

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

General Membership Meeting Minutes
September 6, 2008

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.

Number of Members in Attendance: 28

The following officers were present:

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

The following officers were not present: **Associate Office Director** – Jack Fryling

June's General Membership Meeting minutes were accepted as printed with the following corrections: Terrance Teng should have stated "He." Martha Church (Jenison) new member is from the Maintenance craft, not the Clerk Craft as stated.

Applications for Membership:

Judith E. Fitzgerald (Clerk – Grand Rapids)
Lakisha Frye (Clerk – Grand Rapids)

Bills: None

Officer's Report

Treasurer's Report was read for August 2008. Motion to accept. Carried.

President's Report: Thank everyone for coming to this month's meeting. We are on a roll; have had a quorum each month. We have recently come back from the National convention where much was done/conducted. The delegates performed their duties in an outstanding manner. Bill Young, National Letter Carriers Union came and spoke at the convention. This was a first for both conventions, since President Burrus was invited to their convention. Prior to the convention, there was a President's conference which was scheduled from 7 – midnight on Sunday night. It was a packed house. It restated some items from the National President Conference. President Burrus stated that he would not talk to or meet with any member one-on-one. President Page met with Burrus after that comment and stated his displeasure with that comment.

Management here in Grand Rapids is trying to intimidate employees into filling out the VOE surveys by bringing in a group of employees. We need to continue to NOT filling out these surveys. You do not have to fill them out; no matter what management states. The new Postmaster is known for raising the percentage of VOE surveys. We strongly recommend that you thank your supervisor for giving you the survey, take it with you, and then submit it for your chance to win one of the \$100 prizes at the December meeting.

We are in the midst of a major realignment in Grand Rapids (mainly at the P1).

Some might be aware of the issues at the Kentwood office regarding alleged embezzlement by one of our clerk members. The news media has caught wind of it. Please keep this employee in your prayers. If you are approached for any comment, please direct them to me or the Clerk Craft Director.

At the National Convention, the APWU, following the National Executive Board, has chosen to endorse Senator Obama for President of the United States. This was unanimously supported by the delegates at the convention.

We received a \$93,000 bill from Medicare due to an erroneous payment they made. They listed us as an employer of one member, and the husband of a member. Blue Cross and Blue Shield had them as a covered person and is working to find out why this payment was made, and to absolve us.

The Postal Service has issued a directive regarding shirts and buttons for Political action. It is a violation of the Hatch Act for any employee to wear any political items on the workroom floor. Even if you are off-the clock, but wearing a Postal uniform, you are still not allowed to wear any political items on your person.

Jack Fryling, Bill Scutt and I will be going out to Holland this week due to their own realignment. They are dancing around major violations. Management is under the assumption that as long as they don't boot anyone out of the office, they can circumvent some of the provisions of the contract.

While we are at the National Convention, President Burrus made point of Parliamentary procedures. Personal Privilege is only allowed to discuss the motion at hand. We will ensure that this is followed here locally when someone speaks on a motion or asks to speak.

Vice-President's Report: I would like to thank the membership for sending me as a delegate to the National Convention. I went through many items that were motion in my article in the local publication.

The delegates that were in attendance did a great job. There were new first-time delegates. In the resolution book, many of the resolutions were from Michigan. On Wednesday; Senator Obama spoke to the delegates via satellite. One of the things that I found really nice is that the next President needs to be someone that doesn't choke on the word "Union." On Thursday, some of the delegates went and protested the local Goin' Postal stores to object to the name and the contracting out of our work.

Bill and I have been constantly attending Job Summits to ensure items were discussed (e.g. Principle Assignment areas, etc.); changing errors (e.g. Closed section, open bid, etc.). If you see a bid job posted, but it isn't awarded, it is possible that it was pulled due to one of these problems, and it will go back up the next cycle.

Over the summer, we attended the Realignment meetings. We made a definite impact as to the number that was affected. Since we gave input, we ensured a minimum impact to the membership. We have asked to see the Pre-Awards for this bid cycle to ensure that the provisions of the contract are filed.

Associate Offices. POOMs in the District are trying to reduce clerk hours in various offices, and in turn, reducing clerk hours. It is unbelievable. Some of the clerks will call the union to let us know and to file a grievance; however, many won't. You need to make sure you contact your steward to save your jobs. Don't let a rural carrier or your postmaster do you job, even for one minute.

COPA drawing. As of today, the local has raised \$2,362. We still have tickets; the drawing is at next month's meeting. If you don't have your tickets, make sure you get them.

George Hendricks asked if most of the clerks at the AO are Full-Time or part-time. Amy responded that while we do have some full-time; most are Part-time. Management is trying to reduce hours across the board and increase their hours on the window and performing clerk work. On a clerk N/S day, the Postmaster is doing the work, instead of getting a Hub clerk to do the work. Some of the clerks are scared to speak up in fear of reprisal; don't be afraid, stand up for your work.

Recording Secretary: Thanks for sending us to the National Convention. We need to get out and volunteer for the candidates that support Labor and its positions.

Clerk Craft Director: Thank you for sending me to the National Convention. While we didn't always agree, we put on a united front.

The Postal Inspectors are helping management trying to get rid of employees out of the Post Office. Make sure you follow all procedures. Do NOT take any short cuts. Don't worry about the customers wait times. You have to do everything by the book and follow all procedures.

There are a lot of jobs posted. If you fail to rebid any job in your former section or job level, even one, you lose your retreat rights.

Congratulations to George Folk for his settlement for the Bone Table. Roy Bailey is doing an outstanding job in the stations. Kudos to both.

Detroit is excessing 13 clerks out of 100 miles. If we were not pro-active during this realignment, this could have been us. We know the hours are not the best; however, the jobs are here.

Maintenance Craft Director: Thank everyone for sending us to Vegas. This democratic process within our union is one of the most vital functions we can perform. The delegates did a good job. After the convention, I stayed another day and attended the APWU Search class. This has already resulted in fruition. I had several comments regarding the amount of submissions from Michigan. We definitely made our mark

While at the convention, I tried to make contact the President the Norman Area Local for the first few days. I finally got a hold of him, struck up a friendship and have an understanding that if there is an issue while there, he would be there to help. If you have some problems, even though it isn't the responsibility of the Norman local, they are going to be there to help.

We are having some staffing issues. We have the packages done, the routes done. Management is finally finding out that it isn't working. If someone is scheduled for more than 7.2 hours of work; you need to see your steward and file a grievance. The stewards are working really hard and we are winning. We are still fighting for Mechanized routes.

In 2002, a level 3 custodian out of Holland was denied a promotion. This was grieved, and just arbitrated. We won. He is now promoted to a MM7 with back pay to 2002.

Realignment has gone pretty well. The worse we had been ½ hour time changes.

Last holiday, Dick and I had a meeting with Susan (Plant Manager) and Art Hotchkiss (Maintenance Manager). Sue kept saying it is a budget issue. We are not budget, we are mathematical.

Motor Vehicle Craft Director: Thanks for sending me and the other delegates. Welcome to the MVS and congrats to Tracy Fleming for being certified as a new steward.

At the National Convention, I had the opportunity to sit down with some of the National NBAs. While we aren't being hit as hard as others in the nation. One of the big issues locally is the Highway contract routes and the stops that are being added to them. This is cutting down our work.

Another major issue is when others (e.g. Clerks, Carriers, etc) running the mail to other offices/stations. This is a MVS job. If you are asked and run mail to another office, make sure to let the union know so someone can be paid.

It is nice that the lines at P1 and downtown are finally done and have been painted. It is difficult to back up a truck without some guides.

Sergeant at Arms Report: Thanks for sending us to the National Convention.

Committee Reports:

A&E: The Picnic was a great success. Thanks to all the volunteers and those who showed up. We will be reserving the park next year. The Golf Outing; we were down from last year in the amount of teams, and unfortunately it rained. We could only get in 4 ½ holes. However, we were able to still donate \$5,000 to the American Diabetes Association. The Tigers Trip...it was a good turn out and we had a good time.

Correspondence:

Card from Ed Lesewicz thanking the local for his retiree recognition and his gift.

Card from the Detroit Tigers recognizing our local at the game.

Letter from Labor Heritage Society regarding the fall Golf Outing for the Spirit of Solidarity Monument.

Old/Unfinished Business: None

New Business:

E-Board Recommendations: No recommendations at this meeting.

The floor was opened up for new business:

Motion by Bill Scutt, Seconded Jim Smith to send Nancy Gingery to the APWU Hard and Hearing Educational Seminar from October 23 – 25, 2008 in Dearborn with Lost Time, Registration, Per Diem, Travel, and Lodging. Carried.

Motion by: Bill Scutt, Seconded by Roy Bailey as going on record to support Senator Barak Obama for President of the United States. Carried (Unanimously).

Motion by: Bill Scutt, Seconded by Jim Smith to reimburse Bill Scutt \$199.50 for a fare change for the National Convention. Carried

Motion by: David Janes, Seconded by: Sally Lesiewicz: The WMAL post awards/wins that we receive and are posted on the bulletin boards, meeting minutes, etc. Amendment by: Bill Scutt, Seconded: Nancy Gingery: The three craft directors prepare a report on a monthly basis. Was accepted as a friendly amendment by the maker of the original motion: "The WMAL post awards (wins) that the local receive and the three craft directors prepare the report and post it on a monthly basis." Carried.

Motion by: George Hendricks, Seconded by: Al Matchovich to include the summary awards in the Union Newsletter. Carried.

Constitution changes: There is one constitution change that was submitted and signed by at least seven members in Good Standing regarding Article 11, Section 2. (See Attached).

President Page has stated that he would acknowledge the Retiree Chapter President under and following the officer reports in future meetings. The retiree's committee was invited to give their report at this time.

Retiree Committee/Chapter Report: (*George Hendricks, Retiree's Chapter President*) First of all: Apology to Al Matchovich for not acknowledging him at the retiree meeting.. Thanks to the local for supplying the Retiree chapter for \$500 for the 10 year anniversary. At the National Convention, I attended the MVS craft conference. I think we don't say that often is that MVS is the most highly organized craft in the APWU. Also at this convention, for me, it was one of the most disappointing conventions I have seen regarding Retiree issues. Only one resolution was passed; not even one to change a name.

Labor Management: September 18th is the meeting. See your Steward or Officers if you have anything to add. To ensure that captioning is on full-time

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

\$250.00 Attending the Meeting Drawing. #692 – Jim Smith (We finally had a winner!)

COPA: \$54.00 totally collected. \$27.00 to the winner - #670494 – Jackie Pike

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)

#26 – Tracy Fleming
#15 – Brian Ratigan
#6 – Rose Jerrials
#21 – Amy Puhalski
#1 – Doug Warren

Meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Yours in Solidarity,



Michael A. Long
Recording Secretary

Constitution Changes

ARTICLE 11

DELEGATES TO CONVENTIONS

Current Language Reads:

Section 2 The President and Craft Directors of this Local shall be elected a delegate to State and National Conventions of the APWU at the time of election to office.

Proposed Change to Read:

ARTICLE 11, SECTION 2

To change the first sentence to read: **The President or his/her designee and Craft Directors of this Local shall be elected a compensated delegate to State and National Conventions of the APWU at the time of election to office.**

1. Thomas Papp

2. William Scott

3. Ed A. Van H.

4. Sally Insiewicz

5. MA C. Mathis

6. Nancy C. Fone

7. F. Bailey

8. Jim Smith

9. Michael Nido