

Sandra Soto

From: Angela Charles on behalf of Records Clerk
Sent: Friday, January 27, 2017 12:53 PM
To: 'Bill Shallcross'
Cc: JR Kelly; lconstantine@seminolecountyfl.gov; sayler.erik@leg.state.fl.us; jmariano@pascocountyfl.net; Walter Trierweiler; governorrick.scott@eog.myflorida.com; sunburst@eog.myflorida.com; Consumer Contact; Amber Norris
Subject: RE: Docket 160101-WS - the hits keep coming
Attachments: the buck stops here.pdf

Good afternoon Mr. Shallcross,

We will be placing your comments below in parties' correspondence in Docket No. 160101-WS and forwarding your comments to the Office of Consumer Assistance and Outreach.

Sincerely,

Angela M. Charles
Commission Deputy Clerk
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard
Tallahassee FL 32399-0850
850-413-6826

From: Bill Shallcross [<mailto:wshallcross@cfl.rr.com>]
Sent: Friday, January 27, 2017 11:52 AM
To: Office of Commissioner Brisé; Office of Commissioner Brown; Office Of Commissioner Graham; Office of Commissioner Patronis; Office of Commissioner Polmann
Cc: JR Kelly; Records Clerk; lconstantine@seminolecountyfl.gov; sayler.erik@leg.state.fl.us; jmariano@pascocountyfl.net; Walter Trierweiler; governorrick.scott@eog.myflorida.com; sunburst@eog.myflorida.com; Braulio Baez; Cindy Muir
Subject: RE: Docket 160101-WS - the hits keep coming

Boy, that was a short reprieve, but I am again compelled to write. Please read attached.

Bill

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As an overview, with a partial elaboration to follow, the rate review protocols stink.

People are *mailed* obtuse notifications – impossible for some to decipher – and then asked to show up – or write or call – at hearings with the most minimal of information beforehand - to what? Bitch about water quality, service, current and proposed rates being too high and/or they can't afford water any longer. All theater.

I challenge all commissioners to tell me just one important thing they learned at the hearings to date – and in the context of the extraordinary time and cost invested to conduct the hearings. For me it was learning that Marty Friedman is smarmy – but hardly worth the cost of admission.

Other than folks like me and Ann Marie Ryan, most consumers are clueless. And I even wonder about myself, at a minimum, being foolish.

Instead, at these hearings someone should address the gathering about the history of the request and the salient matters moving forward, in the clearest of laymen's terms – followed by a Q&A - and not the usual thoughtless and endless litanies of process such as:

“The PSC's *evidentiary* hearing on UIF's rate case will be held in Tallahassee, tentatively slated for May 2017. Witnesses from UIF, PSC staff, and the Office of Public Counsel, who represents customers, will present testimony and exhibits and be cross-examined by the Commissioners and other parties. The Commission will carefully consider all evidence before making a decision.”

Does anyone at the PSC really believe consumers outraged enough to write in about a rate hike care a whit about the process?! And requiring sworn testimony from these folks – at service hearings - is just flat out ridiculous.

This whole system is set up for and by lawyers. I have come to the conclusion that, despite the OPC's advocacy at 60,000', PSC needs a people's advocate – like the IRS's Taxpayer Advocate – to *really* help negotiate and inform the little guy in the trenches in these very complex matters – much unlike a defective meter complaint, which it appears PSC staff is better equipped to handle.

If so many people have complained about the same problem with the same company – [UIF] - you may wonder why no one in a position of authority — the government, for instance — has tried to stop it. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/13/your-money/haggler-not-seen-on-tv-handling-charges.html>

But today I am going to roast PSC staff, but the buck doesn't stop there – as this topic is part of a culture.

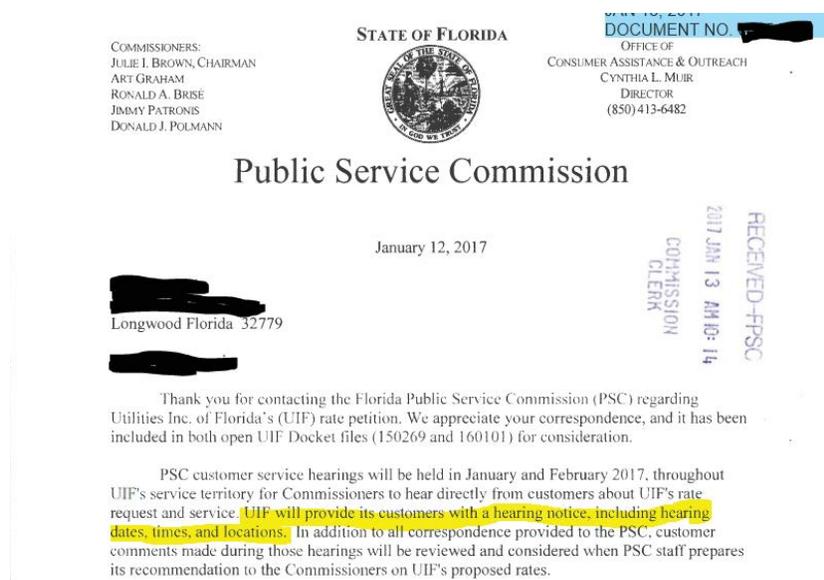
Maybe a day will come when ~~Payless Car Rental~~ **PSC staff** stops pointlessly antagonizing its customers, but as far as the Haggler can tell, that day is far off. He has written twice about the company already in 2016, and the complaints keep flowing in.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/28/your-money/a-car-renters-costly-detour-to-collection-center-drive.html>

Received today from a correspondent (below) a point well taken that I have considered odd previously – the fact that perfunctory PSC response form letters don't include already published "hearing" dates – published in newspapers around the state as early as **December 23, 2016**.

And yes, published on the Friday two days before Christmas. UIF meeting – again -the letter of the law, but certainly not the (Christmas) spirit of it. Throw the bums out!

Friday publication of important – but desired to be buried – items is a long-standing, under-handed tactic, and just two days before Christmas?! – I'm not sure how to characterize that.



Among a litany of other complaints - mostly about UIF "shadiness" - my correspondent wrote:

But first as a brief aside: "I am in full agreement with you, I think their approach of burying the info in a lengthy mailings was deplorable."

Now to my point: "FYI, the letter received acknowledging the complaint I submitted online stated PSC customer service hearings were being held in Jan and Feb of 2017 and they will provide written notice of dates times etc. You mean to tell me that on Jan 12, 2017 (date of their letter), heading into end of January 2017 they don't know the date, time and locations of these meetings?"

As late as January 20, 2017 PSC was still *informing* that: "PSC customer service hearings will be held in January and February 2017..."

Geez – why not just give consumers the dates, since they are known, and you’re mailing responses away? Too much work (and with most pissed consumers writing in response to a UIF notification – with dates and the knowledge of hearings already received) – all part of the transparency Cindy Muir defends?¹ "The lady doth protest too much, methinks." Moreover, I think the whole system needs a make-over.

Similarly, protocols have this guy – below – worked up, which may be unintentional but as I tell my kids: Whether the stone hits the pitcher, or the pitcher hits the stone, it going to be bad for the pitcher.

COMPLAINT INFORMATION (undated but PSC responded on January 25, 2017)

Complaint: Other Complaint against Utilities, Inc. of Florida

Details:

Why did John Hoy tell a totally misleading story in his message he mailed on **January 3, 2017** that I received on **January 9, 2017**? We did not even have 30 days-notice before the hearing scheduled for February 2, 2017. Why? What are the rules for notice? John Hoy stated..."Please note that the commission will hold public hearings on this proposal throughout the state which will provide the opportunity for customer feedback. Notification of these hearings will be provided to you in advance of the hearing date as specified by the PSC." What notice is specified by the PSC? **Actually the meeting dates and times were included in John Hoy's mailing I received on January 9, 2017.** My point is this was intentional misleading information so people would not worry and would wait for another mailing with the meeting dates and times. I am going on record that this notice did not meet the PSC statutory requirements. We are extremely upset that our meeting time is 9:30 a.m. which does not meet our requirements. Only an evening meeting time is acceptable for our area.

¹ "The Florida Public Commission always welcomes timely public comments concerning matters that come before it. Because we strive to ensure that the public has accurate information about our process, and that our process is transparent ..." Cindy Muir - <http://www.orlandosentinel.com/opinion/os-ed-psc-response-myword-011017-20170110-story.html>