

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

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Update by: Jackie Engelhart

Contract Ratified!

APWU members voted to approve the contract with 69,451 voting for and 22,351 against, or 76% yes and 24% no. President Guffey stated "The new contract is an important achievement for APWU. We were able to retain protection against layoffs, bring back thousands of jobs in each craft, and limit excessing." He went on to say "The agreement includes many big changes, and I realize that some union activists are apprehensive. With the help of the national union, I am confident that locals can implement the new provisions and protect the rights of all APWU members. Ballots were mailed to 176,611 union members and more than 50% voted, up from 40% in 2006. Ballots were also mailed to 35,668 non-members who could vote if they became members but there is no mention of how many of them signed up to vote. The new contract goes through May 20, 2015.

PTR and PTF to NTFT

Some APWU members will benefit immediately. A Part-Time Regular now being scheduled for less than 30 hours per week will become a Non-Traditional Full-Time Regular (NTFT) with a guarantee of 30 hours per week. For Clerks who were forced to choose between moving out of state or becoming a PTR this contract is very good. They are no longer at the mercy of management to cut them to as little as four (4) hours per week. Part-Time Flexible (PTF) Clerks in in offices level 21 and above will also become NTFT with a minimum guarantee of 30 hours per week. Level 20 offices and below will still have PTF Clerks. Most PTF Clerks now work more than 30 hours per week they are only guaranteed two or four hours a pay period. With the elimination of the PTR category, and PTF Clerks in AO offices level 21 and above these Clerks all become NTFT. The new contract is good for PTR and PTF Clerks.

The Big Question -NTFT

With 76% of those 50% who voted, voting "yes" to this contract, the majority must have felt we would get less in arbitration, and were not as concerned as the 24% who were very concerned about the new Non Traditional Full Time category negotiated for the MVS and Clerk crafts. The new contract defines NTFT as any position of 30 or more hours per week and to any position of 48 hours or less per week. No current full-time employees can be forced into a full-time position of less than 40 hours or more than 44 hours per week. Management can repost 50% of all Function 1 and 100% of Function 4 jobs as NTFT. They can also hire 20% casuals, renamed Postal Support Employees or PSE's. How will they take advantage of all the new negotiated language to use lower paid PSE's and to post 30 hour jobs? It seems likely that USPS will be re-staffing offices nationwide based on the new contract language, and that they may offer another early out with \$\$\$ to get employees to leave.

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Town Hall Meetings at CS

Greg Johnson was returned from Palatine to Carol Stream as Plant Manager after the announcement was made of the district closure in late March. He held Town Hall meetings in the cafeteria on 5-10, and gave a very positive report on the overall service scores at CS. He said the Clerk impact is under review by the new Central district, and attrition has reduced the number from 66 down to 38 Clerks. He said the AMP of Rockford into CS is on hold and been shelved after the district realignment. When the AMP Study began both plants were in the Northern IL District but now Rockford is part of Lakeland and CS is in Central. Carol Stream is now the largest plant in Central, IL but the lead plant and district office remains at South Suburban in Bedford Park. Carol Stream processes about 2x the amount of mail as South Sub. The other plants in Central are Fox Valley, Peoria, Bloomington, and Champaign. Fox Valley also processes more mail than South and is right behind CS in volume. Normally the District Office is located at the lead (largest) plant but that probably won't happen because the Great Lakes Area will be taking over the second floor office space being vacated by the now defunct Northern IL District, as soon as they can get out of their lease in Bloomingdale. Greg said the Northern IL District was the only level 1 (large) district to be eliminated in the realignment. No one has said why Northern IL got picked for elimination but I can't believe service was that bad. Maybe they just wanted that office space at Carol Stream so the Area could move in and save millions on the lease in Bloomingdale.

Tour 1 Manual Section Reduced

Palatine is abolishing manual bids based on the last (BPI) impact even though only 11 of those impacted Clerks have actually left. Palatine has had a hard time getting the mail out and should cancel the impact but they want 27 Clerks to fill Mail Handler jobs. I was told Lakeland is reviewing all impacts in the 600 offices so we can hope they will cancel it. In the meantime Palatine is going forward with a reduction in the manual section so they can put junior manual Clerks into tour 1 Automation. They reduced IPP by one bid, Flats by five, Low Cost by one, Multi-line by two and Manual Letters by six bids. A second round of letters is going out to senior Clerks who remain in the section but do not match with their current bids. They will have to bid in the tour 1 closed section. Palatine could have just excessed the junior Clerks out of the section and left the senior Clerks in their present bids but they always want to change NS days which means more Clerks will lose their bids. We told management Multi-Line and the Low Cost are understaffed already and should not be cut.

FSS Time Changes ???

When Plant Manager Scirba told us recently that they may need to change the starting times for FSS Clerks our reaction was those bids were just posted three months ago. Since he said the time change was due to machine reliability issues, we said we would agree to details if the time change was temporary, but if it was permanent the bids would have to be reposted because the time changes cross tour lines. I asked for meetings with the FSS Clerks and Chuck said he will schedule them for next week.

Clerk Anxiety at Busse

Plant Manager Melvin Anderson confirmed the information I was given by our Stewards regarding changes to the SPBS machine that will reduce the keying stations from six to one and this will occur in late August or early September. One machine will be retrofit with an Automatic reader which will eliminate five keying stations, and the other one will not be run. Since there are approximately 29 Clerks bids for the SPBS I asked Melvin if the SPBS changes would result in Clerk excessing but he did not think it would. Busse Clerks worry they would be excessed if there is an impact because 52 more senior Clerks were excessed into Busse since 2010. We have raised this concern with management because we do not want any Busse Clerks excessed. I have asked Melvin to schedule meetings with the SPBS Clerks and the Union as soon as possible.

Maintenance/MVS Contract

The new contract is good for both the Maintenance and MVS crafts as it returns subcontracted work. Subcontracted Custodian work is returned but can be assigned to the 10% PSA's allowed in the craft. Skilled work such as Help Desk at the MSTC in Norman OK will be returned to the bargaining unit. In MVS, 740 jobs will be created for Technicians and Lead Techs. A minimum of 600 Highway Contract Routes will be converted to Postal Vehicle Service (PVS) with a minimum of 25% of the duty assignments to career employees. The APWU will be able to review and submit proposals for 8000 more Highway Contract Routes. MVS PTR and PTF positions will become NTFT with a minimum guarantee of 30 hours per week.

