

NAPS OF NOTE

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POSTAL SUPERVISORS

BRANCH 16

PO BOX 580333

MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55458

<https://naps16.org>

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March 2024

Branch 16 President's Report

A Message from Branch 16 President

Curt O'Donnell

ATTN Members,

We just had some really good meetings with our Minnesota representative offices this last week. NAPS had over 400 Members represented across the country with the same message for our representatives. In this newsletter we have listed the main items discussed. Postal Supervisor, Manager & Postmaster Fairness, restoring Postal Police, Postal Employee Appeal Rights and Social Security Fairness Act. If you have any questions please bring them to the branch meeting.

Minneapolis is still having high amounts of I & I's and I don't see that decreasing anytime soon. Your integrity is earned and or lost every day by your actions.

Curt O'Donnell

NAPS Branch 16 President

cpi012@gmail.com



Inside This Issue

Branch 16 President's Report	1
MN State Secretary/ Treasurer	2
Branch 16 Officers	2
Future Meetings	4
Board Meeting Notes from	4

All Members



Welcome!

**Next Meeting is
Thursday
March 21, 2024**

MN State Secretary/Treasurer

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

March 2024

USPS By the numbers: \$78.5 billion in Revenue; 68,000 Veterans-Largest civilian employer of American military veterans; 172 million-Amount of First-Class mail USPS delivers daily; \$1.6 trillion / 7.6% of GDP-Postal industry is an Economic Engine for the nation

Bob Levi, our National Legislative Representative, spoke to us about securing our FUTURE through political action. He also spoke about important issues we need to bring to Capitol Hill that need sponsorship from our Congress and Senate.

Restoring US Mail Security and USPS Employee Protection: Protect Postal Employees, Postal Assets, and the Mail.

Regrettably, over the past few years, the postal service has endangered US Mail and the safety of our employees. The Postal Service carelessly constricted the law enforcement authority of the Postal Inspection Services' uniformed members. Postal-related crime has exploded, undermining postal customer and employee confidence.

Postal-Related Crime

- * 2019-2022: up 87% from mail receptacles
- * 2019-2022 up 600% increase of carrier thefts
- * 2021-2022 up 100% in check fraud

Summer of 2020 - USPS pulls Postal Police Officers off the streets; visible law enforcement presence deters crime and improve the chances that criminals are apprehended. For these reasons, NAPS strongly supports enactment of **HR 3005/S3356 Postal Police Reform**. Both bills seek to clarify and strengthen the law enforcement authority of uniformed division of postal police officers to protect postal employees, postal assets and the US Mail whether inside or outside a postal facility.

Promote Postal Supervisor, Manager and Postmaster Consultative Fairness: Promoting a fair, equitable and just relationship between Postal Service and its EAS employees. In 2020, NAPS pay-talk experience and the unanimous decision reached in 2022 by the US Court of Appeals led to the inescapable conclusion that the current process by which the postal service determines EAS-level personnel compensation is inherently flawed.

HR 594, Postal Supervisors and Managers Fairness Act was introduced. This accelerates the timeline of the consultative process under which compensation for EAS-level postal personnel is determined. It also provides greater accountability and transparency to the process.

Secure Postal Manager Due Process Rights: Extends due process protections to All EAS-level Postal Employees. **HR 595** Postal Employee Appeal Rights Amendment Act. The bill would confer to approximately 4,000 non-supervisory managerial postal employees. This legislation would extend to virtually all EAS-level postal employees the right to appeal adverse personnel actions to the MSPB (Merit Systems Protection Board).

Continued on Page 3

NAPS Board 2024

OFFICERS

President

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Vice President

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State President

Gina Hellermann
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Scott Choi
scottchoi67@yahoo.com

Treasurer

Bruce Kuiper
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Legislative Rep

Tashi Lama
tasdawa4@gmail.com

NAPS members must attend three or more board meetings during the year in order to meet the qualification requirement for *Officer* and *Executive Board* nomination. Elections are held every January. All NAPS members are strongly encouraged to attend and take part in the decision-making process.

Newsletter Editor

Ken Gardner

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Continued from Page 2

Promoting a Secure and Well-Earned Retirement: Social Security Fairness Act. HR 82/S 597 This bill would repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Offset; sections of the social security law that unfairly reduce the rightful benefits of CSRS annuitants and surviving spouses.

Prioritize Meaningful Congressional Oversight: Postal Viability, Performance, Innovation and Modernization. The focus of the Postal Service's strategy to continued viability has been its "Delivering for America" plan. NAPS has concerns about the impact post office operational consolidations through the Sorting and Delivery Center (S&DC) process will have on the relationship between postmasters and the localities they serve. Diminishing the role of postmasters through operational consolidations is the first step to their redeployment or loss.

Last year's First Class Mail on-time performance data has validated NAPS concern about the speed with which the plan is being implemented, as well as the lack of serious evaluation before the "Delivering for America" plan execution. Whatever happened to "every piece every day"... Consequently, NAPS applauds ongoing, legitimate, congressional and regulatory oversight regarding the plan. In these times during which the Postal Service is being challenged by shrinking mail volume, expanding postal products and services is vital for its survival. The goal should be to explore and implement new strategies to generate revenue for the agency!!

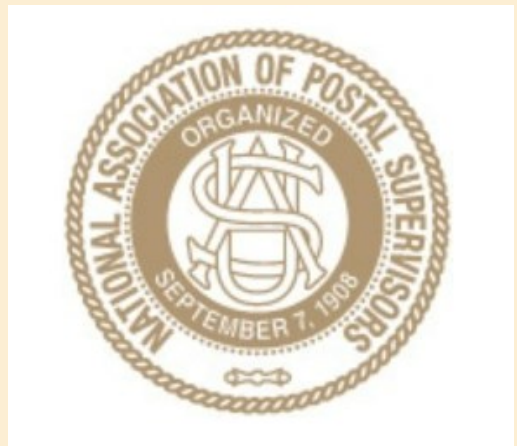
Confirm USPS Board of Governors: Nominating and Confirming Well Qualified and Motivated Postal governors. (by the way, PMG's boss) The agency is governed by nine presidentially nominated and Senate confirmed members of the Board of Governors. A well-qualified and mission-motivated board is essential to sustain our nation's most respected and revered national treasure - the US Postal Service. Presently, seven of the nine presidentially nominated seats are filled. One of the unique features of the Postal Service is that it is a government agency regulated by the PRC - Postal Regulatory Commission; through its five presidentially nominated commissioners, exercises regulatory oversight over the Postal Service in furtherance of a universal mail system and enduring transparency and responsiveness.

Why **SPAC**?

- * SPAC is a key political Tool to focus attention
- * SPAC amplifies impact on Capitol Hill
- * SPAC holds accountable those who have authority
 - * Congress legislates health and benefit issues
 - * Congress legislates scope of universal service
 - * Congress exercises oversight
- * SPAC employs diligence in support process
 - * Questionnaire or legislative behavior
 - * Viability
 - * Recommendation
 - * 92% 2022 Win Rate

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Vail-Rimer
MN State Secretary/Treasurer



Next Meeting Reminder!

Thursday
March 21, 2024

6:00 PM Social Hour / 7:00 PM Meeting

Crystal VFW
5222 Bass Lake Rd
Crystal, MN 55429

See you at the meeting!



Future Meetings NAPS Branch 16:

6:00 PM Social Hour
7:00 PM Meeting

Crystal VFW
5222 Bass Lake Rd
Crystal, MN 55429

Upcoming Meeting Dates

March 21, 2024

May 16, 2024



Board Meeting Minutes From January 18, 2024

In Attendance: Sherry Mattfield, Bruce Kuiper, Scott Choi, Elfresh Tassew, Curt O'Donnell, Elly Souky, Aricka Sundstrom, Dan Mooney, James Cavegn, Adam Delcambre, Thompson Ojoyeyi, Joey Nelson, Jennifer Scarver, Meagan Fortier.

Legislative Training Seminar: In the meeting it was discussed of how many people and who will be attending the LTS. It was voted for 5 people to attend the LTS. It was discussed on what it would cost per person to attend the LTS. Total cost per person would average out to \$2,500.00.

It was voted to have Mark, *Elfresh, Bruce, Scott, and Tashi attend LTS on 3/2/2024-3/6/2024. **Elfresh was originally voted to go to LTS meeting and Curt was standby. If someone couldn't make it Curt was going to fill in. Elfresh had to go on long-term annual leave so Curt is taking her spot for the meeting.*

Membership Dues: It was discussed about retirees pay full dues. Discussed that the dues are down \$2,250 per month to \$1,400 a month without raising the dues.

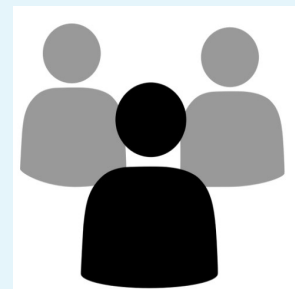
Price Drawings: **Troy Hansen** was picked as winner for the **Big** drawing but was not present to win so it will be redrawn on the next meeting on March. The winner for the small drawing was **Joey Nelson** who was present and won.

State Convention: The State Convention will be held in Rochester on May 30-31, 2024. We are expecting several vendors as well as several guests.

National Convention: The next National Convention will be in Connecticut.

Thank you,

Scott Choi
Secretary



Legislative

Advocating for Change: NAPS in Washington DC

Greetings, Branch 16 NAPS Members!

We are thrilled to report on an incredibly successful and productive journey to Washington DC where twelve executive members from all three NAPS branches joined forces to advocate for our legislative bills. It was a momentous occasion as we engaged with Minnesota's esteemed Congressional House Representatives and Senators to garner support for HR 3005/ S 3356, HR 594, HR 595, and HR 82/S 97.



The trip was meticulously planned, and a total of two teams were formed to ensure comprehensive coverage in meeting all ten members of parliament. Each meeting was approached with dedication and a strong spirit of advocacy, representing the interests and concerns of NAPS members with eloquence and conviction.

The discussions were not merely formalities; they were opportunities to present compelling arguments and evidence in support of our legislative agenda. It was heartening to witness the receptiveness of the representatives to our proposals and the genuine interest they showed in understanding the impact of these bills on our community.

The meetings were characterized by constructive dialogue, where we are engaged in meaningful exchanges to address concerns and explore avenues for collaboration. Our teams adeptly conveyed the importance of these bills in advancing the welfare and rights of NAPS members, and we are optimistic about the prospects for their support.

Indeed, our efforts bore fruit as we received positive feedback and assurances of support from the staff of Minnesota congressional representatives and senators. This reaffirms our belief in the power of advocacy and the significance of our collective voice in shaping policy decisions that affect us directly.

As we reflect on our Washington DC visit, our team members are filled with pride and gratitude for the unity and determination displayed by our NAPS members. It is a testament to our commitment to uphold our values and champion our cause, even in the face of challenges.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all the executive members who participated in this endeavor and to the staff of Minnesota congressional representatives and senators for their receptive engagement. Together, we have taken a significant step forward in advancing our legislative agenda and ensuring a brighter future for NAPS members.

Let us continue to stand united and resolute in our pursuit of positive change, knowing that our collective efforts will pave the way for a better tomorrow.

In solidarity,

Tashi Lama
Legislative Rep.
Branch 16 NAPS



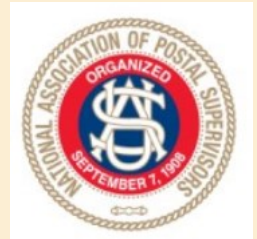
Pictured from left to right: Scott Choi, Bruce Kuiper, Anna McCloskey (legislative assistant to Senator Tina Smith), Curt O'Donnell, Aricka Sundstrom, Jill Rollenhagen, Kadee Miller.

Annual Leave—Are You Kidding Me?

By Brian J. Wagner
NAPS Past President

March 11, 2024

Reprinted from naps.org



Now that the USPS peak and holiday seasons are behind us, you are probably thinking of taking a well-deserved and earned vacation. I agree. Never lose sight of taking annual leave each year to ensure your health and mental well-being. Also, do not put yourself in a “use-or-lose” annual leave situation at the end of each USPS leave year. Here’s the scoop!

As I have written before, annual leave is an employee earned benefit with the intent to use leave—not lose it. It is recognized in *ELM* Section 512.11: “Annual leave is provided to employees for rest, for recreation, and for personal and emergency purposes.” Sure, it may be nice to carry over some annual leave into the next leave year to take time off for a special family event or if you plan to retire and want a nice terminal leave check. However, the USPS does not allow for unlimited carryover of annual leave each year. Fortunately, through the consultative process between NAPS and the USPS, there was an agreement to permanently increase the annual leave carryover amount by an additional 80 hours. Starting in 2024 and beyond, the permanent maximum annual leave carryover balance is 640 hours. NAPS consultation also resulted in a permanent increase in the total number of annual leave hours that may be exchanged under the USPS Annual Leave Exchange program. This new exchange limit is 168 hours. Besides having some extra spending money from the program, a member avoids exceeding the maximum carryover in the following leave year. These are some enhanced, permanent EAS benefits that NAPS was able to achieve on behalf of all EAS employees and our active members.

Furthermore, this column is meant to shine a light on the need for members to maintain their mental and physical health throughout their postal careers. Therefore, you need to plan ahead and use—not lose—well-earned annual leave. Peace of mind and good health are priceless commodities that can’t be bought by exchanging annual leave for cash. I encourage active members to take annual leave each year as part of the three Rs: relaxation, recreation and recharge. This column also is meant to spotlight an important issue that some members have experienced and continue to experience today—the inability to get annual leave approved. I am not kidding! In some instances, EAS employees are being told the only way they can take annual leave is if they find their own replacement. What? Are you kidding me? This type of answer is what you can expect from a lackluster postal leader. EAS employees should not be required to find their own replacement if they want to take their well-earned annual leave. It is a manager’s responsibility to ensure there is sufficient EAS coverage and scheduling to replace an EAS employee who has a reasonable request for annual leave.

I also have been contacted by members who have submitted reasonable requests for annual leave, months in advance, but are having their future leave denied because of the “needs of the service.” Unfortunately, these needs are unknown as the disapproval comes with no reason given, except “needs of the service.” What? Are you kidding me? Again, this is just another example of lackluster postal leadership denying reasonable EAS annual leave requests with a lackluster response and no reasonable explanation given. I am surprised the manager’s title isn’t the “Wizard of Oz” for being all-knowing. All-knowing that future annual leave can’t be approved because of the “needs of the service,” but, also not knowing what those future service needs are. It’s these types of lackluster excuses by some in postal leadership who put EAS employees in a position of losing well-earned annual leave at the end of the USPS leave year. For the record, according to *ELM* 512.62, Nonbargaining Unit Employees Vacation Planning, reads: “Vacation leave is granted to non-bargaining unit employees when their services can be best spared. Postmasters and other responsible officials must schedule leave so that: a. Employees do not forfeit leave; and b. Postal operations are not impaired.”

Therefore, do not hesitate or delay requesting annual leave as soon as reasonably possible. Make sure you submit all annual leave requests with a properly completed PS Form 3971. Do not rely on an email to your manager requesting annual leave. Put all annual leave requests in writing so it is properly documented, especially in the event you run the risk of being in a use-or-lose annual leave status. Also, continue to remind your manager in writing of your need to take annual leave during the year to avoid losing it because you are over the new maximum carryover limit of 640 hours.

As a reminder to all active members, there is a USPS policy letter dated June 24, 2002, by DeWitt O. Harris, USPS vice president, Employee Resource Management, that can be found on NAPS’s website under the “Forms and Documents” section. This policy states that a *PS Form 3971*, “Request for or Notification of Absence,” when submitted by an EAS employee *should* be approved or disapproved within three business days. Do not let your annual leave requests linger. Get an answer, approved or disapproved, as soon as reasonably possible. This will help you plan for your well-earned annual leave, along with giving your manager time to plan for your approved absence. However, if your reasonable annual leave requests are constantly being disapproved with lame excuses about finding your own replacement or not given a valid reason for “needs of the service,” contact your local NAPS representative immediately. NAPS is here to assist our active members with their ability to take their well-earned annual leave so they may enjoy relaxing, recreating and recharging. NAPS also is here to help our active members avoid losing annual leave as a result of lackluster excuses.

Perhaps in upcoming pay talks NAPS can secure that no active member will lose earned annual leave because postal leadership did not have sufficient EAS coverage or the constant “needs of the service” excuse doesn’t outweigh an EAS employee from losing well-deserved and earned annual leave. One thing that is not lackluster is my ice-cream-flavor-of-the-month recommendation: lactose-free peanut butter fudge swirl.

SPAC

Contribution Form

Aggregate contributions made in a calendar year correspond with these donor levels:

\$1,000—President's Ultimate Oval

\$750—VP Elite

\$500—Secretaries Roundtable

\$250—Chairman's Club

\$100—Supporter

Current as of February 2015

Federal regulations prohibit SPAC contributions by branch check or branch credit card.

Mail to:

SPAC
1727 KING ST STE 400
ALEXANDRIA VA 22314-2753

Contribution Amount \$ _____ Branch # _____ Date _____
Name _____
Home Address/PO Box _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP+4 _____
Employee ID Number (EIN) or
Civil Service Annuitant (CSA) Number _____

Enclosed is my voluntary contribution to SPAC by one of the following methods:

- ☐ Check or money order made payable to SPAC; *do not send cash*
☐ Credit card (*circle one*): Visa American Express MasterCard Discover

Card number _____

Security code (three- or four- digit number on back of card) _____

Card expiration date: ____ / ____

Signature (required for credit card charges) _____

- ☐ In-Kind Donation (e.g., gift card, baseball tickets):

Describe gift _____ Value _____

All contributions to the Supervisors' Political Action Committee (SPAC) are voluntary, have no bearing on NAPS membership status and are unrelated to NAPS membership dues. There is no obligation to contribute to SPAC and no penalty for choosing not to contribute. Only NAPS members and family members living in their households may contribute to SPAC. Contributions to SPAC are limited to \$5,000 per individual in a calendar year. Contributions to SPAC are not tax-deductible.

President Biden Nominates Former Labor Secretary Martin Walsh to the USPS Board of Governors

March 1, 2024

Reprinted from naps.org

On February 29, President Joseph Biden nominated his former Secretary of Labor, Martin Walsh, to the U.S. Postal Service Board of Governors. Walsh would succeed Lee Moak, who left the board in December 2023. Martin Walsh served in President Biden's cabinet from 2021 through 2023. Walsh also served as the mayor of Boston from 2014 through 2021. He currently serves as the executive director of the National Hockey League Players Association. The nomination is now pending before the Senate for confirmation.

Make Contributing to SPAC a Habit:

Contributions via USPS Payroll Deduction

To authorize your allotment **online**, you will need your USPS employee ID number and PIN; if you do not know your PIN, you will be able to obtain it at Step 3 below.

- ➊ Go to <https://liteblue.usps.gov> to access PostalEASE.
- ➋ Under Employee App-Quick Links, choose PostalEASE.
- ➌ Click on "I agree."
- ➍ Enter your employee ID number and password.
- ➎ Click on "Allotments/Payroll NTB."
- ➏ Click on "Continue."
- ➐ Click on "Allotments."
- ➑ Enter Bank Routing Number (*from worksheet below*), enter account number (*see worksheet*), enter account from drop-down menu as "checking" and enter the amount of your contribution.
- ➒ Click "Validate," then "Submit." Print a copy for your records.

To authorize your allotment **by phone**, call PostalEASE, toll-free, at 1-877-477-3273 (1-877-4PS-EASE). You will need your USPS employee ID number and PIN.

- ➊ When prompted, select one for PostalEASE.
- ➋ When prompted, enter your employee ID number.
- ➌ When prompted, please enter your USPS PIN.
- ➍ When prompted, press "2" for payroll options.
- ➎ When prompted, press "1" for allotments.
- ➏ When prompted, press "2" to continue.
- ➐ Follow prompts to add a new allotment.
- ➑ Use the worksheet to give the appropriate information to set up an allotment for SPAC.



PostalEASE Allotments/Net to Bank Worksheet

On your next available allotment (you have three):

- Routing Number (nine digits): 121000248
- Financial Institution Name: Wells Fargo (this will appear after you enter the routing number).
- Account Number (this is a 17-digit number that starts with "772255555" and ends with your eight-digit employee ID number):

7 7 2 2 5 5 5 5 5
(Example: 77225555512345678).

- Type of Account (drop-down menu): Checking
- Amount per Pay Period (please use the 0.00 format; the "\$" is already included): _____



National Association of Postal Supervisor Branch 16
<https://naps16.org>