

NAPS 105 General Meeting Minutes
January 27, 2009
Kelley & Gazzero

Meeting began at 6:37

Attendance – 40

Announcements: Branch 105 President Dean Ambrosino introduced and thanked Carrie Damon for agreeing to be the guest speaker. Carrie replaced Robert Koestner as guest speaker. Dean announced that Area Vice President Cy Dumas sent his apologies because he could not attend since he is attending NAPS Branch 120 meeting in Brockton.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Alan Conca

Roll call: In attendance President Dean Ambrosino, Vice President Michaela Saccoccio, Treasurer Sue Evans, Secretary Rose Russo, Legislative Rep Pam Monroe. Executive Board members Alan Conca, Al Poli, Brad Fish, Norma Johnson, Dan Guenette, Joanne Keeling and Roberta Menard. Late: Gail Gagne
Excused: Cy Dumas

Treasurer's Report by Sue Evans –December expenses of \$1,130.56 was spent mostly for the holiday party, one health and welfare and the mailing. That left a NAPS checking account ending balance of \$407.01. The total assets in the NAPS account (statement checking \$407.01, statement savings \$191.34, and Money Market \$33,360.02) is \$33,958.37. The total Income YTD is \$37,127.66. Total Expenses YTD \$32,899.62 leaving the branch ahead by \$4228.04. Sue said that for a convention year we did very well since we made more than we spent. No questions.
Motion made to accept the report by Skip DelSesto, seconded by Santo LoBono.

Secretary's report by Rose Russo – Branch 105 has 41 tentative associate members plus 243 active members giving us a potential total membership of 284. Correspondences received include thank you notes for gift baskets from Joe Ferreira, Mike Limoges and Cid Blanchette. Thank you notes were received from Bob McCall and Joe Murdock for their retirement gift certificates. A thank you note was received from Mike Marotte for his mother's enrolment into the perpetual membership of the Passionist Benefactors Society. An acknowledgement card was received from the family of Joseph Maiorano. Five Associate membership renewals were received. Rose thanked those who sent in their membership renewals and then reminded retirees that renewal dues of \$45.50 should be paid by the end of January. No questions.

Motion made to accept the report by Pat Bennett and seconded by Victor Giorgio.

Legislative report Pam Monroe – Pam said that there are many rumors of big changes coming: plant consolidations, area and district staff reductions and craft work hour reductions and so on. Clarity should come on Wednesday afternoon when the PMG appears before a Senate Postal Oversight panel to testify on the deteriorating financial health of the Postal Service and what can be done to stabilize the ship. Sen. Carper, Chairman of the Senate Federal Services Subcommittee called the hearing to learn how badly the flagging economy is hurting the Postal Service and whether the Postal Service should receive any kind of relief and, if so, what kind and how. She said that there is no doubt about it, the worsening economy has thrown the Postal Service into a financial tailspin. Mail volume has declined at a pace not seen since the early 1930's. Our biggest mailing customers are cutting back too – meaning no mail. Current trends indicate that the USPS this year could lose \$4 billion or more.

The House version of the economic stimulus package, set for a vote in the House on Wednesday, does not include relief for the Postal Service. The Senate stimulus measure is still in the works and it is unknown whether appropriation for the Postal Service is the right move. The best way to provide financial relief for the Postal Service is reduction for one of the Postal Service's largest costs – its payments towards future health insurance premiums of its retirees. This prefunding obligation was created by the 2006 postal reform law. (No other department or agency is required to do this.) Legislation - HR 22 has been introduced to address this. The change would not affect the health insurance benefits of any retiree nor is it a bailout. It simply would revise the payment schedule.

She said that the Legislative Training Seminar is scheduled for March 28 – 31st and Brad Fish, Dean Ambrosino, Michaela Saccoccio, Al Poli and she will be attending. Issues being brought to the hill include Financial Relief for the Postal Service, Voting by Mail, Locality Pay & FERS Sick Leave, Social Security Fairness and Windfall Elimination Plan. Pam said that Inauguration Commemorative folios have been purchased as appreciation gifts for the legislators.

Pam thanked everyone for their SPAC donations. No questions.
Motion made to accept the report by Brad Fish, seconded by Alan Conca.

Dean Ambrosino brought everyone's attention to the handouts that were available and provided by EAP Health Care professional Kathy McKenna. He said that there is much going on that makes EAP more necessary than ever, including all of the changes, financial stress and the unknown, that causes much stress. Changes in the working conditions can cause stress. EAP is available to employees and their families. Kathy will probably speak at the March NAPS Branch 105 general meeting.

Social Director Brad Fish – Brad said that everyone he spoke to who attended the Holiday party enjoyed themselves. He has only heard good things. Fifty-nine people attended from three branches. Consideration is being given to schedule a Foxwoods bus trip in April. People who attended this outing last year had a good time. More information to follow in mailings and at the next meeting.

After dinner Dean introduced Frank Halm who was representing NAPS Branch 118 President Don Spirlet.

Guest Speaker Finance Manager Carrie Damon – Introduced by Dean Ambrosino as a 33 year Postal employee now serving as the Manager of Financial Control and Support.

Carrie acknowledged Bob Koestner's retirement announcement and said that he will be missed. She went on to talk about the budget, saying that we had some big stretches and by stretches she means the hours we have to save in the current year's budget as compared to the actual hours used in the previous year. In September our budget required a ten percent reduction - aggressive. We had some strategy meetings for FY '09. We did very well when we ended last fiscal year. But as far as this fiscal year was concerned we knew we faced challenges. Carrie said that she knew we could carry the momentum going to new FY we reacted well went into the first quarter with momentum and opportunity. We ended quarter one being over plan by only 8400 hours. Number two to plan and number two to SPLY (same period last year) in the Northeast Area at the end of the first quarter. Recently the weather has caused us to struggle. Currently we are 11.6 percent under SPLY in this quarter. Carrie said that it attests to the efforts of all supervisors and managers. She suggested that we give ourselves a pat on the back. She added that the real story is we need more. She said that we actually saved a half million hours to SPLY. But the new plan calls for saving s of 1.6 million hours to SPLY. The stretch went from - 10 percent SPLY in total hours to -12 percent SPLY in total hours. We know the economy is bad and getting worse. It is effecting us and we must find ways to save, save, save. The Postal Service is reactive to the economy.

Carrie went on to discuss SOX compliance. We do get scored once a month via a district manager score card on things like late postage statements, negative and delinquent accounts, employee items, banking and excess stamp stock. The reason we are being ranked on them is that we are scored and there are different goals by the end of the FY to be in SOX compliance. One of the things we don't need is to be sanctioned because we do not meet SOX compliance. We are going full speed ahead to make sure that does not happen and some of the things we are doing such as cash counts regularly still haven't been able to do that.

Carrie went over end of year data from the Business Review. The NEA originally cancelled the Business Review attesting to the good job SENE is doing. On a positive note Carrie added – "After hearing about all of the layoffs I can say to myself, 'Thank God I have a job in the USPS. We have a good job and good benefits we can retire from.'" She said that now we're in control of our own destiny – no one can do it as well as we can.

President's report Dean Ambrosino: Everyone is aware of the changes coming. We have to stay focused on what our responsibilities are and we can only control what our responsibilities are. Focus on our responsibilities and hopefully from these we can weather the storm. Look out for the USPS. We have to look out for each other. The Postal Service has to push about T Time. PMs and managers have to manage the EAS side. We have to respect that, as long as the manager is doing the right thing for the Postal Service. We must manage the operations as best we can for the least amount of money. Are we paying craft to cover management? If so, Dean said that he want to hear about that. What's best for the USPS? There is much pressure to save T Time. Manage the operation; get tasks done in the 8 hours. Do all the work you can. We are not guaranteed T Time.

Question came up about rumors – Why isn't more information shared with us? This is counterproductive. Dean said that here is a freeze on posted positions due to the downsizing in administration. As supervisors and managers we have to keep control of rumors and work from there. Keep it in check. No information will be passed unless Dean knows it's true. District did a very good job in holding back positions.

Ann Mailloux volunteered: There are plenty of vacant positions and permission has been granted to post 11 jobs Tuesday or a week later. But we may be restricted from filling them. Administrative employees should look to your own future and plan. Prepare for another position. Develop new skills – to find a place where you can be as comfortable as possible.

Dean continued - Providence and Brockton plants are experiencing tour compression. In Providence they are going to limit tour II automation and limited days of the week they would serve in operations. At the plant on weekends they will not be running automation, APPS, FSM 100, on tour II. Quite a few supervisors are impacted at the plant. Who will be impacted? He and Cy have met with the plant manager and Lead Plant Manager Gary Fahey a number of times concerning how it will be rolled out. We still haven't come to an agreement on how it is going to be done such as what jobs will be available and matching them up with people. We are going to try to limit the impact on people as much as possible.

Questions came up -

Question: Can we share this with our employees?

Answer: Sure you could. I think this should be shared with the employees.

Question: How do I deal with employees when they read in their magazine that the headquarters, VPs are getting generous bonuses?

Answer: I can't justify it. Corporate America deals with this all the time. It's important to keep in mind that we are fortunate to be working for this organization. It's hard to come to work and stay positive.

Mailloux: People need to understand that in '08 we did an incredible job with service and people. We are in worse position in comparison to other clusters. We have already done what needs to be done to save money. As a result, we have to ask our operational people to do things that they have never done before. We have to ask our operational people to do things that they have avoided doing because they have tried to do the right thing by their people who give their discretionary effort every day. Because that's the position we are in.

Unfortunately, if the managers and supervisors don't step up and do those things, people will be out of jobs. If folks don't believe that we are looking a lay offs – that's what we are looking at. We can't get the mail processed and delivered now. You can do as you have always done and have someone else make the decisions. Or you can rise to the occasion, be a leader, cut what you can cut, make changes although unpleasant. You have to sell this to your employees. You have to talk the truth to your employees. The truth is ugly. I would rather have someone talk the truth to me and give me an opportunity to make a difference, rather than lie to me and find myself on the ranks of the unemployment line. So that's the position that this company is in now. I think that if we don't all understand this, we're not going to have an option to stand up and do the right thing.

Old Business: Audit committee report: Given by Donna Machala (enclosed)
On behalf of the committee she wished Sue Evans a happy and healthy retirement.
Motion to accept made by Pat Bennett, seconded by Brad Fish.

Budget Committee report given by Sue Evans. (enclosed) She thanked the Betty DiSalvia and Andy Maynard for helping.
Motion to accept by Al Poli seconded by Steve Lallier

Dean extended his thanks to Joe Murdock calling him the quiet voice of reason while serving as an executive board member. Then Dean thanked Bob McCall for serving on the executive board as vice president and covering for Cy during his wife's illness.
Dean recognized retirees Cid Blanchette, Bill Panoni, Jim Falvey, Tom Boland and Alan Conca. Alan served as a NAPS Branch 105 executive board vice president and ran social committee. Dean thanked Alan for his many years of service.

Dean thanked Genie and Skip DelSesto and congratulated them on their recent retirement.

Dean also recognized recent retiree Sue Evans and thanked her for the eight years she has continuously served as NAPS Branch 105 Treasurer.

50-50 - SPAC drawing winner of \$102.00 is 3979848 Brady Sullivan.

Motion to adjourn made by Alan Conca and seconded by John Peters.

Meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose A. Russo
Secretary-NAPS Branch 105, Providence, RI