

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

Update by: Jackie Engelhart

USPS Plans to Close 82 Facilities in 2015...

The USPS announced on 6-30-14 that they will go forward with the plan that had been on hold for two years, to close 82 more facilities in 2015. Facilities in our area on the closing list are Fox Valley and Madison WI. At a Town Hall meeting new Carol Stream Plant Manager **Mike Kotula** stated the decision on which plants to close is not being made based on productivity but on size. Management is closing smaller plants with the mail going to the nearest large plant not closing. Fox Valley mail will go to South Suburban and Madison to Milwaukee. Palatine, Carol Stream and Chicago Metro are not on the closing list. This consolidation plan is based on changing the first-class overnight service standard to two day which means mail does not have to be processed overnight. Elimination of overnight means mail will be processed in a 20 hour window on tours 2 and 3, but not on tour 1. Management states mail processing will begin at 0800 am with the DPS beginning at 12 noon.

Time Changes to Come

Most of the mail should be finished by the end of tour 3 so there will little if any mail processed on tour 1. Machines will be empty on tour 1 so the preventive maintenance window will be on tour 1. Clerk jobs will switch to tours 2 and 3, while some skilled Maintenance jobs will switch to tour 1. USPS put out a letter to customers explaining the planned consolidations.

USPS Explanation...

"The USPS is planning to resume the rationalization of our network of mail processing facilities which began in 2012. To provide adequate time for planning and preparation the USPS is providing this six month advance notice of consolidations, for up to 82 facilities, which will begin early January 2015 and be completed by the fall mailing season... In 2012 and 2013, the USPS consolidated 141 mail processing facilities. This rationalization was highly successful, resulted in negligible service impact, generating annualized cost savings of \$865 million and required no employee layoffs. The USPS expects the completion of

this phase of network rationalization will generate an additional \$750 million in annual savings. Why are we taking this step now? Over the past three years, the USPS recorded financial losses of \$26 billion. The USPS receives no tax-payer funds to pay for operating costs and derives all of its revenues from the sale of products and services, and continues to face significant financial challenges associated with the decline of First-Class Mail volume and revenue, wage and benefit inflation, increasing operating costs, as well as legislative mandates and significant debt pressures. Moreover, the uncertainty regarding legislative reform and review of postal rates in the courts continues to delay needed capital investments to acquire package sorting equipment and replace an aging mail delivery fleet. We believe strongly that this phase of network rationalization will establish the low-cost, technology-centric delivery platform necessary to serve the mailing and shipping industry for decades to come. We look forward to discussing our plans in the coming weeks."

July 9, 2014

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Management Cancels Dobry Non-Compliance Arbitration...

NBA Mike O'Hearn informed us on 7-8-14 that management has cancelled this arbitration hearing which was scheduled for 7-16-14 at the Palatine P&DC. They said they did not have an Advocate available for the date and because of the late notice management will have to pay the Arbitrator's fee. Mike said he is trying to get the case rescheduled for the first available date which would not be until October based on cases being already scheduled that far ahead. Vice President Walter Elerby Jr. is the Union Advocate for this case and was prepared and ready to go. Management continues to kick this can down the road but we will continue to do what we have to do to get this non-compliance case heard and force management to comply with the original Award.

Palatine Kenis Non-Compliance Case Scheduled for 10-10-14...

Management violated the contract when they allowed Palatine Clerks to volunteer to go senior in lieu of to the Mailhandler Craft within the installation. Dave Baskin won that case but management failed to comply with the Award. He filed a second grievance and this case was won by NBA Linda Turney. Management paid the grievants out-of-schedule but no guaranteed pay so Dave filed a 3rd grievance. Management says they complied with the Award by paying the out of schedule pay. The issue to be decided is whether the grievants are entitled to the guaranteed pay included in the Union's remedy and granted in the Kenis Award. NWIAL Steward and National Advocate Doreene Motley has been assigned to arbitrate the case.

Busse SPBS Non-Compliance

NBA Linda Turney has agreed to move this case up but we do not have a hearing date and do not know who the arbitrator will be.

Maintenance Craft Director Wins Busse Custodial Staffing

Maintenance Craft Director Joe Golden was the Union Advocate for a Custodial staffing grievance filed at Busse by Steward Jonn Johnson for pay period 04-2009. Arbitrator Lamont Stallworth sustained the grievance in its entirety with all grievants made whole. The grievance was filed because management failed to submit a new Custodial staffing package after the Das Award required them to reinstate the 1983 MS-47 and rescind the 2001 version. The 1983 MS-47 staffing required 34 Custodians to perform 60,665 annual work hours. Busse had 24 Custodians during the pay period and called 25 hours of overtime. Management bypassed 375 hours of cleaning during the pay period and will have to pay the Custodians on the ODL at that time for 375 hours of bypassed cleaning. Jonn has filed other grievances for failing to perform custodial work. Management argued that we were in withholding so they did not have to fill the ten vacant jobs and have used this excuse for years. The Arbitrator did not buy it and said the required cleaning hours must be covered. Maybe now Plant Manager Devette Murphy will decide to call some overtime for the Busse Custodians since the facility is still short 10 Custodians and no overtime is being called. They can pay now or pay later...

Independence Day Service Talk

Busse put out a Holiday Service Talk warning employees they would make extensive use of "Deems Desirable" for call-ins on the Fourth of July holiday. They also said *"We would like to wish all of our employees a happy Relaxing, and safe holiday."* We asked Devette Murphy to reduce the draft as no Clerks were drafted last year. She said she reviewed it but could not make any changes.

Carol Stream Safety Concerns

On 6-27-14 Carol Stream Steward Doreene Motley attended the CS Safety Inspection and Meeting. She reports there are quite a few damaged pie-racks on the work room floor that need to be tagged. Defective equipment should be orange-tagged and removed from the workroom floor and repaired. She spoke to Plant Manager Mike Kotula regarding the lack of air conditioning on 6-30-14 and he was not aware of the heat problem but agreed water and heat breaks could have been given that day. He said he would communicate with his managers on the issue. She reports that maintenance ladders for the tray transport system should no longer be stored near post R-15, and a sign is posted.

Understaffing and Free Money

Management must call overtime for the ODL before working a PSE over 8 hours in day or 40 hours in a week when ODL employees are available to work. Management has been paying out free money at both Palatine and Carol Stream for these violations. The reason they work the PSE's over 8 hours in a day and over 40 hours per week is because they are understaffed due to attrition.

It is easy for the Union to show the violation by reviewing PSE clockrings for over 8 and over 40. As long as management refuses to staff properly these grievances and the free money will continue.

NWIAL Scholarship Time...

Four (4) \$500.00 Scholarships will be awarded on 8-10-14 at the membership meeting drawing. Applicants must be a member, spouse, child, stepchild, grandchild or legally adopted child of member who have been in good standing for one year immediately preceding application deadline. Applications and information are available at your union office.

