

Regular Meeting #2 Minutes - 5/21/2019

Meeting place: Ralph's Kitchen at Santa Maria DiPrata Society, 29 Walnut Grove Avenue, Cranston RI 02920.

Members present: 39 (23 general, 12 associates, and 4 guests)

Our President, Sabir (Jamal) Salih, called the meeting to order at 6:10 P.M. with the Pledge of Allegiance led by John Goeden.

Roll Call of Officers: Sabir (Jamal) Salih, Roger Johnson, Barbara Bouchard, and Sue Evans – all present.

Executive Board members present: Shaun Branch, Victor Giorgio, Kristine Moore, Donna Machala, Al Kesack, and Colleen Sherratt.

Excused: David Costa

Joining us tonight is our guest speaker, Lawrence "Buddy" Crosby, the newly appointed Providence Plant Manager; Cy Dumas, current New England AVP for NAPS; Jay Killackey, former New England AVP for NAPS; Kim Lewin, President of NAPS Branch 118, Chuck Narcisco, the President of UPMA; and Kathleen McKenna, EAP.

Barbara Bouchard gave the Secretary's Report: Barbara said that according to the last DCO report we received (through March 31, 2019), we have 135 general members, 24 associate members, and 21 non-members, and one on the change report, for a total of 159. As far as correspondence received, we received a thank-you for the American Red Cross for our donation of \$500 in support of their Operation Holiday Cheer. Additionally, the President received an invitation to National PCC Day on September 27, 2019.

Motion to accept the Secretary's report: Made by Sue Evans and seconded by Shaun Branch, and all were in favor.

Treasurer's report by Sue Evans: Sue indicated that there is a copy of the Treasurer's report at each table. As of April 30th, we are currently in the red by \$2,089.05 due to LTS and officer insurance. That is not unusual and will even out over the summer months without any expenses. Our total assets are \$35,649.70.

Motion to accept the Treasurer's report: Made by Cy Dumas, and seconded by Greg Anderson. All were in favor.

Roger Johnson gave the Vice President's report: Roger said we currently have two cases.

Donna Machala gave the Legislative Report: Donna said we heard from our NAPS leaders with a review of the 116th Congress. Early on, the House and Senate introduced a number of Postal-related bills and resolutions that impact the US Postal Service and NAPS members. On your table, I provided a copy of the NAPS supported legislation that has been introduced along with co-sponsorship information and a brief description of each piece of legislation. The links to these bills with real-time status and co-sponsors is available on our NAPS HQ website, on the Legislative Center tab.

The release of the President's budget coincided with the NAPS Legislative Training Seminar and our Capitol Hill lobbying day, giving us the opportunity to ask our legislators to challenge the budget cuts directed against NAPS members and tell them we've already paid out. No one saw this budget going far.

LTS core issue is postal reform legislation needed to help the postal service increase revenue to enhance the quality of service. We don't have a postal bill. With the transition in the House, it will take a while and likely be similar to HR 756, but not identical. NAPS was hopeful it could be introduced in April by Chairman Cummings (D-MD) who has a lot on his plate.

Bruce Moyer, 21 years serving NAPS, will continue on the legal side and assist with legislative matters and Bob Levi, Director of Legislative & Political Affairs, highlighted challenges, summarized President's Task Force report released on December 4th. Bruce & Bob gave a Task Force overview: Good, Bad, & Ugly.

- The good is recalculate health liability, rural America's service, fill Board of Governors vacancies, foster retail partnerships with government entities.
- The bad is increase contracting out services, shift more overhead to competitive.
- The ugly is open mailbox, narrow universal service obligation and services, increase employee retirement contributions, eliminate FERS fixed pension.

Several resolutions put out as reaction to the President's special task force. One is opposed to privatization.

NAPS looking for:

- Realign USPS retiree health prefunding
- Provide rate relief (has not recovered from recession & volume decline)
- Standardize MSPB appeal rights
- USPS product/service innovation
- Governance reform to have full Board of Governors

SPAC contributions continue to grow. LTS reviewed high contributor categories. Southern Region was top contributor, Northeast Region was 5th. New England placed 5th in top Areas. SPAC among the largest and most active management Political Action Committee (PAC) in the country, with 92% winning average.

Our PMG, Megan Brennan, was a guest speaker and thanked NAPS for all we do to make NAPS voice heard. She stressed, "Time is now and it's urgent to advance public policy beyond debate to responsible reform to compete in the 21st century. We need to grow profitable revenue. Highlighting the economic impact of mailing and shipping industry is how we message to public officials that USPS matters to the American public and the economy." Megan answered numerous questions from the floor.

Congressman Jamie Raskin (D-MD) 2nd term on House Committee on Oversight & Reform, spoke and emphasized USPS constitutional duty, supports 6-day delivery to everyone's home. He is also a member of the Judiciary Committee, and a professor of constitutional law. We have a friend in Jamie, he is there for us.

Representative Gerry Connolly (D-VA), spoke. He chairs the subcommittee for postal reform. He reported they had 153 signatures for this year's bill so far. Wants to free up Postal Service to compete in other areas like modern enterprise. Also looking at 6-day delivery and MSPB appeal rights. He has fought for federal employees since he's been in office.

Other business:

NAPS Legislative/Regulatory Update from Bob Levi dated Tuesday, May 7, 2019

House Postal Hearing on April 30th: One Step Forward, Two Steps Back

NAPS HQ supported our Branch with a \$1,000 contribution to attend Senator Jack Reed's annual family breakfast on May 5th. We filled the table of 10 with 11. Thank you to those attending this event.

Upcoming political event is Congressman Jim Langevin's Reception at Finn's Harborside in East Greenwich on Monday, June 17th. NAPS HQ is supporting our branch with a \$300 Host contribution. Please let me know if you would like to attend as I have to give them the names of those attending ahead of time.

Our voices are heard on Capitol Hill through SPAC contributions. If everyone contributed just one or two dollars each pay check, it would add up to a substantial amount. Contributions through USPS payroll deduction is easy, can be done online through PostalEASE. There are SPAC Contribution Forms and instructions for payroll deductions in each issue of The Postal Supervisor. You may also see me for a contribution form.

Motion to accept the Legislative Rep's report: Made by Skip Delsesto, seconded by Genie DelSesto. All were in favor.

There were five first-timers in attendance tonight: Carl Dupre, John Goeden, Jeffrey Smith, Carl Yetter, and Sam Sambathvongv. Each of them introduced themselves and indicated which office they work in. Cy said thanks for stepping up, but more importantly thanks for signing up.

Jamal introduced our guest speaker tonight, Lawrence "Buddy" Crosby. Buddy began his Postal career as a City Letter Carrier in Boston in 2000. He was a supervisor in the old SENE District as well as in Greater Boston. He was an Acting Area Manager from 2011-13, and the Acting Plant Manager in Northwest Boston in 2013. He was recently appointed the Providence Plant Manager. Please welcome Buddy Crosby.

Buddy said it is an honor to be here tonight not only representing the Postal Service but as a NAPS member. I understand the challenges we go through on a day-to-day basis. My grandfather worked for the Postal Service for 30 years. He was always a role model for me, and he got to enjoy his retirement for 31 years. The biggest lesson he taught me on a personal note is that he always got paid, and never had an issue with his pay check. Now across the country, first class mail is declining so we need to change how we do business. Postal reform impacts everyone. New managers coming up through the ranks are being tested right now. The vehicles of the future will be automated. There is a big push on Informed Delivery. One thing he's amazed about is that we are still talking about TACs entries. Everything you do in this program will come back to you. Credibility is all you have, and people are getting in trouble at an alarming rate. We cannot sell bad service, however. We in the Plant need to give you a good product, and those of you in delivery need to get the mail home. You may have heard that Amazon is giving their drivers \$10,000 to resign as an employee, and become a sub-contractor. That will increase their profits as they won't be paying so many salaries and benefits.

For NPA, where is your office and where is your opportunity to improve your score. Do you know what you are looking at. What we do now to improve things will only help our business overall. HERO is a new program for that will combine many existing programs into one, such as eCareer, training, and CSP. He will be presenting HERO training next week on all tours and anyone can attend. The Postal Pulse is out now. Use it to indicate areas for us to improve your working environment. Engagement, when will the top leaders get this training? The PMG's message has been clear that we need to treat our people right. We are all leaders for the organization. We cannot do anything without our people. We appreciate all that you do every day. I believe in training people right. We will get through this, and we can conquer these obstacles. Are there any questions?

Cy asked what the vacancies are in the Plant? There is one support function vacancy. But the good news is we are adding three additional supervisor positions. We are the only plant in the country that converted an MHA position and added clerk positions. So we can get to where we need to be.

Victor asked about new vehicles without drivers that are fully automated? Buddy said Portland OR has a fully automated plant where the jitneys, the pallet jacks, and GPs are all automated. This is the future.

Their package sorters can sort 20,000 per hour, and the DBCS can sort in one pass vs multiple passes. He said the FBI is partnering with the Postal Inspectors to do site testing to finger print within one hour with complete clearances run for \$100. We may end up doing the finger printing for other federal/state offices and work with the TSA on passports. The PMG is pursuing all digital capabilities that can bring in additional revenue.

Cy asked if all of these enhancements were under the purview of Kristen Seaver? Buddy said no, Isaac Chronkhite. ID is the biggest thing right now, there are 20 million users so far. This is a game changer.

Jamal presented Buddy with a framed picture of the Providence waterfront as a thank you for being our guest speaker.

At 6:53 P.M., Jamal said we will break for dinner now. The meeting resumed at 7:30 P.M.

Jamal introduced Kathy McKenna, NEA EAP Coordinator, to discuss changes in EAP. There is a new vendor for EAP called New Directions Behavior Health. The website is greatly improved. We still have the in-person counselling, phone counselling, and video counselling. An added feature is texting, and this service is provided by a licensed counselor. We treat depression, anxiety, child care issues, elder care issues, and addiction treatment. These services are available to any family member of your household.

Vic asked if CCAs are eligible? Kathy said yes from day one of employment. Chuck asked if there were still six visits with the texting and/or video options? Kathy said yes unless the issue is more serious and requires more.

Cy Dumas spoke about New England convention in New Hampshire. We had 65 delegates from six New England states. This is the highest attendance in recent memory. There were 13 first-timers, 12 members of Postal leadership, five vendors, and Chuck Mulidore, NAPS National Secretary/Treasurer. We were concerned that the results of the pay talks that were released May 15th would negatively impact our convention. I told everyone that local management has nothing to do with the pay talks, it only has to do with HQ. There are 30 pages in that report, and you should read it. HQ declined to adopt any of the recommendations that were presented by the panel. Title 39 is the law that governs our pay. This is what our fight needs to focus on. NAPS has spent \$500,000 in legal fees since 2016 trying to get all of us a fair pay package. Over the next 30 days, we will be planning our strategy. Chuck did an excellent job analyzing HQ's response, and said NAPS will not roll-over.

Jay said political activity is the way to bring about change. That is why we included in the convention package the political calendar. We need a grassroots effort. Educate our four in the RI delegation. Vic said this is the second time we have been let down by the PMG. The first time was with her comments last year at the national NAPS convention at Mohegan Sun.

Old Business: The audit committee consisting of Steve Rodowicz, Rose Russo, and Genie DeSesto, presented their financial audit for 2018. Steve said Barbara gave them the financial records on May 5th. They met as a committee on May 13th to review the documentation. Unlike prior years, there were no copies of checks or accompanying invoices for the expenses for the year. When they asked Sue Evans about this, they were told that no such documentation exists for calendar year 2018. They were able to do a cross-check of the individual branch accounts with the statements from the credit union, but had no credible documentation supporting the expenses claimed. As a result, they recused themselves from the 2018 audit committee.

Jamal had comments on this. He came onboard in September 2018 and asked the treasurer for a report including receipts for funds spent. He continued to ask prior to each meeting. On November 18th, he called an emergency meeting with the executive board, and reappointed Sue Evans as our treasurer. She rebuilt the records which were reviewed by the audit committee. We were short \$4,901.01. I can report the missing funds have been paid back in full. Cy asked for a point of personal preference, which Jamal granted. Cy said this is not the first time something like this has happened. But I really applaud the efforts of Jamal and Sue for protecting the interests of the branch.

Membership Committee: Jamal said he and the Executive Board met with Mr. Conroy, Sr. earlier this month. He will be sending a survey to non-members and also to members who do not attend meetings to try to find out why these folks are not participating. There will be more to come on this.

Social Committee: Jamal said Vic Giorgio and Kristine Moore are planning a casual event probably for a Sunday in August. A day to build comradery. We also want to have a holiday event in December.

Jamal said he is also trying to get the notices of the management organization meetings with the CTV District Manager.

At 6:53 P.M., Jamal said we will break for dinner now. The meeting resumed at 7:30 P.M.

New Business:

Jamal spoke about the training he attended in Puerto Rico which Tommy Roma has every year. Also in attendance were Carissa Surprise from NEA/Ops and Jimmy Warden. A major topic of discussion was the SWCS study which Carissa has now taken over. The commitment of the selected supervisors involved in this study is questionable. It was supposed to be a 30-day study, then it went to 60-days, now it's 90-days. Ed Phelan had chaired the study and since retired. Bill Downes said he is involved with the study, it is still on-going. They are still looking for higher level offices to include in this team. Victor asked if the position of relief supervisor will come to fruition. Jamal said there are no results so far. Eric Chavez is very interested in this. Bill said this is now a Lean Sigma project. Jessica asked why this only involves SCS and not SDOs? Cy said the plants have not been looked at since 1992. The volume of mail has been shrinking since then and so have the positions.

Jay Killackey said he has been involved in the Postal Service and NAPS since 1966, and this is the most optimistic that he has ever felt. That is a direct result of the New England convention he just attended last weekend. Read the Postal Services's response to the pay talks which is posted on the national website. You should be enraged at how they are treating us at the national level. The team had professional experts on compensation and work. We need to make a blitz on Congress and make public what they are doing. Be active every day. We had good representation from management at the convention.

Jay chaired four work groups/break-out sessions there as follows:

- A presentation on how to build a skilled cadre of local branch members to represent members in discipline and adverse action.
- A presentation on how to properly prepare and execute a consultative meeting with Postal management.
- A presentation on all the moving parts and the participation required to have a successful branch meeting. Jay said Branch 105 could teach this.
- A presentation on how to establish a membership committee to attract newly-promoted EAS employees and non-members.

The results of these sessions is posted on the national website. Jay said the bottom line is if you do the right thing, you will be successful.

Cy said for the benefit of the new folks here tonight, NAPS has a DDF (defense fund) which can pay \$5,000 to an attorney if you get in trouble. This branch historically has had the fewest cases going to that level. Cy said we need an additional six people to be trained as advocates. Cy and Jay will teach a session on this in the near future. We will include other branches as well.

The 50/50 SPAC raffle was won by Sue Evans. The pot was \$215. Donna will send the balance to SPAC.

At September's meeting, we will accept nominations for officers. Elections will be held at our November meeting. Officer vacancies are expected to be the Vice President and the Treasurer.

Jamal presented Sue Evans with a gift certificate for all her assistance with rebuilding the financials for 2018. She is currently living in New Hampshire, but because of her sincere dedication has continued to assist this branch during our recent financial dilemma.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Roger Johnston, and was seconded by Greg Anderson, at 8:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara A. Bouchard

NAPS Secretary

Addendum to the official minutes:

P.S. MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR SUNDAY, AUGUST 18, 2019! We are planning a casual summer get-together....not a formal meeting. Just an excuse to get together and spend some time away from work and talking about work to have fun and enjoy the outdoors. We have booked a spot at Goddard Park in East Greenwich. There will be a tent (in case of rain or extreme heat). Bring your chairs, and any lawn games you enjoy. Bring your significant other and kids as well. There is no parking fee. We are trying not to charge for this, and there is no fee to park. Food will be hot dogs, hamburgers, and soda. We will provide paper goods and condiments. If you want adult beverages, you can bring them as the park has no restrictions on that—just remember to be wise about consumption so you can return home safely. Further details to come via flyer later in the summer as we are still in the planning phase on this.

Also in the planning phase, once a year we will hold a general meeting on a Sunday morning in an effort to get more plant employees to attend. We are thinking of a 7:30-9:30 A.M. meeting at the Providence Chelo's. Since our schedule is already determined for this year, with September for officer nominations and elections in November, we will begin this in calendar year 2020.

We welcome your input as this is **YOUR** organization! We want as many of you to attend our meetings as possible. If you have any suggestions, please let us know.