

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

General Membership Meeting Minutes
May 3, 2008

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. at 918 Benjamin NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503 with the Pledge of Allegiance and a Short Invocation.

The following officers were present:

President – Richard Page

Vice-President – Amy Puhalski

Treasurer – Linda Chandler

Recording Secretary – Michael Long

Clerk Craft Director – Bill Scutt

Maintenance Craft Director – James Smith

Associate Office Director – Jack Fryling

Sergeant at Arms – Jackie Pike

The following officers were not present: **Motor Vehicle Craft Director** – Mike Hill

April's General Membership Meeting minutes were accepted as written. MSC

Applications for Membership:

Michael Rusky (Clerk) – Grand Rapids

Ron Cook (Clerk) - Ada

Barry Stewart (Maintenance) – Grand Rapids

Bills: None

Officer's Report

Treasurer's Report was read for April 2008. Motion by: Don Kramer, Seconded by: Michael Long to accept the report. Carried.

President's Reports Tonight we are going to have a couple of important decision to make. I would like to address a couple of policies that GR management is making. One is the cell phone policy and the other is the time card issue. The Cell phone policy has been in place for quite some time. To reaffirm that employees may have cell phones on them in a vibrate form, and then step away off the floor to answer. The badge control policy, we are not in agreement with it. We will see how it works out. We will address it if needed. There was an off-site Safety and Health report. We have been in discussion about these appalling conditions. We now have that policy in place. We will be going out to inspect these sites. At the January 2008 General Membership, to pay the State Convention delegates Per Diem. This is in conflict with IRS regulations. That will be brought up later to address that and be called out of order and replace it with a new motion. There is many activities coming up. Check the board and get involved – especially the Golfing for Hope outing.

Vice-President's Report: Job Summit. Bill and I have been going to the Job Summits. Casuals. We filed a grievance for use of casuals. We were removed from eReassign and we have residual vacancies. I have recently placed a call to national regarding the use of casuals. I recently was on a telecom with National officers regarding elected National Officers (resolution 523 which was passed at the National convention in 2006). There have been 26 jobs reduced through attrition at the national level. Our levels are going down. The highest membership was in 1998. I recently spoke with Jim McCarty regarding RI-399. There was a national case but we haven't heard anything about it since we had filed the law suit (which was subsequently withdrawn). They are looking at two cases a year. We are hoping for Spring 2009 for the containerization grievances. Mail Handlers only have 3 cases at the national level. The dispute regarding the casuals working beyond 5:00 a.m. is finally done. We are now awaiting a decision from Arbitrator Das. Congratulations Ray for a recent arbitration settlement for over \$10,000 out of Grand Haven. Have recently

trained a few new stewards. Badge control. Management stated that we already have one at the main, but not at P1. Management is stating that people are punching each other in and out. Fred is the go-to person at the Main. Darlene is the go-to-person at the P1 Campus. At the Main Office, they agreed to two readers upstairs and three downstairs.

Recording Secretary: None

Clerk Craft Director: Had a RI-399 meeting recently. Clerks are now the exclusive group to handle HazMat mail. Function 4s are going on in various window areas. Make sure you are productive. Just filed a grievance regarding a Mail Handler being a Lobby Director.

Maintenance Craft Director: Management attempted to take away the overtime in the Maintenance craft. Had a 3-hour meeting with our manager and got it back. We are supposed to have a recycling program coming. We should be getting a new compactor at the P1 and Downtown. This may be 2 full time jobs at P1 Campus and one downtown. This might even include plastic bottles and caps. We are looking at staffing packages for AOs. Jenison looks good, and awaiting information from Big Rapids. We are in some disputes now regarding management is putting people wherever they want them to work (e.g. a P1 custodian is being put at P3 on straight time). You can only be placed to another assignment on overtime. Management created six new staffing packages with reduced hours. This will be filed upon. Badge control – the information I received was this is because of a Mail Handler issue. You have to remember that the Mail Handlers have their own contract. As of Friday, Maintenance will no longer be included in the badge control system. There is an issue with falsifying documents at the P1 Campus. Dan Bourassa and Jim Stoddard will be filing on this. We are getting a lot of new transfers. The mechanized staffing package is done.

Sergeant at Arms Report: None

Associate Office Director: Nothing.

Committee Reports:

A&E: Golfing for Hope on June 8th. Tigers trip is coming up on June 29th (deadline is June 1st). Picnic is in July. COPA raffle – will be raffling off a \$1,000 travel voucher (can be used for any trip/travel/excursion). Cost will be \$5.00 each. All the officers and stewards will have tickets. Drawing will be held at the October 4th General Membership Meeting

Veterans. 14th of May is Flag Placement day in Kent County. Last year, 3,500 flags were placed at the graves. On the 30th of May, there will be a dedication of a monument for those who lost their lives in Iraq. There will be a parade beginning at Division and Michigan at 7:30 pm. Only Two days out of the year Veterans are honored: Memorial Day and Veterans Day.

2008 Michigan Postal Workers Union Convention Committee: The Convention will take place in a week and a half on May 15 – 17, 2008. If you would like to help at this convention, either by helping in the hospitality room, at the bowling event, or during the convention with registration, etc., please let us know. We will be looking for help. Sign up sheets will be posted on union bulletin boards.

POWER: Basket for the convention. We would like to fill it with home made goods and have the basket then raffled off at the convention; Cully will receive the benefits. Cully also was the recipient of \$200 for Valentine Flowers, Easter Eggs \$170.00 which was sold at the Main and P1 Campus.

Solidarity for Charity. Golfing for Hope is June 8th. We have over \$4,000 in prizes donated for this event already. Come out. See Ray Novakoski or Jim Stoddard. If you know of anyone, send them our way.

Social and Rec Committee: Whitecaps game is for June 28th. Rampage game is scheduled for May 15th.

Correspondence:

Received two cards thanking the local for supporting the Tami David Benefit Fund.

Old/Unfinished Business:

Constitution Changes: The constitution committee has met and prior to the vote: April 23rd the committee met.

1. Article 3 – Membership

Section 1 Any non-supervisory employee, regardless of level or grade, who is employed in the 493/494/495 zip code area is eligible for membership in this local union. Members shall pay whatever dues are required by this Local and will not be not charged an initiation fee for joining this Local. Membership shall be effective from the date that application form is submitted for processing.

Section 2 - Delete. Preamble – Section 7 already defines. Move following sections up.

Committee voted to recommend approval. Discussion. Recommendation Carried

2. Article 13 – Sections 1, 3, & 4

Section 1 This constitution may be amended at written request of seven (7) members in good standing and sanctioned by a two-thirds (2/3) vote at a meeting of this organization, provided the proposed amendment was submitted in writing and read aloud at a previous regular meeting of this organization **in accordance with Section 3 below of this Article** and was posted at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting at which it is to come up for action.

Section 3 Proposed Constitution changes are to be submitted at the March regular monthly meeting and voted on at the May regular monthly meeting **and/or** submitted at the September regular monthly meeting and voted on at the November regular monthly meeting.

Section 4 All proposed constitution changes will go before the Constitution committee. They will be submitted to the committee within three (3) days following the March or September meeting and the committee will give a report with their recommendation at the May or November meeting under unfinished business and will be voted on at that time. The membership will vote on the **motion**.

Committee voted to recommend approval Section 1 & 3; Section 4 was not changed.
Recommendation Carried

3. Article 15, Section 2

Section 2: This publication shall belong to the entire membership; its pages shall be open to every member **within this Local, and not to an exclusive group**. The Editor may delete or edit those portions of submitted articles that he/she considers libelous **and/or** not in the best interest of the Union as a whole. Any such action may be appealed to the Executive Board and decided by two-thirds(2/3) vote, and if the appeal is denied by the Executive Board it may be further appealed at a regular meeting of this organization and decided by majority vote.

Committee voted to not recommend approval. Recommendation Carried (Constitution Change Defeated)

4. Article 19 – Duties of Stewards

Section 1. Stewards shall **be given** and wear their steward's badge in plain sight at all times, while representing the union and its members unless in violation of uniform code. They shall organize the workers in their craft and on their tour, **encourage** members to attend union meetings, act as liaison between union officers and members, and investigate and adjust grievances.

Section 2. Stewards must be familiar with the **national contract, to include the Joint Contract Interpretation Manual, Local Memorandums, Postal Regulations, etc and know the area and the people they represent.**

Section 3. Stewards are authorized to attend the biennial Michigan Postal Workers Union Educational Conference with Lost Time, Per Diem, Lodging, Registration, and Travel, and any applicable taxes, provided the steward attends at least two local training sessions in the prior two years (since the last conference).

Committee voted to recommend Section 1, and not to recommend Sections 2 & 3. Discussion.
Recommendation Carried.

New Business:

E-Board Recommendations:

- The policy regarding the dental plan be expunged. Carried
- The policy of paying the Editor mileage to the BMEU and the printer as of January 2005 that the "January 2005 be expunged." Carried
- To abolish the policy "To pay the Associate Office Director \$10 per month for Internet Service." Carried
- To abolish the Policy that "To pay all board members for attending meetings." Discussion. Call for the Question. Carried. Original motion. Carried.
- The policy of purchasing jackets is for new member sign-ups only. Discussion. Defeated (The general consensus at this meeting was that jackets are for all new members (whether transfers or new sign-ups).

The floor is open for new business:

Motion by George Hendricks, Seconded Catherine Beemblossom. To allow the Chair to read and address the letter dated April 14th from National Treasurer Stapleton that was submitted to Dick and Linda by George Hendricks. CarriedLetter Read. Letter stated that as of next year, retirees will submit payment directly to the National office, instead of the local.

Motion by: Karen Hodges, Seconded by: Amy Puhalski. The State Convention Committee members be paid up to 1 days of lost time for Thursday, May 15th. Discussion. Carried** (Ruled out of Order)

Motion by: Jim Stoddard, Seconded by: Al Matchovich. All stewards who are attending the State Convention be paid LWOP. Motion by Catherine Beemblossom, Seconded by Karen Hodges: to amend that all delegates who are attending the State Convention. Amendment defeated.. Motion ruled out of order. Challenge to the Chair. Discussion. Division (18 – 6).Challenge Defeated.

****NOTE:** The membership ruled that since the previous motion regarding the Committee members were also delegates, that the motion being ruled out of order also pertained to this motion.

Motion by Catherine Beemblossom, Seconded by Jackie Pike to extend the meeting until the end of business.
Carried

Motion by Amy Puhalski, Seconded by Ray Novakoski. The delegates who attend the State Convention receive a flat rate of \$25.00 per day for meals for those not staying at the hotel. Chair gave the gavel over to the Recording Secretary. Discussion Carried. Gavel returned to President/Chair.

Labor Management: See your Steward or Officers if you have anything to add..

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

\$250.00 Attending the Meeting Drawing. #316 - Linda Monroe (If she had been present at the meeting, she would have won.)

Scholarship Winners:

1. #10 – Linda Mollo (Laura Mollo)
2. #26 – Kelly VanValkenburg (Jospeh)
3. #22 – Margie Nash (Daniel Nash)
4. #11 – Johathan Befus (Emily)
5. #16 – Brenda Borsema (two children listed (will need to choose one))

Alternates

6. #30 – Linda Chandler (Melvin)
7. #53 - Gregory Wilson (Sarah)
8. #54 – Barb Tubbs (Regan)
9. #48 – Phillip Edwards (Kim)
10. #52 – Ray Novakoski (Mary)

COPA: \$70.00 totally collected. \$35.00 to the winner - #670335 – Karen Hodges

Ten (\$10.00) Dollar Door Prizes:

1. #13 – Don Kramer
2. #26 – Amy Puhalski
3. #19 – Cindy DeLaFuentes
4. #17 – Jackie Pike
5. #3 – Dessa Long
6. #18 – Sandy Page

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Yours in Solidarity,



Michael A. Long
Recording Secretary

LEGEND:

- - denotes a motion or discussion from the floor/membership.
- - denotes a motion from the Executive Board