

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

General Membership Meeting Minutes  
December 4, 2010

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. at the APWU Union Hall, located at 2554 Burlingame Ave SW; Wyoming, MI 49509 with the Pledge of Allegiance and a Short Invocation.

Number of Members in Attendance: 39

**Roll Call of Officers:**

The following officers were present:

<b>President</b> – Richard Page	<b>Motor Vehicle Craft Director</b> – Tracy Fleming
<b>Vice-President</b> – Amy Puhalski	<b>Maintenance Craft Director</b> – James Smith
<b>Recording Secretary</b> – Michael Long	<b>Associate Office Director</b> – Jack Fryling
<b>Treasurer</b> – Linda Chandler	

The following officers were not present: **Clerk Craft Director** – Ray Novakoski; **Sergeant at Arms** – Vacant

**Review of previous meeting's minutes:** November's General Membership Meeting minutes were accepted by voice vote as printed. Carried.

**Applications for Membership (Accepted by Voice Vote of Membership):** None

**Bills:** None

**Officer's Report**

**Treasurer's Report:** Report ending November 30, 2010 was read aloud to the membership in attendance. Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. Carried

**President's Report:**

Thank You, the members, for the opportunity I've had for the last 3 years to serve as your President.

As your President, I have tried to always remember one thing. I was elected to serve the members of our Local. The most important function as President is to assure that the Local's membership and Executive Board operates within the framework of its Constitution and by-laws. The rest is to simply follow the decisions made by the highest ranking group of the WMAL...its membership. On numerous occasions, I had to make decisions that affected all the members of a particular installation or individual office. Most of the decisions were good, some not so good. Making those decisions is not an easy job. Some decisions that I have made have been unpopular with some employees. I can say however, that most decisions that I have made were made after carefully considering the ramifications for all employees, not a select few.

I came into office 3 years ago with many plans and ideas. I soon found out that I would not be able to be everywhere for everybody. I realized that attempting to be personally involved with every situation and issue that arose would "burn me out". I had planned on going to every office, visit every tour and be a very "visible" president who would be easily accessible to most employees. Those plans could never

realistically be fulfilled. I found that issues in the 40+ AO's, along with the processing plants in Grand Rapids, committee work and preparing for events like Conventions, craft conferences, presidents conferences, bus trips, holiday parties, picnics and fund raisers for charitable events took up more time than I ever imagined. The acquisition of the property on Burlingame only added to the problem of being accessible to the membership. Working on Tour 2 at the Main Office did however give me the opportunity to arrange meetings with the management officials who were in the position to discuss matters and negotiate agreements that were of interest to our membership.

I would be remiss not to also thank the many unsung heroes of our local. Look around you, many are here. The stewards who battle for you in the trenches on a daily basis and the members who volunteer to be on the committees. The individuals who step up and stand in when we are faced with a crisis like the passing of one of our own.

I am leaving the Local in good financial shape. For three consecutive years we have operated within the budget and have ended every year in the black. This year alone we project a \$26,000 surplus.

The acquisition of the commercial property we now own has been the crowning achievement of this administration. It not only has given us a place to call "home" but more importantly it has given us opportunities and a potential of raising revenues during a period of ever decreasing membership and corresponding dues. Over the next few months and years, it will be imperative for us to consider new ways of increasing revenues in ways other than rentals. Those opportunities are endless but we will need fresh ideas on how to achieve those objectives. Your ideas.

Q – Excessed Employees. Is there list of residuals to be offered? Are there residuals. A – We had a meeting with Cheri Fuss on Friday. She was planning on meeting with the impacted employees (once she has coordinated it with management). We asked what their intentions were. They are still unsure where they are going. We were under the assumptions that they were going to create carrier positions. Since then they have been some jobs that have come available within Michigan. If other employees opt for Senior in-lieu of, that would reduce the numbers. There has been one employee who has opted to go to Grand Haven as a Sales and Service Associate.

Management is doing this excessing in two different ways. First wave will be done by: BPI. Hopefully is volume picks up, then the second set of employees may not have to be affected.

However, actually know where employees are going right now; management does not know.

Q – Driving Test. Some haven't received their letters to schedule a test. A –

Q – A lot of the employees being affected are in Automation. Machines are empty. Employees are getting 4 hours of overtime. A – We asked management these questions. Management says that they will make the necessary adjustments.

Q – Who is watching the mail that is not being ran through AFCS? A - Feel free to write down how much raw mail is being sent to your machine and not being cancelled and give this information to your stewards.

Q - BPI. How will this affect the number of employees. A - Management stated that the only way that we will increase the number of employees is if we have an increase in mail volume.

Q – Has there been any discussion regarding Automation clerks doing Rips and Tears? A – SMDO has stated that he is trying to reduce the volume of Rips and Tears and have the clerks do this on the machine when they have time to do it. Remember, our position is to follow the last order given and to follow those instructions and do it to the best of our ability.

Q – How are we getting credit for these Rips and Tears? Currently, management is giving trays of rips and tears of mail to clerks on the machine. A – Most of the clerks in automation tend to sway toward the feeders. Management sees this and they are trying to fill this time with things to do. Do you job! Be gainfully employed in your job. If you are just standing there and visibly not doing your job, and have full stackers, they are going to give you something to do.

Management fudges their numbers all the time. We are required to make four punches: Begin Tour, Out to Lunch, In Lunch, and End of Tour. Management can move you to any operation they want. It is their numbers. We see this with management moving employees to standby time when employees are working on the machines. You need to make sure you are being paid for eight hours a day, but for actual moves; management has the ability to move an employee to any operation.

**Executive Vice-President:** Dick and Ray had a RI-399 meeting regarding jurisdictional meeting; however, Mail Handlers cancelled the meeting once again.

I know there are some issues with the members being sent to their Driver's exam within a couple days and we received notices that some of these members have failed. We have ordered up their test scores and the reason for their failure and will be following up on this.

**Recording Secretary:** Thank you for all those who voted in the local election. Make sure to contact your representatives regarding HR 5746 (modify the formula for funding the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) would rectify overpayments to the CSRS by the Postal Service ranging from \$50 to \$75 billion), and HR 173 (regarding 6 day delivery).

**Maintenance Craft Report:** First, pat yourself on the back; we had a great turnout. Thanks for casting your vote.

In January, MPEs and ETs will be going on the ICBM system. Each person will be offered/given a laptop. This has been stated this will take work away from the MOS clerks. Our advice is not to take the computer. It is not a requirement. If anything happens to this computer, you will be held responsible for it; and could be issue a Letter of Demand for full-purchase price if it is damaged, lost, etc. You won't be helping anyone but management. We want these to be treated and issued as a tool; not as it is currently being done. We need to protect our jobs.

Clerks have been getting excess letters and we are doing our part to reduce the effect. We allowed one position MPE that was under withholding to be reposted and one of the custodians was promoted; that gives us two custodian positions currently under withholding.

**Motor Vehicle Craft Report:** Supervisor's are still hauling mail around every day. Notify your steward when you see this happening. Thanks for all your help in this matter.

Seymour Square grievance was awarded. We won approximate \$25,000 for this violation.

**Sergeant at Arms Report:** None (Thank you to Nancy Emelander for filling in this month).

**Associate Office Report:** 432.34 out of the ELM. *“Postmaster. A full-time postmaster is scheduled to work a 40-hour workweek. Normally, this regular work schedule is set at 8 hours a day and 5 days a week, Monday through Friday. When a nonexempt postmaster is required to work on the sixth day because relief is not available, premium pay at 150 percent of the postmaster's basic salary is paid for this time. Equivalent time off from work is not authorized to avoid the payment of this premium. Thus, either nonbargaining rescheduling premium or the better of postal or FLSA overtime, as appropriate, is paid.”*

If a postmaster is working 9, 10, or 11 hours a day, he/she is taking work away from the clerks. He/She isn't being paid for this work, and just giving these hours away. We need to file on this, and to stop them from doing this.

We are still having a problem with supervisors taking mail out to the stations. We had a situation this morning that there were no MVS drivers available. I checked, and there wasn't any MVS drivers available. While I was out there with one supervisor, another supervisor came out with three bundles and told the other supervisor that he was going to take this mail out to the Associate Offices. My supervisor said that is craft work and they are going to file a grievance on it. The other supervisor said that he was going to take this mail anyways.

If this is craft work at the plant, then it is craft work in the offices. If supervisors are doing this work at the Associate Offices, then we have to fight back and take back what is rightfully ours.

Wish all of you a happy holiday season and see each of you next year.

**Committee Reports:**

**Election Committee:** The following is the final a report of the Election Committee.

The committee consisted of: Tammy Byrnes, Karol Imase, Michael Hill and Doug Warren. On November 16<sup>th</sup>, we sent out 624 ballots. 9 ballots were invalidated (due to no return address). 361 ballots were returned; a total 352 ballots were counted

Vice President: <b>Ray Novakoski*</b>	Jennifer Gilbert		
Recording Secretary: <b>Michael Long*</b>	Jennifer Amos		
Sergeant at Arms: <b>Dan Quillin*</b>	Lisa Borchardt	Greg Carlson	George Folk
	David Janes		

**A&E Committee:** January 16<sup>th</sup>. Casino Trip to Firekeepers. Possible trip to Tigers in the Spring. We are not doing an Adult Christmas party this year. Last year, we didn't have any membership interest (only 40 members) (unfortunately, with all the things going on with the local, we haven't had the opportunity to plan a children's Christmas party). However, we have decided to give Hot Chocolate, Coffee, Cookies to plant on December 13 and 14<sup>th</sup> and will be sending out Gift Cards to the Associate Offices to be used at that office.

**Budget Committee:** The Budget Committee met last month and a proposed budget was handed out to the members in attendance.

- Motion by: Jennifer Amos, Seconded by: Michael Long; to accept the Budget Committee Report and that this budget is authorization to expend funds, and the budget committee has the authority to move funds in between categories up the amount listed in the budget. Discussion. Carried

**POWER Committee:** We met a couple of weeks ago. We are going to sponsor Union Members in need who are off the clock for other reasons, if you know of anyone who needs help that are union members and we will be taking a vote at the next meeting based on individual's need to get help.

**Correspondence:** None

**Old/Unfinished Business:** None

**New Business:**

**E-Board Recommendations:**

- To change the policy regarding the payment of membership to the State Organization to be paid: “The Local will pay dues to the state organization (MPWU) based on full membership of this Local, with the exception of the Associate/Retained members.” Discussion. Carried
- To approve the shifting of payment of cleaning services for the hall from WMPW, Inc to APWU committee status, and after each public or individual member rentals will be paid a flat \$85.00 as needed. And the funding will be transferred from WMPW, Inc to the WMAL on a semi-annual basis. Discussion. Carried.
- Due to there not being two training sessions within 2010, that each active steward (those who are on the current designation list) receive a \$50.00 gift card. Carried
- To send the incoming President to the Secretary Treasurer training on March 10-14, 2011 in Jacksonville, FL, with Lost Time, Registration, Per Diem, Transportation, Lodging, and appropriate taxes. Carried.

**The floor was opened up for new business:**

Motion by: Catherine Beemblossom, Seconded by: Steve Austin: Motion to extend the meeting until the end of all business (to include drawings). Carried.

Motion by: Catherine Beemblossom, Seconded by: Jennifer Gilbert to donate \$750 to the POWER Committee’s Christmas event, to be dispersed as the committee see fit. Discussion Carried.

**Labor Management:** Management asked that the meeting be postponed for December. The union has asked for a December 16<sup>th</sup> meeting, per the LMOU. Please let your union steward or officer know if you have anything for this meeting.

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

***\$250.00 Attending the Meeting Drawing.*** # 468 – Chin Woo (She was at this meeting!! Congratulations!)

**Local Election Incentive:** \$50 – Vernon Marcus

***VOE Survey: (Five - \$100 awards for turning in your VOE during the 2010 year)***

1. ***Jan Junewick***
2. ***Al Olson***
3. ***Pat Hostetler***
4. ***Jim Ruark***
5. ***Earl Joles***

***COPA:*** 50/50 Drawing: \$120 total collected. \$60 to the winner - #973182 – Amy Puhalski

***Ten (10) – Twenty-Five (\$25.00) Checks for Christmas:***

1. #8 – Ann Hill Graves
2. #1 – Doug Warren
3. #23 – Michael Long
4. #10 – Kathy Strunk
5. #12 – Amy Puhalski

6. #9 – Lisa Borchardt
7. #13 – Jamie Arranguren
8. #17 – Dan Quillin
9. #20 – Pan Bohn
10. #14 – Linda Chandler

**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 40 or more than are present, there is one additional drawing per ten members).

1. #27 – Sheryl Mol
2. #28 – Nancy Emelander
3. #19 – Chin Woo
4. #24 – George Folk

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Yours in Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael A. Long". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M".

Michael A. Long  
Recording Secretary