

Western Michigan Area Local #281
American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO
General Membership Meeting Minutes
February 1, 2025

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.

Roll Call of Officers:

The following officers were present:

President – Michael Long	Clerk Craft Director A– Suzi Boyd
Executive Vice-President –David Janes	Maintenance Craft Director – Jennifer McKinnon
Recording Secretary–Awanda Jennings	Motor Vehicle Craft Director – Chris Fisher
Treasurer- Linda Chandler	Clerk Craft Director B – Ameka Jones
Sergeant at Arms-Todd Hodges	

The following officers were absent: – President –Michael Long, Maintenance Craft Director – Jennifer McKinnon

Review of previous meeting's minutes: Motion to accept the January 7, 2025, General Membership Meeting Minutes by Diep Huynh, seconded by Aaron Simmons. Carried.

Applications for Membership (Accepted by Voice Vote of the Membership)

Jessie Delgado -Grand Rapids- Clerk Renay Mihalek -Custer-Clerk Timothy Frederick- Burnips-Clerk
Kiya Richardson- Wyoming- Clerk Ari Bismarck – Spring Lake- Clerk Jason Dennis – Alto-Clerk
Scott Schneider – Hopkins Clerk

Welcome New Members of the WMAL!

Treasurer's Report: Report ending January 31, 2025, was read. No income to report due to statements have not been sent out yet from Fifth Third Bank. Motion to accept by Suzi Boyd, seconded by Chris Fisher. Carried.

President's Report: Sorry I am not at the meeting, had a chance to go back to Norman for training, so I took it.

VERA- As you heard by now, the US Postal Service is offering an Early Out (Early Retirement) for eligible employees in the bargaining unit. It was told to me that they are looking to cut over 60k employees. Even the PMG said he is trying to "lean" the ranks. He stated "I'm not trying to take over the package business industry. I'm trying to just fill my trucks and fill my carrier bags, right?" DeJoy said. "And once I do that, and I've leaned out the whole place, we have potentially a chance of covering our costs and saving the Postal Service."

Before you take the incentive, make sure you read everything you can possibly review and attend all the Webinars, Counselling Sessions, or such. It is not \$15, 000 at all at once (10k in August 2025, and another 5k in 2026).

Along this line, the offer from President Trump for an eight (8) month buyout to two million employees of Federal Service to resign and be paid until September does not apply to the Postal Service. Not to mention, per the union that represents the Federal workforce, Trump does not have that authority. The maximum incentive for early out is \$25,000 (we were offered 15k).

Annual Leave- especially with the VERA. If you are looking at taking the VERA, be careful on how much annual leave you use until you retire. You could be liable to pay back the Postal Service for unearned leave used. **ONLY USE LEAVE YOU HAVE ACTUALLY EARNED1 NOT ADVANCED1**

Side note : Terminal leave once you retire all the annual leave you have saved up, they will give you all of that back from what I have read you will receive it in one check, and it takes about 2 pay periods after you have officially ended your employment with the Post Service it takes about a month but that's the way you will receive it.

eOPF- Have you checked your on-line Personnel file recently? If not, why not? If you are planning to retire now or in the future, you want to make sure information on your eOPF is correct. Maybe you bought back your military time, but it was not credited properly. It is on you to make sure your information is correct. Have you ever been issued discipline that you know of? I have heard of people looking at their eOPF and finding discipline that they never knew was issued to them.

Discipline—with that about looking in your eOPF, remember, the union can be present at a Pre-Disciplinary Investigative (PDI) / Investigative Interview (II) meeting, if you ask for the union to be there; however, nothing in the contract states that management must notify the union when you are issued discipline. We will not know you received discipline unless you tell us. And remember, you only have 14 days, from the date the discipline is issued/received to file a grievance. Once you have gone beyond the 14 days, the discipline is on your record for a minimum of two years.

Following Instructions-The Employee Labor Relations Manual (ELM) states "665.15 – Employees must obey the instructions of their supervisors. If an employee has reason to question the propriety of a supervisor's order, the individual must nevertheless carry out the order and may immediately file a protest in writing to the official in charge of the installation or may appeal through official channels." What does this mean? It means simply, when you are asked to do something, you do it. Unless it is for Safety, or a strongly held religious belief, you must follow the direction of your supervisor.

Scholarships-The deadline for the WMAL James Sweeney Scholarship is due by March 17. Check out this edition of the WMAL Voice for an Application or go to the local's website. The APWU Scholarships for the Nationals are also approaching fast (May 31st).

No Lunch- Still in a holding pattern. We were close to an agreement, but USPS Headquarters did get involved. Now those people have changed, so I am waiting to see what we can get settled locally. If it goes up, who knows when and if it will be settled.

Executive Vice-President's Report:

The booklet for VERA -read it when it comes. There are about 22 pages of questions and answers that you should read. Each person here will have their own concerns that they have to worry about as far as what's important for them for retirement, and I can't emphasize enough there's too much in there that you may miss, read it twice.

One of the things that seems to be overlooked by a lot of people and they didn't know about this is let's say you have the creditable years 25 years and your 52, you decide to take the offer, you're going to run into a problem, you do not get to collect your annuity until you are 57 which is the minimal retirement age. Each person has their own agenda and their own life, so make sure this is what you want. You're also going to have to worry about what you have for life insurance, medical

insurance, what happens if you have survivors. The offers should be coming out next week, so by the time the minutes come out we should have the letters telling us what our annuity is. For the people that are 55yrs old, you do not have the 10% penalty for what you're going to remove from your TSP but remember once you remove it you can't put it back. So be careful, this is money you will need for the rest of your life.

If you don't work, and you do start receiving your FERS annuity with the Special Retirement Supplement, they will pay you up to what you would collect on social security at age 62. If you decide to do that, make sure you go to the website at ssa.gov. Check what you would normally get. Look at that number and realize that number is a firm number. So if your FERS is \$1000-\$1500 you are only going to get up to what you would collect at 62 from Social Security.

Recording Secretary: None

Clerk Craft Report A: Management is back to reverting jobs at the GMF and the Annex. For the manual jobs at the Annex they are citing that we do not have the SPR volume we used to and it dropped by 92% so those jobs are not needed. That is an unrealistic drop in volume due to Ground Advantage taking the place of SPR's and management having no Ground Advantage mail type on their volume comparison chart. The appropriate grievance will be filed and like the others will be sent to step 2. There also has been some confusion on the converting of PSE's. They can be converted following the steps of Article 37; the 1:4 ratios as well as the 24-month rule. There are times that these two scenarios can happen around the same time. Some of you will be converted into FTR residual positions and some will be converted as a UAR. In order to be placed into a residual position as a UAR you would have had to of been unassigned before those jobs became residual. An example of this would be if the job became residual in April and you are converted as an unassigned regular in December, you are not eligible to be placed in that job that was residual in April.

Clerk Craft Director B: None

Maintenance Craft Report: Absent

Motor Vehicle Craft Report: I've sat in a meeting with management last week regarding the changes that are coming, and this is a big deal for the MVS craft. All the additions, schedules, runs this still has to be approved at headquarters level, and it's not going to happen overnight. So far, we have 11 new runs including THS.

Sergeant at Arms Report: I Signed up a new member.

Committee Reports: Audit committee met on Friday January 31, 2025, Committee members are Linda Chandler, Cory Fox, Lisa Stockdale, and Natasha Johnson (chairperson) we were shown Bond 450, 000. Everything was in order, all receipts were attached, and 2 signatures were present, there were no issues found.

Correspondence:

Old/Unfinished Business:

New Business:

Motion by Suzi Boyd to reconsider the previously passed motion for the Educational Assembly. Second, carried. Motion read as adopted: Motion to send up to 20 active stewards of the local to the 2025 Educational Assembly in Gladstone (Escanaba) Michigan (April 30 travel) May 1-3 (classes) May 4 (travel) with lost time, registration, lodging, mileage, per diem and applicable taxes.

Motion by Suzi Boyd to make an amendment to the previous motion to read where it states mileage roundtrip to change it to a flat rate of \$300.00. seconded, carried. Motion read as amended to state to send up to 20 active stewards of the local to the 2025 Educational Assembly in Gladstone (Escanaba) Michigan (April 30 travel) May 1-3 classes (May 4 travel) with lost time, registration, lodging, mileage a flat rate of \$300.00 for stewards/officers that chose to drive, per diem and applicable taxes. Seconded, carried

E-Board Recommendations: None

Labor Management: If you have anything for Labor Management, please let your Craft Directors know.

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: 33 Nikia Bey (If she was at this meeting, she would have won!)

COPA: 50/50 Drawing: \$156.00 total collected. \$ 78.00 to the winner – Todd Hodges

Five (5) - Twenty (\$20.00) 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).

1. # 22 Faith Muhammad
2. # 30 Tyshanica Patterson
3. # 18 Lisa Stockdale
4. # 19 Jennifer Rizzon
5. # 03 Cory Fox

Motioned to adjourn by Diep Huynh seconded by. Aaron Simmons Carried.
The meeting was adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Awanda Jennings



Recording Secretary