

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

General Membership Meeting Minutes
February 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, with a moment of silence for member John Vandewetering who passed away recently.

Number of Members in Attendance: 28

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

Without objection, Suspension of the rules to move to the WMPW, Inc Shareholder's meeting. 7:05 p.m.
Carried

Return to the WMAL General Membership Meeting: 7:15 p.m.

Review of previous meeting's minutes: January's General Membership Meeting minutes were posted. Michael Long motioned, Ray Novakoski seconded and were accepted by voice vote as printed. Carried.

Applications for Membership (Accepted by Voice Vote of Membership): None

Bills: None

Officer's Report

Treasurer's Report: Report ending January 31, 2010 was read aloud to the membership in attendance. Motion by: Ray Novakoski, Seconded by: Michael Long to accept the Treasurer's Report. Carried

President's Report:

One of our member's John Vandewetering from the BMEU passed away since the last meeting. Condolences to his family. His sister does work for the Postal Service. He did not have a service, so we were unable to send flowers, but we did send a condolence card to the family.

Thank you to everyone who came out. We survived Blizzard 2011. I spoke to all three craft director's, because there were so many people who were not able to come to work or advised not to, class action grievances will be filed for each craft. Odds for winning Administrative Leave are rare; but after reading the past cases, I believe we have a good case. There was an option to take administrative leave when you called in; however, the next day, management went around and asked if you wanted annual or LWOP. According to an e-mail from Human Resources, they were not going to give Administrative. If they come around and ask you, take Annual or LWOP until the grievance is resolved.

There was an issue with the on-line bidding from January 28 – 31st. While it didn't affect us locally, it had another affect with the use of the Clothing Allowance Visa. They were not able to be used during this time. I sent an e-mail to the National Clerk Craft Director for his direction on this, but haven't heard back from him as of yet.

Bargaining is still on-going. There is still no word on the upcoming contract. It is frustrating. We just need to wait and see. With this being said, the moratorium on Excessing is still in effect and no one is being excessed.

Postal Service has stated they are considering closing or downsize Processing and Distribution Centers. Just to let you know: Flint is under their second AMP study. First was their originating mail. Now it is for their destination (DPS) mail. Saginaw has a current AMP going on. They had their meetings in November. While nothing has been stated, but usually when they have the meetings with the public it is pretty grim.

Postal Service is going after Postmaster/EAS salary protections. They are trying to implement language in the ELM which would eliminate this language and be able to place them into lower levels.

Obama is about to come out with his budget on February 14th. From what has been read, he is going to be addressing the Postal Service in his budget.

Management officials changing: We have an additional Senior MDO now, not just one. Vance is now the Senior MDO for the P-Campus; Chris Tinkman is the Senior MDO of the GMF. Barb Martin is now the Acting Postmaster; Greg Chanski is the POOM. These are supposed to be details, but not sure how long.

I have a meeting with Lee Thompson to address some issues on Monday. One is dealing with leave issues that are going on.

At the last meeting, I reported the Audit committee would be providing their report; however, there isn't anyone here from the committee to answer questions, so the report will be read at the March meeting.

Stewards training. It was a good turn out. Ray did his portion, and then the craft director did their portion in the afternoon.

We are looking for stewards at the P1 Campus on Tour 1 & Tour 3. There are a lot of issues out there. If you know of anyone who is interested, please contact the craft directors or myself.

This week, I had the honor of attending the Retiree's Luncheon, I had a really good time. I was able to swear in the new board. It was nice to see those I haven't seen in a long time. I am honored and thankful for what retirees have done for us. We wouldn't be where we are now if it wasn't for them.

Executive Vice-President:

It is a stressful time currently in the Postal Service, with excessing, contract, and management doing our work. I know the craft directors and stewards are filing grievances to address this. I know we have addressed this previously, but it hasn't done any good. I went out to the P1 over the holiday period, and watching management doing our work. I have already filed, and am meeting with management on Monday to address this.

We had stewards training on January 26th. We had approximately 25 stewards show up. We went over some basic things initially with them to make sure we are all on the same page; and in the second-half/afternoon they meet with their respective craft director to deal with craft specific information.

Recording Secretary: This last week, there was only one day of actual work for the state legislature; however, two bills were introduced to attack union members. One of these was regarding Prevailing Wage, and the increase of Health premiums for public workers. The struggle continues.

While on-line, check out and sign-up for e-Mail updates from: Michigan AFL-CIO, APWU e-News/Legislative Update, and Postal Reporter.com

Clerk Craft Report:

I have been going to the P-Campus quite a bit. Management and the Mail Handlers have been doing our work. I am personally filing these now. The more stewards we can get out there the better and to help spread out the workload with the amount of grievances.

The bad thing about the mail handlers doing our work has been that the statements we are receiving are from the Mail Handlers. We only have one clerk providing statements.

I had a meeting with Sue Hawes, and Vance Devers regarding clothing allowance. There have been some employees stating that are not receiving their allowance. Management has gone into the system and put the correct code into the system to authorize the clothing allowance. If you are suppose to receive an allowance and are not, please let me know.

More issues regarding the Inspector's coming around to the different stations/buildings. Just make sure you do your job correctly. If they do question you, make sure to ask for your steward. If a steward is not available, contact one of the local officers.

Management stated they will be monitoring employee's 3972.

Management also said they will be adding new readers to the DBCS. I have asked George to watch to see if any issues arise.

Q – The General Clerk at P1 has a form regarding the clothing allowance. Just wanted to make sure you knew. A – Yes. Thank you.

Maintenance Craft Report:

I wanted to thank the stewards who came to training in January. I thought it was a real nice session. It was more like a stewards meeting in the afternoon, which allowed for a healthy exchange of ideas.

We discussed overall in general in preserving our work (Occupational groups). In talking with the National Maintenance Director, they have started noticing 340-time for Mechs and Techs. For Mechs and Techs, keep busy! Ask for work if there are any routes that are not done, etc. . Protect our work. Right now, they have already started to look at MOS. While we are not in the business of telling management how to schedule, it does not give them carte-blanche to violate the contract and reduce staffing.

If you see someone running to go get a part, make sure to let a steward know to grieve it. When we are grieving it as a group, not just one individual, it makes us stronger and shows a more unified front.

We have two casuals in the city right now. Supposedly one job is being filled downtown February 12th downtown. I have another grievance coming in for the P-Campus. Our position is that when we are

under withholding, you can't use a casual. Withholding is not time-limited, but a casual is. This is not supplemental. I will be turning in the Step 2, and bringing out a package to the P1 for them to file.

Motor Vehicle Craft Report:

People are still taking mail around. We have settled 15 of the 16 grievances last month. The other one has been appealed to Step 2 which we should win too.

Tracy and President Puhalski have a meeting this week at the VMF regarding abusive managers. It seems that management at the VMF believes they can speak to the employees anyway they want. It seems that it has been going on for a while.

Sergeant at Arms Report: None

Associate Office Report:

Please remember if a supervisor, manager, or Postmaster wants to bring you into the office, make sure to ask them the nature and if it could result in discipline; if they say it could, ask for your Steward, stay quiet and wait for a steward to be provided. If they say it is only a discussion, this is only a one-sided exchange of information. They will tell you what the rules are, what I expected of you. Once they start to ask you questions, then it becomes an interview, and you need to ask for a steward.

Retiree's Chapter Report:

Thank you Amy for coming out the Retiree's Luncheon and swearing us in.

The Retiree's Chapter was formed out the Sectional center (493/494/495) (not just Grand Rapids), because this was the only way we could get enough members at the time (at the time they required 25 members to form a chapter). We currently have 144 retiree members in the chapter.

Financial report. I send an updated copy of the Retiree Chapter balance to the Treasurer when I receive the rebate. Is there a way to show that there is activity in the account by putting the rebate and showing it on the report?

HR-5746 – Pre-Funding for Retirement. No other federal agency has to pre-fund retiree benefits. It costs of the Postal Service 5.1 – 5.8 billion each year. We have an unfriendly congress.

The retirees have agreed across the country to reduce their COPA contributions until the negativity towards retirees have been changed from the National office.

Committee Reports: None

Correspondence: None

Old/Unfinished Business: None

New Business:

E-Board Recommendations:

- To purchase a one-line Patron Ad at a cost of \$25.00 in the Owen Bieber Building Dedication commemorative booklet. Carried.

- To post: To withdrawal funds from the Contingency for the use of replacing the furnace and air conditioner (on both side of the hall) at an approximate cost of \$30,000. Motion by: Richard Page, Seconded by: Beverly Jarrett to amend: “at an approximate cost of \$50,000.” Amendment carried. Will be posted as amended.

The floor was opened up for new business:

None was presented by the membership.

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. # 585 – Mary Carr (If she was at this meeting, she would have won!)

COPA: 50/50 Drawing: \$70 total collected. \$35 to the winner - #973291 – 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. #16 – Jim Ruark
2. #1 – David Janes
3. #31 – Jack Fryling
4. #8 – Geraldine Davis
5. #20 – Dan Quillin
6. #17 – Lori Schmike

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Yours in Solidarity,



Michael A. Long
Recording Secretary