

LOS ANGELES COUNTY CONSUMER AFFAIRS ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING

Minutes
Thursday, March 17, 2016

Item 1: Call to Order: Chair Arquelles called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

Item 2: Welcome:

The Chair introduced the dignitaries below and thanked them for attending the meeting. He also expressed gratitude to the City of El Monte and the Department of Consumer Affairs and Business Affairs for partnering and hosting the commission meeting in the community. The Chair provided a brief history of the commission and stated what the role/responsibilities of its members were. Each commissioner was requested to introduce themselves and state the supervisorial district they represent.

Mayor Andre Quintero

City Manager Jesus Gomez

City Councilman Jerry Velasco

Los Angeles County District Attorney Javier Perez

Honorable Mike Eng, Vice-President of the Los Angeles Community College Board

City Treasurer Richard Thomas

Assistant City Manager Alex Hamilton

Los Angeles City Commissioner Irma Beserra Nunez

Item 3: Roll Call and Confirmation of Quorum: The quorum requirement was met.

Present: Vivian Chan, Farrell Chiles, Ho-Jeong Eun, Mike Gomez, Patsy Ostroy, Mark Ramos, Ronnie Jayne, Dennis Arquelles, Sylvia Southerland, K.W. Tulloss

Absent: Karine Badgasarian, Susan R. Jerich, Joseph Lee, Ross Viselman

Staff: Brian Stiger, Espie Hernandez, Wendy Myring, Dawnesha Smith, Rigo Reyes, Cathy Mikuni

Item 4: Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed the general public and emphasized how pleased he was to have the community see their local government at work, learn about the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs services, and have the resource fair which gives the community access to even more services.

Item 5: Action Item: Approval of Minutes for the Regular Meeting on January 21, 2016: The motion to approve the minutes was moved by Commissioner Southerland and seconded by Commissioner Tulloss. Motion carried.

Item 6: Department of Consumer and Business Affairs Programs

Director Stiger provided an overview of the units housed under the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs: Consumer Protection, Small Business and Wage Enforcement Program. He gave examples of assistance the units provide to the consumers and business of Los Angeles County.

Item 7: Addressing Fraudulent Immigration Consultants

Rigo Reyes, Chief Investigator with the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs, gave a presentation regarding fraudulent immigration consultants. According to Mr. Reyes, dishonest immigration consultants often defraud consumers by charging fees for illegal or misleading services including giving phony legal advice, claiming to have inside "connections" or encouraging consumers to lie on their applications. Consumers who deal with these people often lose their money and can hurt their chances to adjust their immigration status. Immigration consultants may

include: “notarios”, paralegals or anyone offering immigration-related services. Mr. Reyes invited the public to contact the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs with questions and/or assistance relating to immigration consultants.

Item 8: Overview of Landlord/Tenant Rights and Responsibilities

Cathy Mikuni, Consumer Counselor with the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs, provided an overview of the most common questions the Department gets regarding landlord/tenant issues. These areas included:

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|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Evictions | Security Deposit Refunds |
| Mobile Home Tenant Rights | |
| Rental and Lease Agreements | |

Ms. Mikuni invited the public to visit the Department’s website, dcba.lacounty.gov, to access more detailed information on the matter or to call (213) 974-1452 to speak to a counselor regarding their particular situation.

Item 9: Public Comment:

- Commissioner Irma Beserra Nunez, Los Angeles City Commission on Community and Family Services, praised the commission, the Department and the City of El Monte for giving the community an opportunity to see and hear their local government at work.
- Alfredo Rosa and Arlise Emerson, LABACA Enterprise, asked the City of El Monte to join their efforts in promoting child abuse awareness. They expressed the importance of the matter and invited the city to join them in an upcoming event that LABACA is coordinating
- Jaqueline Morales, youth sports advocate, requested that the City of El Monte provide more after-school programs/parks and build less homes in the community. This effort would help deter bad elements and make the community more family friendly.
- Jerry Velasco, City of El Monte Councilman, voiced his concerns about the high rent mobile home owners/renters are paying. He requested that local government look into the issue and advocate on behalf of those affected through resources and services.

Item 10: Future Agenda Items

- Report on how women can be helped with credit issues/challenges (*Commissioner Gomez*)
- Report on how are minorities being assisted with the rise of prescription drugs (*Commissioner Eun*)
- Report on gas cost, have CAAC make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors regarding the issue (*Commissioner Gomez*)
- Payday/predatory lending legislation update (*Commissioner Tulloss*)

Item 11: Closing Remarks

- Commissioner Gomez thanked the City of El Monte and the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs to making the event a success
- Commissioner Tulloss commented that it felt good to be on the road amongst the community
- Commissioner Chan thanked Commissioner Gomez for all his effort in coordinating the event

Item 12: Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Next Meeting Date: May 19th at 10:30 a.m.