

**Representing the Stations of
Encino – Panorama City – Sherman Oaks – Sun Valley – Tarzana – Van Nuys Main**

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

**By
JEMMAYEN MACARAEG**

Senate committee holds hearing on Postal Service oversight

On April 16, the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs held a hearing on oversight of the Postal Service. The hearing focused on service issues, network modernization, implementation of the Postal Service's 10-year strategic Delivering for America (DFA) plan, USPS's finances and other topics.

Postmaster General Louis DeJoy, Chairman of the USPS Board of Governors Roman Martinez, Chairman of the Postal Regulatory Commission Michael Kubayanda and USPS Inspector General Tammy Hull testified at the hearing.

In his opening statement, Postmaster General DeJoy acknowledged the success of the Postal Service Reform Act of 2022 but emphasized that it was only the first step: "What we need now is for our stakeholders to support us in the implementation of key self-help initiatives outlined in the Delivering for America plan that are critically necessary and that will ultimately enable our operational and financial success."

In his opening remarks, Chairman Martinez focused on the Postal Service's finances and referenced "uncontrollable factors" that negatively affect the agency's bottom line, such as the requirement for postal retirement funds to be invested in low-yield U.S. Treasury bonds, which produce minimal returns, and the Postal Service's disproportionate obligation to Civil Service Retirement System pension funds.

Chairman Kubayanda expressed concern with the Postal Service's performance in his opening statement and encouraged the agency's leaders to be "transparent with stakeholders."

In her opening statement, Inspector General Hull discussed ongoing audits of regional processing and distribution centers in Virginia, Georgia and Oregon, as well as

service performance reviews in Missouri, Minnesota, North Dakota, California and Washington, DC.

Many of the questions posed by senators focused on the implementation of the plan and its effects on service. Sens. Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Jacky Rosen (D-NV), Jon Ossoff (D-GA), Laphonza Butler (D-CA), Josh Hawley (R-MO), Roger Marshall (R-KS) and Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) all referred to specific local issues related to service delays or problems with postal facilities. Postmaster General DeJoy testifies.

DeJoy acknowledged issues in the plan's rollout, especially in Atlanta, GA, and Richmond, VA. "We apologize to the constituents that have received that service. But in the long term, if we don't make these changes, that will be every day everywhere around the nation," he said. While the postmaster general recognized the "significant obstacles" that lie ahead for the DFA plan, he also cited the "significant progress" that has been made.

Outside of service questions, Ranking Member Rand Paul (R-KY) criticized the Postal Service's labor practices. He called converting non-career postal workers to career "nonsensical" since it makes their pay and benefits more expensive for the agency. DeJoy defended the decision, saying that it was the "right thing to do," and that it improved employee retention.

In their questioning, Chairman Gary Peters (D-MI), Sen. James Lankford (R-OK) and Ranking Member Paul all stated that the Postal Service needed a new investment strategy for its retirement funds instead of keeping them in low-yield Treasury bonds. NALC has had productive conversations on Capitol Hill with lawmakers about an updated, responsible, more-profitable investment strategy for these funds.

Sen. Tom Carper (D-DE) brought up the Postal Service Health Benefits Program, which is set to launch this year under the Postal Service Reform Act. When asked if the Postal Service and the Office of Personnel Management were prepared to implement this program, DeJoy said it "is moving nicely along and we'll be ready to implement."

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"The MailCall" is published monthly by "Heart of the Valley Branch 2462, NALC, 6910 Hayvenhurst Ave., Suite 104, Van Nuys, CA 91406 in the interest of and for the Letter Carriers of the Van Nuys Post Office and its Stations. **ARTICLES FOR PUBLICATION MUST BE IN THE HANDS OF THE EDITOR ON NIGHT OF THE REGULAR BRANCH MEETING. ALL ARTICLES MUST BE TYPED OR ON COMPUTER DISK WITH SINGLE LINE SPACING.** The Editor reserves the right to delete any article he deems necessary, improper, or unfit. All opinions expressed are those of the writer and are not necessarily those of the Editor or Branch 2462, NALC. The views expressed in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official views of the U.S. Postal Service. In the hopes that any material contained herein may be of benefit to your Branch and to the goals of the NALC, permission is granted to copy and/or use any material in this publication with our best wishes.

ATTENDANCE CHART BRANCH MEETINGS

MONTH	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N
MAIN OFFICE	2	2	1	3	5						
ENCINO	3	4	4	3	5						
PANORAMA CITY	2	2	4	4	2						
SHERMAN OAKS	7	5	7	6	7						
SUN VALLEY	0	0	0	0	0						
TARZANA	0	0	0	0	0						
RETIREE'S	7	5	5	6	7						
TOTAL	21	18	21	22	26						

NEXT MEETING TUESDAY JUNE 4th "2024" 6:30 p.m. BRANCH OFFICE

**DEADLINE DATE FOR THE NEXT
ISSUE OF "THE MAIL CALL" IS**

June 9, 2024

**WEB PAGE.... WWW.NALCBRANCH2462.ORG
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O P C PERSONNEL OFFICE.....818-374-5600
[E-Mail.....Branch2462nalc@gmail.com](mailto:Branch2462nalc@gmail.com)**

"RETIREE CORNER" ATTENTION: !!!!

Our next Breakfast Meeting will be held at Denny's Restaurant , (Corner of Sherman Way & DeCelis). **It will begin at 09:00 AM. Date will be June 22 ,2024 (4th Saturday)** So, please mark your calendar.....We hope to see you there. Thank You

SAFETY REPORT

**BY
LUCY JACOBS, BRANCH SAFETY REP**

Be Safe Around Dogs

Dogs are self-elected and often highly trained protectors of their masters and their master's property. To them, you are an intruder. You must prepare yourself for a challenge every day from every dog you meet as you go about your daily work.

Basic rules to follow;

1. Observe the area. Take a quick glance at all the places a dog may be - under parked cars, under hedges, on the porch, etc.
2. Size up the situation. Determine if the dog is asleep, barking, growling, nonchalant, large, small, etc.
3. Avoid signs of fear. A dog is more apt to bite you if it knows you are afraid.
4. Don't startle a dog. If the dog is asleep, make some kind of non-startling noise, such as soft whistling. Do this before you are close to the dog, while you still have time and space for an "out."
5. Never assume a dog won't bite. You may encounter a certain dog for days or weeks without incident - and then one day, it might decide to bite you.
6. Keep your eyes on the dog. A dog is very likely to bite you when you aren't looking. Always be on the alert for a sneak attack!
7. Make friends. Talk in a friendly manner. Call the dog's name if you know it, but never attempt to pet or feed a dog.
8. Stand your ground. If a dog comes toward you, turn and face it. If you have a satchel, hold it in front of you and back slowly away while making sure you don't stumble and fall. NEVER TURN AND RUN.
9. If a dog attacks you, use the repellent to protect yourself.



DON'T FORGET TO CHECK THIS OUT !!!!!



VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by
JANETTE DOLABSON

Medicare Part B Special Enrollment Period:

The Special Enrollment Period (SEP) has arrived and runs through Sept. 30. The SEP is a result of the Postal Service Reform Act that created the Postal Service Health Benefits (PSHB) Program within the existing Federal Employees Health Benefits Program. A major component of the Postal Service Reform Act was the integration of Medicare with the PSHB.

Retirees aged 65 or older who have not yet enrolled in Medicare Part B have a chance to enroll without being subject to the late enrollment penalty during this special one-time-only period. If they enroll, the Postal Service will pay for the rest of their lives any annual penalties on the premium for not having enrolled during their initial enrollment period. For those who did not enroll in Medicare Part B when they were first eligible, this is a chance to opt in at a time when they might need it more, without having had to pay the premiums earlier when they did not need it, or a penalty for opting in late.

Eligible retirees should have received notice and enrollment instructions from the Postal Service. To read more about the PSHB Program, see the January issue of The Postal Record. PR

House Committee holds second hearing on WEP and GPO repeal:

House committee holds second hearing on WEP and GPO repeal On April 16, the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security held a hearing on the repeal of the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO).

These two provisions are parts of Social Security law that unfairly reduce— or sometimes eliminate—the Social Security benefits of public employees, including letter carriers, who have earned pension benefits from public employee pension plans such as the Civil Service Retirement System. The Social Security Fairness Act (H.R. 82/ S. 597), a priority bill for NALC, would repeal the WEP/GPO. The bill has 318 co-sponsors in the House and 53 in the Senate.

The hearing included testimony from four witnesses: Jason Fichtner, chief economist, Bipartisan Policy Center; Rachel Greszler, visiting fellow in workforce, Economic Policy Innovation Center; Nancy Altman, president, Social Security Works; Charles Blahous, who is the J. Fish and Lillian F. Smith Chair, senior research strategist, Mercatus Center at George Mason University.

In his opening statement, Chairman Drew Ferguson (R-GA) acknowledged that the WEP and GPO “were intended to make Social Security more fair, but for millions of Americans, they have fallen far short.”

Ranking Member John Larson (D-CT) also expressed his support for repealing the WEP and GPO, calling the provisions “blatantly unfair,” and also emphasized his support for a broader legislative package to improve Social Security’s solvency.

At the hearing, witnesses offered several opinions on reforming or repealing WEP/GPO, as well as methods to improve Social Security’s solvency. While several approaches were mentioned, NALC fully supports H.R. 82/S.597, which repeals both WEP and GPO.

Many members referenced the unfair burden these provisions impose on public service workers and their spouses. The hearing followed a field hearing in Baton Rouge, LA, in November. The Louisiana hearing featured witnesses affected by the WEP and GPO, including a police officer, a retired state employee, a firefighter and a teacher.

The next step is for the bill to be marked up by the House Committee on Ways and Means. NALC strongly urges the committee to mark up the bill and send it to the floor for a House vote. PR

Management’s Arbitrary and Unrealistic Expectations:

Throughout the years, Postal Service management has attempted many times to devise a system or a “tool” that projects a letter carrier’s daily workload. Believers in these systems or tools think they can take a mathematical formula and simply plug in some mail volume numbers, arbitrarily select a street time for the day, and apply some non-existent work standards to determine what time a carrier will leave the office and what time they will return from the street. Their goal is to determine how much “down time” the carrier has in order to pivot off another route. In addition to using such time-projection systems, managers occasionally just pick arbitrary time allotments out of the air and attempt to apply such numbers to a letter carrier’s office and street time, and then expect them to meet those times. One recent application arbitrarily limits letter carriers to no more than one hour of office time in the morning. No matter how much mail they have to case or how much other office work they must perform, they are instructed to be on the street no later than one hour after they begin their tour. Another arbitrary time allotment by managers limits letter carriers to a predetermined amount of time in the evening, usually five minutes, to perform their required p.m. office duties. Whether management is using a time-projection tool or simply applying arbitrary time allotments for letter carriers to adhere to, such ways to determine office times often do not allow for fixed office time to perform such necessary daily functions as vehicle inspections, stand-up talks, retrieving mail from the throwback

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VICE PRESIDENT REPORT

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case, withdrawing mail, and retrieving or signing for accountable items, to name a few morning office duties. If your office has an office break, that time is most likely not factored into these projections or allotted times either. Arbitrary projections and time allotments certainly do not take into consideration how much actual work needs to be performed and the actual time allowed for each of these office functions. Letter carriers are required to perform certain tasks in the morning, before leaving for the route, and in the afternoon, upon returning to the office.

Management's projections or arbitrary time allotments are not the sole determinant of a carrier's leaving or return time, or daily workload. Using a time projection or applying an arbitrary amount of time does not change the letter carrier's reporting requirements outlined in Section 131.4 of Handbook M-41, City Delivery Carriers Duties and Responsibilities; the supervisor's scheduling responsibilities outlined in Section 122 of Handbook M-39, Management of Delivery Services; or the letter carrier's and supervisor's responsibilities contained in Section 28 of Handbook M-41. The letter carrier's reporting requirements outlined in Section 131.4 of Handbook M-41 read, in relevant part, as follows: 131.4 Reporting Requirements 131.41 It is your responsibility to verbally inform management when you are of the opinion that you will be unable to case all mail distributed to the route, perform other required duties, and leave on schedule or when you will be unable to complete delivery of all mail. 131.42 Inform management of this well in advance of the scheduled leaving time and not later than immediately following the final receipt of mail. Management will instruct you what to do. 131.43 Complete applicable items on Form 3996, Carrier Auxiliary Control, if overtime or auxiliary assistance is authorized in the office or on the street. 131.44 Report on Form 1571 all mail undelivered—including all mail distributed to the route but not cased and taken out for delivery. Estimate the number of pieces of mail. 131.45 Do not curtail or eliminate any scheduled delivery or collection trip unless authorized by a manager, in which case you must record all facts on Form 1571. 131.46 Before you leave the office, enter on Form 1571 the mail curtailed; when you return, add any mail which was not delivered, and which was returned to the office. Follow any special local procedures set up to identify errors and corrective actions for mail returned because it was out of sequence.

Article 41, Section 3G of the National Agreement reinforces the carrier's rights and management's responsibilities related to the PS Form 3996. It states: G. The Employer will advise a carrier who has properly submitted a Carrier Auxiliary Control Form 3996 of the disposition of the request promptly after review of the circumstances at the time. Upon request, a duplicate copy of the completed Form 3996 and Form 1571, Report of Undelivered Mail, etc., will be provided the carrier. Letter carriers are responsible for estimating the amount of time it will take to complete their assigned duties, and management has a responsibility to manage that workload within the confines of the handbook language. In attempting to meet bogus time projections or

arbitrary time allotments, some required office duties are, at times, ignored or overlooked. PR

There is no arbitrary 1 hour in the office and there is no contractual language that states you have any certain amount of time to load your vehicle.

These are all managements bogus expectations. They know there is no language to back them up. They also know you can't be disciplined if you don't meet these "expectations." As long as you meet office standards of 18/8 casing and even if you don't they would have to find time wasting practices pointed out and time given for correcting them.

You also have either a fixed office time of 33 minutes if you don't have an office break or 43 minutes fixed office time if you do. None of that time is casing mail time.

You also do not have undertime in the morning. You don't have undertime until you have delivered your route. How will you know how much under time you will have before you have delivered your route? If management tells you that you have undertime in the morning and want to give you a swing. Follow their instructions. If you end up not having undertime in the afternoon call in and inform them and wait for further instructions.

The only instructions should be:

1. Keep going. (that is authorizing the ot)
2. Bring the swing back) or
3. We will send someone out.

There should not be any other comments about not making their time projections. There should be no threats disciplining you for not having undertime.

If you are being told in your stations that you should be out in and hour and you should only take 22-25 minutes load time, notify your shop steward. We will need a statement from you so we can file a grievance. All of you should be making a statement regarding these arbitrary expectations. If you don't give statements, we won't have proof from you carriers that this is happening. Just complaining isn't enough. The burden of proof is on us.



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Lucy Jacobs, Editor
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Branch Meeting Minutes

May 7, 2024

By

Steve Seyfried, Secretary

The Meeting was held at the Branch 2462 Union Hall 6910 Hayvenhurst Ave, #104 Van Nuys California. It was called to order by PRESIDENT MACARAEG at 6:47 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by SGT-AT-ARMS GODDARD

MOMENT OF SILENCE--In Memory of all LETTER CARRIERS & RETIREES that have passed in 2024.

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS

PRESENT--MACARAEG, J. DOLABSON, SEYFRIED, WILSON, MULLINAX, GODDARD, VALENZUELA, BURTON, JACOBS

ABSENT--JOHNSON, L. DOLABSON

MINUTES ACCEPTED AS PRINTED IN MAIL

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP--NONE

COMMUNICATIONS READ

BILLS READ--MOTION TO PAY

M/S/C

COMMITTEE REPORTS

AUDIT & BUDGET--TRUSTEES Audit will be in July 17, 2024, at the Branch Office.

SAFTEY & HEALTH--JACOBS Look for my article in MailCall
RETIREES 7 Retiree's present tonight.

MDA FUND--GODDARD \$ 2,380 in the fund

HBR--BURTON New app is available for those with the health plan, go onto your favorite app store and type in NALCHBP, download the app and follow the instructions.

MDA--BURTON Bowl-a-Thon was huge success as we raised over \$ 712.00 for Muscular Dystrophy. Encino Team brought down the honors for high score. Congratulations!!!!

MBA--BURTON Plan is currently offering latest policies for Disability and Term Life Insurance. They also have plans for CCA's.

POLITICAL--BURTON HR 7629--the Protect Our Letter Carriers now has 61 Co-sponsors. CCA buy back bill is still waiting for more support. The Social Security Fairness Act has moved into Committee discussion and we hope to see it come to the floor of the House to be considered soon.

EDITOR--JACOBS MailCall went out on time and we will be adding additional funds to cover future mailings.

ELECTION COMMITTEE No Report

FINANCE REPORT--MULLINAX NALC Service pins have been ordered. We do not have any new Gold Card members this year. Currently working to update non-member list, should have info soon.

TREASURERS REPORT--WILSON Financial Reports were read.

MOTION TO ACCEPT REPORTS AS READ M/S/C

VICE-PRESIDENT DOLABSON Spoke on special enrollment period being offered through September 2024 on the USPS Health Benefit Program. Also on management's attempts to arbitrarily establish Carrier duty time restrictions on office time and Vehicle loading time. Other than 18 & 8 casing standards, there are no set times for doing office duties or Vehicle Loading. Should anyone tell you so or urge you to "chop chop" and hurry up, you should make note of the date and time of the incident and request to see a Shop Steward to make a written statement regarding the incident.

PRESIDENT MACARAEG Spoke on the recent Region 1 Training session in Las Vegas. Classes covered a variety of subjects

including Grievance handling, Interviewing techniques, Emergency Suspensions and many more. All those in attendance were impressed with the information they received. She also reported on the Officer Training classes held in Washington, DC. which covered all aspects of Branch operations and requirements. Congratulations of newly converted Carriers Sean Botnick, Juan Lopez and Manjeet Hayre.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

MOTION--Move that costs for all guests that attend the Delegate dinner at the National Convention be taken out of the Public Relations account. M/S/C

MOTION--Move that the Branch purchase 2 Laptops. Cost not to exceed \$ 1500.00. M/S/C

MOTION--Move that the Branch purchase a new projector for Branch presentations and training. Cost not to exceed \$ 450.00. M/S/C

MOTION--Move that the Branch allocate \$44,000.00 from the Contingency Fund, for the 2024 National Convention in Boston, Massachusetts, August 5 2024, These funds will be distributed to the delegates to cover. Airfare, Housing, Per Diem, Delegate dinner and Ground transportation. M/S/C

UNDERLINED INDICATES UNANIMOUS VOTE

MDA DRAWING

\$ 2 STEVE SEYFRIED--RETIREE--SHERMAN OAKS--DONATED
\$ 2 CALVIN BROOKINS--RETIREE--CIVIC CENTER--DONATED
\$ 2 CALVIN BROOKINS--RETIREE--CIVIC CENTER--DONATED

Meeting Adjourned 8:49 PM

PRESIDENT REPORT

(Continued from Page 1)

Sens. Butler and Rosen also brought up the upcoming election and the Postal Service's immense responsibility to deliver tens of millions of ballots. Postmaster General DeJoy ensured that the agency was prepared and committed to another successful election season. Inspector General Hull agreed that this is a top priority. She said that the OIG will release its election mail readiness audit in late summer and will visit delivery units and plants across the country to observe operations and flag problems in advance of November's Election Day.

The hearing concluded with Chairman Peters saying he remains "laser-focused" on service. He emphasized the need for transparency and requested a list of locations the Postal Service plans to change with specific timelines for implementation, full-service data on every location implemented so far, and documentation for any cost projections from Postmaster General DeJoy by May 1. The two did not reach an agreement on that.