

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

General Membership Meeting Minutes  
November 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 at this month's meeting: 83

**Roll Call of Officers:**

The following officers were present:

**President** – Amy Puhalski  
**Vice-President** – Ray Novakoski  
**Recording Secretary** – Michael Long  
**Treasurer** – Linda Chandler

**Clerk Craft Director** – Roy Bailey  
**Maintenance Craft Director** – James Smith  
**Motor Vehicle Craft Director** – Tracy Fleming  
**Sergeant at Arms** – Dan Quillin  
**Associate Office Director** – Jack Fryling

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

**Applications for Membership (Accepted by Voice Vote of Membership):**

Harriet Nelson (Clerk – Grand Rapids)  
Vernon Harryman (Clerk – Grand Rapids)

**Bills:** None

**Officer's Report**

**Treasurer's Report:** Report ending October 31, 2011 was read. Motion by: Michael Long, Seconded by: Roy Bailey to accept the Treasurer's Report. Carried

**President's Report:**

Save America Postal Service petition. The NALC originally initiated these petitions, but the APWU jumped on board last week. This issue is serious and we are very concerned about our jobs and the service to the American people. If you would like to take one, have your friends, co-workers, family fill these out and get it back to your officer/stewards. This is an important need, and we have to have them back by November 15<sup>th</sup>.

ABC Pay Anomaly. Back in 2000, there was an issue with inter-level bidding, grievances were filed, but recently employees are receiving invoices that have been tripled from the original amount. If you receive one, contact your steward and/or officer and we will pull your original grievance and give you a copy of it. Grievances are still pending the dispute at the National level. Eagan stated that the Triple amount was a fluke.

AMP Studies. Kalamazoo, Gaylord and Lansing have finished their AMP studies. The public meeting for Kalamazoo and Lansing are coming up. We attended the community meeting for Ledyard office closing.

One of the biggest concerns is what information the Postal Service takes into consideration when they are closing the office. We asked if profitability is taken into account, and was told “No.” Ledyard is one of the most profitable stations in our area. Some local businesses were in attendance. When asked how they are going to accommodate these businesses downtown, management stated they would. Our customers had concerns about parking and long lines. One business stated that the Postal Service is tying their hands, and if need be will start using UPS.

Impasse from the LMOU. Vance (Senior MDO) and I met regarding possible Impasse items. Vance informed me that management will impasse the Holiday Pecking Order, along with the Tuesday through Tuesday for posting (pulling the sign-up sheets on Tuesday, for posting on the following Tuesday). We feel we have a strong enough argument regarding this and forcing management to utilize the supplemental employees prior to forcing career employees. Those are the two items going to impasse. We will be sending off our packet next week to our National Business Agent. Management is required to send their impasse items to the Postal Service and to our Central Region Coordinator. If they fail to do so, they are out of luck and do not get another chance.

Vendors in the Grand Rapids Installation – The new vendors are accusing employees of various items. (stealing items, putting hangars up the machines, shaking them, etc.). It is our position the vendors are not doing their job. There is not any food in the machines, they are dirty, when you get change (you put in \$5, you only get \$4.25, etc.) I am attempting to meet with Margie Perez who is in charge of the contract with them. We have brought concerns to the vendors, but they did not address them. It is like the Vendors do not care. The filter upstairs in the coffee is a prime example. It has been in the machine for seven (7) months.\*they did however tell me they changed it after our conversation. When asked how often it is suppose to be change, they stated every 4 – 6 months.

Stations Realignment. We have been attending numerous meetings regarding the realignment of stations around Grand Rapids. If you have any specific questions, please contact either myself, Ray, or Roy. When they create a Non-Traditional Full-Time assignment, the union has the opportunity for input to propose different schedules, alternatives etc.... However, it seems that all they are doing is going through the motions. It was very clear that the new OIC has a plan to cut many hours with no regard to our customers or the employees whose lives are going to be impacted.

ASM – Administrative Support Manual. They added a new part specific regarding Social Media. If you are on-line, on a blog, Facebook, Forum, etc., you are not allowed to speak on behalf of the Postal Service. Just be careful when you are out there chatting. You have your own personal opinion; however, don't speak on behalf on the Postal Service. Be careful on what you are saying on-line. Management is trying to remove employees for any little thing.

Overtime for Christmas. I was approached by Vance regarding overtime for the Christmas period at the P-Campus on Friday between the GMF and the P-Campus. I would like to put it in writing that every violation that everyone gets paid. Last year was a chaotic mess with anyone doing whatever they wanted. If we decide to do this, there will definitely be some language that they will have to agree upon; otherwise, they will go by the LMOU and the National Agreement.

Budget Committee will meet this month. Per the constitution, we will have a proposed budget for the membership at the December meeting.

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

Recognized the Veterans at the Meeting. Thank you to all those who have served and protecting our freedom.

November 8<sup>th</sup> is elections/voting day. This is your right. Make sure to get out and vote.

### **Recording Secretary's Report:**

Thank you to everyone for showing up tonight.

HR 2309 has been released from committee and awaiting action from the whole house. Not sure as to when and if action will be taken. I think the possibility of the HR 1351 and the number of co-sponsors with the threat of a discharge petition might be holding it up. The Senate has proposed its own legislation this week that is gaining support. The Title of this legislation is: "21<sup>st</sup> Century Postal Service Act of 2011". It will credit up to one year for Civil Service and Two Years for FERS employees, along with a possible buyout of \$25,000. It has A LOT of also possible changes that some may affect us in the long-term... (e.g. Considering the Financial condition of the Postal Service). However, please remember that this is not law. It is still a recommendation/bill. Whatever happens and is approved by both houses, still have to go into joint committee to iron out the changes. The APWU has taken the position on this new bill (21<sup>st</sup> Century Postal Service Act of 2011). They have stated that it will hurt the Postal Service.

There is a petition to be signed to Save America's Postal Service. Make sure you sign the one floating around here at the meeting or around you office. Remember, the job you save, can be your own.

This week, you should have received or will receive your 2012 Guide to Benefits. Make sure you look at everything there is to offer. Not only the Federal Employees Health Plan, but also the Dental and Vision plans, Flex Spending, Life Insurance and Long-term Care Insurance information. Make sure to look through each plan available and find what is best for you. Keep this in mind... if you are planning on retiring anytime soon, you have to have been in FEHB for at least five years to continue this into retirement.

Thank you for sending me to the Multi-Craft Conference. I sat in on the Maintenance classes, and being new to Maintenance, learned a lot.

**Clerk Craft Report:** Welcome to everyone tonight. Nice to see such a large crowd.

We have split the stations between Amy (Kentwood and Wyoming), Ray (East Paris and the Main Office Windows), and myself with the upcoming changes I am taking the Northwest, Northeast, and Easttown. I will be willing to talking to each of you regarding these stations.

Went out to P1 to see the APBS. Still a lot of bugs in the system and will be difficult. Management anticipates it will take a week before it becomes fully operational.

Ledyard meeting. How can you close the station which is making 440,000 dollars each week? Still haven't received a reply.

Health Plan – There is a Health Fair on November 15<sup>th</sup> at the P3 Conference Room from 1 pm. – 9:00 p.m. and will have representatives from different health care providers (e.g. APWU, BCBSM, etc.).

Minute for Minute Grievances for any violation for the Overtime for Christmas.

### **Maintenance Craft Report:**

I forgot to mention at last meeting we are trying to rebuild our Maintenance Stewards base; We have a steward (Pam Bohn) who just had her first Step 3 appeal and had it sustained.

We have two new MPEs coming from Kalamazoo. Derick Scott-Farnsworth & Tina Brown. Welcome. It is good we are gaining and not losing.

We have two new Clerks who came to Custodians: Michael Long & Dessa Long. Welcome

Thank you to the membership for sending me to the Multi-Craft. Brought back some information to share with the stewards at the recent Stewards Training. Tammi Byrnes put together a nice little binder at the P-Campus for the stewards to share.

Don't forget to Roll your clocks back tonight.

With the situations with Kalamazoo, management is in the process of updating/doing the WEP Staffing. When that comes, I will change from custodial staffing over to Mechanized Staffing. We are up to the challenge.

We have a new PSE in Maintenance as a Custodian on Tour 3. He is a union member (and is in attendance at this meeting). We do have a dispute with management for the use of PSEs and we are addressing this.

Just about done with Staffing in Grand Haven and Jenison. Will be back in town doing some custodial staffing in Grand Rapids afterwards. After this, we will be addressing Mechanized Staffing.

### **Motor Vehicle Craft Report:**

Thanks for sending me to the Multi-Craft. I would have liked to learn more, but National still doesn't have everything worked out with the new contract. Get a few answers.

We are still working on getting more work out at the VMF. Still working on getting the trucks washed.

When runs going up for bids, they will be consecutive days off, as per the contract.

Still working on getting our one NTFT position posted for bid.

Chris Fisher has been working on things with the drives and has done a good job at that; while I have been working on VMF issues.

**Sergeant at Arms Report:** Make sure everyone signed the book and make sure to purchase your COPA tickets.

### **Associate Office Report:**

October 23<sup>rd</sup>, the union and management came up with Questions and Answers regarding the new contract. Question Number 1 was specifically for Level 20 and above offices doing bargaining work. I spoke with Labor regarding this and if they were going to retract their order; and awaiting to hear back.

Spoke with one of the Associate Offices and they received orders to cancel their cleaning contracts.

POOMs. Greg Chanski is now the POOM for 494. The Southern 493 offices will be picked up by the 490 POOM, and the Northern 493 offices will be handled by the 496 POOM.

➤ Motion by: Steve Austin, Seconded by: Roy Bailey to Suspend the Order of Business and go to the Constitution Changes. Carried (Returned to order of business at: 9:20 p.m.)

### **Retiree's President Report:**

Great Turn Out at tonight's meeting.

I had the opportunity to address the Letter Carriers last week regarding various legislative and retiree issues. We share a lot in common.

I handed out a fact sheet of various information that I have gleaned from the last couple of years.

### **Committee Reports:**

A&E: We are going to do a Christmas Party on December 10<sup>th</sup> along with the Mail Handlers. Children's Christmas Party on December 4<sup>th</sup>.

Health Plan. There will be a Health Fair at the P3 Conference Center on November 15<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. If you have any questions regarding any of the plans, make sure to be there. We have information for the APWU Health Plan for those who would like it.

POWER Committee: POWER Committee meeting will be held on November 17<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 a.m. If you have any suggestions for projects for Christmas Holiday for APWU members in need, Veterans, etc.

**Correspondence:** None

**Old/Unfinished Business:** Constitution Changes – the following Proposed Changes:

1. Article 9, Section 5: Section 5: **The Craft Director shall be responsible for all grievances, matters and policies pertaining to their respective crafts and shall** contribute as a minimum of one article to the Western Michigan Postal Reporter during his/her term of office and present a report at the General Membership Meeting each month. At the close of his/her term of office the/she shall turn over all books, papers, and equipment that belongs to the Local. Committee's Recommendation of Non-Concurrence. Discussion. Motion by Glenda Novakoski, Seconded by: Karen Hodges to Call for the Question. Call for the Question motion - Carried. Vote on Original Motion. Division called: 31 for, 43 Against. 2/3rds was not achieved for adoption of the original motion. (Original Motion/Amendment Defeated)

2. Article 9, Section 10: Section 10: Stewards shall be appointed and/or decertified **by their respective Craft Directors. Within 7 working days of the Craft Directors written notification to the President, the President will sign and submit to management any and all changes to the steward designation list per the Craft Directors written notification.** Committee's Recommendation of Non-Concurrence. Discussion. Motion by Glenda Novakoski, Seconded by Karen Hodges to Call for the Question. Call for the Question motion - Carried. Vote on the Original Motion. Division called for: 34 for, 36 against. 2/3rds was not achieved for adoption of the original motion. (Original Motion/Amendment Defeated)

3. Article 9, Section 1: Section 1: The President shall preside at all meetings of this Local. He/she shall appoint all committees not herein after provided for. He/she shall enforce the Constitution of this Local and those of the APWU, sign all warrants, **and have general "administrative" supervisory power of this local where not in conflict with any other provisions of this constitution.** He/she shall be President of the Accident Benefit Association, and have his/her dues paid in the ABA by the Local, and perform such duties as pertain to his/her office. At the expiration of his/her term of office he/she shall make a written report of his/her office and any progress of this Local. Committee's Recommendation of Non-Concurrence. Discussion. Defeated

### **New Business:**

#### **E-Board Recommendations:**

- To purchase a copier at an approximate cost of \$2,800 and the respective service agreement. Discussion. Carried.

**The floor was opened up for new business:** None

- Motion by: Jennifer Gilbert, Seconded by: Karen Hodges: To donate \$500 to the POWER Christmas Holiday Project. Discussion. Carried

**Labor Management:** If you have anything for Labor Management please let President Puhalski, Craft Directors or Associate Office Directors know.

1. East Paris – we have UBBM from October 14<sup>th</sup> and it has First Class in it.
2. Northwest – a Vendor (Drop Shipment) has the codes for entrance into the facility.

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

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

***COPA:*** 50/50 Drawing: \$256 total collected. \$128.00 to the winner - #9775595 - Chris Fisher

***Ten (10) - \$25.00 Gift Cards for Thanksgiving.***

1. 765 – Tom Gann
2. 715 – Brian Ratigan
3. 731 – Patty Law
4. 786 – Linda Chandler
5. 752 – Barb Tubbs
6. 724 – Mary Carr
7. 716 – Scott Achterhoff
8. 788 – Jack Fryling
9. 762 – Steve Austin
10. 775 – Dale Scramlin

***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. #764 – Andy Kupraszewicz
2. #781 – Bill Schaut
3. #751 – George Folk
4. #745 – Tim Miles
5. #773 – Dana Mclean
6. #791 – Jennifer Gilbert
7. #760 - Shane Reynolds
8. #733 – Pam Bohn

Meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Yours in Solidarity,



Michael A. Long  
Recording Secretary