

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

General Membership Meeting Minutes
March 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.

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: None

Review of previous meeting's minutes: Additions and corrections are the areas where the new members was listed from. Motion to accept the February 1, 2025, General Membership Meeting Minutes. Carried., those applications must be turned

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

Eric Oliver	Suman Gurrung	Rachell Barron	Maykel Cabrera Oliva	Tacoga Heston
Kyle Unger	Tonya Mullins	Kristopher Keyes	Tracey Cambrie	Rowan Toor
Welcome new members of the WMAL!				

Bills: None

Officer's Report

Treasurer's Report: Report ending February 28, 2025, was read. Motion to accept by Davud Janes. Seconded. Carried.

President's Report:

No-lunch grievance-We had a verbal agreement; however, headquarters got involved and forced it to be appealed. This is now being appealed to Step 3 / Arbitration. It should be an easy win, but unfortunately, nothing is guaranteed.

We did change the April and May meetings:

April 5th meeting to Sunday April 6, 2025, E-board 11:00 am, General at 12:00 pm.
May 3rd meeting to Thursday May 8, 2025, E-board at 5:00, and General at 6:00 pm.

The VERA voluntary retirement, make sure you have your paperwork in by March 7, 2025. If you haven't received your information, I have posted an email and information on the website and on Facebook for whom you need to contact.

Weingarten Rights-The rule is "Employees have the right to request a union representative and have them present during an interview that the employee reasonably believes could lead to discipline." This means management doesn't have to give you a steward when you are being issued; however, that also means they don't have any questions when they issue you. If they ask you more questions

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regarding that or for any other reason that you feel could lead to discipline, then that becomes time to ask for a steward.

Rally -Sunday March 23, 2025, at 11:00 am. I was called by the NALC on Friday to let us know they are going to be holding a Save the Postal Service rally at Calder Plaza. I told them I would reach out to you all and ask if you would like to attend. We have shirts already that can be bought for them. (NOTE: The APWU will be holding a Save the Post Office rally also in Detroit on March 20th at 2:00 p.m. If you would like to attend, please let me or David Janes know immediately).

Primetime should have been done by February 28th per the LMOU. I know downtown, maintenance and automation are not done yet. I can tell you in the past we grieved this before. I know we have argued in the past that whatever was open on the last day should be given; however, we will grieve about this and see what occurs. But don't expect to get Christmas, 4th of July, or Hunting season or etc. off, if you haven't gotten your choice yet. Everyone I have seen so far, those are already closed.

T-shirts. We have now been doing this for over a year so since I am starting to get caught up with some; I'll be sending letters out to the last of the members who still haven't asked for their shirts. If you haven't received your union shirt, please let me know.

Scholarships- If you already done so and have a High School Senior (either your child or grand-child) and want to apply for the union's scholarship, those applications must be postmarked or turned in by March 17.

The APWU has two different scholarships – one for a college/university (\$8,000 (2k / yr), and another for those going to a trade school. Deadline for both of these is May 31st.

In closing, since I took over the President position I have been saying, we need people to step up. To those who have, thank you. You might ask why some haven't been selected since we are short, the one thing the board looks at before the appointment of a steward is their attendance. We need our stewards to be at work to represent the membership.

However, what I have also stated is we need people to start thinking ahead to the next term and who wants to be in those positions. Elections have consequences. Either they are for the positive or negative. We are seeing what is happening now in the Federal Government with some of those consequences. You might be for these actions or against. Whichever way, they are consequences. We as postal service employees may see this too if the leaked information is correct regarding moving us under the Department of Commerce. Will it happen? Who knows? What will happen if it does? Besides allowing every lawyer being able to buy their new summer, spring, fall and winter homes due to the amount of lawsuits that will be filed; who knows? Rumors abound – however, all we can do is fight like hell to make sure it doesn't happen. However, remember what happened to make us independent!? The strike of 1970. It isn't just a memory being forgotten. It is tangible and actions took place to make us know what and where we are today.

Executive Vice-President's Report: Seems to be a misconception about your Weingarten Rights- after you receive your letter of warning or your suspension you don't have to sign it but immediately ask to see your union steward. Your time starts once you receive it, we have 14 days after the date of issuance to fight it.

Management doing our work – with all the VERA's we don't know how many people are going as of yet. It was made very clear by management to revert jobs, if you see this grieve it. I've noticed our lead clerks on the machines and management is doing lead clerk work. Let's save our jobs.

Recording Secretary: I sat in on the zoom call with Mark Diamondstein and Judy Beard he stated -if there is a hostile takeover this will be a death spiral. This will eliminate our Postal Workers Collective Bargaining Contract. The agreement we have now is with the United States Postal Service, so this will end the no layoff protection, no limits on accessing, step increases, cola increases, grievance procedures, or just cause protections all the things that had been won through generations of postal workers.

Judy Beard stated there was a 50-page document that was leaked to the press, and it indicated some of the following:

- Raising the FERS- FERS employees to contribute more but only get the same amount they are outlined to get as of today.
- Eliminate the FERS annuity supplement -this the one you would receive until you are 62 yrs old.
- They want to base the FERS retirement annuity benefit on a high 5 salary instead of a high 3 so you would get less money at retirement.
- Move the federal employee health benefit fund including the postal health benefit from a premium share to a voucher system.
- Convert new Federal workers to at will employment unless they accept the higher GERS contribution rate, at will employees if they hire you, they can fire you just cause.
- Eliminate the official time for employees to perform union related duties on the clock.

None of these are set as a bill yet.

Clerk Craft Report A: Change of address-when you move change your address with the United States Postal Service, management does not care that you have moved, and you are someone that does not come to work have not updated your information. When they are issuing discipline, it will be sent to the last address they have on record and that 14 days to fight the discipline will stand. By the time you do figure out you did receive something it will have expired, and that discipline will be on your record for 2 years.

Reversions: They continue to revert jobs. We have 9 manual jobs at the Annex, they are denying them at Step 1 and Step 2, they will be going up to Step 3.

The Post Office is under Attack- We have been around for almost 250 years, you can go to APWU.org look for link that says take action defend our public service and there is little links on there that you can click on there and you can email your Representatives email Postal Board of Governors and then there is a spot you can put your name and whatever you what to say to them to let them know you're in the fight to keep the Postal Service where it's at.

Our National Executive Board and ourselves are attending rallies while our rights are under attack, and we have employees that are non-members. Now is the time to get them to sign up and join in, try to organize. 16%.

Thank you all for coming out tonight.

Clerk Craft Director B: If you are working in the cold let your union steward know (employees' heater was out for week).

Be sure you have working bathrooms, make sure working conditions.

Be sure to check the postage one package was sent several times if you don't feel comfortable give it to your supervisor they can send to Revenue Fraud.

Maintenance Craft Report: Still working on the Line H for the GRP & DC, Line H is going up to Step 3. I will be going out to East Paris on Thursday.

Maintenance open- season is now until March 31st I recommend everyone take the test.

Motor Vehicle Craft Report: No grievance report- gained a new driver and lost another. Headquarters sent new route drafts and wants you to rebid every single job -it's improper Article 39 insourcing is not changing our board, it's adding jobs. Thanks, Aaron, for making the calls to the union bosses.

Sergeant at Arms Report: None

Committee Reports:

Retirement Committee: Kathy Strunk gave a presentation on the Retiree Chapter and the benefits of joining the retiree's committee.

35-under Committee: Those 35 and under, get involved. Contact Brittany Thompson for information on how to get out own 35 and under committee started and going here in WMAL.

Correspondence:

Old/Unfinished Business:

Two Proposed Constitution Changes were submitted:

1. Constitution submissions changes: Article 7, Section 4: (a) Any member of the Western Michigan Area Local who voluntarily holds a EAS position shall be ineligible to hold **or be nominated for** any office, either elected or appointed, in the Western Michigan Area Local or to be a delegate to any convention held by the APWU or any subordinate body of the APWU, for a period of one (1)year from the **date the member ceases from filling/holding** such position(s).

Any member who has submitted an application **for an** EAS position shall withdraw such application prior to acceptance of nomination for any office (**or delegate to a convention/conference**) in the Western Michigan Area Local. Failure to do so, and upon discovery pf said violation of this language, the member will immediately vacate his/her position and and/or withdraw from being a delegate and, if applicate, renumerate the local for any monetary expenditures (e.g.(this list is not exhaustive) payroll, trips, (including all items including all items included within that trip motion), cellphone, dues reimbursement, etc.), This will also waive the payment of yearly reimbursement LWOP usage for retirement (Article 20 of the Constitution).This language also applies to any member who submits an

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application for or accepts an EAS position while she is EAS position while he/she is serving as an officer, steward, or delegate of the Western Michigan Area Local.

2. Article 8 Vacancy in Office - Section 1: In the event of a vacancy in the office of the president of this local, for any reason whatsoever, the Executive Vice-President shall perform duties of the President until the Executive Board appoints a new President to serve the remaining term of office.
 - a) The vote to appoint a new President shall be made by the executive board no later than 2 months after the vacancy has occurred. Once the vote has occurred, and a nominee is selected, it shall go before the membership at the next general membership meeting concurrence by the membership of the attendees of that meeting by a majority vote. The vote shall be on a secret paper ballot to accept or not accept the Executive Board selection. Those votes will be counted at that meeting after all the votes have been submitted. If the membership votes not to accept the selection of the executive board, that vote shall be vetoed, and a new selection must be made no later than 2 months after the veto. The new nominee for president cannot ¹be the same person who was vetoed at the last general membership meeting. If the membership accepts the Executives Board's vote, that selection shall be made President.

New Business:

Motion by Michael Long, Seconded by Suzi Boyd to reconsider the motion made in January regarding sending the officers and 10 stewards to the All Craft Conference. Discussion. Carried.

Motion by Michael Long, Seconded by: Brittany Thompson to amend the original motion to change it to read: To send up to 19 officers and stewards to the..." Discussion. Carried.

Motion as now amended: "To send up to 19 officers and stewards to the 2025 All- Craft Conference- October 6 - 8 (with travel on Oct 5/Oct 9) and (with 1 person 35 and under) to attend the Young Members Conference (October 3rd and 4th; and the Recording Secretary to the Legislative/Political Conference (October 5th) to include lost time, registration, lodging, flight and parking, per diem, transportation RT to and from hotel/ airport (Vegas); mileage RT to and from airport in GR". Carried as amended.

E-Board Recommendations: None

Labor Management: If you have anything for Labor Management, please let your Craft Directors or the President 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 #70 Breon Carter (If he was at this meeting/he would have won!)

COPA: 50/50 Drawing: \$200.00 total collected. \$100.00 to the winner – Ann Hill-Graves

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 Pat Hockey
2. # 15 Tyshanica Patterson
3. # 30 Rick Cotton
4. # 01 Rickey Jackson
5. # 17 Smitha Varghese

Motioned to adjourn by David Janes seconded by Suzi Boyd Carried

The meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arcanda Jenurof". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Recording Secretary