

## **Meeting called to order by President Erick Poston at 07:30 PM**

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

### **Memoriam**

There was no memoriam for Branch 40. However, President Poston asked the members to pray for the family of Jonte Davis, the carrier who was murdered on duty in Warren, Ohio.

### **Recording Secretary**

**Nestor J Chaves**

### **Roll Call of Officers**

With the exception of Administrative Vice President Charles Austin, who was excused, and Trustee Jeffrey Glenn, all other officers were in attendance.

### **Reading of the Minutes**

The Branch 40 minutes for the February 9<sup>th</sup> meeting were posted on the website, and copies were made available at this meeting. There were no questions regarding the minutes.

A motion was made by Dennis Perk to accept the minutes as presented and was seconded by Bruce Graham. Call for discussion, seeing none, the vote was taken and the motion passed.

### **Communications**

The Branch received a communication from the employees and Trustees of Nalcrest thanking us for the ad which was placed by Branch 40 in their 60-year Commemorative Booklet.

Document Included

The Branch also received a communication from 7<sup>th</sup> Congressional Candidate Dennis Kucinich asking for our support as he seeks election as an Independent to represent the working men and women of over 20 core communities in Ohio, and the entire Nation.

Document Included

### **Membership**

Since our last meeting on February 9<sup>th</sup> 2024, 36 new employees completed and submitted 1187's for membership into the NALC, Branch 40. We require a motion to accept them.

Chris Anagnostopoulos made a motion to accept the 36 new members. It was seconded by Judy Durham. Call for discussion, being none, the motion was passed.

President Poston added that Cleveland is close to going back to hiring CCAs. The rule is, when we are at 276 PTFs for four consecutive pay periods we revert to hiring CCAs. Even though we had some resignations we are flirting with that number, with an additional 16 new employees coming on board Monday.

Nestor Chaves also commented that in Pay Period 3-2024 we had 82 new union paying members added to our rolls.

### **Retiree Report**

The following members retired from pay period 3 thru 5 2024, Charles E Austin Jr, Knowles Bacon, Andrew M Herman, and Donald J Zarrelli. Branch 40 congratulates them and wishes them many years to enjoy their retirement.

President Poston also commented on the retirement celebration at station BC this morning honoring A.T.Wilson with 66 years of service,

Knowles Bacon with 43 years, and Charles Austin Jr who started in 1993.

### **Delegate Report Boston Convention**

Nestor Chaves informed nominated delegates in attendance that the information packet was available and to make sure they picked one up prior to leaving. Delegate Credential Cards were also received by the Branch and another Delegate meeting will be held prior to the Convention.

President Poston stated that 25 rooms have been reserved in block, 15 doubles and 10 singles.

### **Financial Secretary Report-Reading of the Bills**

#### **Charnell Green**

At this time Charnell Green informed the members that unfortunately due to computer technical issues no Financial Reports were available tonight. However, next month the Financial Reports will include the Months of February and March.

#### **AFL-CIO**

President Poston gave the report and spoke to the upcoming primaries on March 19<sup>th</sup> and the importance of getting out to vote.

The AFL-CIO needs volunteers to march in the St Patrick's Day Parade on Sunday the 17<sup>th</sup> and we will meet at 18<sup>th</sup> and Superior at 1:30 PM.

Members should sign the petition for an independent commission to end gerrymandering and contact the office to do so.

National is considering releasing active carriers to help in the upcoming election, canvassing neighborhoods, and making phone calls. Retirees are encouraged to join the effort, as we absolutely need you, anyone

interested should contact the Branch so we can pass that on to the AFL-CIO. Retirees can expect to be working beginning in June with active carriers released in September.

He recognized Tierra Battle for her work as Political Action Fund Coordinator for the East side, especially for her efforts to get Shontel Brown as a cosponsor on HR 5995, the bill which would allow Casuals, CCAs, and TEs to buy back time towards retirement.

## **Health Benefits**

### **Patrice Ashley**

No report

## **MBA**

### **Brian Wisnewski**

Thanked the members for allowing him to represent them and spoke about management ramping up against carriers in the route adjustment process.

## **Safety-OWCP**

### **Matt Nicholson**

Spoke to the importance of paying attention to your case file online. The Claim Specialist downtown seems to be challenging one out of every two claims filed, with most reasons not being legitimate. If we can't settle these actions by management informally, we can file a grievance but timeliness is important. Management is supposed to inform you personally if they are controverting your claim, not just upload it in your file.

## **Entertainment Social Recreation**

### **Leah Hudak**

She informed the members that she would be supplying refreshments and snacks for the meetings and is working with Abdoul Anus to establish Tik Tok, Facebook, and Instagram Accounts for Branch 40. She will have some type of contest to raise monies for MDA monthly, hopes to have PTF bi-monthly meetings, and a clothing drive. She is open to suggestions and can be reached directly or through the Branch.

President Poston encouraged members who would like to help with future activities to reach out to Leah as we are trying to build a base of younger carriers to get involved and attend meetings.

## **Executive Vice President**

### **Andre Laney**

He began his report speaking about carriers not opening their mail, especially when it comes to Letters of Demand, which usually means you owe money to the Post Office. You have 14 days to file a grievance on a Letter of Demand, to ensure that their claim is legitimate, as the Post Office will garnish your wages if no action is taken. There are many reasons why you may owe the Post Office money, such as for Health Benefits while in a non-pay status. We can still file a grievance if you get an invoice but at that point the Post Office will be garnishing your wages.

Filing a grievance can delay the garnishment and give you time to set up payment options and percentage, otherwise they can take 15% of your non disposable income. You can pay by credit or debit card, salary offset, or you could pay it in full. You should also be checking your earning statement either online or your paystub, verifying your hours and deductions. Another important deduction to pay attention to is

FEGLI, your life insurances. These rates increase considerably when you hit 50, 55, and at 60 they will double, you may want to consider private insurance as an option.

A good resource for information is the Letter Carriers Resource Guide from the NALC, we distribute them at orientation. The guide covers your rights and benefits from the beginning of your career through retirement. You can get view an updated copy at [NALC.org](http://NALC.org), workplace issues, tab resource guide.

FEGLI open seasons are rare but under a life changing event such as, marriage or newborn, you can make changes. You can downgrade or eliminate coverage but you cannot increase amounts.

Rual Moncrief from Shaker was recognized and asked about when the 14 days starts regarding a letter of demand and how they are aware you received it. The response was the Post Office places tracking on the mail.

Brian Rembowski from North Royalton was recognized and stated that he has received a letter of demand twice even though its in Formal A.

Charnell Green commented that his case was at the DRT level.

Pam Pilkington retiree was recognized and asked if copies of the Resource Guide could be brought to the next meeting.

Members can download a PDF file from the website or request a copy which will be mailed to your home.

## **President**

### **Erick Poston**

He began his report by stating, if he had copies of the resource guide members could come to the office and pick one up and would try to get some for the next meeting.

The Committee of Presidents meeting, which he recently attended, covered many topics regarding the ongoing contract negotiations.

The previous contract took 18 months to negotiate and ratify, which is average. The current contract expired on May 20<sup>th</sup> 2023, which places us under a year. We are ahead of schedule but it is still to be determined if this contract will be negotiated or go to arbitration.

The Union and Postal Service each picked an Arbitrator along with agreeing this week to a Neutral Arbitrator, Dennis R Nolan. These three Arbitrators will come to a decision based on the arguments presented by both sides, with the biggest issue being pay.

The Letter Carrier contract is the second largest in the United States, affecting not just us but other government agencies and the private sector. Brian Renfroe stated we could settle today and it would be a good contract but it would not be the best contract for our members.

Per contract the average costs the Post Office incurs is 100 billion dollars, that's why both parties take these negotiations seriously.

We weren't always the United States Postal service we used to be the United States Postal Department and during that time the Treasury Department was responsible for retirement costs.

In 2008 there was a study done by the DOL that determined the Post Office overpaid 60 billion dollars towards pre funding pension costs for civil service retirees to the Treasury. The Segal group an outside agency conducted their own study and determined it was actually 75 billion. This refutes the recent claims by the Post Office reporting a 6-billion-dollar loss last year. Today the figure is closer to 90 billion dollars and accounts for 4 billion of the Postal Service loss in 2023.

Fortunately, the problem can be addressed by the person in the White House with an Executive order to return those monies. Using the Segal

group study to do the actuaries would determine how much is owed to the Department of the Treasury. Unfortunately, he has still not signed the executive order which was drafted and is on his desk. With this being an election year, knowing the Letter Carrier votes are important, he could sign it in the near future. If you receive a push notification to call the White House please do so. Transferring the 90 billion back to the Postal Service would offset the 100 billion contract cost.

In 2013 we went to a two tier pay schedule with Table 2 at a lower pay rate, about 15,000.00 less. Table 2 takes the same time to reach the top rate but with smaller raises. Both sides want a single pay table but the Union wants significant pay increases. Currently the starting wage tier 2 is 22.13, with table 1 over 26.00 an hour. The Union wants significant increases such as 10% for the starting gap and 6% to 7% for the ending gap.

The Union wants the elimination of non-career employees so we no longer have CCAs and to stop prorating the COLAS for Table 2 throughout the pay scale.

Unlike the post office which compares us to Dominoes, Uber, Lyft, and Grubhub drivers, the Union is going to be arguing that we are comparable to other outside delivery drivers such as UPS. Throughout our history you can make a definitive comparison between the UPS contract and the Postal Service contract. Although UPS starts at 21.00 an hour, which we consider low, it takes them less time to get from junior step to senior step.

The UAW was successful in eliminating the two tiers pay scale and gained significant wage increases, getting their concessions back. We need to reward our carriers who worked through Covid, have expanded street times, and more deliveries.



We got the Postal Service to where they are today, we passed the Postal Reform Act, we want the concessions back from 2013. With the recent gains made by UPS drivers and UAW workers we believe it will be a significant advantage for us.

They are also talking about creating new overtime lists, such as an 8 hours per day but with the ability to work the NS-day, overtime on regular days but not on the NS-day, and the ability to work more than current 12-60 rule. However, the Union wants guarantees the employee can walk when they reach the maximum on whatever list they're on without repercussions from management.

Spoke to the issues regarding the uniform allowance and high costs of uniforms. In 1974 the allowance was able to cover most of the items needed, today you would need it doubled, about one thousand dollars per year. The answer may not be raising the allowance as we believe companies would simply raise the costs to purchase, with one company controlling 80% of the business. They are looking into ways to solve this problem with the possibility of the Union administering the program, with the goal of carriers being in uniform day one.

With the Post Office giving the money to Citibank to administer the program they keep any funds not used by the carriers.

Crimes against Letter Carriers is also being discussed as the Union wants Prosecutors filing charges with sentencing requirements, and change all locks across the country. However, Letter Carrier crime against Letter Carriers needs to stop, as it is happening more frequently. We do not want to be handling notices for removals for people involved in this type of behavior.

Brad Payton Olmsted Falls was recognized and stated that his manager informed him his uniform allowance would be issued at 180 days and asked if the manager would be the one who would authorize it.

In response President Poston stated that you are suppose to get a credit card in the mail from Citibank. However, if you don't get the card after your 90 days, give us a call so we can send an email to get it done.

Donald Gardner Glenville was recognized and asked if the current contract which had expired was still in enforce.

The answer was yes.

Chris Balega Lyn May asked if the contract language would change if new Overtime Lists were created for the purpose of filing grievances.

The answer was yes, with all the language on equitability changing.

Patrice Ashley retiree asked if the negotiations were dealing with the difference in COLAs for Civil Service and FERS retirees.

The answer was no. The problem was created when the law was passed in 1985 to create the FERS retirement and there was no current legislation to address it.

Rob North Olmsted was recognized and asked if management was walking with carriers as part of the process.

The answer was no. Management is doing 3999's but they mean nothing when it comes to time. However, they can still be used to identify vacant addresses and safety concerns. Scanner data is used for the adjustment with a random six weeks picked over the course of a year, excluding December, June, July, and August.

James Gurepko, North Royalton asked if in the future we would be able to clock out for our breaks and lunch during the inspection. This would prevent management taking that time from us.

During the route adjustment process you have to communicate these issues and during the review it can be readdressed.

### **Unfinished Business**

None

### **New Business**

The Executive Board will be looking at funding for the Entertainment Committee with a recommendation at the April 12<sup>th</sup> Union meeting. Currently the purchase of refreshments has been on an as needed basis for steward, union meetings, and the retiree seminar.

At this time Leah Hudak made a motion for the Branch to donate 100.00 dollars to the family of Jonte Davis, the carrier killed in Warren, Ohio, it was seconded by Maureen Gochett.

During discussion President Poston commented that he was a CCA and did not qualify for life insurance, the family is bearing the burden of the remaining 8,000.00-dollar funeral costs. A collection was suggested by Regina Williams and the Auxiliary would be donating an additional 200.00 dollars.

Sam Harris Station BC asked if individual stations could also collect donations.

The answer was yes. The donations should be sent to the Union Office to be included and identified separately.

As a result of the discussion the motion was amended by Leah Hudak the amount was raised to 250.00 and again was seconded by Maureen Gochett.

Being no more discussion, the motion was voted on and passed.

Document included

At this time President Poston read the name Martin Peltz for the attendance award currently at 220.00 dollars, the member was not present, as required to receive the award. Next month the award would rise to 240.00 dollars.

### **Good of the Order**

Before adjournment President Poston recognized International Women's Day and thanked the women of Branch 40 for all they have done to support the Union and this country.

Bruce Graham made a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Judy Durham.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:48 PM

Recording Secretary

03/25/2024

Nestor J Chaves