

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

General Membership Meeting Minutes

April 12, 2014

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. A moment of silence was observed for the passing of member Darlene Cox.

**Roll Call of Officers:**

The following officers were present:

**President** – Amy Puhalski

**Executive Vice-President** – Michael Long

**Recording Secretary** – Jennifer Gilbert

**Treasurer** – Linda Chandler

**Motor Vehicle Craft Director** - Chris Fisher

**Clerk Craft Director** – Jeff Schellinger

**Sergeant at Arms** – John Hansma

**Associate Office Director** – Jack Fryling

The following officers were absent: **Maintenance Craft Director – Joe Hall**

**Review of previous meeting's minutes:** To accept the March General Membership Meeting Minutes with the following corrections: Scholarship deadline should have read March 17<sup>th</sup> instead of April 17<sup>th</sup>.

Motion by: Mike Long Seconded by: Ray Novakoski Carried.

**Applications for Membership (Accepted by Voice Vote of Membership):** Welcome new members of the WMAL: NONE

**Bills:** None

**Officer's Report**

**Treasurer's Report:** Report ending March 31, 2014 was read. Motion by: Ray Novakoski, Seconded by: Mike Long to accept report. Carried.

**President's Report:** The moment of silence for Darlene Cox....member of the Maintenance craft passed away suddenly. Keep her family in your thoughts and prayers. Recently persons promoted to supervisor: Vern Marcus at the main office. Larry Kroonwitter at the P-Campus. Jim Smith at the P-Campus. USPS and APWU came out with PSE conversion memo. First 11 PSEs will be converted to career April 19<sup>th</sup>. Should Still have 15-20 residual vacancies in the clerk craft that fall under the memo. Hopefully end of May, beginning of June will have more clerk craft PSEs converted. Have five residual vacancies on the maintenance side...totally different conversion memo language. Clerk and MVS conversions are by installation, maintenance by district. Clerks are converted and do not have a choice to decline, maintenance and MVS have the option of declining conversion. Still have issues to work out with the conversions, Amy is dealing with that. Also had PTFs converted to FTR in the associate offices. Postal Service lifted withholding so the PTFs in the AOs had the opportunity to be converted.

False scans are happening and if anyone knows of false scans occurring please contact the OIG that this is occurring. Can't scan all mail pieces before they are delivered. Box section should not be scanning mail pieces until all notices are placed into boxes.

Staples: April 24<sup>th</sup> is National Day of Action, not a protest. If anyone wants to go on April 24<sup>th</sup> there are two locations where picketing is going to occur. Amy is going, contact her if you are interested in picketing. Picketing is in Clawson and Dearborn, Michigan for anyone who wants to participate. USPS position is that they are not contracting out....APWU position is that it is postal work and needs to be staffed with postal employees. Go to StopStaples.com for more info.

Associate offices: Custodial work of 2 hours or less of work if it can't be combined for a maintenance craft position then it still has to be performed by APWU craft employees (clerks, etc.). Had some settlements in the AOS for the custodial work. If work is being contracted out in the associate offices and not being performed by APWU crafts please let the union know so they can look into it.

Language came out of Washington D.C. that USPS has to use combined PSE hours for the creation of full time duty assignments. We can now use the PSE hours for the creation of full time duty assignments so that is a good thing. We are tracking all PSE hours worked.

Heat will be off starting April 21<sup>st</sup> at the main office for the installation of new air handlers. Will be off for about two weeks. This will enable the heat and air conditioning systems to work better.

The Grand Rapids Carrier Annex is now up and running. Jeff and Amy are addressing staffing issues.

Just got back from National President's Conference. National came out with new program to automatically figure out number of hours worked for the creation of full time duty assignments. Put in number of hours worked and program comes up with full time duty assignments that can be created. Amy took the training.

One of our National Business Agents in Chicago was promoted to a position at APWU headquarters. Local presidents have a concern about representation and asked at the National President's Conference to have this issue addressed. We did not support the other two NBAs during the election so the Local presidents are concerned that the open position be filled. We need someone from Michigan as an NBA so that we have adequate representation in the state of Michigan.

We have one expedited arbitrator and one regular panel arbitrator. This is an issue for us because one of the arbitrators doesn't want to travel in the winter so we don't have cases heard expeditiously. Industrial Relations Director Tony McKinnon assured the Local presidents he is working on getting additional arbitrators after Amy addressed the concerns.

POST plan about the reduction in office hours for the associate offices, grievance has been arbitrated. Many offices have reduced service hours to two, four, or six hours a day from being open eight hours a day. Should hear something in a couple of weeks.

1.6 grievance was also arbitrated and there was an award from Arbitrator Das affirming that work is to be performed by craft employees according to contractual provisions. Can't perform work above and beyond that language. APWU has filed a lawsuit for non-compliance of the Das Award.

Info request was put in by APWU for Staples contracts. USPS refused to provide the info. APWU filed a labor charge and was successful in getting a decision in our favor that USPS has to provide the contracts they have entered into with Staples. Also, Staples was awarded a contract to be the

sole supplier of office supplies for the USPS. So Staples is providing postal services with Staples employees in their stores and in return the USPS granted them an exclusive contract that we buy all of our office supplies strictly from them.

Mark Dimondstein, our national president, is big on one union. Has gotten the unions together to form a union alliance, for common goals and defending our work and lobbying together for the better good of all union postal workers. The picketing at the Staples offices is in the areas where there are a lot of members who will be able to turn out and make a big showing of support.

Organizing campaign is going on right now through May. Currently 42,000 non-members around the country. PSEs get a t-shirt and FTR new members get a jacket. There is a list out of non-members for our local. There is an incentive in our Local if you sign up a new member you get 50.00 excluding executive board officers.

COPA contributions are needed. Elections are coming up and we need to support candidates who support us.

National dispute on PSE rate. USPS decided to pay more money to PSE drivers in some areas. APWU filed a dispute on the variation of payment of PSE drivers.

Suits have to be worn by maintenance craft when they do lock-out/tag-out procedures. This is a result of OSHA violations pertaining to lock-out/tag-out resulting in injuries.

Resolutions will be read today to be voted on and forwarded to the State Constitutional Convention. These will be read and voted on under new business. Those passed will be sent to the State for motions during the convention proceedings.

Spring cleaning at the union hall the day of the meeting in May from 1PM to 4PM. Will be cleaning on the inside and outside. This will be Saturday, May 10<sup>th</sup>. Amy asks for volunteers to help with the spring cleaning at the hall and refreshments will be provided.

There have been instances of the PTFs working as OIC and doing clerk work at different offices....when they step up and go to different offices to work they are hurting their home office because they are not performing the duties of their craft and the postmasters are performing the work in their absence.

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

May 8<sup>th</sup> Steward's training. Any items recommendations let him know. Welcome new stewards Bonnie Kaspersky, Suzie Boyd and Joshua Gray. Will get with the new stewards for initial stewards training. Don't go to Staples, don't buy anything from there. Still looking for new stewards. Resolutions will be brought out on the floor for voting.

Don't buy anything at Staples. We now have internet at the P-1. Scanning: Only craft work. Not for supervisors to scan. Any craft employee can scan. Will try to be downtown more often.

### **Recording Secretary Report:**

Last meeting I talked about getting your friends and family registered to vote and bringing them to the polls with you. There are registration deadlines. Elections are in May, June, and the August state primary. Really want to pay attention to the primary in August for the gubernatorial race. Elections in May and June are usually for mileages and local elections. Still have time to register to vote for the August primary. Too late to register for the May and June elections but August primary there is still time to register. If anyone you know is going to be 18 by the time the election occurs, they can register to vote NOW. As long as they will be of voting age by the time the primary occurs in August they can register to vote at any place they go to register such as the Secretary of State office. You do not have to wait until you are 18 to register to vote if you will be old enough to vote when the election comes. Next month I will be focusing on the candidates running for office.

### **Clerk Craft Director Report:**

At the P-1 we have a new MDO Mike Nash from Lansing.

Doing SV scanning at both P-1 and P-3. Talked to supervisors about it...our position is that it is bargaining unit work. We have arbitrations on the issue. Will be getting with Jeff March on the issue of supervisors providing scanning duties.

The 440 hours of annual leave carryover is a problem when people try to put in for annual leave to keep from going over the 440 hour limit and losing annual leave. Were successful in grieving management for the denial of annual leave applications for employees attempting to put in for leave in advance to avoid the loss of annual leave at the end of the year. Anything over 440 hours you forfeit your annual leave. One employee went over 24 hours the limit. That person was continually denied annual to get themselves below the carryover balance, so that is how the grievance was won.

Issue out at P-1. Employees being called at home. Happened with an employee of the BMEU. Cannot call employees at home for any reason. Jeff has a meeting with Annex management on Tuesday to discuss the contacting of employees at home. Grievance was filed and sustained for contacting an employee at home. Member states that management has texted him more than once. Jeff will address at a meeting scheduled in the near future.

Welcome new stewards, thanks for coming aboard. Looking forward to working with all of you.

### **Motor Vehicle Craft Report**

We are all re-bid. New station is up and running. New stops and new run established, everyone is happy. Scanning issues: Have to be scanned out when you leave with the mail not ahead of time. MVS needs credit for extra trips so extra trips have to be scanned as well so that MVS gets credit for the work. Employees need to be diligent about scanning.

### **Associate Office Director Report-**

Steward out of Holland resigned as a steward. Thank you to Bonnie Eckert-Wilson for her time and effort in serving the union when she was a steward.

Comment by Amy about AO employees stepping up to OIC in other offices other than their home office....see bottom of President's report above.

Amy also states that we have LEAD CLERKS now. Lead Clerks take the place of 204-bs. We should no longer be utilizing 204-bs whether they be PSEs, FTRs or whatever. Only for an absence of 14 days or more and no more than 90 days. Not because there are vacant supervisor positions that management doesn't want to fill. Amy showed management the language that 204-bs should not be utilized at all outside of the parameters of the contractual language. Craft employees are not happy with the Lead Clerk concept but Amy stressed the fact that Lead Clerks are supposed to LEAD an operation. That is the intent of Lead Clerk so that we don't have 204-bs anymore.

Lead Clerks are not supposed to take the place of a General Clerk. Management abolished the General Clerk jobs and made the Lead Clerk positions but are using them as General Clerks and not Lead Clerks. Lead Clerks are supposed to be in the operation leading the clerks in the operation. PSEs are not supposed to be 204-bs either.

Jennifer Gilbert mentioned that PSES are not supposed to be given leave according to a management schedule because some 204-bs are getting leave approved that would not be otherwise approved if they were working in craft. Get with your steward if you are aware of any instances where craft employees are denied and 204-bs are given annual leave as non-bargaining unit employees. Amy has a settlement that says the 204-bs fall under craft when applying for annual leave.

### **Committee Reports**

**Retirees:** The election is in the process of being re-done. Election results will be in soon. Ballots will be counted on the 16<sup>th</sup> of April.

**Correspondence:** Geraldine Davis sends a thank you card to the Brothers and Sisters of the WMAL on the condolences for the passing of her brother in February.

### **Old/Unfinished Business:**

#### **New Business:**

Voted on proposed resolutions to be submitted to the State Organization for the convention.

**E-Board Recommendations:** None

**Labor Management:** If you have anything for Labor Management please let your Craft Directors know. Electronic Badge readers....only two are at the P-3 and neither one is by the entrance to the building. Why is this. Amy will address.

**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.)

Had 38 scholarship applications

Scholarship drawings: #652 Martha Wainwright  
# 658 Kathleen Strunk

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#655 Dave Bartoscewitz  
# 672 Linda Richards for Andrea  
#671 Cindy Merlington for Adam

Alternates:

first: #654 Kim Covell for Nick Covell  
second: #659 Dessa Long for Elizabeth Long  
third: #683 Paul Spruitt for Aaron Spruitt  
fourth: #660 Mike Long for Laura Long  
fifth: #670 Jackie Yocom for Brittany Yocom

Gift Cards for Easter:

#12-Amy Puhalski  
#10-Scott Achterhoff  
#1-Dave Baker  
11-John Hansma  
21-Ray Novakoski  
14-Linda Chandler  
23-Mike Long  
17-Jack Fryling  
7-Phil Marckini  
5-Karol Imanse

**\$250.00 Attending the Meeting Drawing: Jaime Aranguren** (If he was at this meeting, he would have won!)

**COPA:** 50/50 Drawing: \$90 total collected. \$45 to the winner -# 819 Chris Fisher

**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 are present, there is one additional drawing per ten members).

19-Jennifer Gilbert  
29-Jody Pellerito  
15-Jeff Schellinger  
6-Hattie James  
8-Ann Hill-Graves  
26-Bonnie Koperski

Drawing for convention delegate tie: Geraldine Davis won the drawing.

Motion to adjourn by Mike Long. Seconded by Jeff Schellinger Carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Jennifer L. Gilbert  
Recording Secretary