

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

General Membership Meeting Minutes  
March 5, 2011

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: 30

**Roll Call of Officers:**

The following officers were present:

<b>President</b> – Amy Puhalski	<b>Clerk Craft Director</b> – Roy Bailey
<b>Vice-President</b> – Ray Novakoski	<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	<b>Sergeant at Arms</b> – Dan Quillin

The following officers were not present: **Motor Vehicle Craft Director** – Tracy Fleming

**Review of previous meeting's minutes:** February's General Membership Meeting minutes were posted. Al Matchovich motioned, Cindi DeLaFuente seconded to accept the minutes as posted with the following corrections: (Treasurer's Report should have read: "Report ending January 31, 2011" (not 2010). Carried.

**Applications for Membership (Accepted by Voice Vote of Membership):** Betty Stokes – Clerk (GR)

**Bills:** None

**Officer's Report**

**Treasurer's Report:** Report ending February 28, 2011 was read. Motion by: Ray Novakoski, Seconded by: Michael Long to accept the Treasurer's Report. Carried

**President's Report:**

Thank you to everyone for coming out tonight.

Beverly Jarrett; one of our members at the P1 and was injured at work back in February. Please keep her in your thoughts and prayers. We did send some flowers from the local, and have cards for you to sign.

Contract Negotiations. Rank and File was called back to DC last week. All the National Officers were there for an Executive Council Meeting, but we still haven't heard anything as of yet.

Moratorium of Arbitrations between March 7 and May 6<sup>th</sup>. This means that no arbitrations across the country will take place. At Headquarters, they agreed to do a Shake Out of the grievances. Our NBAs will be handling the grievances here in the region. We have asked to review our grievances to see if we can provide information to our NBAs prior to actual meeting.

A couple of weeks ago, the MVS Director and I went out to the VMF regarding the treatment of employees by one of the managers. We put management on notice to treat employees with dignity and respect; otherwise the Inspectors will be notified.

Federal Employees Pre-Retirement Seminar on March 8, 2011. It is a Free, all-day seminar. I spoke with the NALC President who has gone before and states it is very informative. If you are interested, I do have a flyer.

Our members who are out on the National Reassessment Program (NRP) are still off of work. I contacted Injury Comp to find out why some of our people who tried to file for Disability Retirement were denied. Found out that all the files were sent to Denver due to a Class-Action lawsuit.

We recently have had some new stewards that Ray trained: Carrie Collins (Newaygo), Mary Johnson (Grand Rapids (P1/P3)), Linda Richards (Grand Haven). Thank you for stepping up.

We recently had a meeting with management regarding operations changing at the GMF, specifically the Nixies. They are trying to change the ways Nixies are done. Management is having an issue getting the mail done. We are going to monitor what is going on. Management has assured us that no Mail Handlers will be sorting the nixies in the 010 area.

POI – They are having Automation Clerks do some of this stuff (e.g. Bagging at the machine).

Q – Out at the P1, Mail Handlers were doing the Nixies; where is that grievance at? A – Step 2.

Realignment Rumors. I asked management if there would be any realignment of clerks at the GMF or P1; management stated not at this time. They are realigning the Mail Handlers; but not clerks at this time.

I had a meeting with Management; who has decided to exercise their rights that they will only be paying one person to attend the Labor Management meeting. I haven't scheduled the next meeting yet. We will continue with our job of filing grievances.

Next week I will be attending the Secretary-Treasurer training. I am looking forward to obtaining some good information and familiarizing myself with QuickBooks.

I received an invite to an upcoming Joint Labor Management meeting at District, which I will be attending.

### **Executive Vice-President Report:**

We are continuing to monitor the Excessing. Even though we have the moratorium, and they are not physically excessing anyone right now; people are still voluntarily leaving. Management has issued some withdrawal excessing letters.

Filed a grievance of a Carrier doing Mail and Address Searches up on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor (used to be done by Mailing Requirements and an Injured Clerk before this).

Three new stewards have been trained, with one more coming up from MVS. Thank you to all the stewards who have stepped up.

**Recording Secretary's Report:**

With the changes that are currently happening within the Postal Service, I wanted to take this opportunity to remind everyone about the EAP benefit. You can either go on-line at EAP4You.com or call 1-800-EAP-4-You (800-327-4968).

Unless you have been living under a rock this past month and not seeing any news, you can't avoid missing what is currently happening in Wisconsin and the attack the union and public workers are facing. While President Obama has stated his support for Collective Bargaining, numerous motions and bills are being shoved through not only Wisconsin's congress, but Ohio's and Michigan's as well. These bills are being disguised as an attempt to balance the budget, but Collective Bargaining doesn't affect the budget at all. As in Ohio's case, they are passing these bills now, while the climate is favorable towards them, to make sure that when Democrats get back into office this won't be easily reversed.

On Tuesday there will be a rally on the Steps of the Michigan Legislature to show our joint opposition to one of these measures. If you are able to go, please do so.

On a national front, we ask that you contact your Congressman in support of HR 48. This bill would amend title 5 of the United States Code to provide that payments under the Federal employees' group life insurance program shall be made in a lump sum, unless the insured or the recipient elects otherwise.

Q – Has the Board considered or made a motion to send people to these rallies? A – We haven't talked about it at this point.

**Clerk Craft Report:**

Mary Johnson is a new steward out at the P1. I would like to thank Therry Dyksterhouse who was alone prior to this.

Have been spending a lot of time out at P1 on Tour 3 and 1. SPBS clerks were doing Incoming and Outgoing at the same time. They will be adding an additional 50 sacks to this operation. They will be removing the hampers and cages and going to sacks. After talking to the clerks that work in the operation, the sacks don't usually work too well. I suspect there will be a lot of spurs being picked up off the floor.

When I was there last night, I helped a couple of clerks obtain their uniform allowances. Theresa Smith gave me a letter that said they were eligible but needed more documentation.

Stations. There is a shortage of clerks and we are behind in processing the mail. They are bringing in RCAs from the AOs. I have requested their Form 50s to see if they are actual Dual

Appointees. I have asked the stewards at the affected stations to check into this also. When I got back into the office, there was a letter from the Postmaster; that said: "This is your Dual-Appointment Letter." Without any names. Will be following up on this on Monday.

Christmas Grievance for management doing our work. We are at Step 2 with this.

It was brought to my attention that there is some additional work that the mail handlers may be possibly doing. After the clerks doing Priority mail, they are pushing over the APCs, and the Mail Handlers are supposedly throwing only Parcel Post into these APCs. This might not be true. Mail Handlers might be trying to throw Priority also.

Q – When Mail Handlers sort Parcel Post into the Priority, they are upgrading this mail. We should be grieving that Mail Handlers should not be upgrading Parcel Post, because in turn they are "sorting" Priority Mail. A – I am monitoring this and appropriate grievances will be filed.

### **Maintenance Craft Report:**

This week we had the last machine going on-line for the ECBMs? There is a National level grievance already filed and I have a local grievance ready to be filed, but Rich and I have been holding off until we see how many people accept a laptop. Once we agree to that, we will meet and send the grievance up.

Postal Service is trying to get rid of anyone that can. I received a call today to sit on another Threat Assessment. Management is trying to throw people out of the building for any reason. Don't give management any reason to remove you.

Grievances have been filed at P1 and Downtown about casuals. Joe Hall is working on the one at P1 and I am doing the one downtown. Management arguments were silly. I think we will prevail on these. Don't expect settlements like we have before where casuals were here for months on time. We filled one of the two vacancy with one excessed employee.

**Sergeant at Arms Report:** None

### **Associate Office Report:**

Time – Because they have been cutting back on the hours of clerks and making them do more (spreading the mail, box section, etc) and by the time they get this done, it is time to open the window; thus the clerks are not getting their breaks. Management can accommodate us to get our breaks in. If eight clerks didn't take their breaks, that equates the hours of one PTF. I encourage everyone to take your breaks. If you are not being allowed, please contact your stewards.

Money – There has been several issues within the past few months with issues with the clerk's cash drawers. If you are going to go on vacation or any extended amount of time, please get a co-workers and count your drawers before you leave. If you return and find your amount is different, make sure to let your union know.

### **Committee Reports:**

**Audit Committee:** The Audit Committee report was read to the membership by Committee Chairperson Barb Tubbs.

Motion by: Ray Novakoski, Seconded by: Cindi DeLaFuentes to accept the Audit Committee Report as read. Carried.

**Correspondence:**

1. Thank you card from the Ada Post Office “for the Holiday gift card to buy treats with.”
2. Letter from Graham Davis on behalf of the State of Michigan for the Association of Equipment Manufactures ([www.IMakeAmerica.com](http://www.IMakeAmerica.com))
3. All You Can Eat Annual West Michigan Union Label Coalition Pancake Breakfast.

**Old/Unfinished Business:**

Without objection, Ray gave a presentation as to the quotes we received to replace the furnace and air conditioner at the hall to the membership.

Motion: To Withdrawal funds from the Contingency Fund for the use of replacing the furnace and air conditioner (on both sides of the hall) at an approximate cost of \$50,000. Call for the Question by Dick Page. Call motion - Carried. Original Motion Vote: Carried (2/3 majority was reached)

**New Business:**

**E-Board Recommendations:**

- To purchase 10 tickets for the Union Label Coalition All You Can Eat Pancake Breakfast at a cost of \$60.00. Carried
- To send up to 20 stewards (which includes the President, Vice-President, Craft Directors and Associate Office Director) to the upcoming MPWU Educational Convention – June 9 – 11, 2011 in Bay City, Michigan with up to Four Days Lost Time, Registration, Per Diem, Two nights Lodging, Mileage, and applicable taxes. Carried

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

Motion by: Barb Tubbs, Seconded by: Cindi DeLaFuentes that the local adopt a policy that all bills submitted without a receipt must be approved by the membership at the General Membership meeting. Carried

**Labor Management:** If you have anything for Labor Management please let your craft director know.

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

***\$250.00 Attending the Meeting Drawing.*** Steve Schroeder (If he was at this meeting, he would have won!)

**COPA:** 50/50 Drawing: \$84 total collected. \$42 to the winner - #973364 – Richard Page

**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. #24 – Pattie Matthyse
2. #27 – Bernard Schimke
3. #28 – Mila Webb
4. #5 – Al Matkovich

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Yours in Solidarity,

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

Michael A. Long  
Recording Secretary