Regular Meeting #2 Minutes – 9/26/2017

Meeting place: Lancelotta's Banquet Restaurant, 1113 Charles Street, N Providence 02904.

Members Present: 34

Brian Hold called the meeting to order at 6:05 P.M. with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Vic Giorgio.

Roll Call of Officers: Brian Holt, Roger Johnson, Barbara Bouchard, Sue Evans, and Donna Machala - all Present.

Executive Board members present: Betty DiSalvia, Victor Giorgio, Joanne Keeling, Donna Machala, Colleen Sheratt, and Don Taylor.

Excused: Cy Dumas

Brian introduced our key note speaker, Chris French, the CT Valley Manager of Operations Programs Support.

Brian wanted to clarify that we had a board member resign, so he appointed Don Taylor to that position.

Brian said we have several first-timers to recognize tonight: Jessica Cusack, Tim Ruel, Matthew Tiner, and Lilca Velasquez.

Brian wanted to acknowledge that it is Bill Barker's 90th birthday today. He was presented with a piece of cake later in the meeting.

Barbara Bouchard gave the Secretary's Report. According to the latest DCOs, this branch has 158 general members and 23 associate members for a total of 181. We received thank you notes for two sympathy cards we had sent to acknowledge the passing of general member Mike Cuccia and former member Lisa McNally's mother.

Motion to accept the Secretary's report: Made by Pat Bennett; Seconded by Victor Giorgio.

Donna Machala gave the Legislative Report.
Donna said there is nothing new to report. Several members of the board attended Senator Jack Reed's breakfast in May. She attended Representative Jim Langevin's fund raiser in East Greenwich recently.

Motion to accept the report: Made by Don Taylor; Seconded by Roger Johnson.

Treasurer Sue Evans provided the Financial Report
Sue had provided a copy at each table of the financial report through August 30, 2017. She said we are in really good shape since this is not a national convention year so our expenses have been minimal. We're in the black $8,299 with total assets at $44,206.45.

Motion to accept the Treasurer's report: Made by Andy Maynard; Seconded by Bob Conroy, Sr.

Roger Johnson gave the Vice President's Report.
Roger said there are two disciplinary actions pending right now.

Motion to accept the Vice President's Report: Made by Vic Giorgio; Seconded by Donna Machala.

Brian said he recently attended the quarterly management organization meeting in Hartford. It's much better to attend the meeting in person, that way you can interact with the rest of the staff when you are there. We discussed the SWCs testing that is being done in CT and NY which we expect will provide some positive results. Those offices involved were asked to write down every task they do each day as a delivery supervisor. Victor asked how this data was being validated? Brian said there was a higher level team convened consisting of Tony Roma, Greg Murphy, and Carissa Surprise from the NEA. Ed Phelan opened up the testing, and there will be much more to come on this topic. Vic said was it documented how many reports we are running and utilizing? Brian said they have all that. Chris French said they are looking at how much craft work EAS are doing, how many ECC cases they are working. He said this can differ from one district to another. They are looking at the time value for all of it. They are looking at Non-Traditional Full Time SCS and/or Relief SCS which may cover between offices.

He said they discussed the upcoming holiday period, and what the course of action will be. We may be renting some vehicles this year. Mostly 2-tons but the need by office will be prioritized.

We will break for dinner then resume with our guest speaker. The meeting resumed at 6:20.

Brian asked Chris French to speak to the group. Chris said he was happy to be here to speak a second time to this group; I appreciate what you do. Where did we end the year? Where are we headed for FY18. We ended 1.5% over plan in Function 2 and Function 4. FY18 will see even more cuts. Last year after the peak mail seasons, the mail volume dropped more than was expected with no significant increase in DPS or FSS to replace it. But we are seeing a large increase where? In packages. We saw a 19.6% increase in package growth over SPLY. CT Valley is number 2 in the country in packages for Amazon, with the Providence Sunday hub being the largest Sunday hub. We will get money back in our budget for that which will help us. Amazon represents 50% of our total parcel select volume. This is what's coming into our Post Offices, and it's our most significant product. Chris said he's been working closely with Bob Conroy, Jr. (the Acting HR Manager) on earned vs. actual and staffing for collections and combination routes. We have a large CCA cap because of Amazon. He said the Amazon contract is up this year. The NEA will include Brian in the discussion on this. We will see more aggressive budgeting with the goal of -2% working to the loss of volume.

In Function 4, what do we have for CSV vs. what do we earn. We do not earn time for everything that we do. So we are doing the best we can to juggle the hours we have in offices in order to cover everyone's needs with the increased volume.

Chris said HQ announced there will be formal inspections on all city routes all over the country over the next three years. On 3900 city routes, looking for a 3.9% savings as a result. The logistics behind this is a challenge. There will possibly be co-op changes if it makes sense and can show a savings.

Chris asked if anyone has used the DMS checklist yet, the dashboard? Lilca said she has. Chris said they are trying to incorporate the programs we use every day. There will be a process for those who work in more than one office so you will have access to each. They are trying to streamline the programs, with single sign-on. And more enhancements coming out, green if the action is complete, red if it's not. It's still a work in progress, developmental. Please bear with us. Greg asked if the user could customize based on the office? Chris said no it will be universal, but that is a good suggestion.

We are going to be developing a COAR program for rural routes to get the line of travel back in line. More to come on the rurals. There will also be rural counts in 2018 for routes that went L to non-L. Rurals are getting lots of parcels, what are the impacts to the evaluations.

We are in the middle of density tests for CPMS. That will wrap up on Saturday. We want to get as many collections back on the carriers as possible. So the collectors can handle the carrier pick–ups and ship from store orders. That's a big revenue source for the Postal Service. Vic asked is there any leeway with the times? Chris said it has to be justified. If it's business coded we will look at it. There would need to be less than 25 pieces collected to change the collection time on a box. It's better to move the location than to change the time.
Additionally, if you have collection boxes that need repair, you can purchase them through eBuy and it does not come out of your office budget. It's a HQ funded program.

Peak season planning began earlier this year. We will hire HCAs which will be annuitants only. Only NDC plants will get PSEs, Springfield and Southern CT according to Bob Conroy, Jr. Chris said we don't have the funding for additional hiring. He has taken all the vehicle requests and submitted them to NEA. What's available but not being used which is 85 to 90, with an additional 170 additional needed. The VMFs are talking to Enterprise to lease some type of delivery vehicle, not the caravans we've used before. Vic asked if the number of scanners assigned to us will increase for the peak season? Chris said he requested additional scanners from HQ, but as of now there is no structured plan to issue more scanners. He indicated the extra amount could be returned at the end of the season.

A new project coming from HQ is how carriers load the vehicles. A process to divide the vehicle into quadrants to organize their packages. More structured and organized method. And incorporate the MDDs. And training for PDAT for parcel routes. You may see early morning routes, mid-day, and early afternoon.

The District is holding Postmaster meetings just before peak season begins to share all this information for holiday planning. It's also a way to get feedback early. We expect the 20 days before Christmas will bring delivery of 500,000 packages a day or more. Good numbers compared with last year at 10 days with 500,000 packages. It's good revenue. That would be a total of $17 million packages for peak season, putting CTV as one of the top five in the country.

New vehicles can be expected in the Spring of 2020. Five companies have developed protypes; some with rear-wheel drive, some with front-wheel drive. Some that use diesel, hybrid, gas, or electric. Testing will be conducted for six months. Brian asked who is involved with the design of the vehicles? Chris said the designs have been completed. Lots of input from VMF managers. Right now in the interim, there are 9,000 ProMasters awaiting the PMG's approval. Any park and loop routes, the LLV will be replaced with a ProMaster or caravan. I was assured that once the final contract is signed, the vehicles will be made in America.

Brian presented Chris French with a large mug with our branch name. Chris thanked the group again, and said to please email him with any further questions.

Old Business:

At our last meeting, we had a request to change our quorum from 15% to 10%. I'd like to ask Bob Conroy, Sr., to speak on this. For those who have been attending these meetings over the years, you can see the attendance numbers have gone down. He said to conduct official business according to the by-laws and constitution, you need a quota. This is getting tight at some meetings. For roughly 175 members, 10% should work. I recommend we pass this motion. Brian asked if anyone had any questions on this or opposition to it? All in favor, all responded yes. Opposed, no one. The motion passed.

New Business:

Reminder to everyone to please sign up to attend the meetings by using EventBrite so that we can get accurate head-counts for each meeting.

Brian said we will be ordering polo shirts with the NAPS logo on them. The Branch will pay half the cost ($10). If you want one, please let Barbara know which color (black, blue or red) and the size. She will accept your payment of the remaining $10 per shirt.

Joanne Keeling said she has received five nominations for the scholarship committee.

Sue Evans said she is on the CFC Executive Board this year. She reports that OPM is way behind in printing the brochures as agency wishing to be in it has to pay to be reviewed to be included in the book. That's new this year. So don't expect to see anything come out until mid-November.

Brian said pay talks have begun for EAS and will last for 90 days. We will hear anything until December 20th. This year, NAPS has hired an outside pay negotiator to assist in these talks. Greg asked how soon after the 20th we will hear something? Brian said there's no way to know.

Brian said he didn't know if folks were aware that some EAS were found to be performing craft work in other parts of the country where the SWCS testing was taking place. That is only to be done in an emergency. No one should be doing that, it's a grievance the clerks will win. The only exception would be a vacant rural route. Bob Conroy, Jr., said it happens a lot in New Haven and the 064 and 068 areas. In those cases if you are doing bargaining unit work, you will not get a PSE or CCA. You need to make sure you show where the work load is being recorded. Brian said put the carriers on stand-by time.

Brian asked Bob Conroy, Jr., to expound on what Chris French discussed tonight. Bob said where we stand now is, we are 272 under what we earn in Function 4. We are not making it in F4. We have tried hard to get more PSEs to the field, but the District Manager is very strict on this. You have all had to go through the 1994 process to get your bids in line to where they should be to minimize the amount of OT that you use. We are at about 95% now. If you align your bids properly, should you have any pre-tour OT? No. Last week at 93%, we used 310 hours of pre-tour OT. The District Manager has requested a weekly report on this and wants the number to go down or he will be even more stringent on the OT. Victor said he'd like more training on this. Bob said to contact Michelle Zeller. If she's not available, there should be someone in Ops Program that can help you out. Same thing in Function 2 where we are bleeding hours. Every Thursday, the District Manager meets with the NEA AVP. We are in 8th or 10th place in the District. This is the hold up in getting more CCAs.

Bob said Peter Sgroi, the District Finance Manager, has been out in the field conducting 1017A audits (disallowing time) and 1017B (for unauthorized overtime). He went to every POOM group. Only one office, Monroe CT, was doing it correctly, and that was because the Department of Labor received a complaint about that office. This tells us the line supervisors are not getting the message that these need to be done correctly. These are some of the things the District Manager is looking at every day.

Brian said he wanted to touch back on what Bob was talking about on disallowing time. It was in Virginia that EAS were put on emergency time for taking away hours. Be very careful with time and attendance. Do it the right way. Use the 1017As and 1017Bs. For NAPS, it hard to defend someone not doing it correctly.

Brian reminded everyone that on Amazon Sundays, no 204Bs can be in the building if clerks are working.

Brian opened up the floor to take nominations for all the officer and executive board positions. The nominations for Officer positions were as follows:

- Brian called for nominations for the office of President. Shaun Branch nominated Brian Holt for President. He asked two additional times for more nominations, but none were made.
- Brian called for nominations for the office of Vice President. Bob Conroy, Sr., nominated Roger Johnson for Vice President. He asked two additional times for more nominations, but none were made.
- Brian called for nominations for the office of Secretary. Sue Evans nominated Barbara Bouchard for Secretary. He asked two additional times for more nominations, but none were made.
- Brian called for nominations for the office of Treasurer. Donna Machala nominated Don Taylor. He asked two additional times for more nominations, but none were made.
- Brian called for nominations for the office of Legislative Representative. Colleen Sheratt nominated Donna Machala. He asked two additional times for more nominations, but none were made.

Brian took nominations for Executive Board positions which were as follows:

- Victor Giorgio nominated Colleen Sheratt.
- Colleen Sheratt nominated Victor Giorgio
- Don Taylor nominated Joanne Keeling
- Shaun Branch nominated Greg Anderson
- Victor Giorgio nominated Tim Ruel
- Brian Holt nominated Shaun Branch

Roger made a ballot box for our use at the November meeting where we will be voting on all the nominations. Betty has agreed to continue maintaining our website.

Brian reminded everyone that next year the national convention will be held at Mohegan Sun. He went to the one last year in DC. He's not sure how many we will send in 2018. Bob Conroy, Sr. said there are not many opportunities to attend a national convention locally. There was one in Boston many years ago. It's a good learning experience about how this organizational body works. Bob said for every ten members, we can send one delegate to a national convention. Based on current figures, that's 17 spots. It would be good for some of the young, newer members to attend. It gives you additional knowledge about what is going on in the Postal Service. I encourage all of you to put your name in to go. It will show you how important the by-laws are to functioning properly as a group. It's also a good networking opportunity and a way to meet people from all over the country. There's no way of knowing when another national convention will be held in New England. Bob said he's happy to see more, younger people attend our meetings; you are the future of this group. Brian agreed and said we need to reach out to the other tours as well to get them involved.

The 50/50 raffle was pulled, and Tim Ruel won! The pot was $175 with half going to SPAC. If anyone needs a SPAC form or instructions on how to do a payroll deduction for SPAC contributions, please see Donna Machala.

Our next meeting will be held on November 15th at Kelly Gazzaro VFW Post, and voting will be held for officers and executive board members.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Roger Johnson; Seconded by Pat Bennett.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Bouchard