigation** and federal regulatory shifts.
 - Planning a **consumer financial education initiative**.
 - Strengthening **state and local partnerships** for consumer protection.
 - Continued **data analysis and public awareness efforts**.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Tuesday, March 25, 2025, 9:00 a.m. – virtual.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:48 a.m. by Ira Rheingold.