

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

General Membership Meeting Minutes  
April 3, 2011

Meeting was called to order at 3:00 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. Also a moment of silence was held for our member Roger Ireland and retiree Judy Jaynes who both passed away last week.

Number of Members in Attendance: 29

**Roll Call of Officers:**

The following officers were present:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>President</b> – Amy Puhalski           | <b>Motor Vehicle Craft Director</b> – Tracy Fleming |
| <b>Vice-President</b> – Ray Novakoski     | <b>Sergeant at Arms</b> – Dan Quillin               |
| <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** – Roy Bailey; **Maintenance Craft Director** – James Smith

**Review of previous meeting's minutes:** March's General Membership Meeting minutes were posted. Michael Long motioned, Ray Novakoski seconded to accept the minutes as posted as printed. Carried.

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

**Bills:** None

**Officer's Report**

**Treasurer's Report:** Report ending March 31, 2011 was read. Motion by: Ray Novakoski, Seconded by: Michael Long to accept the Treasurer's Report. Carried

**President's Report:**

We received word that two of our members (one being a retiree) passed in the past week. Roger Ireland and Judy Jaynes.

Thank you to the membership for allowing me to attend the Secretary Treasurer training.

Excessing Update. They are down to 12 Level-6 clerks in Grand Rapids. Senior Plant Manager has requested a re-evaluation of the volume impact since mail volume is up. We have had some transfer already. We have met our BPI impact so no one will be excessed for BPI.

I attended the District Labor Management meeting. This encompassed all the plants in the district. The following is a brief synopsis of what was discussed:

- The Postal Service went from 76 districts to 67 districts. The SE District was merged into the Detroit District.
- We have a new District Manager. Charlie Miller.
- FMLA office is being eliminated. The position is being sent to Shared Service in North Carolina and will take effect in September. Not sure what the impact will be at this point.
- TACS manager (Deborah Ann Treamer) and Kevin Curtis (OTIS Manager) positions were eliminated; but they created one. This will go up for bid.
- 498/499 Zip Codes are now part of the GMD instead of Lakeland.
- AFCS 200 is coming into our plant. We are one of the two plants in the district who is going to be getting one. Right now, the mail comes out of six bins, and the new will be 12. The slide-show says it is an OCR. We are supposed to be getting this in July/August. We believe this should go to the clerks, since we have jurisdiction over OCRs. We will be initiating discussion with management over this.
- Saturday night processing of DPS mail will be eliminated in Grand Rapids. We are sure they will be doing a realignment, but management has not stated anything as of yet.
- Sick Leave percentage is 15.3% in the district. It is very hard to get a day off in the plant, and we have told management that with the reduction in staffing it is hard to get a day off. We tried to get this in the local, but management wanted a huge cut in Prime Time to obtain this.
- Labor Relations: Fiscal Year 2011 – in GMD 798 thousand has been spent due to Article 8 violations. Headquarters came out with a new training regarding Article 8. In our area. Determine Staff, Article 1.6, Article 7 (Cross Craft violations), Article 8, and Limited Duty. So far in our district alone, they have paid out 36 thousand.
- VOE surveys. You know the APWU boycotts this survey. We only had 30% in GMD. SE District had 80%. You can imagine with our new District manager, we will be receiving a new push on this. When you receive this survey, remember this is your mail.

Contract. The highlights have been posted on the bulletin boards. The ratification will take place starting on April 8<sup>th</sup>. If you want to view the contract before you receive it...you can view at apwu.org. (President Puhalski went over the highlights once again).

There is a Rally downtown Monday (April 4, 2011) at the Calder from 4:30 – 5:30 p.m. Come out and show you support for Public workers.

There will be a Rally in Lansing on April 13<sup>th</sup> at the State Capitol. Show your support and come out.

**Executive Vice-President Report:**

On the contract. Before they started, one of the main goals of the National union was to get jobs back; especially those that have seeped out of craft to the EAS employees. It is not something is going to happen immediately, some of it may take a while (one of these is the Lead Clerk (Level 7) in the Associate Offices may take up to a year to do the job description). Jobs that were done by EAS will need to be evaluated before being returned to craft.

Postal Service is at its borrowing limit. In October, the payment for the Retiree Pre-Funding is due, as well as the OWCP payment.

PSE is going to be like what a TE used to be. They are going to be hired off a register. They will receive a wage that is higher than what a casual got.

NTE – New full-time employees. It may not be a 40 hour work-week. Something had to be done outside of the box.

Locally we had a carrier working up in the Administrative Area. We have had those duties given to clerks.

**Recording Secretary's Report:**

The Postal Service has filed formal notice through the Federal Register of a proposed change to the Discontinuance (closing) process for Post Offices found in 39 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). This is different from US Code Title 39 which is law; these are Postal Service regulations and do not need legislative approval or a bill to change. It is simply a regulation change and not law. With clerks on the verge of becoming Lead Clerks in some of these offices, these changes could dramatically affect our members.

Retirees (or those in the process of becoming one), if you don't have Direct Deposit yet for your monthly annuity check, you will be required to do so. Department of Treasury just put out information that this will become a requirement for all retiree receiving an annuity; the time of getting a check in the mail will no longer be an option.

On April 5th (Tuesday), the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee will be holding a full committee hearing on United States Postal Service (USPS) pay and benefits. The Committee expects to hear from the Postal Service on their tentative agreement offered to us. President Guffey will be speaking on behalf of the APWU in regards to our new tentative contract.

If you don't think what is happening here in Michigan, Wisconsin, Ohio, New Hampshire, and other states with the elimination of Collective Bargaining will happen to us....you need to think again, and fast. Senator Jim DeMint (R-SC) stated last week: he "doesn't believe collective bargaining has any place in government...including the federal level."

Contact your State Senators and tell them to vote NO on House Bills 4309, 4310, 4311, and 4312, or to fix them to give Michigan workers the respect they deserve.

On a local note, there are a couple of rallies coming up in the near future. The first is tomorrow (April 4<sup>th</sup> in Grand Rapids at the State building (350 Ottawa) from 4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Another rally is on April 13th at noon on the steps of the capitol in Lansing. If you are able to make it, please do so. They are hoping for 10 thousand or more people to show up.

On a closing note, I heard something last week that made sense and might put into perspective as to why unions are under attack, not only because of the monies we give to the Democratic Party; but.....in public view, we, public sector employees make a good wage and benefits. Instead of striving to make what we do; the American public is pitted against us and told that we should make what they do. So instead of looking to us and trying to obtain what we might have, they want to lower us to what they make and have.

**Maintenance Craft Report:**

MOS Clerks are being looked at for realignment. They want to have MOS clerks on each tour. Not all MOS Clerks will be required to rebid. The junior clerks will be excessed off of days and placed on the other tour(s).

**Motor Vehicle Craft Report:**

Contract. I believe it is a win situation. We will be able to bid on these other routes.

We still have a number of clerks and maintenance people who still like and want to transport mail. I am being told about it and the grievances being filed. It is the same people all the time and they need them to stop. Management feels that contract employees can transport mail and we will file the appropriate grievances.

**Sergeant at Arms Report:** COPA. It is imperative that you give to COPA as much as you can.

**Associate Office Report:**

I am excited with the new contract. Level 15 offices and 16 offices...no more PMRs.

Level 20 offices and above will not be allowed to do any collective bargaining work. Level 18 offices will be limited to only 15 hours, and Level 16/15 offices only 25 hours of bargaining work each week.

**Committee Reports:**

Building Report – from the Middle of May through the end of July, the hall is booked every weekend. The new heating and cooling system is here and should start being installed next week.

**Correspondence:**

1. Letter from Labor Heritage Society for their Annual Spring Golf Outing Fundraiser.
2. Thank you Card from Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services.

**Old/Unfinished Business:** None

**New Business:**

**E-Board Recommendations:** The Executive Board has recommended endorsement of the new Tentative National Agreement. When you get your ballot in the mail, be sure to vote.

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

Motion by: Steve Austin, Seconded by Linda Richards to expend the necessary funds to replace the doors at the Union Hall. Motion by Jennifer Amos, Seconded by: Dan Quillin to table the motion until we receive a price. Table to motion carried.

**Labor Management:** If you have anything for Labor Management please President Puhalski know. Meeting has been scheduled for April 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Drawings:** (The # preceding the name is either the ticket number or raffle number at the meeting it was drawn at.)

*\$250.00 Attending the Meeting Drawing. Roslyn Taylor* (If she was at this meeting, she would have won!)

*Scholarship Drawings – Five - \$1,000 (Per the Western Michigan Area Local policies and Scholarship rules, there will be five - \$1,000 scholarship winners drawn, and five alternates).*

**Primary:**

1. Maggie Boersema (Member: Brenda Boersema)
2. Laura Long (Member: Michael Long)
3. Jacob Pierzchala (Member: Gerald Pierzchala)
4. Jonthan Radlinski (Member: Kathy Radlinski)
5. Stephanie Jenkins (Member: Steve Jenkins)

**Alternates:**

1. Troy Cervantes (Member: Laurie Owens)
2. Sabrina Jenkins (Member: Pam Jenkins)
3. Aubry Pierzchala (Member: Jerry Pierzchala)
4. Daniel Janes (Member: David Janes)
5. Kelsey Boersema (Member: Brenda Boersema)

***Ten (10) - \$25.00 Gift Cards for Easter:***

1. #21 – Carol Mannion
2. #27 – Jennifer Amos
3. #4 – Jessi Dewitt
4. #31 – Jack Fryling
5. #8 – John Collison
6. #33 – Dawn McDonald
7. #17 – Patty Mattyse
8. #10 – Karol Imanse
9. #9 – Linda Richards
10. #15 – Tim Ozinga

***Five pair of tickets to the Pancake Breakfast***

1. Sonia Bergers
2. Phil Maddox
3. Linda Polak
4. Irene Erickson
5. John Collison

***COPA:*** 50/50 Drawing: \$105 total collected. \$52.50 to the winner - #973473 – Linda Richards

***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. #19 – Jodi Pellerito
2. #1 – Doug Warren
3. #5 – Tammy Byrnes
4. #14 – Linda Chandler
5. #22 – Phil Maddox

Meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Yours in Solidarity,



Michael A. Long  
Recording Secretary