

## **NAPS Branch 105**

**Meeting #1 Minutes – 02/10/2015**

**Tuesday, February 10, 2015**

**Lancellotta's Restaurant – North Providence, RI 02904.**

**Members present: 24**

**Pledge of Allegiance led by Al Kesak**

**Roll Call of Officers:** Michaela Saccoccio, Brian Holt, Nancy Walkden, Sue Evans, Donna Machala, Victor Giorgio, Betty DiSalvia, Cy Dumas.

Not present/Excused: Colleen Sherratt, Frank Halm, Rose Russo, Joanne Keeling.

**NAPS 105 President Michaela Saccoccio** recognized EAP Representative Kathy McKenna. Kathy thanked Michaela for inviting her, and spoke about stress and change and how it affects performance in the workplace. She said that Domestic Violence has become a hot topic, and that there would likely be more materials about the topic coming from EAP. She said we all know how it can impact the workplace. She also spoke about continuing the suicide prevention initiative and how talking about it seemed to be making a difference. Kathy urged EAS employees to contact EAP if they knew of anyone needing help. She also spoke about Coaching Services, and that it would be useful for employees thinking about retirement as well as those seeking upward mobility. She said coaching services are often very informal and employees could participate over the phone, through email, as well as face to face. She also urged us to call the 1-800 phone number if there was a crisis in an office. At any time, employees would be able to talk with a trained counselor ready to give immediate assistance.

Michaela echoed Kathy's advice, saying that she had received a phone call from someone who needed assistance, and mentioned that it could be scary being on the receiving end of a troubled phone call. She also said that Domestic Violence and Suicide are often employee problems that go unnoticed. Kathy said that we are the eyes and ears of the workplace and should offer assistance to employees who might be going through difficult times. Michaela said as Supervisors and Managers, we should refrain from underestimating the situation and seek help with EAP.

Michaela explained that the scheduled speaker, NE Area HR Manager Ann Mailloux, was unable to make it to the meeting, given the bad weather and road conditions. However, Ann did give Michaela some comments to read to NAPS 105 members.

**Nancy Walkden gave the Secretary's Report.** She said that NAPS 105 currently has 145 Regular Members, and 32 Associate Members. She told us that NAPS 105 received holiday greetings from Senator Jack Reed and his family, from NAPS Branch 43, from NAPS HQ Executives Louis Atkins, Ivan Butts, and Brian Wagner. She said we also received a thank you note from Ivan Butts for having him as a guest speaker at our last general meeting. Nancy said we also received a request for donations from the American Cancer Society, and a catalogue of

travel options from Conway Tours. Motion to accept Secretary's report: Bob Conroy Sr. Seconded by Donna Machala.

**Donna Machala gave the Legislative Report** in Frank Halm's absence. Donna told us that Michaela and Frank would be meeting with Senators Reed and Sheldon, and Congressmen Cicilline and Langevin during the 2015 Legislative Training Session taking place March 9 – 11th. She said that the 114th Congress will have a different look due to new leaders, new postal oversight committees, and new agendas. Both first-timer and veteran LTS delegates will receive an intensive orientation on the new Congress and emerging postal legislation. They they'll head to Capitol Hill to educate Congress about what postal reform means through innovation and service quality, strengthened by financial stability.

Donna said that common-sense reforms lie at the heart of NAPS' legislative agenda, and that the USPS needs to innovate in order to survive. She said that as First Class mail volume continues to decline, LTS delegates will educate Congress on why it needs to permit the USPS to adapt by growing new lines of business, including banking, enhanced mail products, and government services.

Donna stressed the need to preserve service quality. Building tomorrow's postal system requires the preservation of speed and reliability, the hallmarks of service quality and business success. LTS delegates will speak to Congress about the need for the USPS to remain a speedy messenger and courier, reliant on a robust processing and transportation network that preserves customer loyalty and assures a stronger bottom line.

Donna mentioned strength through financial stability. She said continued USPS financial losses are chiefly the result of excessive Congressional mandates, draining the USPS of the capital necessary to upgrade its fleet, modernize its network, and expand its product lines. LTS delegates will urge Congress to temper those mandates and return to the USPS its pension overpayments, making the USPS financially stronger.

Donna also urged us to take action to stop the slowdown of mail. She said that NAPS wants its members to contact House members and ask them to support a one-year Moratorium on the closure of 82 Mail Processing Centers, the preservation of First Class mail delivery standards, and the continuation of comprehensive postal reform.

Motion to accept the legislative report: Bob Conroy Jr. Seconded: Skip Delsesto

**Treasurer Sue Evans gave the Financial Report.** She said we only had one expense in December, the NAPS 105 Scholarship which brought totals for the year to \$26,206.14. Sue said this was actually \$636.00 below budget, and for a Convention year was amazing. She thanked everyone who helped keep the expenses so low. She said as of the end of December, the checking account is \$2283.93, and the savings account is currently \$387.20. The NAPS 105 Money Market account is currently \$27,589.93. She said we came out in the black between income and expenses.

Motion to accept the treasurer report: Victor Giorgio. Seconded by Andre Maynard.

Michaela extended her thanks to the Executive Board and others who attended events during the last year for keeping Branch costs low. She said sharing rooms during NAPS events has been effective in keeping expenses to a minimum. Michaela also commented on how good counts for NAPS general meetings keeps food costs low and definitely helps with our bottom line.

Michaela spoke about Dave Mastroianni's recent Connecticut Valley Revenue letter. She said the letter showed that we had a successful holiday season, tried new strategies that paid off, and provided the service our customers paid for. Revenue showed us at 1.6 million over plan for the month, and 8.1 for the year. Dave asked us to keep up the good work and thanked us.

Michaela also mentioned that Jack Reed's Annual Breakfast Event will be held on Sunday, April 19, 2015 @ 10:00 at Rhodes on the Pawtuxet in Cranston. She said we normally get funding as a Platinum sponsor with a table for 10, so if anyone wanted to go to the breakfast, they should contact a member of the executive board. She said it's not a lot of food, but you will see a lot of people, including many who can push our agenda forward.

Michaela mentioned some of the most recent additions to the NAPS 105 Website. NAPS Branch Paperwork Retention Periods were added, as well as a brochure regarding benefits. Nancy reminded members that beneficiary election forms were also available on the website. Bob Conroy Sr. also mentioned that there was something available on the OPM website that, when requested, gave an individual breakdown of benefits. He said he didn't have the site with him but would get back to members, but that everyone should go on the site to get updated and useful personal information and give a copy to spouses.

Michaela shared NE Area HR Manager Ann Mailloux's words with members. She said that Ann wanted to say hello to Branch 105 members. Ann said that the NE Area was still number 1 in the country regarding injury/accident frequency rates. Ann said that the past few weeks have been very difficult with an increase in vehicle accidents. She said that we all needed to work diligently to reduce the number of motor vehicle accidents by analyzing accident data and putting tactics in place to address what the data reveals. Michaela told us that Ann also mentioned that the VOE Survey has been replaced. The new survey, being done by the Gallup Organization, will measure employee engagement. It will now be called "The Postal Pulse." It will be given to all employees, career and non-career, and data will be available to all offices who can then make improvements based on employee feedback. She said that the first survey will be done at the end of March, and communication and training regarding the survey will be coming soon. She said this is a major step forward for the USPS. The Unions were also briefed on the survey and are on board, which should reduce previous participation resistance.

Michaela said that she knew a bit about the survey, and that we should stay tuned. Bob Conroy Jr. said that EAS employees may receive the survey via email, but craft employees would be getting paper surveys. Michaela said that we should encourage employees to fill out the surveys. Cy Dumas said that he has always been an advocate of improvement and encourages people to use their voice.

Break for Dinner at 6:34

Meeting resumed at 7:09

**NAPS 105 Vice President Brian Holt** told us that he was aware of two EAS employee incidents, one involving discipline, and another that possibly could involve discipline. He'll know more at the next meeting as to where it stands. He said Michaela was currently advocating for both of them. Brian emphasized that NAPS needs to know about these things so they can work on a solution, and urged members to contact NAPS about discipline; whether you were issuing it or receiving it.

Michaela echoed Brian's words about contacting NAPS, especially before something gets out of hand.

Cy Dumas spoke about discipline. He said that he is currently involved in three removal cases in Connecticut Valley. He said all three individuals were interviewed, either by postal inspectors, senior management, or investigative teams, without NAPS representation. Cy said that if NAPS people are involved early, situations could possibly be minimized and people could potentially keep their jobs. He said that if anyone knows of someone going through a difficult situation, they should be told to contact NAPS right away and refuse to be interviewed without representation.

Cy spoke about employee concerns regarding new PMG Meghan Brennan. He said that he was really pleased that they stayed with an insider, since the problems we are dealing with would be overwhelming for someone without a strong postal background. Cy said that PMB Brennan is a wonderful person, and that he received a handwritten "get well" card after his heart attack last year. He said that New England will benefit from her leadership, since she spent a good amount of her career here, and has brought many leaders from the New England area to be part of her staff at headquarters. He said one of the latest members to join her team is John Godlewski. Cy said that John was the manager of HR in Northern New England for about 10 years, and is very responsive. Cy said John was promoted to District Manager of Northern New England only about 6 months ago, and said he was surprised to see him move to HQ so soon. Cy said that John now has one of the highest positions in Human Resources, so he will have a lot of impact on all HR initiatives.

Cy said that all Meghan Brennan was the brains behind the post-plan and restructuring that we are currently undergoing. He said that she has taken more hard questions than anyone he has seen coming out of L'Enfant Plaza.

Cy spoke about USPS's having EAS utilize their personal vehicles for work. He said NAPS is pushing back on that and advises everyone not to voluntarily do anything with your vehicle in terms of your duty. He said legally, they cannot force you to do that, and it would cause too many problems.

Cy said he believes the Northeast Area currently has 500 vacancies for EAS, and Connecticut Valley has 78 vacancies as of February 2015. He said he has had some calls from Branch Offices regarding open level 17 positions being available to craft employees, but said that there

are insufficient EAS that can lateral over into those positions. He feels that these vacancies are creating big holes that result in more hardships for current EAS employees. He said we should try to encourage craft employees to apply for open EAS positions. Cy said that CCA's, PSE's, and MHA's are not eligible to apply for EAS positions since they are not career employees, however, it's possible that, in those parts of the country experiencing difficulty filling positions, external hiring may be implemented. Then non-career positions like CCA's could apply and would be better than someone off the street because they would already have postal experience. Cy said we should encourage those people who show interest. He suggested giving interested employees our Postal Supervisor Magazine to provide more information to those seeking upward mobility.

Cy spoke more about the Postal Supervisor magazine, mentioning those who write articles. He said that latest edition had "a lot of meat and potatoes." He said that the article, Building a Winning Team, should be shared with others. He said the writers in this issue were all good NAPS members, including his friend Tommy Roma. He said Tommy absolutely cares for the people that he represents and that's the thrust behind everything he brings to the table.

Cy spoke about SPAC, saying that it's been a long time since Rhode Island was number 1 for per capita. He said Rhode Island was number 1 in the country for 2014, which indicates payroll deductions, raffles, etc.

He said that Postal Supervisor article by the former PMG was also worth reading.

Cy said that the 2014 budget and financial reports for Branch 105 were terrific. He said that Branch 105 always has quality networking and quality meals at their meetings. He spoke about other branches' meetings and said that Branch 105 continued to surpass them both with quality of meetings and member participation.

Bob Conroy Sr asked Cy about Postal Supervisor Magazine article writer Dee Perez's background, saying that most of his articles seem to be knocking NAPS resident officers. Cy explained that Dee is an officer in Branch 202 in New York, and is a level 20 Postmaster on Long Island. Cy said that he believes Dee is one of the best Postmasters out there. He said Branch 202 is the second largest NAPS branch in New York State, and the third biggest in the United States. He said Dee was a strong supporter of Jay Killackey, and feels that, absent Jay, there is a lack of information coming from NAPS HQ. Bob Conroy asked how he came to write articles for the magazine. Cy responded that anyone can write for the magazine. Michaela asked who would someone contact regarding getting a password for the NAPS site? Cy said he would suggest contacting Seth Lennon. Betty DiSalvia said there is a link on the NAPS HQ page to apply for a new password.

Michaela asked Cy if there was any news on the VMF Realignment. She said information has been minimal, and has gotten no information from NAPS. Cy said he has sent inquiries, and has written HQ regarding the dearth of information on the realignment. He said between USPS HQ not sharing information, and NAPS not getting it, it has been an embarrassment. He said he was told we would get information this week.

Michaela spoke about thinking about summer vacations and working together with your Managers/Postmasters and acting in advance in order to get your time off.

### **Old Business:**

#### **Audit Committee Report**

Donna Machala said the Audit Committee met on February 3, 2015. She said Sue Evans gave the committee all her financial records and spreadsheets, which they reviewed. Donna said that the records were in great order, except for one outstanding check from October 2014. She said that the committee was made up of herself, Barbara Bouchard, and Regina Delsesto. Donna said they would be submitting the report to the Branch 105 Secretary.

Motion to accept report made by Brian Holt, Seconded by Victor Giorgio.

#### **Budget Committee Report**

Sue Evans, Betty DiSalvia and Rose Russo made up the Budget Committee. Sue said that they met on February 3, 2015. She said this year they are projecting \$10,000.00 for Conventions and training, down from \$15k last year. She said that retiree's gifts would be a guess this year since they had no idea who would be retiring. Meetings, events, the scholarship fund, postage, and reimbursements take up the rest of the budget for a total of \$21,460 for the year. She said that they based income estimates on past DCO's and Money Market dividends to derive a potential annual income total of \$25,690.00. She said that there would be no major convention so it looks like we're going to have a good year. The projection is that we will come in under budget by \$21,460.

Jim Ulinick asked how using email and online reservations for meetings benefited the branch's finances. Michaela and Sue replied that they were using email only through Eventbrite, which is a free service that allows our branch to learn how many will be attending general meetings. Jim asked if we would be phasing out sending minutes and meeting notices through email rather than mailings. Sue said that it was decided that since we represent the US Postal Service, sending mailings made sense. Michaela said that we do everything we can to reduce expenses regarding keeping good address records, using smaller fonts, less heavy paper, etc.

Motion to accept Budget Report: Victor Giorgio. Seconded by Donna Machala.

### **New Business:**

Betty DiSalvia made a motion to spend no more than \$5000.00 in order to send as many interested people as we can to the NE Area Convention. Seconded by Brian Holt.

Michaela gave the gavel to Brian Holt so she could talk about the motion. She said that she believed if we spent more than \$3000 then it required a vote. She said last year, the dollar amount was \$4000, but they had capped attendance to 5. She said several people shared rooms and so more people could have attended for the \$4000. She said that meals are part of the convention, and registration and hotel costs are pretty much the entire cost.

Michaela asked if anyone wanted to speak against the motion. Bob Conroy Sr. asked where Michaela came up with the \$3000.00 limit? Michaela said that she believed it was in the NAPS 105 Charter. Bob said that to his knowledge, it was never approved, only recommended. He

said he would research it when he got home. He said it was an excellent idea to bring it to the membership, but did not recall that it was part of the constitution and bylaws.

Betty DiSalvia looked at the constitution and bylaws for NAPS 105 and said she did not see anything regarding funding the NE Convention, only the National.

Motion was put forward to spend no more than \$5000.00 to send as many interested people as possible to the New England Convention this year. Motion voted on. Motion passed.

Victor Giorgio asked about the status of Pay For Performance. Cy said the next pay schedule talks will be in 2016, so PFP will be in effect till then.

Michaela spoke again about Mohegan Sun, and how that will be the venue for the 2018 NAPS Convention. She said it should be in the back of our minds and will be talked about again and again. Cy said that he's been recommending to New England branches to set aside a fund for three years to put money aside for convention expenses, possibly locking it in with a vote.

Bob Conroy Jr. asked about who would be the host Branch for that convention, and what expenses would the host Branch incur? Cy replied that the host branch hasn't been determined yet, but the probability is that it will be 105. He said it's really going to be like a New England host, and most branches would be happy to participate in the theme of hosting. He said the geography of where our branches are in relation to Mohegan Sun show that approximately 9 branches are within 100 miles, and 7 are within 50/60 miles. Cy said that there is national money that takes care of a lot of expenses that the host branch would incur, but he's not aware of any branches taking a financial bath.

Michaela said that the National NAPS website has information regarding being a host branch for conventions, things that are spelled out on a specific timeline. She said that there are many in New England that have voiced great ideas about what to do for the convention and that she hopes the momentum will still be there when it comes time to do hard planning.

Bob Conroy Sr. asked, "Based on our current membership, how many delegates would be allowed at the National Convention?" Cy and Michaela both answered that there is no limit to the number we could send. Bob asked if there was a formula as to the number of delegates versus votes. Michaela said that the number of votes would be the same regardless of the number of delegates present. Cy said that votes are based on the total number of regular and associate members. Cy said branches get one vote for each 10 members, and that based on Branch 105 membership, we would currently have 18 votes. He said that more than 18 could go to the convention, but would not have voting rights. Cy said that the beauty of Mohegan Sun is that someone wouldn't have to free up 8 days to attend. People could attend at any time. Cy said the last time a National Convention got this close to New England was Boston in 1950.

Michaela said that our next general meeting would be held on May 2, 2015. She said it is a Saturday, and since we talked about having a social event, it seemed like a good time to do Branch business combined with a social event. She said that tickets prices for spouses/guests have not been finalized yet, and we are seeking entertainment choices, but that the venue will be the East Greenwich Veteran Firemen's Club. It has a hall that hold up to 180 people, has a bar, an outside seating area overlooking the bay. She said there are several postal employees who are

musicians who we are looking at right now as possible entertainment. She said hopefully we may get a good crowd and enjoy a meeting along with a nice social event that we can all look forward to.

Michaels said the other General Meeting dates are set at September 16 and November 19, 2015. She said they should be on the website soon.

Michaela asked if there were any members who were first timers at the meeting. Lisa McNally said she hadn't been to one in 6 years, and Al Kesak hadn't been to a meeting in awhile. Everyone welcomed them back.

**50/50 Raffle:** One half benefits SPAC. Proceeds from raffle ticket sales = \$120.00. Jim Ulinick drew the ticket. Victor Giorgio read the number. Member David Girard won \$60.00.

Motion to adjourn made by Bob Conroy Jr. Seconded by Donna Machala.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Walkden