

NAPS Branch 105

**Meeting #4 Minutes – 11/19/2014
Wednesday, November 19, 2014
Kelley Gazzero Post – Cranston, RI 02920.**

Members present: 34

Pledge of Allegiance led by James Maisano

Roll Call of Officers: Michaela Saccoccio, Brian Holt, Nancy Walkden, Sue Evans, Frank Halm, Donna Machala, Joanne Keeling, Victor Giorgio, Betty DiSalvia, Colleen Sherratt, Cy Dumas.

Not present/Excused: Rose Russo.

NAPS 105 President Michaela Saccoccio recognized special guests in attendance: NAPS National Vice President Ivan Butts, Former NAPS National Vice President and NAPS 105 Honorary Member Jay Killackey, and NE Area Vice President Cy Dumas.

Michaela reminded us that there will be a 50/50 raffle tonight, and that NAPS would also be raffling four \$25.00 Stop & Shop gift cards. She told members not to throw away their tickets after the 50/50.

Michaela told us that EAP Coordinator Kathy McKenna could not attend but she did send handouts, one of them dealing with traumatic events. The handouts have been placed on the tables.

Michaela recognized 02904 SCS Eric Thompson who was attending his first official NAPS 105 meeting, and reminded everyone that he had attended a meeting in May 2014, prior to his recent promotion as an acting supervisor.

Treasurer Sue Evans gave the Financial Report. She said we only spent \$225.00 this month, which reflected the registration for the recent NAPS North East Area Training event at Mohegan Sun. Total expenses for the year so far are \$23803.20. Sue told us that this is approximately \$3000.00 under budget, and that this is significant because it was a convention year. She said that out of that \$3000.00, she only expects about \$1600.00 of it to go towards tonight's meal and for rooms for the Connecticut training. However, she said that she was still happy that, bottom line, we would definitely finish the year under budget.

Sue told us that income for the year equals \$20,514.50, and with total expenses, it leaves us in the red for \$3391.83. She did say that with three more DCO's, and reduced expenses, we may be able to pull it out and break even. She also mentioned that the Money Market fund was looking good at \$25,600.64.

Pat Bennett motioned to accept Sue's report. Bob Conroy Jr. seconded.

Michaela extended her thanks to the Executive Board and others who attended events during the last year for keeping costs low by sharing rooms at conferences, driving back and forth to training events, etc. She said it showed their commitment to our members by being fiscally responsible. She said that next year would be just as good if not better.

Nancy Walkden gave the Secretary's Report. She said that NAPS 105 currently has 148 Regular members and 32 Associate members. She said we are signing people up as soon as they are promoted so we are increasing our membership. She and Michaela said NAPS 105 only has 7 non-members, but that we were working on getting them to join as well. Nancy said that NAPS 105 received a brochure from the Narragansett Bay Olive Oil Company, giving NAPS Members a 5% discount, and correspondence from NAPS Headquarters regarding selecting to donate to the Postal Employee Relief Fund during the current CFC drive. She said we also received a "Thank You" note from Jim Langevin for the donation we made to his campaign. Lastly, she said we received 7 applications for the Scholarship that would be drawn at this meeting.

Michaela mentioned that the minutes for the last meeting were mailed out to the members with this meeting's announcement.

Cy Dumas moved to accept the minutes as written. Skip DelSesto seconded. Motion passed.

Break for Dinner at 6:27

Meeting resumed at 6:53

Guest Speaker: NAPS National Vice President – Ivan Butts

Ivan thanked Michaela for the invitation to speak, and for all the support he received at the National Convention. He recognized former National VP, Jay Killackey, saying that he has huge shoes to fill and will do the best he can to carry on Jay's sound leadership for NAPS members. Ivan told us that he joined the USPS in 1983 as an LSM Operator, worked his way up through the ranks in the Plant. He said he became a Supervisor and eventually landed a job in In Plant Support. He told us that he also held details as a Labor Relations Specialist, and a Customer Service Supervisor. Ivan explained that those details really helped to round out his career. In 2009, Ivan said he was ruffed out of 3 separate jobs, and eventually landed as Manager of Resource Management, where he worked until his recent election as Executive Vice President. He said his experiences gave him opportunities to build analytical skills, and he thinks that's one of the things he brings to the table at Headquarters. He said that he believes success can result from researching and correlating issues, and that NAPS HQ should be as data driven as the agency. He said that building a case around sound data that incorporates the law and policy creates solid positions to move our agency forward.

Ivan said that we are at a precarious time, trying to get a moratorium on Plant Closures. He told us that what should have been a transition time was spent running back and forth to the Hill, meeting with Congressmen and Senators to try and gain support for the moratorium in the continued resolution. He said he worked with Bruce Moyer and Elliott Freidman, in developing talking points and new committees to help move our issues forward. He said that he gave kudos to Jay, because he talked about the effectiveness of committees. He said he worked with the

legislative committee that Jay had started, reformulated it, and put them to use in driving momentum during the midterm elections.

Ivan said that the election results didn't go well for Democrats. He mentioned that it could be said that the elections didn't go well for the working class, and that the election results definitely show that we have some work to do. With the Republicans holding the House and Senate, NAPS will need to develop new strategies to reach across the aisle to gain support for what we need. He said that Plant closures and consolidations are happening in the South, so Republican strongholds are also being affected, and that may be a way to gain support.

Ivan spoke about the 82 Plants scheduled to consolidate or close, and said that he is working with Senator Sanders and his aide to gain some momentum for a moratorium for the closures to be included on an omnibus bill. He said he thought the long term continued resolution was not going to happen because of the Republican hold on the House and Senate. He said if we don't get the resolution, we will be looking hard at the omnibus bill. He said that the USPS said that some closures would be delayed until April 2015, but they continue to say that the operating window will be changing in January. Ivan said that the operating window change will essentially get rid of overnight delivery for America. He feels that the USPS is packaging the information in a way that does not get that point across to elected officials or the general public. He said that this is an important talking point to get across, and that Bruce Moyer was walking that information out to the Hill. He urged all of us to use CapWiz on the NAPS National website and write to our Congressmen and Senators to get the word out.

Ivan spoke about the recent data breach. He said that he's heard the rumors about it starting in China, and that he has heard a lot of people wondering why it took the USPS two months to notify us about the breach. He said that NAPS was briefed by the agency that the FBI was involved and the information was withheld while they were researching and investigating the situation. He said he was briefed about what kind of data was taken, and was told it was basic information like names, date of birth, social security numbers, dates of hire, etc. He said he asked if our eOPF files were taken, and was told that they were not part of the breach. He said that Brian Wagner asked about the recent retirees from May 2012 till now and learned that they were also part of the breach and they would also be getting letters explaining the situation and inviting them to take advantage of the Equifax credit monitoring. Ivan urged us to take advantage of the monitoring, and to take the steps necessary to protect ourselves. He said he believes that the breach likely occurred through VPN, which has since been suspended until USPS Headquarters can ensure the integrity of the networks.

Ivan went on to talk about the 2015 Legislative Training Sessions in March. He said the dates would be March 8 – 11, 2015. He said that Brian Wagner would be doing Secretary/Treasurer training on Sunday morning, and that NAPS would pay for one member from each branch to stay over if they were attending that training. Ivan also said that NAPS was looking for someone to participate in the wreath laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery, but that they would have to switch dates because that weekend signifies the 75th Anniversary of the Battle at Iwo Jima. He said the time NAPS usually participates in the wreath laying has been reserved for those veterans, but they do have a date of Wednesday, March 18th, and NAPS will also cover the cost of a room for Tuesday night for whoever participates in that event. He said that there are

two participants already committed and they have two additional spots open. He said anyone who wished to participate should contact Cy Dumas.

Ivan talked about SPAC, saying that they were on track to raise over \$200,000.00. He said SPAC gives us the resources to help our legislative friends. He said that right now, we don't just need legislative friends, we need legislative champions, and SPAC helps us to help those champions fight for our causes up on the Hill. He said although Branch 105 is small, he sees that we do big things with SPAC, and he applauds our efforts. Ivan recognized Brian Holt, Dave Girard, and Victor Giorgio and gave them pins to signify their participation as members of the Continuous Contributor Club. He thanked us for all we are doing with SPAC, and hopes we continue to keep up the good work.

In closing, Ivan said that he knows times are tough right now, but he is committed to working hard to protect our interests in making life better for our supervisors, and appreciates our support.

Michaela commented on the current status of NPA and raises, saying that health care premiums are going up while the USPS portion paid for managers is going down. She said we have gone three years without raises, even though some people may or may not see a raise this year. She said that in many cases, it feels like we are going backwards. Ivan said he agrees that we are losing ground. NAPS is doing some fact-finding in regards to pay conditions and they will look at things like locality pay, and adopt different strategies that will hopefully work in our favor.

Former National VP and Honorary Member Jay Killackey thanked NAPS 105 for making him an honorary member and also thanked us for the 16 years when we had his back. He said he certainly tried to have our backs over those 16 years as well. He told us he knows that the National Vice President job is in good hands with Ivan, who is passionate and puts in long hours similar to how he worked in that position. Jay said that he left NAPS Headquarters two months ago, and said that life is good now that he has time to spend with his wife and his 12 year old daughter. He said he and Ivan talk from time to time, and said that he appreciates that some of the things he put into place are still working, with new wrinkles from Ivan. He said Ivan has acclimated himself very well and Jay feels that Ivan will do well in Washington. Jay said we should expect to see him at future meetings.

NAPS Northeast Area Vice President Cy Dumas wished everyone Happy Holidays. He said that he had been to a number of meetings in the last few months, and remarked on how our branches minutes and treasury reports stand out. He said that in terms of assets, we ranked very high among the Northeast Area. Cy told us that we were the third largest branch in terms of members. He said it was due to the diligence of officers in signing up new supervisors. He said that at the National Level, NAPS is in great financial shape. He said compared to NAPUS and The League, those organizations are in dire straights financially. He said that we don't have as many EAS positions as we used to, and although we have been actively recruiting new supervisors as they become promoted, he thinks that there is fertile ground for recruiting postmasters. Michaela told us that NAPS 105 has 20 postmasters as members, and another 20 that will hopefully be contacted about joining us. Cy told us that the Disciplinary Defense Fund would be a very big incentive for postmasters to join NAPS, and that neither NAPUS nor the League have that level of financial support for its members facing difficulties like downgrades or

removals. He said he was representing a postmaster recently who was going through MSPB, and was told by NAPUS that they needed \$10,000.00 from him to pay for the process. He wasn't able to come up with the money, but he had also been a NAPS member for 20 years and was eligible for the DDF. He said that our dues are also less than the other organizations.

Cy said that although he would like to see an organization that includes all EAS, he doesn't see any movement right now towards an organization that would include everyone. He said that years ago, there was a plan to merge that proved unsuccessful. He said that there is nothing wrong with being a dual member.

Cy spoke about the recent NAPS Executive Board meeting, saying that one of the best things to come out of the meeting was Larry Ewing's election as Chairman of the Board by a 15 to 9 decisive victory. Cy said he has served under 5 chairmen, and feels Larry is the best. He said Larry is a customer service guru and has worked with Jay and Tommy Roma on the original SWICS Committee. He said Larry has poise, intelligence, and is able to work among opposing parties in order to reach critical decisions. Cy said NAPS has five new members on the board, which he thinks balances well. He said the tone of the meeting was very collegial, without any friction.

Cy spoke about Charlie Scialla. He mentioned that Charlie has been retired for 30 years and has been an incredible resource for NAPS, and would be hard to replace in the DDF, since he has institutional knowledge that is irreplaceable.

Cy said that Megan Brennan spoke at the Executive Board meeting, and gave good remarks, took a lot of questions. He said he was pleased that she subsequently became the new PMG. Cy said that Megan came to a Branch 105 meeting back in May of 2006 at the West Valley Inn. He said that Megan Brennan was a carrier, as was her father and brother, and that he was pleased to see someone who came up through the ranks from a craft employee to the Postmaster General. He said she has a tough job ahead, and will have to make some difficult decisions, but said she also has a heart. Cy said that Megan Brennan sent a handwritten note in a card to him after learning of his heart attack last year.

Cy spoke about Mohegan Sun. He said that the 2018 Convention will be held there, and we had a little sample of what to expect at a recent training event attended by delegates from New England and New York. He said everyone appreciated the venue, especially the layout and the cooperation from the staff. He said that Branch 105 had 9 people there who agreed that the training was very worthwhile and beneficial. The program was very informative, with very little down time. Cy said that for 2018, he has been trying to get Branches to work on a convention fund to be able to send as many delegates as possible. He said that there are many creative things that could be done, especially since airfare will not be necessary. He said that Mohegan Sun is ecstatic to have us.

Cy spoke about the NAPS National committees that were established at the Executive Board meeting. He said that he is on the Restructure Committee, which has to do with making changes to the board. He said there are 21 delegates on the board, and they looking for alternatives. He said he is also on the Constitution and Bylaws Committee. He said other committees include SWICS, Legislative, Advocacy, Ethics, and Finance. He said that there would definitely be some review and activity regarding the Constitution and Bylaws at the 2016 Convention surrounding the shrinking number of NAPS members. He told us that Branch 105 has reviewed their Constitution and Bylaws probably 4 or 5 times in the past 12 years and that would need to be done at the national level.

Cy echoed Dave Mastroianni's hope that employees would consider donating to the Postal Employee Relief Fund.

Michaela piggybacked on Cy's discussion of the Mohegan Sun training. She said that Northeast Area Manager of HR Ann Mailloux spoke about changes in the Voice of the Employee (VOE) surveys. She told us that the survey would now be maintained by Gallup, and would include 12 questions that focused on a management overview. She said the questions are meant to illicit information about the pulse of the Postal Service from its workforce. She said that everyone would get 2 surveys, in quarter 2 and again in quarter 4. She said we will see if these questions and subsequent data will be able to point us in the right direction. She said most of it stems from a focus on communication. She commented that it seems to be a theme right now, and that Rick Uluski said that more communication training will be rolled out in 2015. She also said that Rick Uluski thanked everyone for having a great political mail season, and that there were no horror shows in any of the plants or post offices. Rick also said we were starting FY2015 off on good footing with regards to safety and finances and hoped we would continue that trend.

Frank Halm gave the Legislative Report, starting off with the changes that the election results will bring about. He said we are looking at a hostile environment on the Hill. He said that Senator Ron Johnson (R-WI) is likely to head up the postal oversight committee after Sen Tom Coburn's retirement. Frank said that Sen. Johnson is a Tea Party favorite and a frequent critic of the Postal Service. He said Johnson has also proposed budget cuts by reducing federal employee retiree benefits and a realignment of the "high three" retirement annuity formula.

Frank spoke about SPAC, saying that RI has raised \$3959.50 with a per capita of \$22.89 per member. He said this ranks RI 15th among the States in aggregate, and 1st in Per Capita! He said there are currently 8 members contribute via payroll deduction.

Frank told us that SPAC contributed \$4000.00 to Senator Jack Reed's 2014 re-election campaign, and \$2000.00 to Congressan Jim Langevin's campaign. He said that Michaela and Al Poli went to Congressman Langevin's fundraiser. Michaela said that she had an opportunity to speak with Langevin, and he told her that he would continue to reach across the aisle to support the Postal Service. Michaela mentioned that if anyone wanted to go to a function in the future, they should let her know. Frank said that all of the Senators and Congressmen in RI are Democrats and support the USPS, but unfortunately, none are on crucial committees that can help us.

Frank cautioned retirees that their COLA could change, and that it seems we are under attack all around. He said it appears we are going to have a tough two years. He urged us to let coworkers and other employees know and to make noise. He said the louder we are, the more they will listen.

Motion to accept was made by Andy Maynard. It was seconded by Bob Conroy Sr.

NAPS 105 Vice President Brian Holt told us that our Branch was currently advocating for two members. He said one of the cases turned out to bigger than originally thought. He said that they always tell people to let them know what's going on so they know what they are dealing with, but that this case had some problems. Brian said he called upon who he considered the branch's best advocate, John Knapp, and that John was able to bundle things up and assist in addressing the complexities this member was facing. He urged members to tell NAPS advocates everything that is going on because it is much harder to deal with things after the fact. He said should

anyone receive a letter of warning, or any other type of discipline, they need to contact NAPS right away, and that they can reach us on our cell phones. He said to pass this information along to others, since he doesn't want to see anyone deal with bad situations. Cy Dumas thanked Brian for giving John Knapp a plug, because he also feels that John has great ideas and does good work. Cy said that Branch 105 has a number of members who advocate well, but in other branches, he often takes on the tough cases because of the lack of members with the skill set or willingness to do it. Cy said that NAPS always needs to train more members. Brian agreed and said that if anyone is interested in advocacy training to let him know and he would sign them up for the next sessions. He also pointed out that retirees can also advocate for members.

Michaela spoke about Jay Killackey's "Problem Solving" training session at Cy's event at Mohegan Sun. She said that Jay pointed out that NAPS should really stand for National Association of Problem Solvers, because we solve problems in our daily jobs trying to get the work done and get people motivated. She said we also solve problems for each other when someone gets in hot water. She emphasized that when we are faced with problems, we need to think about some solutions to those problems and then sit down and talk about it, not wait until the problem gets too big. She said the case that John Knapp handled was a nightmare, and it was sad to think that a member would be too embarrassed to let us know. She said she appreciated that John was able to work through it.

Michaela announced that there would be a "Meet & Greet" at the Providence Plant on November 20, 2014 from 5pm – 7pm for anyone who is interested in upward mobility. She said if anyone knows someone from craft who wants to be a 204b, they should let them know about the event. She also mentioned that the new supervisors would be able to cross train as part of their new training program, and asked Nancy Walkden to give members more information about the program in general.

Nancy said that Headquarters recently rolled out a new supervisor program for which Connecticut Valley District was lucky enough to be a pilot site. She said there were two locations for the first 4 weeks of training: Hartford, and Providence. Nancy said that the training is set up differently from the last program which included 52 weeks of online learning and virtual classrooms. She said HQ went in a different direction and the course now is 16 weeks, with weeks 1 and 2 being conducted in a classroom with subject matter experts, and weeks 3 and 4 requiring online learning and virtual classrooms for each supervisor track; customer service, distribution operations, and maintenance operations. She said the first two weeks focus on transitioning to leadership and building skills, and the second week is very heavy with Human Resource subjects such as Safety, Labor Relations, Ethics, and Resource Management. Nancy said that the classroom format worked very well in that it allowed the new supervisors the opportunity to network and learn from skilled managers, and to ask questions and learn from one another. She said she wanted to thank all the Postmasters out there who supported and assisted their supervisors by allowing them to be away from their units for 4 weeks. She said that the next 12 weeks will be mostly on-the-job learning back in their offices, working with their Managers/Postmasters as mentors, but that they would be doing cross-training during week 13 in order to understand other processes that affect their positions. She said that Customer Service Supervisors would do a week in the Plant, the SDO's would do three days in Customer Service and three days in Maintenance Operations, and SMO's would do a week in

Distribution Operations. She said week 16 is graduation, but that there would be additional assessments and feedback required up through week 52 in order to determine each new supervisor's skill development and potential. Nancy said that the pilot was tracked daily by HQ and that each subject/course was followed up by a survey for each participant. She said she believed that HQ would base its final course model on all the feedback and that the program would be available to the rest of the country in January, 2015.

Michaela said that it would be in our best interests to support training for the new supervisors and that we should help them, encourage them, and give them good advice because they will be taking our jobs someday after we retire.

Michaela spoke about an article on a Postal News website that she had seen regarding bad treatment of CCA's in the USPS. She said there may have been more than one story but she said it was embarrassing to think that any supervisor would treat someone the way the writer of the story said they had been treated. The story said the CCA had been insulted, was given no consideration for their family life, no consideration for the fact that they were new employees, and were given no help if they had questions or problems. She said it just seemed like the person was treated like they were less than human. She said that she knew someone who was hired to work as a CCA in Providence and how they were treated and although it wasn't as bad as the story online, it was pretty close. She said supervisors may just want to take a step back when they have new employees and remember back to when they were new and didn't know anything. She said you should remember those who were supportive of your efforts and made you want to continue to work for the USPS instead of being critical or harsh or insensitive. She said NAPS definitely doesn't want to be associated with treating people badly.

Old Business: Dean Ambrosino College Scholarship Drawing: Executive Board Member Joanne Keeling reminded us that according to our constitution, the winner must provide proof of enrollment within three weeks in order to qualify for the scholarship. Also in the constitution, three names must be drawn in the case that proof of enrollment is not available. Jay Killackey drew the name, and the winner was Rhode Island College student Gregory Conroy, son of Robert Conroy Jr. Cy Dumas noted that Joanne has been assisting NAPS 105 with the scholarship for many years and that she does a great job.

New Business: Michaela announced two committees that will report back to us in February: the Budget Committee will include Sue Evans, Betty DiSalvia, and Rose Russo; the Audit Committee will include Donna Machala, Regina Delsesto, and Barbara Bouchard. Michaela thanked them all for stepping up and working on the committees.

Michaela announced that the next regular meeting is scheduled for February 10, 2015 at the Kelley Gazzero Post and that the website will be updated with that information. Michaela also referenced the recent security breach, and said that handouts were available for anyone with additional questions. She also said that Betty DiSalvia had more information that she would be sharing on the NAPS 105 website. Betty said she would be sharing tip sheets about what to do to keep safe. Betty said that breaches of information are nothing new, and that Home Depot and Target had both been targeted recently. She said that if you shop, and use a credit card, then you are still at risk. She said that there are things you can do to protect yourself. She said you can check your credit card and banking statements consistently. She said you can sign up for online

access to these cards or accounts and check regularly for irregularities. She said you should take advantage of these opportunities because it's fairly easy these days for unsavory characters to get access to information and data and steal your identity or wipe out your bank accounts. She urged us to be diligent.

Betty also told us that the website now has Event Brite, which is a reservation service that gives you a convenient way to let us know you are coming to Branch Meetings.

Michaela told us that new member Steve Allen was at the meeting and that he is currently working on a detail in Labor Relations in Providence. Steve told her to inquire about anyone interested in issues like discipline or other problems, and that he would be happy to put together a small presentation that he could offer at a meeting or some other venue. Anyone who wanted more information on taking corrective action and doing things the right way should contact NAPS or Steve directly.

Steve Ravo asked how many people attended the 2014 Convention in San Diego. Michaela responded that it was close to 1400. Steve then suggested that NAPS may want to be in touch with RI venues to promote RI restaurants and businesses when the Convention comes to Mohegan Sun in Connecticut. Cy Dumas said that it was already part of the game plan.

Michaela recognized SCS Rachel Brousseau, our newest NAPS member, and thanked her for attending the meeting.

50/50 Raffle: One half benefits SPAC. Proceeds from raffle ticket sales = \$200.00. Cy Dumas drew the ticket. David Girard won \$100.00. He donated \$50.00 to SPAC.

There were four \$25.00 Stop & Shop gift cards that were also raffled. Winners were James Maisano, Michaela Saccoccio, Skip Delsesto, and Andre Maynard.

Motion to adjourn made by Pat Bennett. Seconded by Andre Maynard.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Walkden
Secretary
NAPS Branch 105