

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

General Membership Meeting Minutes
January 8, 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 in Attendance: 25

The new Executive Board of the Western Michigan Area Local was sworn in at this meeting by Jennifer AMOS (MPWU Human Relations Director and former local President)

Roll Call of Officers:

The following officers were present:

President – Amy Puhalski
Vice-President – Ray Novakoski
Recording Secretary – Michael Long
Treasurer – Linda Chandler
Sergeant at Arms – Dan Quillin

Clerk Craft Director – Roy Bailey
Maintenance Craft Director – James Smith
Motor Vehicle Craft Director – Tracy Fleming
Associate Office Director – Jack Fryling

The following officers were not present: None

Review of previous meeting's minutes: December's General Membership Meeting minutes were accepted by voice vote as printed. Al Matcovich Motioned, Don Kramer seconded. Carried.

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

Deborah Bartel – Clerk

Norma Vachon – Clerk

Bills: None

Officer's Report

Treasurer's Report: Report ending December 31, 2010 was read aloud to the membership in attendance. Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. Carried

President's Report:

First, thank you to all the attendees for those who came out to the first meeting of 2011 and the swearing in. Hope all had a good holiday season.

The transition from the old administration to the new one has gone well.

December was a very busy month for everyone; whether in the stations or at the Plant. Every year, management has 11 months to plan, but this year was like all, it was chaos. The District

Manager, Senior Plant Manager, Senior MDO, and Supervisors were all out at P2 working. A grievance has been filed. Management said they didn't take into consideration how much more mail volume. That is no excuse for their violations.

No update on the Contract negotiations. We have talked to one of the members on the Rank and File committee, and it seems that the Maintenance and Motor Vehicle is pretty much ramped up, but nothing else.

Audit committee is being formed, so we should have an Audit committee report at the next meeting.

We sat in on Six Excessing meetings for those who are going to be impacted. For sure, nine clerks are being excessed in the first round. While National is negotiating, there will be no excessing. However, management is still progressing without actually moving the employees out of the office. Management doesn't see the correlation that the reduction of employees will effect BPI. Fortunate enough for our craft, most will stay in Michigan. Mail Handlers are going to Kentucky. Management has made it clear that they don't care about impact on those employees affected.

Do not do the job of two people. If you get injured, they will send you out of the office. Management does not care about us. Work Safely!

Vice President Novakoski will be looking into why employees failed the carrier drivers exam. Management said the criteria was raised...but it is odd that even those who have been carriers before and have Commercial Drivers Licenses failed the test.

Barb Postema retired (Congratulations to her). A couple of others have chosen to transfer, thus reducing the number of impacted employees.

Q – Are they are offering another incentive to retire? A – Not from what we know. However, one of the bigger issue is that management is shutting down Areas. Southeast Area is being shut down and shifted to other locations. This affects the management officials in that area office.

Q – At the P1, it was stated that the Mail Handlers that are being scheduled to excessing will be put in the break room for eight hours a day starting this Monday. A – This is what they did in Detroit.

Executive Vice-President:

I want to thank everyone for electing me and the chance to serve another three years. A lot of it is training and I enjoy doing that.

Excessing. While President Puhalski touched on it, and it is upsetting what is happening. Please note that we are doing everything we can to minimize the impact.

We met with management regarding what they are doing with the front windows and Passports. Management is going to allow us to get involved in a few other things. We ask that the employees make sure to punch in to the correct operations and punch the right function on their POS unit when doing the proper work, to ensure you receive the proper credit.

Recording Secretary: I would like to ask for a moment of silence for those people killed today in the massacre in Tucson Arizona. Currently five are confirmed dead. The news states that they have the person responsible in custody.

We have received the award back from our NBA regarding staffing of one person the machine. It has been agreed upon that our local agreements (Step 1 & 2s) have to also be followed along with the National Agreement. We locally have the only time that a machine can be operated by one person is when someone goes to the Rest Room. Otherwise two people must be on the machine. Don't let management try to convince you to run the machine. If you are asked, or if you run the machine (out the kindness of your heart), ask to see a steward; or if you see a machine being ran by one person, make sure to see your steward.

Contact your congressperson regarding:

- ✓ HR 48 – To amend Title 5, United State Code to provide that payments under the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance program shall be made in a lump sum, unless the insured or the recipient elects otherwise. We ask that you contact your legislator and support this piece of legislation.
- ✓ Sen. Tom Carper (D-DE) also has introduced legislation (S. 3831) that would require arbitrators to consider the financial condition of the USPS if negotiations end in arbitration. It also would give the Postal Service sweeping authority to close stations and branches, and would grant the USPS authority to reduce the number of mail delivery days from six to five. We ask you contact your Senators and ask they do NOT support this piece of legislation.
- ✓ (H.R. 5746) that addresses the financial problems faced by the Postal Service. Two studies conducted over the past year prove that the Postal Service has overpaid the retirement fund between \$55 billion and \$75 billion dollars over the last 30 years. H.R. 5746 authorizes the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to transfer those funds to the retiree health benefit fund, which would eliminate the \$5.5 billion annual payment mandated by the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2006. We ask that you contact your legislator and support this piece of legislation.

FMLA Expected Changes. Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis recently announced that new regulations would be issued before the end of this year to correct those changes which happened during the Bush years.

Q – We have to use the WH-380 form for FMLA. A – President Puhalski posted that the National Union has

Clerk Craft Report:

Welcome to the New Year. Hope all had a good holiday season. I would like to thank the membership for allowing me to serve them for the next three years. I will do the best I can.

I have put out a new e-Mail address for the stewards. I am using the same clerk craft phone number if you need to get a hold of me.

We have gone through many meetings regarding excessing. It is every apparent that the Senior MDO does not care about the employees. When asked questions, the Senior MDO just sat there stoic. Even the Compliment coordinator was asked, it seemed that she only read off a script about what an employee is entitled to when they are excessed.

Twelve people took the tests for Carrier and only two passed. The other ten who failed, some of them have CDL drivers license, were former carriers, so how can they not pass now? It is frustrating that management doesn't care about any employees. There are two custodian positions will be allowed to stay in town due to Maintenance having two custodian positions in town.

I have been in contact with management regarding the Choice Vacation time. They didn't have anything put together for the stations and branches. I put out an e-Mail to Management, and followed up with a phone call yet the leave rosters are not complete and I will follow-up to make sure they are completed.

There will be Stewards Training on January 26th. Please make every effort to attend.

Maintenance Craft Report:

The old drivers handbook has been changed. The old one is obsolete. The new one is more in-depth. That might be where some of the problems occurred.

I hope all the stewards can attend the training on the 26th. If you have any comments or want to see something specifically addressed, please let myself or Vice-President Novakoski know.

Rumors about P1 closing. I have the leases for the P-Campus, and the first one to expire is July 2012 (for P1).

Laptops. I had to be corrected by a steward about Laptop usage. Getting a Laptop is not a contract violation. The problem I have is the paperwork that management makes the employee sign and to accept that laptop, it will be very hard to defend you because of the liability. The union feels the computers should be issued as a Tool (the same as a screwdriver). In the future, it might happen that those with computer will perform the same function or the MOS duties.

We have done well in the past three years in getting jobs and keeping them. A grievance is always filed when a job was abolished, and one of those grievances have been forwarded on to National.

Management has been telling employees' downtown that they don't have to be a qualified MPE to do MPE work. I have sent out a stern e-Mail regarding this. We have already filed and won this before. We won't allow this to continue to happen.

We had an MPE job which allowed one of the custodians to be promoted, and allowed for another job to be opened and a local clerk to be excessed into our craft.

Motor Vehicle Craft Report:

Still have supervisors and employees transporting mail around.

Management has now decided they can contact people at home, and take the overtime away from others. Appropriate grievances will and have been filed.

Sergeant at Arms Report: Thank the membership for the vote. I know Jackie was very respected and it will be hard to fill her shoes. Thanks to Nancy Emelander for filling in.

Associate Office Report:

It is no surprise that management is trying to cut hours. Don't take any shortcuts, because that will bite you and management will burn you for it. Take care of the customer in front of you, and don't worry about the others in the line until they are in front of you.

Split shifts – what management was having employees do is to punch out to lunch. What you have to do is BT in the morning, and when you go home ET. When you come back in, BT once again. This also has to do with the guarantee time.

I have also filed another grievance for those employees that are doing work in another office get paid for travel time. It is being appealed. If there are any PTFs, make sure you get paid for travel time and the mileage.

Even there is only one full time employee in your office, it does not circumvent the requirement for them to post Overtime Desired list, Holiday lists, etc. If they are not doing this, please contact a steward.

Committee Reports:

A&E Committee: We are running a Casino bus trip on January 16th to Firekeepers in Battle Creek. A few seats are still available. Contact President Puhalski if you want to go. Cost is \$15.00 (but you get back \$25 in credit for gaming and food).

POWER Committee. We were fortunate enough to send a check to three of our members to help celebrate the holidays. These are members that management sent home without any pay.

Hall. The amount to rent the hall (for the public only) has been raised \$100 to \$650. Rental prices for the membership have stayed the same.

Correspondence: Thank You card from Nancy Gingery for the holidays.

Old/Unfinished Business: None

New Business:

E-Board Recommendations:

- To extend the VOE Contest for the five (5) - \$100 dollar drawings (to be held in December 2011) for the 2011. Carried.
- To extend the membership drive of \$50.00 for 2011 (when someone signs up a new member). Carried.

FYI. The April meeting has been rescheduled to April 3rd (3:00 p.m. General Membership); June 5th (3:00 p.m. – General Membership); September 10th (7:00 p.m.)

The floor was opened up for new business:

None was presented by the membership.

Labor Management: We have a Labor Management meeting scheduled for January 20th. If you have anything, please let your steward or officer know. At P1, we have a tally sheet for a work credit sheet, but management is not picking them up from the section.

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

\$250.00 Attending the Meeting Drawing. # 130 – Kathleen Gordon (If she was at this meeting, she would have won!)

COPA: 50/50 Drawing: \$80 total collected. \$40 to the winner - #973210 – Tammy Byrnes

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. #30 – Roy Bailey
2. #25 – Beverly Jarrett
3. #31 – Jack Fryling
4. #17 – George Folk
5. #1 – Doug Warren
6. #16 – Shane Reynolds

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Yours in Solidarity,



Michael A. Long
Recording Secretary