

Regular Meeting #2 Minutes – 05/26/2021

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

Members present: 19 (16 general members, 3 associates) and two guests (Lisa Douglas who is running for NAPS NEA AVP and Bill Austin, who is running against Lisa).

Our President, Sabir (Jamal) Salih, called the meeting to order at 6:12 P.M. with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Shaun Branch.

Roll Call of Officers: Sabir (Jamal) Salih, President; Shaun Branch, Vice President; and Barbara Bouchard, Secretary – all present.

Executive Board members present: Kristine Moore, Donna Machala, and Anthony Alviti.

Excused: David Costa, Sue Evans, Victor Giorgio, Al Kesack, and Jessica Sargo.

Joining us tonight is Lisa Douglas, current New England AVP for NAPS; Bill Austin, retired MCSO of Bridgeport, who is opposing Lisa in the 2021 elections, and Chuck Narciso, UPMA President.

First Timers: Tony Parente, SCS at Corliss Park. He has been a supervisor for about six years.

Shaun Branch gave the Vice President's report: Shaun said we currently have one removal at MSPB and one suspension.

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

Barbara Bouchard gave the Secretary's Report: Barbara said that according to the last DCO report we received (through March 31, 2021), we have 147 general members, 21 associate members, and 13 non-members, and one on the change report, for a total of 168. We have not received any correspondence.

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

Treasurer's report by Sue Evans: Jamal said Sue is not able to join us tonight, but she emailed the Treasurer's Report which you will find on your table. Our expenses through April were \$1800. We have spent \$4,991.95 year-to-date. Our assets total \$62,968.01. Our total income for the year minus our total expenses leaves a balance of \$3,737.86. Since we will have the 2020 Convention this August, we expect higher expenses this year.

Motion to accept the Treasurer's report: Made by Anthony Alviti and seconded by Shaun Branch. All were in favor.

Donna Machala gave the Legislative Report:

Jamal and I attended the LTS ZOOM event on Sunday, April 18th. It was a very good program and was well attended.

This month, Senate and House bills were introduced. The bills to co-sponsor are:

Senate Legislation:

S. 1720 – Postal Service Reform Act of 2021, Introduced May 20, 2021 (19 Co-sponsors as of 5/24/21)

It is the Senate companion to H.R. 3076

The core provisions of the legislation would repeal the requirement that the US Postal Service prefund its retiree health benefits and would better integrate Medicare with the FEHB Program for future retirees. The Postal Service estimates these changes would save the agency approximately \$44 billion over the next decade. Among H.R. 3076's other provisions is a section that seeks to enhance the transparency of Postal performance and another to ensure the maintenance of six-day delivery for all Postal products.

S. 1302 – Social Security Fairness Act

Introduced May 20, 2021 (30 co-sponsors including both RI Senators as of 5/24/21)

It is identical to its House companion H.R. 82

This bill would repeal the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). The WEP is part of the Social Security statute that reduces Social Security benefits for individuals entitled to such pension plans as the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS). The WEP is the part of the Social Security law that reduces Social Security Survivor benefits for survivors eligible for such annuities as CSRS.

S. 1663 – USPS Shipping Act

Introduced May 20, 2021 (0 Co-sponsors as of 5/24/21) It is identical to H.R. 3287

This measure would allow USPS to ship alcoholic beverages directly from licensed producers and retailers to consumers over the age of 21, in accordance with state and local shipping regulations.

On the House side:

H.R. 2337 – Public Servants Protection and Fairness Act

Introduced May 20, 2021 (154 Co-sponsors including both RI Congressmen as of 5/24/21)

This bill would help alleviate the impact of the WEP on certain CSRS annuitants who are also eligible for Social Security. Would provide a \$150 per month rebate to individuals who reach the age of 62 prior to 2023 and would alter the formula to reduce the impact for WEP for CSRS annuitants who reach the age of 62 after January 21, 2023.

H.R. 3287 – USPS Shipping Equity Act, Introduced May 20, 2021 (18 Co-sponsors) (S. 1663 is companion bill). Allow USPS to ship alcoholic beverages

H.R. 3077 – Postal Service Improvement Act, Introduced May 20, 2021 (3 Co-sponsors)

Would enhance the capability of the US Postal Service and state election authorities to track absentee election ballots and would authorize paid parental leave for employees of the agency. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-VA) successfully amended H.R. 3077 to include the provisions of H.R. 1623 and H.R. 1624 which would provide MSPB rights to currently excluded EAS level Postal employees and calibrate the beginning of EAS pay talks to the expiration of the exiting pay package and the recommendations of the statutory fact-finding panel would be binding on the agency.

H.R. 3076 – Postal Service Reform Act of 2021 (5 Co-sponsors), Introduced May 20, 2021

The core provisions would repeal the requirement that the US Postal Service prefund its retiree health benefits and would better integrate Medicare with the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program for future retirees. Other provisions seek to enhance the transparency of Postal performance and another to ensure the maintenance of six-day delivery for all postal products.

H.R. 1623 – Postal Supervisors and Managers Fairness Act (5 Co-sponsors), Introduced March 18, 2021

The bill would provide for the timely start of pay talks between EAS level Postal employees and the USPS. In addition, the bill would establish a fair and credible process for conducting pay consultations.

H.R. 1624 – The Postal Employee Appeal Rights Amendments Act (6 Co-sponsors), Introduced

March 18, 2021

The bill would provide all EAS level Postal personnel with right to appeal adverse personnel actions to the Merit System Protection Board. Currently, about 7,500 EAS level employees are denied this right.

H. R. 82 – Social Security Fairness Act

Introduced February 9, 2021 (149 Co-sponsors including both RI Congressmen)

The bill would repeal the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). The WEP is part of the Social Security statute that reduces Social Security benefits for individuals entitled to such pension plans as the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS). The WEP is the part of the Social Security law that reduces Social Security survivor benefits for survivors eligible for such annuities as CSRS.

H. R. 304 – Equal COLA Act, Introduced February 8, 2021 (16 Co-sponsors)

The bill would create parity between the cost of living adjustment with respect to a Federal Employee System (FERS) annuity and a Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) annuity.

H.R. 695 – USPS Fairness Act

Introduced February 8, 2021 (270 Co-sponsors including both RI Congressmen)

The bill would repeal requirement USPS prepay future retiree health costs. During the previous congress, the House passed an identical bill. The text of H.R 695 is the House companion to S.145.

On the naps.org website, under Legislative Center, scroll down and there is a letter composed and ready for you to add your name and send to your Congressman asking for their support of H.R. 1623 and 1624. It is so simple. You're able to add your own words, if you'd like. I would suggest including the city or town you live in. I received a lengthy response from Congressman Langevin, and he inquired where I lived. They will respond and when they receive many calls and letters, they will act upon those requests. We ask for your support in sending letters.

Two of the three Biden nominees to the USPS Board of Governors were confirmed. Ron Stroman, former USPS Deputy PMG, and Amber McReynolds, a leading rights advocate, Chief Executive of National Vote at Home Institute. Anton Hajjar, former general counsel of APWU is expected to receive confirmation soon. This would give the Democrats a majority on the nine-member Board of Governors.

I attended Congressman Langevin's virtual ZOOM fundraiser meeting in March. NAPS Headquarters contributed to his campaign on our behalf.

I received a letter from The Reed Committee disappointed that COVID-19 restrictions will once again prevent them from gathering for the Annual Spring Family Breakfast. Senator Reed will have a virtual event on Sunday, June 6th at 10 AM. If anyone is interested in attending, please let me know. I will need to supply your personal email address to the committee, so they may send a link to you to join. I will ask NAPS Headquarters for their support in funding Senator Reed's campaign.

SPAC enrollment is available on the NAPS.org website, there is a form in the Postal Supervisor, or see me for a form. Your donation can be as little as \$1 or \$2 a pay period.

Motion to accept the Legislative Report: Made by Chuck Narciso and seconded by Betty DiSalvia. All were in favor.

Jamal said the legislature plays a big role for us. In order to get better pay, we need changes to Title 9. Our delegation in RI is in support of the efforts of NAPS. We are going into generational change now in the company. Reach out to your congressmen and senators. Get involved now at a young age. Show your support. In the western part of our country, they are

trying to curtail six-day delivery.

Jamal introduced our first guest speaker. Lisa Douglas, who took over for Cy Dumas, is here tonight. She previously attended one of our zoom meetings. She is campaigning to maintain her current position. Elections will be held at the National Convention in Grapevine TX in August. Lisa said she did take over for Cy. She was attending LTS in Washington DC just before the country began to experience the pandemic caused by COVID. Since then, we have been operating via the zoom platform. She feels communication is an issue. A POOM cannot just pull people from a position without a conversation regarding a reassignment and a change of your NSDs. Do not try to force anything on people. Please communicate with your people. Talk to your front line supervisors. She has not yet released a notice that she is running for office because she does not know yet where she will be working. Once she does, she will send out the information. She said it is great to be back in the field. She plans to focus on you and all the new people taking over. Not knowing is the worst part of restructuring that is taking place. She is working for Kristine Young who is the processing director. Lisa would like to see NAPS HQ be more involved in all of the changes taking place. She wants to help people. She wanted to acknowledge in public the assistance she received from Bob Conroy, Jr., when she went to the Providence PDC on detail over the holiday season. He is a great mentor. Thank you for helping me.

Jamal agreed saying Bob has helped many people over the course of his career.

At 7 P.M., Jamal said we will break for dinner now. The meeting resumed at 7:40 P.M.

Lisa continued by saying she has a good rapport with the District Manager, Rick Gaudet, and Dane Colman. She will reach out to higher levels as needed. She feels that more seasoned people should help newer people. This RIF is a learning experience, and she's trying to learn as much as possible. NAPS is here for you. Jamal said Lisa will take questions now. He asked if she had heard anything new on our NPA for this year. The NPA goals came down but he could not understand the objectives being given in May of 2021 halfway through the year. It has been 45 days since the NALC ratification, and our talks have not started yet. Lisa said she has not heard anything new yet. Jamal said the only way to change the mind of the leadership in the USPS is by changing Title 9. Revamp it to give EAS proper compensation and the rights to raises. Our lawsuit was appealed in April. We are waiting for a hearing now.

Lisa asked how many people in this branch are attending the convention. Jamal said only one at this point.

Mr. Conroy, Sr. asked if there would be a convention this year and next year to get back on schedule? Lisa said yes, we will go to New Orleans in 2022. Mr. Conroy said that should be adjusted. There's not enough time to do anything. He feels the last thing craft employees want is to be a supervisor, because they are making more money than them. The thrift program put a wrench in the plan. With it, craft employees will be making as much as EAS in retirement. It's not worth it to be a supervisor. He doesn't understand why they can't find the money to pay the folks that are running the place. Anthony said the senior carriers are making more than the entry-level supervisor. Jamal said we need to be on the offensive. The USPS should value you as a manager or supervisor. How do we do this collectively and let them know enough is enough.

Jamal introduced Bill Austin who retired in 2020 with 35 years of service and was an active

member of NAPS since 1986. He is running against Lisa. Bill had put a copy of his announcement on the tables and it tells you about me. He began as a letter carrier and was in management since 1986. He lives in Stamford. In the past he has been able to settle 90% of the cases given to him at the next level. The remaining 10% he can be a pit bull. He is not afraid to speak his mind. He was a level 24 in his last position in Stamford. He has the time, energy, and enthusiasm to handle this position. I learn something new every day, and I want to give back. How do we get the 15 branches in New England together since we have the same issues but different geographical areas. Providence has the same issues as Maine, but it's hard to get together. Now we have a RIF and people will be placed into positions they know nothing about. There is no RIF avoidance, that is a process you do not want. Learn your job. Jamal said we will see continued movement.

Rich Wilson said upper management is continually saying you will be walked out over minor issues. Bill said this is a good comment. If this happens to you, do not sign anything. You do your job as indicated in your job description. Never sign anything. You can also contact your POOM when this happens.

Bill said we have a contract with Red Jacket for a New England convention in 2022. He said he knows we have been going to the same location since 2009. They do a great job with the room set ups and food. For people in CT, it's a six-hour drive. If you have other suggestions for locations, please let him know and he'll put it to a vote.

Jamal thanked him for attending tonight. We appreciate your participation in this meeting.

Old Business:

Jamal said we missed getting a second on the motion Mr. Conroy, Sr., presented at our last meeting. This was regarding a change to Article 1, Meetings, new Section 4. Jamal asked for a second, and Kristine Moore seconded the motion. The motion passes, as all were in favor, no one opposed.

Jamal called for the Audit Committee's report. The Audit Committee, consisting of Donna Machala, Bob Conroy, Jr., and Shaun Branch submitted their recap. They conducted a review of the 2020 financial records for Branch 105 on May 11, 2021. The records included the savings account, money market account, checking account, and all related debit and credit receipts, as well as the spreadsheet the Treasurer maintains. Donna said they found the records to be accurate and reconciled on a monthly basis. The records are clear and concise. We thank Sue Evans for her continued diligence with the Branch's funds. Donna submitted their report to the Secretary. Betty DiSalvia made a motion to accept the report, and Shaun Branch seconded it. All were in favor.

New Business:

Jamal said he is preparing a change to the by-laws regarding the requirement for all executive board members to attend the meetings. We have four general meetings per calendar year, and four executive board meetings. He feels if an executive board member misses more than 50% of the meetings in a calendar year, this should be grounds for removal from the board. You must be an active member to sit on the board. Your attendance at all of the meetings is important. Mr. Conroy, Sr., said this goes into the minutes. At the next meeting we can print up that section of the by-laws, have proper discussion on it, and take a vote.

Anthony questioned how we went from three attendees at the National Convention to one. Jamal indicated he had spoken to those individuals and accepted their reasons for not going. Bob Conroy, Jr., said we already voted to send at least two people and allowed the funding. We should send at least two people. Mr. Conroy, Sr., said that there are some grey areas in the by-laws. But the executive board governs between the general meetings. Jamal said he will hold a zoom meeting with the executive board to discuss this change.

Mr. Conroy, Sr., said the attendees at National make the votes on behalf of each branch. We are allocated a percentage number of votes based on total members in the branch. So even if Jamal goes alone, he would make those votes himself.

Jamal said Brian Wagner is not running for re-election. Ivan Butts is running for President. Chuck Mulidore is running for Vice President. Jim Warden of NY is running for Secretary/Treasurer against Cindy McCracken from Washington State. Jamal said Jimmy always has good updates, but he did not know anything about Cindy. Jamal said he'd appreciate feedback on them.

Mr. Conroy, Sr., said at our next meeting in September, you will vote on officers for this Branch. You need to get involved. We are losing people from the board. Spread the word around. Get involved and start thinking about running for officer. The virus has hurt us as far as participation is concerned. We should come back up with attendance. You have 25 or more years ahead of you in your career.

Chuck said his members are also frustrated in not knowing what is going on with NPA. There are RIFs but no information is forthcoming. He feels that his members should have joined with NAPS. All EAS should be on the same page as there is strength in numbers.

Membership Committee:

The 50/50 SPAC raffle was won by Shaun. The pot was \$140. Donna will send the balance to SPAC.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Donna Machala, and was seconded by Jim Bourque, at 9 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara A. Bouchard
NAPS Secretary

Attendees: Anthony Alviti, Lance Bierman, Barbara Bouchard, Jim Bourque, Shaun Branch, Bob Conroy, Jr., Russ Fontaine, Declan Lavey, Donna Machala, Lisa McNally, Kristine Moore, Chuck Narciso, Tony Parente, Jamal Salih, Eric Thompson, Rich Wilson, Bob Conroy, Sr., Betty DiSalvia, and Rose Russo