

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

General Membership Meeting Minutes
March 7, 2009

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. at 918 Benjamin NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503 with the Pledge of Allegiance and a Short Invocation.

Numbers of Members in Attendance: 34 (plus two guests)

Roll Call of Officers:

The following officers were present:

President – Richard Page	Clerk Craft Director – Bill Scutt
Vice-President – Amy Puhalski	Maintenance Craft Director – James Smith
Recording Secretary – Michael Long	Motor Vehicle Craft Director – Mike Hill
Treasurer – Linda Chandler	Sergeant at Arms – Jackie Pike

The following officer(s) were not present: **Associate Office Director** – Jack Fryling

Review of previous meeting's minutes: February's General Membership Meeting minutes read and accepted. Power Committee: (Collected \$60.00 not \$600). Bob Park (not Parks). Carried as amended.

Applications for Membership: (All accepted by voice vote of the membership)

Tim Mabin (Clerk, Grand Rapids)
Mary Hitzler (Clerk, Grand Rapids)

Motion by: Jennifer Gilbert, Seconded by: Michael Long to allow Katie Prins, Deaf Hard of Hearing Executive Director time to address the membership/meeting, and thank us for our donation to their new building fund. Carried.

Bills: None

Officer's Report

Treasurer's Report: As of February 2009. Report was read. Motion to Accept. Carried.

President's Report: Thanks to all the members for coming out to tonight's meeting. I would like to welcome our special guests as well.

I would like to thank you for sending Vice President Amy Puhalski and myself to Washington DC for the President's Conference. Many items were discussed at this conference; many of these items will be discussed more in depth in my article.

One of the issues was to mobilize the National Presidents Conference with a caucus at the next National Convention, to take back the convention, which we believe we lost at the last convention. It is the local that sends its delegates. We want it back in the hands of the members, not that of the National officers.

The Multi-Craft (All-Craft) Conference is back on. Because of the contracts that were signed, it would have cost more to cancel than to have it. Hopefully, the officers in charge of running it will not come in with an attitude they don't want to be there.

There was a rally to encourage all employees and their families to use the mail. It is our life-line, it is our job.

There was an Article 12 (Excessing) discussion. We have not seen excessing in a huge amount here in Grand Rapids area; however, in other locations, it is quite extensive. There are areas in other parts of the country where they are moving up to 750 miles and beyond. However, nationally there is no coordination of the excessing. For example, Detroit is currently under a 500 mile excessing, however, there is excessing in other locations that intersect this 500 mile radius. Who goes first, who gets the jobs? We are extremely blessed in GR, where any excessing is within the installation/city.

We were forwarded a letter from President Burrus showing support for the smaller offices. It says he will be electronically monitoring the hours of the clerks which are being stolen by management. However, the Presidents at the conference asked President Burrus how he intends to do this, because the smaller offices are not on the electronic time keeping. They are still doing their time cards. How this is going to be accomplished is still being worked out.

There was a discussion regarding the Motor Vehicle Services' MOU, which allows certain pilot programs to have MVS employees do or move into clerk craft operations. We were assured that this hasn't been applied anywhere. There is already existing language in Art 7.2 of the National Agreement allowing other employees to go into other crafts when there isn't enough work.

There are reports in the field that management is trying to employ work standards on the DBCS equipment/machine. Remember, there are NO work standards on the DBCS. There is no proficiency level. If management tells you to run faster, ask for your stewards.

There is an update on some National Level/Step 4 decisions:

- Step 2 Decisions being issued at Step 3 after the fact.
- Casuals working between 5 and noon.
- Sexual Offenders reporting requirements. We did not win this grievance. If you are a registered sex offender, you will need to report it to the Postal Service.
- Annual Leave Exchange Option
- FMLA Form Letters
- AMS Specialist
- RI-399 and the Small Parcel Bundle Sorts
- Provisions to the Employees Labor Relations Manual.

Update on the building. We are going to closing the deal on March 20th. Possession will be determined at that time. The Auxiliary of the VFW has asked to hold a sale to get rid of some of their items. We are going to allow them and others to continue holding their meetings there.

Very soon, we will be posting a request for members to help with moving, cleaning, etc. The property is located at 2554 Burlingame Ave SW; Wyoming, MI 49509.

Vice-President Report: Thanks to the members for sending me to the President Conference.

Deems Desirable: It is a big item throughout the nation. At the President Conference, many presidents addressed this issue. Management is not following the agreement. On a good note out of our local, we received a nice settlement, along with some good language back from Step 3 substantiating our claim. We will have stewards training on March 17th, and this will be given to the stewards there.

Clerk Craft Director McCarthy addressed the conference. National feels that Shared Service in Greensboro should be clerk work, not EAS. A National dispute has been filed.

APC Memo. It is close to coming to an agreement saying it is clerk work. The hold up is management wants language that management can use light or limited duty from other crafts.

Bill and I have gone over the list of pending qualifications. There are about six or seven jobs that are finally falling to the correct person.

Labor Management. One of the big issues was the Automation Breadcarts. I went through the other day and Orange/Red Tagged 11 of them on just two machines. Make sure to Red Tag the ones that are broken, stuck, hard to pull, etc.; make a copy of the Red Tag and give the copy to a steward.

RI-399 process. Last year they finalized the SPBS case in February 2008 and they still don't have an arbitration decision. They rotate the cases (Clerk, Mail Handler, Clerk, and Mail Handler). Our next case to come up is dealing with containerization and this affects our office. However, they won't go forward with another case until they have a ruling on the first case.

Membership. The National APWU is going to have a deficit this year and be financially challenged. We have lost 1/3 of our membership in the last 10 years. We need to organize our non-members. We still have our local organizing drive.

Recording Secretary: Political Report – the new Legislative Priorities for the 2009 year is now available on-line on the APWU Website. Make sure to let your legislator know and support the Employee Free Choice Act and HR-22.

There was information circulated at the downtown Post Office regarding the Proposed Budget for 2010 from President Obama about the raising of our Health Premiums. According to the NALC information, this will not happen.

Clerk Craft Director: Received letters from President Burrus approving my being an Arbitration Advocate for the local in grievances and in RI-399.

Inspection Service is very active. If you steal money, you are saying you don't want your job. The Inspectors are out on the road. They are probably following people on OWCP.

Associate Office Matters. Dealing with some overtime issues and other issues out in the smaller offices. If you have any issues, please let me or your steward know.

Grievance Settlements: I would like to give credit to Bruce Barnard for something he has been working on since late 2003 regarding clothing allowance. If you have a bid job that deals with pouching and dealing with the public, you are entitled to a clothing allowance. Good Job Bruce!

We have been grieving for those not being placed into their jobs in a timely manner.

30 people are being compensated for management requiring documentation at their whim. We are active and we are on top of it.

Maintenance Craft Director: There have been some rumblings regarding at the P-Campus. We have been sparring over Mechanized Staffing. First package management put out, we were going to lose 10 ET positions. When we redid the package, we found a lot of mistakes. It has taken over a year to get it done. We had it down to losing only 1 ET, and we found even more mistakes. Finally, we have settled on a pretty good package. We have between 10 - 15 new custodians, 3 ET positions, a new MOS position, and a new BEM position. We have stopped management from sending custodians to other buildings on straight time. If you are sent to another building it is on overtime.

4776 has continued to be a problem. Part of the problem is: Management has been allowed to use the EMRS system to generate the worksheets. This is an input system for our worksheets. We have numerous grievances/settlements stating we are supposed to have them. What the problem is: Management doesn't have anyone who knows how to do it. We are talking about expanding the 4-10 program, but can't do it until this is done.

We have over 15 grievances at Step 3 dealing with maintenance issues. Half of them are dealing with P-Campus. I have spent numerous hours making sure our NBA is aware how important these are to us.

4-10 Workweek. Seems to be working okay. We are still looking at expanding it. If it is working and we can show that it is working, it will be expanded.

Five-Minute Leeway. Jim Ruark has filed a class-action to cover the installation. I believe we will prevail.

Motor Vehicle Craft Director: Was going to touch on the MOU signed by Burrus, but this was addressed by President Page.

Step 2 settlements and items going to step 3 regarding crossing crafts and contractors doing our work.

No one bid the job that was posted. Since we are under withholding because of the excessing, it will stay as a residual. Our two PTFs will remain as PTFs for the time being.

Sergeant at Arms Report: None

Retiree's Director Report:

Bob Park - .A Certification of Appreciation was given to Bob Park for all his dedication since his retirement in 1980. He worked many, many years in Personnel, and has used that knowledge to help people since his retirement with personnel issues.

Bob then provided the members in attendance a brief history regarding how our benefits came into being.

Letter from FEHB regarding your health benefit. When you retire, and have a current FEHB plan, you should be receiving a notice regarding that your current plan is better than the one offered

through Medicare. You must keep this letter/notice when you receive it. It will state something to the effect: “(your plan) has determined that the prescription drug coverage offered in (your plan) is on average for all plan participants, expected to pay out as much or more than the standard Medicare D drug coverage will pay. Your Medicare D premium (should you enroll at a later date) will not be increased if you decline coverage at this time. If you choose to enroll in Medicare D at this time, you can keep your current coverage and (your plan) will coordinate benefits with Medicare. However, if you terminate your FEHB coverage, you may not be able to re-enroll at a later date. In the future, if you lose or drop your FEHB coverage, you may want to enroll in Medicare D prescription drug program as soon as possible to avoid paying increased premiums. If you wait to enroll, you will have to pay a high premium, of 1% per month for each month you do not have equivalent prescription drug coverage.”

When you retire, make sure you join a local retiree’s chapter.

Committee Reports:

POWER Committee: We received a card from the person who was helped with your caring and generosity of giving of items for her new apartment.

Veterans Report: On behalf of the Homeless Veterans program in Kent County, thank you very much for the Backpacks. They were really sought after. People came out of the woodwork.

Correspondence: Letter from Helen Devos Children’s Hospital thanking us for the donation.

Old/Unfinished Business: None

New Business:

E-Board Recommendations:

- To authorize the formation of a Limited Liability Corporation (LLC) called WMPW Inc. to serve as the Local’s subordinate for the purpose of purchasing and managing the property at 2554 Burlingame SW, Wyoming, MI. Discussion. Carried
- To approve payment of \$2000.00 per month by the WMAL to the WMPW, Inc. for rent of the property at 2554 Burlingame SW, Wyoming, MI. Discussion. Carried.
- To send the Executive Vice President to the MI State AFL-CIO Convention being held on April 22, 2009 in Madison Heights, MI with per diem, mileage, registration (\$75.00), one night lodging (\$99.00) and applicable taxes. Discussion. Carried.
- Motion by: Michael Hill, Seconded by: Jennifer Amos: to temporarily suspend the proceedings of the meeting, to convene the Shareholders meetings of the WMPW at 8:35 p.m. Carried.
- Motion by: Doug Warren, Seconded by: Jennifer Gilbert to reconvene (unsuspended) business of the WMAL. Carried.

The floor was opened up for new business:

- Motion by: Jennifer Gilbert, Seconded by: Nancy Gilbert: to send all Stewards and Officers of the Western Michigan to the MPWU Educational Convention, June 11 – 13, 2009 in Bay City, MI with Lost Time, Registration, Travel, Lodging, Per Diem, and applicable taxes. Discussion (Tabled)

- Motion to amend by: Amy Puhalski, Seconded by: Bill Scutt, to send the Executive Board (who are stewards) and the Primary Stewards of the local. Discussion (Was accepted as a friendly amendment by the maker of the original motion)
- Motion to amend by: Karen Hodges, to send the President, Vice-President, and Craft Directors to the Educational Convention and then bring back the information and put on the training locally. Chair ruled this amendment out of order since it would change the meaning and intent of the original motion.
- Motion by: Jim Stoddard, seconded by: Linda Richards: To table the motion and all discussion until we receive the figures and information as to financial amounts of this training. Carried. Original Motion is tabled.
- Motion by: Amy Puhalski, Seconded by: Jim Smith to accept Hopkins (49328) as an office of our local. Discussion. Carried.

Constitution Changes: (Submission was submitted with seven members in good standing signatures)

See below regarding proposed change to Article 7, Section 5 of the local's constitution. Proposed language is cited here, which changes bolded: Old language is available on the website or in the union office.

Article 7, Section 5,

- b) The Executive Vice-President of this Local shall receive a salary of \$1,900.00 per year, plus up to eighty (80) hours of LWOP per year, to be used for **Local union business (not for State or National APWU conventions)**. In the event it becomes necessary to exceed the allowable 80 hours of LWOP, the Executive Vice-President shall submit in writing, his/her request for additional LWOP documenting same to the Executive Board, for approval. The Executive Vice-President of this Local, shall be compensated by the Local for any loss of annual or sick leave due to the use of LWOP.*
- d) The Treasurer of this Local shall receive a salary of \$2,400.00 per year, plus up to forty (40) hours of LWOP, to be used for **Local union business (not for State or National APWU conventions)**. In the event it becomes necessary to exceed the allowable 40 hours of LWOP, the Treasurer shall submit in writing, his/her request for additional LWOP documenting same to the Executive Board for approval. The Treasurer of this Local shall be compensated by the Local for any loss of annual or sick leave, due to the use of LWOP.*
- e) The Craft Directors of this Local shall receive a salary of \$1,200.00 per year, plus 40 hours of LWOP, to be used for **Local union business (not for State or National APWU conventions)**. The Craft Directors of the Local shall be compensated for any loss of annual leave or sick leave due to the use of LWOP for local union business.*
- g) The Associate Office Director of this Local shall receive a salary of \$1200.00 per year, plus eighty (80) hours of LWOP per year, to be used for **Local union business (not for State or National APWU conventions)**, and additional LWOP as approved by the Executive Board and shall be compensated by the Local for any loss of Annual or Sick Leave due to the use of LWOP as authorized by this Local.*

Labor Management: See your steward or officers to submit items for discussion.

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

Scholarships: 5 - \$1000 Scholarships:

1. #32 – Samantha Schafer (member: Paula Schafer)

2. #30 – Kyle Maddox (member: Phil Maddox)
3. #27 – Jacqueline Mann (member: Michelle Wilson)
4. #4 – Jordon Richards (member: Linda Richards)
5. #24 – Stephanie Kelly Jenkins (member: Steve Jenkins)

1. #5 – Preston Richards (member: Linda Richards)
2. #6 – Andrea Norman (member: Linda Richards)
3. #10 – Jessica Emelander (member: Nancy Emelander)
4. #21 – Maria Woszczak (member: Jennifer Amos)
5. #16 – Taylor M. Grysen (member: Carol Grysen)

Motion by: Bill Scutt, Seconded by: Jennifer Gilbert, to extend the meeting until the end of the business/drawings. Carried.

\$250.00 Attending the Meeting Drawing. # 608 – Ronda Freiberg (If she would have been at the meeting, she would have won!)

COPA: 50/50 Drawing: \$102.00 totally collected. \$51 to the winner - #7836453 – Tammy Byrnes.

COPA - \$7.00 for Cans for COPA from NE office.

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 more than 40 members are present, there is one additional drawing per ten members)

- #27 – Richard Fletcher
- #13 – Don Kramer
- #19 – Carol Imanse
- #8 – Jackie Pike
- #31 – Kathy Struck

Meeting adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

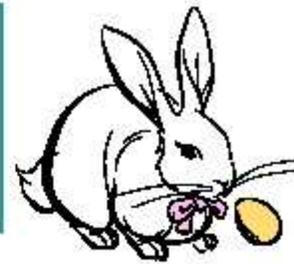
Respectfully Submitted,

Yours in Solidarity,



Michael A. Long
Recording Secretary

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE WESTERN MICHIGAN AREA LOCAL WILL BE.....



WESTERN MICHIGAN AREA LOCAL #281
AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION, AFL-CIO
APRIL 2009 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

SATURDAY
APRIL 4, 2009
7:00 P.M.

UNION HALL AT 918 BENJAMIN NE; GRAND RAPIDS MI 49503

Refreshments to follow the meeting

\$250.00 Special Attendance Drawing (Need to be present to win)

Four - \$10.00 Check Drawings (Need to be signed in at meeting to win)

Ten - \$25.00 Gift Cards (for Easter Hams) to be given out for Easter (Need to be present/signed in to win)



EAP
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

April has been designated EAP Awareness Month

