

***Western Michigan Area Local #281
American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO***

General Membership Meeting Minutes
December 6, 2008

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. at 918 Benjamin NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503 with the Pledge of Allegiance and a Short Invocation.

Number of Members in Attendance: 22

Roll Call of Officers:

The following officers were present:

President – Richard Page	Clerk Craft Director – Bill Scutt
Vice-President – Amy Puhalski	Maintenance Craft Director – James Smith;
Recording Secretary – Michael Long	Motor Vehicle Craft Director – Mike Hill
Treasurer – Linda Chandler	Sergeant at Arms – Jackie Pike

The following officers were not present: **Associate Office Director** – Jack Fryling

Review of previous meeting's minutes: November's General Membership Meeting minutes were accepted. Moved to accept by: Roy Bailey, Seconded by Don Kramer. Carried.

Applications for Membership: (All accepted by voice vote of the membership)

Michelle Schuberg (Big Rapids – Clerk)
Michael Moon (Grand Rapids – Maintenance)

Bills: None

Officer's Report

Treasurer's Report November 2008 Report was read. Motion to accept by: Don Kramer, Seconded by: Roy Bailey. Carried.

President's Report: The National has filed NLRB charges due to the elimination of Tour 2. I encourage all to go to the APWU website to keep abreast of what is going on. There was a nationwide teleconference. President Burrus stated that APWU can not challenge for eliminating Tour 2; but can on the process they are doing it. Management has to follow the contract (re: Article 12) when they do away with bids.

10-4 (Modified) Workweek. We are continuing discussion with management. We have been successful in obtaining jobs, especially in Maintenance at this point. We are going to continue with a limited pilot program for clerks (more specifically stations/branches and BMEU). The National office wants to make sure that no one is being forced to take this modification. It is a voluntary program.

Grand Rapids Citywide Pool clerks. There are discussions with management due to their attempt to realign Pool clerks. More will be forthcoming.

Vice-President's Report: Bill and I have been attending Job Summits. Management is taking away the weekend off days. Prior to the last bids, we were in agreement to split the days off on Tour 1 to allow

employees to have a weekend day off at least. However, since management has decided to do away with jobs which have both weekend days off, we have told management that we will have consecutive days off. Remember, it is management that puts up the jobs

Deems Desirable. We are still having issues with management putting people in for Deems Desirable. We have filed a class action grievance. If you call in and are asked for documentation, make sure you ask for a steward.

Casuals been sent to the P1 Campus facility. We are monitoring the overtime. Even in December, the contract still applies. Overtime Desired Listers must be given overtime prior to casuals getting overtime (however, remember, casuals don't go into overtime until they hit 40 hours).

Casuals can work beyond 0500, but can't start at 0500. The union lost the grievance regarding the use of casuals after 5:00 a.m at the National level.

There are new regulations for FMLA beginning January 16th. Michelle Gregory, our FMLA representative is following the changes, will be having training coming up. If you have any questions, please see your steward.

Recording Secretary: Labor got out and voted in the November elections. If you were planning on going to Washington DC in January to see the Inaugural Event, hotel rooms are all but gone, but the APWU has a room with monitors to watch the festivities in the Madison Hotel. Just because the Democrats took more seats in the House and the Senate, we must never let down our guard. This lame duck congress that is currently meeting is showing this; also the Department of Labor has changed the FMLA guidelines.

FEHB Open Season ends on December 28th; and FSA on December 28th.

Clerk Craft Director: I wanted to reemphasis the National and local website. Things update/change daily. Make sure to check back often.

I am working on getting a PTF converted to Full Time in Grand Haven. Along with two full time employees in Grandville and Baldwin Post Offices.

Deems Desirable. We have a grievance in regarding Deems Desirable

Hand cases for the Manual. Cardboard cases will be put out if needed this Christmas season.

Lifts for Gaylords. More things will be coming in to the stations in Gaylord. We are working on obtaining more of the Tilt and Lifts for these items to reduce injury.

Mail Handlers are attempting to hold up a job that has "Rewrap" on it and a Hazmat. It is currently posted, bid it if you want. We have a RI-399 agreement that says that Hazmat is clerk work.

There is a National Settlement that says the Ink Jet Cancellor on the Flat Sorter 100 that says this is Clerk work.

Payments from the Holidays if you didn't work 8 hours. We received a decision from Step 3 that says when you work a holiday and go home early, and don't fill out a 3971, you will be paid up to 8 hours.

Sign Off from National regarding the APC Host. We are waiting on a sign-off stating that the APWU Host is Clerk work. More information is forthcoming.

Maintenance Craft Director:

New FMLA regulations. Debra Anne Treamer is going back to FMLA, so be prepared to fight for your rights, especially with the new regulations coming in January.

10-4 (Modified) Workweek. What President Burrus letter was dealing with employees being forced to take this modification. It is voluntary. There are safeguards in the modification. Both parties can drop out of the modification at anytime. Myth about overtime opportunities. With the current budget troubles and the lack of overtime, there might actually be a possibility of more opportunities with the modified workweek.

There is a big tag of Reversion notices. Some of those jobs have been on the list for 2 – 3 years. The Maintenance manager has said that he is pretty well done with all movement. The list is from management to allow them to look at them. It is not an actual reversion list.

New Positions. New BEM and MOS positions. We have seen about 15 new positions this year thus far. We are always works on staffing issues.

Motor Vehicle Craft Director:

Thanks for coming in on this “beautiful” night. We had an arbitration this last week. NBA Merlie Bell came to GR to do this arbitrations. We think it is a fairly strong case. But we just have to wait to see what the Arbitrator does.

10/4 Workweeks. MVS will not be participating at this time; since we believe that this will allow management to cut routes.

Sergeant at Arms Report: None

Committee Reports:

A&E: Christmas Party on December 14th, 12:30 – 3:30 p.m. at the Casino Club. RSVP are very important and are needed by December 10th. We are doing a craft table for Christmas gifts, Cookies and cupcakes, etc. We are focusing on a family theme this year.

We are looking at having a Casino trip in February.

Veterans (presented by Don Kramer): We have approximately 720 veterans at the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans in Grand Rapids. About a 1/3 don't have any family. There is a star tree with their wishes there for the Christmas season. I urge each of you to stop down and take a star off the tree and purchase an item. Also if you can spend some time with them, it would be great felt, not only by yourself, but those at the home.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Committee: First, I would like to thank you for sending me to the APWU Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education Seminar last October 23 – 26. 2008. I am sorry I was not able to give my report to you last month (at the November 1st meeting), but I was in a Board of Director Workshop for the Deaf and Hard of hearing Services, and then learned of my father-in-law illness and subsequently passed away on November 6th. I would like to share what I had learned at this conference. I attended workshops on: Personal Money Management, OWCP/Limited Duties, and Election 2008 (Obama vs McCain). Congratulations that our candidate won!

If you would like a copy of anything I brought back, please feel free to ask.

1. Check list for Preparing to retire.

2. Update information about the TSP
3. Avoid Money Management mistakes
4. Budget Worksheet (Sample)
5. CSRS-FERS Retirement Planning Seminar
6. OWCP, if injured at work, what to do.

Each year, I highly encourage you, your spouse, and family to sit down and discuss issues together; such as: a will, your debts, TSP and savings, etc. This way, you will remain updated in case something bad were to happen (e.g. Death, Divorce, etc.) or if you are remarried.

By including the entire family, in case something happens, your children would know what benefits they have and where to go. If you do not wish to share this information with your children, make sure you tell someone who you can trust and tell him or her all pertinent information and where it is stored.

One thing to do though is to help our children learn from the mistakes we have made. Encourage them to prepare for retirement, TSP, stock futures etc when they get a job.

Three subjects I would like to address specifically:

1. Long Term Care. There are many agencies and organization that offer you this benefit. This benefit will pay professionals, family, and or friends to assist you with if you become disabled, such as different household activities; going to the restroom; getting in and out of bed; chores around the house, etc. Make sure to shop around for the best benefit. As Postal Employees, we have options available through the P O and other sources make sure to fill out different applications at the same time. Once you are approved, you can then choose the best to fit your situation.
2. Health Insurance. After retirement, if you worked for the Federal Government and your spouse did not, and you have used his/her health Insurance throughout your career, if she/she dies, you may not have health insurance. To be eligible for Federal Health Insurance in your retirement, you must have had the Federal Insurance for last five years before retirement. Make sure you check with your local Retiree Chapter or contact the National Retirees Department at the APWU if you need further information.
3. OWCP/Limited Duty. The National Reassessment process is now in Michigan. If you are injured at work, and the Post Office offers you a limited duty job, make sure it fits within your restrictions and then take the offer. If Post Office is unable to find you work, you can, be assigned/referred to the OWCP for Vocational Rehabilitation. If this were to happen, once you have been retrained and placed on a new job, your Post Office pay is frozen at your current level of what you were at. OWCP will pay the difference between what you earn at the new job and what your Post Office salary was. However, once your new job pays the same or more than your old Postal income, you are not longer a Postal employee and lose all your Post Office benefits.

Correspondence: None

Old/Unfinished Business: None

New Business:

E-Board Recommendations:

To accept the 2008 Budget for the 2009 Fiscal year until the Budget Committee proposes changes, if any, at the February 2009 General Membership Meeting. Carried

To make it a policy that if cancellation of the General Membership Meeting occurs, the local President, by 2:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting, will notify the membership through the local's

website (if possible), along with a phone message/recording alerting the members to the cancellation.
Carried

To send the four new stewards (Lisa Borchardt, Rick Velesquez, Tracy Fleming, and Ken Jones) and the President (or his designee) to the Area 4, 5, & 6 District Meeting to include up to two days Lost Time, Lodging, Travel, Registration, and Per Diem, January 30 – 31, 2009 in Saginaw, MI. Carried.

The floor was opened up for new business:

Motion by: Amy Puhalski, Seconded by: Jackie Pike to expend funds to purchase a new computer at the Main Office. Call for the Question. Carried. Vote on Original Motion. Carried

Motion by: David Janes, Seconded by: Doug Warren to purchase an External Hard Drive. Defeated.

Labor Management: See your steward or officers.

Drawings: (The # preceding the name is either the ticket number or raffle number)

\$250.00 Attending the Meeting Drawing. #627 - Thomas Gann (If he would have been at the meeting, he would have won)

Five \$100.00 – VOE Surveys Drawing.

1. #115 - Andrew Kupraszewicz
2. #104 – Aldon Olson Jr.
3. #114 - Robert Eldred
4. #25 – Brian Slamkowski
5. #39 – Patricia Hostetler

Ten (10) - \$25.00 Checks for Christmas

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|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. #12 – Don Kramer | 2. #15 – Pete Brock |
| 3. #22 – Paula Scheid | 4. #24 – Bill Scutt |
| 5. #23 – Michael Long | 6. #13 – Doug Warren |
| 7. #4 – Dessa Long | 8. #17 – Jackie Pike |
| 9. #19 – Sandi Page | 10. #11 – Dick Page |

COPA: 50/50 Drawing: \$82.00 totally collected. \$41.00 to the winner - #670705 - Amy Puhalski.

Four (4) - Ten (\$10.00) Dollar Door Prizes: (NOTE: According to local policies. When an Executive Board member receives one of the door prizes, another drawing is done. If more than 40 members are present, there is one additional drawing per ten members)

- # 7 – Jim Smith
- #21 – Carole Imanse
- #10 – Roy Bailey
- #14 – Linda Chandler
- #2 – David Janes
- #9 – Mike Hill
- #20 – Amy Puhalski
- #1 – Phil Marckini

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Yours in Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael A. Long". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Michael A. Long
Recording Secretary



WESTERN MICHIGAN AREA LOCAL #281
AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION, AFL-CIO
JANUARY 2009 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

SATURDAY
JANUARY 3, 2009
7:00 P.M.

UNION HALL AT 918 BENJAMIN NE; GRAND RAPIDS MI 49503

Refreshments to follow the meeting

\$250.00 Special Attendance Drawing (Need to be present to win)
Four - \$10.00 Check Drawings (Need to be signed in at meeting to win)



Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday - January 19

