

Regular Meeting #4 Minutes - 11/20/2019

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

Members present: 38 (29 general members, 9 associates)

Our President, Sabir (Jamal) Salih, called the meeting to order at 6:20 P.M. with the Pledge of Allegiance led by John Goeden.

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

Executive Board members present: Victor Giorgio, Kristine Moore, Donna Machala, Al Kesack, David Costa, and Gregg Anderson.

Excused: N/A

Joining us tonight is Cy Dumas, current New England AVP for NAPS; Chuck Narciso, UPMA President; and Brian Holt, CT Valley District Labor Manager.

First Timers: Jimmy Bouakhasith who started as an RCA in Coventry, was a CCA in Pawtucket, and is now a Supervisor in Newport. Keith Hansen who was a 204B in the VMF, but he is now an SDO in the Providence PDC.

Shaun Branch gave the Vice President's report: Shaun said we currently have no cases to report.

Motion to accept the Vice President's report: The motion was made by Victor Giorgio and seconded by Jim Bourque. All were in favor.

Barbara Bouchard gave the Secretary's Report: Barbara said that according to the last DCO report we received (through September 30, 2019), we have 163 general members, 26 associate members, and 20 non-members, and one on the change report, for a total of 189. We have not received any correspondence since the eight submissions for the scholarship.

Motion to accept the Secretary's report: Made by Victor Giorgio 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. Our expenses for October were \$11.05. We have spent \$19,094.40 year-to-date. Our assets total \$43,308.28. Our total income for the year minus our total expenses leaves a balance of \$6,290.27. However, we will have very few expenses now going into the new calendar year.

Motion to accept the Treasurer's report: Made by Mr. Conroy, Sr., and seconded by Brian Holt. All were in favor.

Donna Machala gave the Legislative Report:

Bob Levi, NAPS Director of Legislative & Political Affairs, sent an email to all the legislative reps and branch presidents across the country regarding needing more cosponsors for HR 2382, which is legislation to eliminate the Postal Service's requirement to pre-fund retiree health benefits. He wrote: "at the beginning of the year, the House of Representatives adopted a series of changes to the rules that govern the consideration of legislation. One of the new rules creates a 'consensus calendar,' in which a bill can be voted upon by the full House of Representatives, even if it has not been approved by the committee of jurisdiction. To be eligible for this expedited procedure, the bill must have acquired at least 290 co-sponsors." As of today, HR2382 has earned 274 bipartisan co-sponsors – 16 votes short of the

290 mark. "The bill would eliminate the unfair and financially devastating requirement that the Postal Service pre-fund its retirees' health benefits. It is important that you review the attached list of NON-cosponsors to urge those in your state to join the majority of their colleagues to relieve the Postal Service of the unfair burden that Congress itself imposed on the institution 13 years ago and siphoned-off billions of dollars that could have been used for Postal operations. It is important that you educate first-term members of Congress that the Postal Service is the only entity – public or private – that is required to pre-fund retiree health premiums, and to also remind veteran Representatives of that fact. You may call members of Congress at 202-224-3121 and ask for the staff member who handles Postal issues. Thank you for your help in this campaign."

At each table is the list of the 2019 NAPS supported legislation. Our two congressmen have supported HR 2382, and I've prepared letters to them thanking them for co-sponsoring HR 2382 and asked them to urge their colleagues who have not yet co-sponsored this bill to join them and the majority of their colleagues in support of HR 2382. I included the list of NAPS supported legislation and asked for their support as the U.S. Postal Service plays an important role in our economy. Everyone is encouraged to reach out to our members of Congress by calling or writing.

Observers of the federal workforce issues said the impeachment inquiry against President Trump is likely to dominate the next Oversight and Reform Committee chair's agenda.

The Alliance of Nonprofit Mailers put out a report on October 22, 2019, *Postmaster General Retirement not a Surprise, as Governors Want Their Own Person*. In part from the report: Some have called it surprising, but we were not taken off guard when Postmaster General (PMG) Megan Brennan announced she will retire at the end of January. We were not surprised because the Postal Service has five newly-minted Governors, all appointed by President Trump. (Not "most" as reported by some media.) The two most important jobs of the USPS Governors, not the full Board of Governors that includes the PMG and Deputy PMG, are to approve rate changes and hire and fire the PMG. (And there is no quorum requirement for these decisions, as some have reported.) With a crisis declared by the two most recent PMGs, and no solution in sight, it makes sense that a new set of Governors would want their own CEO to help them turn things around. It's just common sense - not partisan politics, not an attempt to privatize, and not animosity toward Amazon.com, as some have argued. The Governors do not run the USPS full time; that is the job of the PMG. To carry out a redefinition and turnaround of USPS, the Governors likely concluded they need to bring in their own PMG to best implement their strategies. The Governors intend to carry out a nationwide search for a new PMG, which probably means they want to find someone who is not a career USPS employee. It is important that the most recent PMGs have been career employees with family members who also worked at the Postal Service and belonged to Postal unions. These four have led the USPS for the past 21 years (1998 – 2019) and followed four PMGs (1986 – 1998) who were not career Postal employees. There are strengths and weaknesses associated with both backgrounds for PMGs, and it is likely we will test the non-career model next year.

UPDATED INFO: *Since our branch meeting, there have been additional co-sponsors to HR 2382 surpassing the 290 cosponsors needed with 294 as of 12/3/19.*

Motion to accept the Legislative Report: Made by Gregg Anderson and seconded by Bill Downes. All were in favor.

Jamal asked everyone to put your ballot in the ballot box if you have not already done so.

At 6:35 P.M., Jamal said we will break for dinner now. The meeting resumed at 7:10 P.M.

Old Business:

Jamal asked Cy for an update. Cy said this group has a balance of \$43,000. He has seen the financial reports of other branches. At one time, Greater Boston had \$100,000. Their balance is now at \$70,000. No shows at general meetings can impact your bottom line. Brockton has \$5,000. These lower

balances can lead to branches cutting back on things such as the costs of meetings and how many will be able to attend conventions. Providence has a good number of people going to the conventions.

Not much is going on right now with the court case (NAPS vs USPS). The Postal Service has requested the case be dismissed, and there has been no response as of yet.

Cy asked how many carriers are their nation-wide now? About 212,000, and 45% of them have less than six years in the business.

Cy spoke about his informational session held in Marlboro on November 3rd. There were 33 officers in attendance. We heard Eric Chavez speak; he is the new Northeast Area Vice President. Karen Woo did a presentation on employee engagement. He feels this is a valuable program which NAPS should also be involved in. He is happy to see some new faces in the mix here tonight. We need more advocates to be trained. We have Jay Killackey who works for DDF and is also a rep.

Cy said every November, the Greater Boston Branch has a ceremony honoring all those members who retired over the year. They also gave out ten \$500 scholarships. This information is good thinking about different ways of doing things.

The Greater Boston PDC has taken five machines out due to the declining mail volume. Now they are looking at doing the same thing at the Brockton facility and in CT plants.

Eric Chavez said very few EAS employees are not getting NPA this year, compared with 4,500 last year.

You may have heard that the PMG is retiring at the end of January 2020. It is very likely that we will have another outside person as her replacement as the Board of Governors (BOG) has consulted a head hunter company. Cy said the BOG Dave Williams worked for the OIG previously, and he has a good insight on the different functional aspects of the USPS. He supports NAPS pay package efforts. The last three PMGs were all internal candidates. It's been over 20 years since we had an outsider running this business; Marvin Runyon 1992. There is now a quorum on the BOG. Three new people have financial backgrounds.

Cy said the financial report for FY2019 came out last week. The USPS is \$500 million in the black for revenue, but is minus \$8.8 billion overall (due to TOE -\$4 billion, and -\$4.8 billion in health care costs and retiree benefits.) The only relief in sight is getting legislation approved. Congress seems to only be dealing with crises for a long time now. In his opinion, this PMG has done nothing for the EAS. We come in at #9 out of 16 areas in the country for percentage of NAPS members.

Cy said regarding the movement of the 027/028/029 offices going to Greater Boston and where we are at with that process. The NEA supports this. But we are in our peak season right now. More than likely the new PMG will make this decision. CTV has 15,000 employees now, and Greater Boston has 12,000. This move will bring 3,000 from CTV to Greater Boston and will impact the district manager levels in each district.

Jamal thanked Cy for his comments. He wanted to remind everyone that Brian Holt is here tonight if you have any labor related questions. He then thanked Bob Conroy, Sr. for the membership letter we sent out with the September minutes. He asked him to provide further input.

Membership Committee: Mr. Conroy said his intent is to keep this group informed on NEA and national issues. He will be targeting the non-members next and the new hires as well. As a reminder, you receive \$25 for every new person you sign up. Help them by providing the form to withdraw from craft unions; this is an easy fix there's no reason for them to be still paying them. He said we need to be more visible to the non-members. We need to start utilizing the bulletin board in the EAS swing room at the plant. Bring your NAPS magazine in after you read them and leave them in your swing rooms. Make use of them. Post the meeting notices so this group is visible to them. He challenged everyone to set a goal this coming year to attend at least one NAPS meeting in 2020. He will have a new membership letter for each of our mailings in 2020. But he needs everyone to help in any way you can.

New Business:

Jamal reminded everyone that it is open season right now for health care benefits through December 9th. Look at what you have now and what your costs are. Are you getting your money's worth? The Providence Plant had an open house on November 5th.

He commented that we are going into our busiest season now, with people working longer hours and more days than they may normally. If you need some assistance, use the free benefit you have with EAP (1-8000-EAP-4YOU/1-800-327-4968).

Jamal said he wants to have an after season holiday gathering for this group. He asked for three volunteers to work on this, and Kristine Moore, Roberta Casey, and Gregg Anderson stepped up. We are looking at January, not a sit down meal more like hot hors d'oeuvres. A DJ and have it on a Saturday night. You will need to purchase tickets so we get a head count. One member with one guest and you will be reimbursed at the door.

Sue made a motion to raise the amount spent on the national convention in 2020 from \$8,000 to \$10,000. Mr. Conroy, Sr., said \$8,000 has been the limit for many years and costs have gone up. So it is not unreasonable to raise that amount by \$2,000. The amount does not count the President and Vice President who go as delegates. Sue said she did a preliminary look at air fares and said that is around \$500 to Dallas, \$230 for registration, \$1,200 for the hotel, plus per diem costs. So for each attendee we are looking at \$2,400. Vic asked this does not necessarily mean we will spend all of it, and Jamal said no but it means more can go. Jamal asked for a vote; is there anyone against? No, all were in favor so the motion passed. Mr. Conroy said the by-laws need to reflect this change.

Donna made a motion that for 2020, NAPS make another donation to Operation Holiday Cheer to send packages to RI military members. This year, we had 400 boxes to mail. This donation would go for the postage to send the boxes, so the money is revenue to the Postal Service. Cy made the motion to accept, and Brian Holt seconded it. The motion passed. Sue will include this in the budget for 2020.

Mr. Conroy, Sr., presented a change to Article 5 Section 1 to change "six months" to "three months" for eboard vacancies. Currently six months is allowed, and we really do not want to wait that long to fill vacancies. We will put this to a vote at our next meeting.

Jamal asked Bob Conroy, Jr. for the results of the executive board elections. The following individuals were elected to the eboard:

1. Al Kesack, Providence PDC
2. Jessica (Cussack) Sargo, Providence PDC
3. Kristine Moore, Manager, Corliss Park
4. Victor Giorgio, Manager, Middletown RI
5. Gregg Anderson, Postmaster, Wakefield RI
6. David Costa, Manager, Riverside

Cy Dumas swore in all board members.

Jamal asked for two volunteers for the Budget Committee which is chaired by Sue Evans, Treasurer. Betty DiSalvia and Bob Conroy, Jr. both volunteered. They will meet prior to the January eboard meeting on January 29th at 4 P.M. in room 235 at 24 Corliss Street.

Jamal asked for three volunteers for the Audit Committee. Donna Machala, Dave Costa, and John Goeden volunteered. Sue said you will be provided with the documentation before the February meeting.

The Dean Ambrosino Scholarship raffle was conducted. The following people were selected in this order:

1. Alexandra Larson (Jane Larson's daughter)
2. Taylor Payton (Paul Payton's daughter)
3. Kelsey Pedro (Edd Pedro's daughter)

The first selectee has ten days to produce evidence of current enrollment. The winner will receive \$550 this year because Mike Foley donated \$50 towards the scholarship when he won the SPAC drawing at our last meeting.

UPDATED INFO: *Ally Larson was notified by letter on November 21st that she was the first-place winner. The very next day, she produced documentation of her mid-term grades and the courses she is already enrolled in for January 2020 at RIC. She is, therefore, our scholarship winner. Her mom was extremely pleased that she won, but especially so because the scholarship is named after Dean Ambrosino with whom she worked for many years.*

Rich Wilson asked about the clerk bids being changed in Garden City as well as the supervisors' schedules being changed. Bob spoke about the fact that different people can have very different management styles. You need to realize we are a data driven organization now, and there is lots of pressure from the top down. There are certain tools we have to use to manage the craft. You can give feedback to upper management. But when you are dealing with a level 26 and looking at CSV, it is quite obvious when there is a problem with complement. Bill Downes said there are people here who can help you. Rich said this plays a role with employee engagement. Jim Bourque said what Bob said is very true, but if you need help call us. Use who is around you. Cy asked whether these were temporary changes due to peak season or are they involuntary reassignments? It is a manager's job to make operational changes. However, the manager should be notifying NAPS.

Jamal said regarding the End of Year Celebration with CTV, the District Manager used "SEE" (Service, Engagement, and Efficiency). That is the focus for us now.

The 50/50 SPAC raffle was won by Jim Bourque. The pot was \$245. Donna will send the balance to SPAC.

The gift card raffle of four Stop 'n shop cards worth \$50 a piece were won by: Kristine Moore, Genie DelSesto, Sue Evans, and Vic Giorgio.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Victor Giorgio, and was seconded by Gregg Anderson, at 8:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara A. Bouchard

NAPS Secretary