

Regular Meeting #3 Minutes - 9/30/2020, Wednesday, 6 P.M.

The May meeting is the second meeting of the year, however, due to COVID-19 restrictions, we were not allowed to meet in May of 2020.

Meeting place: Via Zoom/telecom.

Members present: 16 (10 general members, 6 associates).

Our President, Sabir (Jamal) Salih, called the meeting to order at 6 P.M. with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Victor Giorgio.

Roll Call of Officers: Sabir (Jamal) Salih, President; Shaun Branch, Vice President; Barbara Bouchard, Secretary; and Sue Evans, Treasurer; Donna Machala, Legislative Representative – all present.

Executive Board members present: Victor Giorgio, Kristine Moore, and Dave Costa

Excused: Al Kesack and Jessica Sargo

Joining us tonight is Chuck Narciso, UPMA President.

First Timers: There were none in attendance.

Shaun Branch gave the Vice President's report: Shaun said we currently have seven disciplinary cases to report.

Motion to accept the Vice President's report: The motion was made by Bob Conroy, Jr., and seconded by Donna Machala. All were in favor.

Treasurer's report by Sue Evans: Sue said so far this year we have spent \$10,606.18. We have \$52,219.44 in assets, which is the highest she has ever seen it. Our balance after receiving income and deducting expenses year-to-date is \$7,942.90. Dave Costa asked if there is a cap to the amount of assets we are allowed to have. Sue said she will look into this. Bob Conroy, Jr., asked if we are considered a non-profit as far as incoming earnings are concerned. We would not want to incur an IRS penalty. Sue said she will research this.

Vic asked if we are able to donate additional funds to SPAC since our treasury balance is high. Jamal said no, we are prohibited from doing that. Individuals only can donate to SPAC, not branches.

Motion to accept the Treasurer's report: Made by Dave Costa, and seconded by Bob Conroy, Jr. All were in favor.

Barbara Bouchard gave the Secretary's Report: Barbara said that as of the most recent DCO dated September 30, 2020, we have 145 general members and 21 associate members for a total of 166. We have 20 non-members. The Branch received a thank you letter from the American Red Cross for our \$500 donation to them that they received in June 2020. We recently received a letter from the Lt Governor of RI Daniel McKee, regarding the 18th Annual Operation Holiday Cheer. Due to COVID, the RI National Guard does not have any units scheduled for November deployment or the upcoming year. As a result, they will support the RI Military Family Relief Fund. This will assist military members impacted by the pandemic. They appreciate our continued support. Additionally, we have received three scholarship submissions.

Jamal said he's been working cooperatively with Branch 43 in order to sign-up new supervisors at the very beginning of their appointments. As a result, there are an additional eight people currently on the non-member list they were able to sign up. Jamal will get the 1187s to Barbara. Jamal also wanted to acknowledge Bob Conroy, Jr., for his comments and participation in the New Supervisor Program.

Motion to accept the Secretary's report: Made by Donna Machala and seconded by Vic Giorgio, and all were in favor.

Donna Machala gave the Legislative Report: Jamal and I attended the Legislative Training Seminar (LTS) in Washington DC from March 8 – 11, 2020. Our LTS event occurred prior to the President's issuance of his March 16th guidelines recommending avoidance of social gatherings in groups of more than 10 people. NAPS Headquarters notified LTS attendees on March 31st that there was one attendee at LTS who tested positive on March 27th with COVID-19. We were asked to take steps to ensure that we stay as healthy as possible and were provided with CDC guidelines. We didn't hear of anyone else testing positive.

At the LTS, we heard from Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), Chair of the House Committee on Oversight and Reform. She was working on several projects: a bill for employees to enroll in Medicare, to streamline the Postal Service, and to enhance revenue and efficiency. Representative Maloney looked forward to moving toward solvency.

We also heard from Rep. James Clyburn (D-SC), House Majority Whip has always been and will continue to be in favor of six-day delivery, is against privatizing, and is doing what's necessary to protect working men and women in this country. He looked at the Pledge of Allegiance: came to be in 1942, named Pledge of Allegiance in 1945, last phrase "with liberty and justice for all". For this country's greatness, he wants to make accessible and affordability for all – no matter if it's healthcare, education, or housing.

We also heard from Bob Levy, Director of Legislative and Political Affairs for NAPS, provided an update on 6085 which is the Postal Supervisor and Manager Fairness Act, to require timely start of the consultation process. NAPS provided the Postal Regulatory Commission with CPI measurement for the Postal Service to be measured as CPI-Delivery instead of being measured/bundled with sales of toothpaste, toilet paper, and automobiles. We are still awaiting legislation for Postal Relief, and we need the repeal of prefunding by the Senate, need flexibility with rate setting, need to protect universal service, and there's an urgent need for Postal reform and say no to privatization.

Ron Stroman, former Deputy Postmaster General, told us to make our voice heard in the House. He was optimistic we will get this done. Postal Service is critical to America. Mr. Stroman answered many questions from the attendees.

Jamal and I met with each of our RI senators and congressmen and their staff. We were able to attend Congressman Langevin's fundraising luncheon on Tuesday while in DC. This was funded by NAPS HQ. We received a letter from Congressman Langevin thanking NAPS for our generous contribution to his reelection campaign. Our visits with the senators, congressmen, and their legislative reps are welcomed and always a pleasure as they are very supportive of our efforts on behalf of the NAPS members.

The latest bill, introduced August 11, 2020, is H.R.8015, Delivering for America Act, which had 222 co-sponsors (including our RI Congressmen) signing on to restore levels of service and operations to those in effect prior to January 1, 2020.

Senate bipartisan bill 4174, Postal Service Emergency Assistance Act, was introduced July 2, 2020, to provide the Postal Service with much-needed financial relief to help offset the impact of COVID-19. NAPS Vice President Ivan Butts commented on the bill's introduction, stating NAPS applauds and fully supports the introduction of this bill. It speaks directly to the voice of America for the sustainability of the Postal Service as an essential provider of medicines and other goods in today's environment. Senate bill 4174 provides the USPS with up to \$25 billion in COVID-19-related emergency funding, clarified that the \$10 billion loan previously

authorized in the CARES Act would be subject to the same conditions extended in previous loans (i.e., no new Treasury Department conditions). NAPS requests all its members to urge their Senators to support S 4174 and requests that Senate leadership include the bill's provisions in the COVID-19 legislative package currently being crafted. This bill was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

There are so many bills to keep up with, that I created a spreadsheet with the bill name, bill number, number of co-sponsors, and a brief update. If anyone is interested in receiving a copy, please let me know.

H.R. 2, Moving Forward Act, introduced on June 11, 2020 by Representative Peter DeFazio (D-OR), has 129 co-sponsors including our RI Congressmen. This legislation would provide funds to invest in national infrastructure. The bill includes \$25 billion for the Postal Service to invest in innovative mail processing equipment and new delivery vehicles, including \$6 billion earmarked for "next generation" electric vehicles.

H.R. 7015, Postal Preservation Act, has 32 co-sponsors, is bipartisan legislation that would authorize a \$25B emergency appropriation to the USPS and prioritize the acquisition of PPE for frontline Postal employees.

H.R.6800, Heroes Act, includes \$25 billion for USPS and eliminates loan conditions related to H.R.748 signed into law.

H.R.6085, Postal Supervisor and Manager Fairness Act, requires the timely start of consultative process. Introduced March 4th, by Jerry Conley.

I was on a Zoom meeting with Bob Levy, encouraging us to reach out to our congressional leaders. I wrote to each of them for their support of NAPS supported legislation. I also wrote to Governor Raimondo asking for her support in Vote by Mail. Contacting members of Congress is key; numbers matter. They look to their office staff for the number of calls or letters received on issues they will vote on. Be sure your voice is heard, contact your representative.

SPAC contributions can be made at NAPS.org, or there is a form available in the Postal Supervisor magazine. Payroll deduction is also available.

Motion to accept the Legislative Report: Made by Bob Conroy, Sr., and seconded by Betty DiSalvia. All were in favor.

Jamal said he had asked Lisa Douglas to join us tonight but she has a prior commitment. She will try to call in if possible. He wanted her to address what happened with the NAPS lawsuit on EAS compensation. She participated in the telecoms on this topic.

Old Business: Jamal reminded everyone to send in your scholarship forms by November 1st.

New Business:

Jamal said he intends to continue to use Zoom even after we are able to meet in person again. This will be another way for people to be involved even if they are unable to attend in person.

Barbara said we need to appoint this year's scholarship committee. Jamal asked if we have any volunteers and do we just need two people? Kristine Moore said she would do it again this year. Sue said the by-laws says three people. Bob Conroy, Jr., and Dave Costa also volunteered. Jamal asked what is the requirement for the winner? Sue said to produce transcripts or proof of enrollment. Jamal asked what is the relationship? Sue said child or grandchild. Mr. Conroy, Sr. said the Constitution says "any child, grandchild or ward of any Active or Associate member..."

Dave asked hadn't we discussed increasing the scholarship amount? Jamal said we had

discussed that at a prior meeting, but no action had been taken on it. Dave proposed that we consider giving two \$500 scholarships. Sue Evans said if this is voted as a change, it would be effective for next year (2021). Bob Conroy, Sr., offered to put the request in writing and get it to Barbara. Dave said it's good to consider this since we have the money in the treasury. Sue said we do not get very many requests in, and we may not have this extra money next year or in future years.

Bob Conroy, Jr., made the proposed change as follows to Article XI of the Constitution:

“Whereas Article XI, Section 1, states:

Section 1. (a) The primary purpose of this fund is to provide progeny of NAPS Branch 105 members in the pursuit of their education. One scholarship award each year shall be given as the ‘NAPS Branch 105 Dean Ambrosino Memorial Scholarship.’”

Add: Whereas, the Branch has funds available to provide additional scholarships for the membership. Therefore, be it resolved that Article XI, Section 1, read:

Section 1.(a) The primary purpose of this fund is to provide progeny of NAPS Branch 105 members in the pursuit of their education. Two scholarships be awarded each year and given as the ‘NAPS Branch 105 Dean Ambrosino Memorial Scholarship.’”

Jamal said we will discuss this at the next meeting and then vote on the change.

Barbara said we have a vacant position on the executive board. Please email him or Barbara if you are interested in being considered to serve on the board. It will then be considered at the next eboard meeting. Joanne Keeling asked who resigned from the board, and Jamal said it was Gregg Anderson.

Jamal wanted to discuss possibilities for our next meeting. General discussion regarding the requirements to be able to meet in person within the State of RI guidelines. Betty said she thought the limit for outside was 50. John DeFusco said they had a recent VFW meeting with social distancing, wearing masks, and no food, with windows open in their facility. Chuck said Phase 3 in RI says 50 people can be in a restaurant or catered. Jamal said he will check more into this for our November meeting.

Jamal asked for questions, and Victor asked about the lawsuit. Jamal said it was rejected by the court as being the wrong path for NAPS to take. NAPS does plan to appeal the ruling. It takes Congress to change Title 39 which covers EAS pay. NAPS filed an appeal as of September 15th.

Jamal asked Bob Conroy, Jr., to discuss operations in Providence. In the Plant, staffing has been an issue with COVID leave. There have been machine reductions but that was put on hold. Some facilities were able to reactivate machines for the Fall mailing season. We do have an additional flat sorter. We are over the cap for MHAs and PSEs. We expect packages to increase this Fall by 30%. We are seeing a lot of oversized packages coming in which have to be sorted manually. So NMOs will increase as a result. Projections are that people like ordering on line and will continue to do so. I never thought we would be in the middle of a battle with the politicians and the President on election mail occurring during a pandemic. The unions are here to help us during this. Bob encouraged everyone to bring up any problems you have with mail flow right away. Jeanne Jackson is meeting frequently with the Secretary of State in RI. Mass. is different in that their ballots go back to the respective towns. The BRM piece seems to go smoothly. Ballots will be released on October 5th. More to come on that. Monday's are still bad for the plants. You can take up to 12 weeks of COVID-19 leave for child care, and some are going beyond that. This has been a heavy impact on the plants. We will send the 025/026 mail to Wareham for the Christmas season.

Jamal said for EAS in the field, make sure your mail is cleared every night. Follow

procedures. This will be an historic election, so make sure you do everything by the book. Do the right thing. Dave Costa asked at what point will we be isolating the election mail, and Bob said just that last week and November 3rd. We capture as much as we can from the carriers, then Jeanne Jackson will take it to the Board of Elections by 8 P.M. Vic asked if we are supposed to be cancelling the ballots, and Bob said only the ones coming over the window. There's been no directive on that so far.

Jamal said you have probably heard about the structural changes. There are no more areas; there are regions now: Atlantic, Southeast, Central, and Western. We are part of the Atlantic Region. The new PMG came in June and looked at the middle layer of management, and by October, the areas were gone. We all have a front seat to see what will happen. With new EAS coming in, we are seeing different issues, so we have been very busy with discipline. Lots of generational issues. Instructions are not being followed, rules are not being enforced. As EAS, we have an obligation to do our job. If you see something, say something. I've mentioned this many times, do not use your personal phone to contact craft employees. Use RIMS or communicate in person. Cases are not being adjudicated in a timely manner. I want to remind everyone to use EAP if needed; it's a good tool. It's also a free service, so use it if you need help with something. Help each other. I thank you for what you do every day.

Dave brought up an issue that he heard about in his POOM group relative to following instructions, and it was discussed. Bob Conroy, Jr., said to fix the problems occurring on the weekends to get the failures under control.

Jamal said the new district is not as pro-active with hiring as CTV was, and now we are adding COVID restrictions into the mix. It's been frustrating.

Chuck said rural inspections and route inspections with management riding in the same vehicles with the carrier is an issue now with COVID. We are being told to ride in a separate vehicle with the DCD and clipboards, and ask questions. We hear about safety, but are told to do that. On that note, Rich Wilson asked about using mPOS in the lobby during the holidays. It puts you in close contact with the customers. Jamal advised him to email his Postmaster for clarification on that.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Donna Machala, and was seconded by Dave Costa, at 7:35 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara A. Bouchard
NAPS Secretary