

**NAPS Branch 105**  
**Kelly - Gazzero VFW Post**  
**General Meeting Minutes #1 – 2/25/2014**  
**February 25, 2014**

**Members present: 38**

**Pledge of Allegiance led by Victor Giorgio**

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

Not present: Cy Dumas

**Guest(s) attending:** Michael Kocak – Postmaster- Taunton/Acting POOM; Gary Neirinckx - Providence Manager-Customer Service Operations

**Treasurer's report – Sue Evans**

Sue told us that we have current expenses in 2014 of \$335.26, and total income of \$2024.90 which leaves us with a balance of \$1689.64. Our assets are \$476.19 in Statement Checking, \$385.28 in Statement Savings, and \$28,736.54 in the Statement Money Market account, for a total balance of \$29,736.54. Sue told us that there have been reductions in spending, specifically no more gift baskets for members when a relative dies since the delivery charges alone were \$15.00. Instead, sympathy cards will be sent out. Sue told us that she has a large cache of cards and card stock, so in the future, the only costs associated for the cards would be for postage.

**Secretary's report – Nancy Walkden**

Nancy reported we currently have 138 Regular and 28 Associate members of NAPS 105. She said that there were 21 recent retirees and urged them to consider becoming Associate members as well.

NAPS 105 received several pieces of correspondence: Congressman James Langevin, Senator Jack Reed, NAPS Executive Board Members Louis Atkins, Jay Killacky, and Brian Wagner, and Connecticut Valley District Labor Relations Manager Felicia Adamski, sent Holiday cards, and member Ann Mailloux sent thanks for her birthday gift and her son Sterling's scholarship award. Thank you notes were also received from retirees Jim Harrington, Frank Lombardi, and Sheila Pagano for the gift cards they received from NAPS 105 upon their retirement. Connecticut Valley District HR Manager Theresa Brusco sent thanks for inviting her to speak at the last general meeting, as well as the gift she received from us.

Motion to accept Secretary's report – Skip DelSesto. Seconded by Rose Russo.

**Legislative report – Frank Halm**

Frank informed members that there are two raffles for this meeting, the 50/50 raffle and an Amazon Kindle raffle. He told us that since the Amazon Kindle was donated by eBoard member Betty DiSalvia, both the donation amount and the funds received from both raffles will benefit SPAC.

Frank also urged members to sign up for direct payments for SPAC. He told us that although the Northeast leads in SPAC donations, we lag behind in direct payments. He explained that direct payments benefit NAPS Headquarters because they can budget the money better.

Frank told us that in RI, our Congressmen and Senators are "in our house" and already do everything we would like them to; however, SPAC money does benefit our national agenda. He went on to describe a recent event that he and eBoard member Donna Machala attended with RI Congressman Jim Langevin at Circe, a Providence restaurant. Frank said that there were only about 30 people or so there, and that he and Donna were able to speak with the Congressman for 10 minutes. The cost of this event was \$500.00, which was covered by NAPS HQ, illustrating how SPAC can work for us here in RI.

Frank said that he, Brian Holt, and Michaela Saccoccio will soon be attending Legislative events in Washington DC. They will be meeting one-on-one with NAPS HQ reps, as well as attending scheduled meetings with Congress and the Senate. Frank said that things looked promising with the senate bill out of markup. One favorable item is the extension of MSPB rights for all EAS employees. He said he believes that Congress and the Senate must act, and that there are consequences to not acting. One of the issues we are facing currently is the age of the fleet. He said that the newest vehicles are now close to 20 years old, translating to frequent breakdowns, and late mail delivery. This directly affects customer service. Frank said that we should be looking for more personal stories to share that illustrate the need for action.

Lastly, Frank wanted to explain MSPB rights for those who did not know what they were. He said that these rights were originally established as a means to afford veterans a way to seek a third party judge when facing adverse actions such as downgrades and removals. Currently, these rights are afforded only to EAS employees who supervise other people. This bill would extend those rights to over 7000 EAS administrative employees as well.

Motion made to accept the report was made by Donald Taylor. Motion to accept by Jeanne DelSesto.

**EAP Coordinator Kathy McKenna** spoke about referring employees to EAP. She said that even if someone didn't wish to make an appointment with EAP, she would be able to do a quick 5 minute walk-around which may make someone more receptive to counseling. Kathy told us that when doing facility visits, she keeps sessions very brief, and never comes on days when it snows since she knows how busy offices can get. She recognizes that employees have been affected by all the changes and closings and hopes that we will continue to offer EAP to employees who are struggling. Kathy also wanted to let us know that Life Coaching is now available to all employees and their immediate family members.

**Branch President Michaela Saccoccio** spoke about the Survivor Benefit Portfolio – this information is available at the meeting and soon on the NAPS 105 website. It provides beneficiary and claim forms for FEGLI, FERS, CSRS, TSP, and final compensation. She urged members to review their own status and to update information as necessary.

#### **Vice President's report – Brian Holt**

Brian began his report by speaking briefly about adverse actions. He told us that he was not aware of any current discipline, but that if anyone knew of someone, to please let us know.

Brian also reported that raffle tickets are now available that assist current NAPS Executive Vice President Jay Killackey in his campaign for election as NAPS Headquarters President. Brian said that NAPS will donate 1 ticket to our local branch should we sell a certain amount of tickets. The tickets are \$20.00 each, and there are 4 prizes that will be awarded at the National Convention on August 28, 2014. Ticketholders need not be present to win. The Grand Prize is \$5000.00, 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize is \$2000.00, 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize is \$1000.00, and 4<sup>th</sup> Prize is \$500.00. If anyone is interested in purchasing a ticket, they can reach out to Brian @ 401-559-5753.

*\*\*\*\*\*Following the General Meeting, Michaela received a box of raffle tickets from Jay Killackey in the sum of \$1000.00 worth of tickets our branch has for this raffle. She said that Jay included a note thanking our branch for supporting his campaign and gave us these tickets as a thank you. Michaela will bring the ticket stubs with her to the National Convention in the hopes that our branch will be a lucky winner. She urges everyone to participate and to inform our active members and associates. She wanted to add that you do not have to be a NAPS member to take a chance on winning \$5000.00\*\*\*\*\**

Michaela echoed Brian's request to members to contact NAPS should they incur any corrective action. She said that she had heard that people were still "taking liberties" in TACS, and that she can't understand why anyone would change clock rings for employees when it would be hard to explain scans or other database information that refuted those changes. She said "we can help you, but we can't do

anything if records show otherwise.” She shared that she thought the better choice was to just get yelled at for having a carrier out late. She said that getting aggravation from your boss was definitely better than being walked out of the building.

Member and recent retiree Jim Harrington asked as to how long it would take to get his first retirement check. Frank Halm replied that there was a significant back up in the system right now that may translate to a 5 or 6 month wait because of the amount of recent retirements, although the Postal Service does move faster than some Federal agencies. Frank told members that they could find more information on the FEDSMITH website. Members can find a link to the site on [www.naps105.org](http://www.naps105.org).

### **Break for dinner at 6:45**

### **Meeting resumed at 7:20**

### **Guest Speakers Taunton Postmaster/Acting POOM Mike Kocak and Providence MCSO Gary Neirinckx.**

Mike Kocak spoke about the trajectory of the USPS, where it came from and where he sees it heading. He senses that the organization is currently struggling with direction, and the changes imparted have not been positive.

Mike explained that although mail volume has been steadily increasing in recent months, the increase is represented not by the high profit first class mail, but by standard mail. He said this means that employees have just as much work to do, but now the USPS has less revenue to work with. He said that the organization needs to find a new direction. One option that has been visited is banking and licenses, which many overseas post offices have adopted. Mike said that he favors moving our focus towards package services, but that this focus would require a lot more attention to scanning, since customers now expect greater visibility and constantly updated information. He said that the USPS is under increasing pressure to provide these products and features to our customers.

Mike also spoke about the future of leadership, and how managers and supervisors were supported in the past. He recalled that mentors would see possibility and talent and would support and help people move forward. He said that he does not see that the USPS has that same degree of focus, nor the closeness that formerly supported upward mobility. He said that we need to begin building a network that encourages and energizes people towards leadership roles. He said that encouragement must be given to craft employees to become Supervisors, and that attention must also be given to front line supervisors to seek out management positions.

Mike cautioned us that this would not be an easy task, however, since many craft employees no longer see promotions as a financially sound move, and can easily make more money with overtime. He said that since there is no immediate financial benefit, less people are eager to step up to manage. Mike said he supports and encourages everyone to seek out new growth in management, and should look towards those who may have a few years left before retirement, as well as those CCA's who have recently been converted to regular employees. He said the CCA's may be especially motivated to move from \$15.00 per hour to \$25 or \$27 after a promotion. He said this group may be where we can find many of our next new supervisors.

Mike relayed that the new training for Supervisors highlights computer courses over experience, and he believes people learn better when they have someone they can depend on for answers. He also spoke to the newest supervisors at the meeting, saying, “You guys are our future, you’ve got to make something out of whatever the USPS becomes.”

Providence Manager of Customer Service Operations, Gary Neirinckx echoed Mike Kocak's concern about the difficulties in finding and engaging new candidates for management and supervisor positions. He recalled times when review boards were necessary due to the large number of applicants.

Gary said that he and Mike Kocak would like to propose a non-mandatory mentoring system that would build and support new talent and would assist interested employees with learning or enhancing skills and development as managers and supervisors. He proposed sessions of an hour or two, devoted

towards subjects that are significant or problematic. He and Mike wish to impart their experience as managers and offer assistance at every level.

Gary mentioned that he and Mike understood that high level managers were comfortable asking each other for assistance, but that those who were entering leadership were less likely to seek guidance. He said that he and Mike wished to encourage interaction and dialogue so that new supervisors and managers could communicate their needs and further increase their knowledge and skills. He said that ultimately the incentive should be the idea of a better retirement and a more productive present.

Both Mike and Gary urged new Supervisors to respond to opportunities to grow, and to take advantage of mentoring programs that will assist them to move forward. Mike explained, "You aren't just supervisors, you are leaders. Whether you are a supervisor in a small office or a large facility, you are in charge. You can take charge, but you must learn what it takes to do that."

Gary and Mike spoke about the future of USPS management, and how technology will change the way we manage employees and data. They said that tablets may soon allow supervisors to be connected throughout the day, uploading information and keeping everything 100% transparent. They said that this will move focus away from workload theory to real time data, moving the USPS from old ways of operating towards a new technology based environment. However, they believe that the key concepts of managing must still be in place.

Both Gary and Mike wish to work together to offer classes that will benefit supervisors and managers who will face the challenges of managing in the future. Gary said that he understands how busy employees are, but offered, "The little things you can do to enhance your knowledge, it will definitely help."

#### **Old Business:**

**Budget Report** - Sue Evans prepared and shared the forthcoming budget for NAPS 105. She said that she, Betty DiSalvia, and Andy Maynard held a budget committee meeting on February 7, 2014 and completed a review of expenses, income and special events that occurred in 2013, and recommended the following budget items for 2014:

Expenses - Conventions/Training: \$15,000.00, Events/Gifts: \$400.00, Retiree's Gifts: \$650.00, Meetings: \$4500.00, Postage/Supplies/Ins: \$3400.00, Scholarship Fund: \$500.00, Reimbursements: \$2368.00, Health/Welfare: \$20.00. Total Expenses = \$26,838.00

Income - Dues: \$20,000.00, Special Deposits: \$1500.00, Dividends/Money Market: \$75.00. Total Income = \$21,575.00.

Sue explained that the committee felt that the expenses were fair, and that the budget usually didn't balance in a convention year. Robert Conroy Sr. expressed concerns that the budget proposed a \$5000.00 loss right off the bat. Sue replied that there are several cost cutting measures that are being assessed, such as looking into insurance costs, reducing costs for pizza at e-board meetings, cheaper paper selections at Staples, etc. She also mentioned that she was grateful for members being "spot on" with attendance at General Meetings, since it hurt to have to pay for meals that went uneaten. Dan Guenette suggested buying stamped envelopes in blocks of 500 to take advantage of discounts.

Motion to accept Budget Report was made by Brian Holt. Seconded by Victor Giorgio.

**Audit Report** - Donna Machala prepared and shared the findings of the Audit Committee for NAPS Branch 105's 2013 financial records. Donna, Rose Russo, and Barbara Bouchard completed their review on February 6, 2014, and analyzed savings, money market, and checking accounts, as well as all related debit/credit accounts and branch funds spreadsheets. They found the records and statements to be accurate. They also asked the Branch President about Tax exemption status and documentation. The committee recommended that the Western World Insurance Co invoice from the Bradford-Sutcliffe

Associates separate the combined tax and fee total, as well as update the renewal form application to reflect the current officer's contact information.

Donna said that NAPS Branch 105 Treasurer Sue Evans did a fine job organizing and maintaining the records for all accounts.

Motion to accept Audit Report was made by John Knapp. Seconded by Victor Giorgio.

### **Swearing In E-Board Members:**

E-Board members Colleen Sherratt and Rose Russo were both sworn in by Branch President Michaela Saccoccio.

### **New Business:**

Associate Member Robert Conroy Sr., per Roberts Rule of Order Article 10, Section 60, made a motion to "establish a special committee of three, which shall be the President, Vice President, and Secretary. This special committee shall be authorized to review, correct, and approve the minutes of each meeting prior to posting them on the Branch 105 web site and mailing them out with the next meeting notice. In the absence of any of the three officers the remaining officer(s) shall review, correct, and approve the minutes of the meeting." The motion was seconded by Brian Holt.

Mr. Conroy said that he did not wish to blame anyone but felt that members shouldn't wait 3 to 4 months to have minutes approved. He said only about 25% of Branch 105's members come to meetings, others rely on the website to get updates and information. Mr. Conway felt that getting information out as quickly as possible to members would stir up more activity. He mentioned that this change does not require a bylaws change.

Associate Member Skip DelSesto told us that if he doesn't see updated information on the website, he probably would not go back.

Branch President Michaela Saccoccio said that she couldn't agree more. She told us that Betty DiSalvia has done a great job updating the website often with new content or hot items, and that she thought the motion was a good idea.

Motion voted on: Motion Passes.

Associate Member Betty DiSalvia made a motion to raise Associated Members annual dues from \$45.00 to \$90.00 for 2015. Frank Halm seconded the motion.

The motion would require a change to the constitution. This will require a discussion at the next meeting and then voted on. The increase in dues would greatly benefit the NAPS 105 Branch, since the current Associate member dues all go directly to headquarters.

### **2014 National Convention Delegates**

Branch President Michaela Saccoccio asked for nominations for delegates to attend the National Convention in 2014. She said bylaws require delegates to have attended a minimum of three branch meetings in the last 2 years. She also told us that no member can get more funding than what it costs to send the Branch President.

Delegates nominated: Frank Halm, nominated by Brian Holt  
Nancy Walkden, nominated by James Brien  
Victor Giorgio, nominated by Dan Guenette

All nominations for those attending the 2014 National NAPS Convention are now closed.

### **2014 New England Convention**

Sue Evans made a motion to spend no more than \$3500.00 to send people to the NAPS Regional Convention in New Hampshire in May 2014. Motion seconded by Victor Giorgio

Sue explained that attendees would not require per diem, and that funds would be used for registration, lodging, and training.

Robert Conroy Sr. argued that since the budget showed a loss of \$5000.00 this year, we could use this opportunity to save \$3500.00. He asked what could be learned at the Regional Conference that couldn't be learned at the National? Mr. Conroy suggested not going to the New England Regional conference, and that he would rather see more money spent at the Legislative sessions. Frank Halm replied that Branch 105 is only funding Brian Holt at the LTS this year, and that the NE Seminars are about training and networking with Managers and Labor Reps. He said that he felt it was "well worth it to send at least 4 people." He said that being able to network with District Managers was very valuable.

Jim Ulinick asked how Branch 105 would benefit from the people who get the training. Michaela Saccoccio explained that the "rough agenda" includes interaction among 85 delegates and Executive managers such as Rick Uluski. She said that there would be District break-out sessions in which we can send our agenda in advance. These sessions would allow us to sit and discuss these items for up to 2 hours. Michaela said that the conference agenda had not been firmed up completely but there are also other workshops and sessions such as Advocacy Training. She said that the National Convention is less about training than it is about voting and that the New England Conference is a really good value for the money.

Gary Laprocina said that he was a member of NAPS and also a member of the Postmaster League. He said that the more networking you can do, the more benefit you get in making decisions that affect EAS employees. He said he felt the NE Conference has always been a worthwhile event. Jim Ulinick agreed that there was value in the conference, but that he wanted those who attended to share their info with the members.

Dan Guenette suggested choosing attendees from active members, rather than retirees. Victor Giorgio commented that "you do learn personal stuff, and we do convey as much info as possible to our members." He agreed that the NE Conference was a great opportunity.

Vote called by Branch President Michaela Saccoccio  
Motion Passed.

No agenda for Good and Welfare.

**50/50 Raffle** was won by Patricia Bennett, ticket pulled by Robert Conroy Sr. She donated the \$95.00 to SPAC.

**Special Amazon Kindle Raffle** was won by Mary Fontaine. Michaela Saccoccio thanked Betty DiSalvia for donating the Kindle.

Michaela also informed us that John Knapp was recently promoted to Manager of Customer Services at the Darlington Station. She congratulated him and thanked him for stepping up.

Michaela thanked everyone for attending the meeting, and reminded members to call ahead if they planned on attending others so we could get a good head count.

Motion to adjourn was made by Patricia Bennett. Seconded by Roger Johnson.

Respectfully submitted

Nancy Walkden  
Secretary – NAPS Branch 105

