



The Pavement Pounder

Branch 111 NALC

“The Wasatch Branch”

Publication
2026.4
April
edition

Midvale - Millcreek - Murray - Northwest - Orem - Sandy - South Salt Lake - Sugarhouse - Tooele - West Jordan - West Valley

The President's Report

Earned Office Time and Other Myths

Just when you think that you've seen it all, management finds some new and improved tactic to put the squeeze on Letter Carriers. The latest trend is for management to invoke the fallacy of “minimum standards”, or DOIS projections, or some other numeric-nonsense-fairytale such as “earned office time”. Management will state that a Carrier is not making “standard” (otherwise known as 18 and 8, which is 18 letters or 8 flats per minute). The Supervisor then tells this carrier that since they are not making their office times they need to speed up. Then the theatrics begin: scornful looks, ominous clipboard notations, the evil eye. The sad part about this is that there are some Carriers who will actually believe this steaming pile of you-know-what, and will start killing themselves to meet an unrealistic or impossible number that management has fabricated with their flawed computer program known as “DOIS”.

Some of you might think that DOIS stands for “Database Of Inaccurate Statistics”, or “Deleting Overtime Is Simple”, but DOIS actually stands for “Delivery Operations Information System”, even though it is actually used for the first two definitions. So why is management trying to force-feed us DOIS, or 18 and 8? The reason is simple: they are forced to. I was shocked to find in the DOIS Quality Assessment (a management guide to implementing DOIS, and a weapon to use against Carriers if ever I saw one) the following instructions:

“The supervisor is using the Route Carrier Daily Performance Report to review previous day activities to determine which carriers did/did not meet the projections in DOIS. The supervisor is having conversations with carriers who did not meet DOIS projections... The supervisor is working with carriers who do not meet their projections so that their performance matches or exceeds their percent to standard”

What did that say? Did that really say that supervisors are supposed to work with carriers until their performance matches or exceeds their percent to standard? How exactly is that supposed to happen when “standard” is an obsolete measurement that is only used to evaluate a route? In fact, the parties have agreed that DOIS cannot be used to determine whether a carrier is achieving “standards”. It states in M-01664:

“DOIS projections are not the sole determinant of a carriers leaving or return time, or daily workload. As such, the projections cannot be used as the sole basis for corrective action.”

Additionally, when management does want to determine the office efficiency of a Letter Carrier, the M-39, Section 141.2 mandates:

“When management desires to determine the efficiency of a carrier in the office, a count of mail may be made.”

(continued on next page)

(continued)

Thus, the only way that management can determine how well a Carrier is doing in the office is to physically count all of the mail he or she is processing. The reason that a physical count is necessary is because DOIS is a linear count that becomes an estimated piece count. As such, there is no way to determine how many letters or flats a Carrier is actually processing. But, even if it was accurate, the 18 and 8 standard is obsolete. In fact, it has been obsolete since 1975. In NB-NAT-3233, Arbitrator Garrett stated:

“The fact [is] that the 18-and-8 standard initially was developed in 1922 without benefit of a precise definition of ‘letter-size’ mail...Even if, for convenience, the old 18-and-8 standards were to be used as a rough guide for casing of mail during route inspections, nonetheless these out-moded standards cannot provide any proper basis for changing an existing route or for imposition of discipline because of alleged inadequate performance. The Award herein thus will prohibit any such applications of the old ‘18-and-8’ standards.”

This settlement eventually became memorialized in section 242.332 of the M-39 which states:

“No carrier shall be disciplined for failure to meet standards, except in cases of unsatisfactory effort which must be based on documented, unacceptable conduct that led to the carrier’s failure to meet office standards.”

In a nutshell, this means that management cannot simply say that you are not making your office time or “standard”. What management must do is identify something that you are doing wrong (a time-wasting practice) in order to help you work better. So, unless a Supervisor can identify something that you are doing wrong, then they shouldn’t say anything about your office time! If they are harassing you about your office time, please report it to your Shop Steward. We will file a grievance under the “Joint Statement on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace” which states:

“We also affirm that every employee at every level of the Postal Service should be treated at all times with dignity, respect and fairness. The need for the USPS to serve the public efficiently and productively and the need for all employees to be committed to giving a fair day’s work for a fair day’s pay, does not justify actions that are abusive or intolerant. “Making the numbers” is not an excuse for the abuse of anyone. Those who do not treat others with dignity and respect will not be rewarded or promoted. Those whose unacceptable behavior continues will be removed from their positions.”

The only standard that the NALC recognizes is a fair day’s work for a fair day’s pay. Finally, in M-01664, the parties at the highest level have agreed to the following precedent setting decision (part of which I have cited above, but it is so important that it bears repeating):

The use of DOIS does not change the letter carrier’s reporting requirements outlined in section 131.4 of Handbook M-41, the supervisor’s scheduling responsibilities outlined in section 122 of Handbook M-39, or the letter carrier’s and supervisor’s responsibilities contained in Section 28 of Handbook M-41. DOIS projections are not the sole determinant of a carriers leaving or return time, or daily workload. As such, the projections cannot be used as the sole basis for corrective action.”

So, what does this mean to Letter Carriers? This agreement means that DOIS cannot control our leave times, our return times, or our workload, end of story. There is no requirement to case at an 18 and 8 standard. We estimate how much time our route will take, not management. We decide what we write on our 3996 (Carrier – Auxiliary Control), not management. And finally, we carry our mail and demonstrate that our estimates were reasonable. So, in the battle between our estimates vs. DOIS (or an 18 and 8 standard), there is only one winner, and that is the Letter Carrier who sticks to his or her estimate.

Michael Wahlquist – President
Branch 111, NALC



Emergency Response Team

In 2024, NALC President Brian Renfroe saw the need for our union to offer peer-to-peer support for offices that have experienced traumatic events. The team started with 30 members, all of whom received a week-long training at the Maritime Institute in Baltimore, Maryland. This was followed by another week of suicide prevention training at NALC Headquarters a few months later. I am very grateful to have been included in those original 30 members of the ERT.

In 2025, with demand so high, the ERT held another session at the Maritime Institute. An additional 30 members were trained and have since been working in the field. I was lucky enough to be included in that session as well, spending time with the new recruits.

Last week, a third training was held at the Maritime Institute, adding 29 more members to the team. I am profoundly grateful for the opportunity to have served as a facilitator, helping to train this latest addition to the ERT. I am also excited to announce that Branch 111 now has two members on the team. I couldn't be more proud of Nathan Chester for accepting this difficult assignment. I have been close with Nate for almost 20 years and after spending a few days with Nate at the training, I have no doubt he will touch the lives of the members and families he serves. In turn, I know this work will touch Nate's life, and I am excited to serve in the field alongside him. The ERT is led by giants, including Manny Peralta, Mack Julion, Ed Morgan, Michelle McQuality, and Chris Henwood. These leaders are not just the face of the program; they attend every minute of every training session. To date, the ERT has deployed over 135 times—twice within Branch 111. I have personally deployed multiple times, traveling as far as Chicago and Minnesota. It is an experience that is emotionally demanding and hard to describe, but it is also deeply rewarding and the work I am most proud of.

Substance abuse has been a major topic at all of our training sessions. While establishing a program to help those who struggle is no easy task, many of us are committed to doing exactly that. It is no secret, and I know he would not mind me sharing that President Renfroe is a recovering alcoholic approaching three years of sobriety. It is also no secret that he and I share this struggle. I just celebrated 12 years of sobriety, and while I have no words to fully describe the journey, I will say this: if you are struggling and don't know where to turn, I am here to help guide you.

If you are in crisis and reading this today, your journey to recovery can start now. **801-613-2505** is a dedicated line that rings directly to my phone. The resources and professionals who can help letter carriers are already in place. One phone call, one choice, can change everything. If you're not sure or just have questions, please call.

In Solidarity,
Mike Hansen
Executive Vice President
Branch 111, NALC



Nominations for Branch 111 delegates to the Utah AFL-CIO convention are now open through the May Branch meeting. Nominations can be submitted at the branch meeting. You can also mail or email your nomination to the branch prior to the May branch meeting. Email is slcbranch111@gmail.com.



UTAH AFL-CIO

Steward College 2026



Changes To Our Prescription Benefits

Since the start of 2026, the plan has received many questions surrounding member cost-share related to our pharmacy benefits. We understand this has been a change from our prior benefit structure; therefore, it is important to explain the overall impact of rising prescription expenses, overall health care costs, and why this change was necessary.

For many years, healthcare has been trending towards a percentage-based responsibility for medications with many of the other postal plans having already moved to the coinsurance structure. Despite our attempts to resist this change the rising use of brand name medications and GLP-1s means the copay structure is no longer sustainable.

- **Question:** Why is my prescription costing a lot more than last year?
- **Answer:** Due to the increased utilization of brand name medications, the Plan was unable to maintain the prior copayment structure and keep health plan premiums competitive; therefore, we have moved to coinsurance.
- **Question:** What is the difference between copayment and a coinsurance benefit structure?
- **Answer:** A copayment is a fixed amount of money that you pay to the facility, provider, or pharmacy when you receive certain services. This amount does not change based on the service. Coinsurance is a percentage of the cost you must pay for the service, supply, or medication received. For example prior to 2026, a \$3,500 prescription may have had a \$90 copayment, this would equal a 2.6% member cost-share; resulting in the plan covering 97.4% total cost. A generic medication that costs \$50 with a \$10 copayment; results in the member covering 20% cost-share. Changing the structure makes the cost-share more equitable based on the individual's usage without significantly increasing premiums.
- **Question:** What if I'm only taking generic medications?
- **Answer:** Members who utilize generic medications may not have noticed a change or cost increase. For some members, the cost may actually be less.
- **Question:** What if a generic option is not available ?
- **Answer:** First and foremost, it is always important to discuss with their physician which medication is best for you and what alternatives may be available for your individual health care needs.
- **Question:** How can I make my prescriptions more affordable?
- **Answer:** Discuss with their physician if there is a generic available.

Non-Medicare members should:

- Speak to their physician or pharmacist about assistance programs that may be available.
- Visit the manufacturers website to learn more about coupons that are available.
- Visit prescription discount platforms or cost comparison tools.

Medicare members should be aware that although they are not eligible for coupons their Out-Of-Pocket maximum is significantly lower (\$2100) and may be satisfied sooner than anticipated based on Medicare's assigned value for certain medications.

It is also important to discuss with their physician any Medicare compliant assistance programs available in their local area.

-Jim Kerekes
Health Benefits



NALC BRANCH 111

Minutes of the Regular Union Meeting

April 09, 2026

●Meeting Convened at 6:34 pm

The meeting was also broadcast over Zoom for those unable to attend in person.

Conducting: Mike Wahlquist, President

Pledge of Allegiance conducted by Michael Galvan

Roll Call by Steve McNees

Minutes of the March Union Meeting were posted. With no objection the minutes will be filed for future reference.

Reading of the Communications by Steve McNees

●Presidential ruling from President Renfroe: A suspended steward is not allowed to attend meetings nor speak on charges they have filed. Also, during the term of suspension the branch is not required to act on charges previously filed by the suspended steward. It would be appropriate for the branch to table the charges until the suspended steward has finished serving their suspension.

●President Renfroe replied to Stormy Blood's letter of March 13th requesting she be restored as steward, dismiss the article 10 charges against her, and conduct a new investigation of President Wahlquist. Renfroe responded that the decisions of the branch may be appealed to the National Committee of Appeals within 20 days. ●March 25th – a breach allegation of an EEO settlement was reported by the USPS. The EEO Specialist has begun an inquiry. ●Relocation of Letter Carrier Duty Assignments to a centralized location (SLC West Sorting and Delivery Center) at 1095 S 4800 W: On Sept. 19th West Valley Branch, SLC Airport, and Magna Post Office will move. On Oct. 31st the Downtown Annex will move. ●Route 57040 will have a 271-G special inspection beginning April 18th. Kimberly Tipler will be management's Formal A representative. ●Rosie Rivera is running for re-election as the SL County Sheriff and would like our support.

Application for Membership by Mike Hansen

Amberly Secor, Sarah Potja, Jose Player, Miguel Serrato, Annette Buchefel, Cooper Johnson, Angel Terry, Jared Miller, Tyler Nilsson, Josh McMahon

GUEST SPEAKERS: ●**Sim Gill** running again for SL CO. District Attorney. Public service for over 30 years.

He helped start the first ever drug court, mental health court, and veterans court (to help with mental health, substance abuse, get them peer to peer counselling, and VA transitional housing). Veterans take responsibility but get the help they need to move on out of the criminal justice system. Crime hurts offender, offended, and the public. He would like "our voice and our vote".

●**Erin Gemison** candidate in State House District 34. She

is running against one other democrat (no republicans running). She works with public health issues. She has worked on fair wages, better family leave, and more. Currently she works with domestic violence survivors in Sim Gill's office. She has the experience and the perspective of being in our community and fighting for the folks who aren't being heard on Capitol Hill anymore,

●**Iva Williams** candidate in House District 42 (southeast pocket of Sandy). Her opponent voted for the union busting bill (she supports unions). She is concerned about affordability, her kid's schools closing, and a sustainable economy that works for everyone, She supports union. She would like our support also.

●**Debbie Dixon** running for NALC Region 2 NBA- She has been a carrier since 1987, starting in upstate New York she then moved to Spokane, WA. Currently she is working in Olympia, WA (branch 351). She was an RAA for 10 years (until she announced she was running for NBA this year). She is unhappy with the time to get a decision on a grievance. She would rather file Labor charges to get grievances processed faster. National grievances need to be enforced at the national level. She has joined CLC (Concerned Letter Carriers) because they are like minded and a pro-active group. She would like to have more training. Maybe specialized zoom meetings for just stewards or organizers and everyone with a specialized job in the union. The CLC is about what is needed for carriers on the workroom floor.

●**Corey Walton** running for NALC National Executive V.P. Member of the CLC. He has 34 years carrying mail. Shop steward since 2006. Arbitration advocate 2012, has had a podcast for 3 years call "from A to Arbitration" to train small branches who can't afford to get to training. Integrity in DC at all times is at the top of his list. Nothing is more important to him than LiteBlue. James Henry has more integrity than anyone he has met. Teaching LiteBlue on the workroom floor has to be a priority. The toxic working environment on the workroom floor is not acceptable (top priority). We are going to educate the workroom floor.

●**James Henry** running for NALC National President. Member of the CLC. The best ability is dependability. He is running because if you see something and don't stand up for what you know is right, you are as wrong as the wrong itself. He was in the Marine Corp. for 22 years. Our leaders will work to get what we need, that is their chief concern. What Letter Carriers do will make the difference. The first step to failure is the failure to try. They will never take to the bargaining table the failure to try. A concerned letter carrier will not only fight for you, but will fight with you.

Minutes (continued)

Q&A with all three CLC members: We need those who are awarded not rewarded for the positions they get.

- They would like a mentorship program for all positions.

8:13pm –A motion was made to extend the meeting by 30 minutes (9:00pm). The motion passed.

LETTER CARRIER POLITICAL FUND (LCPF) by Josh Thibodeau –no report

MDA COORDINATOR by Nathan Chester

Bowling night is June 18: 7-9pm at Bountiful Bowl. The event is free, just make a donation, as big or small as you want for MDA. It is family friendly with food and drinks. He still need some more sponsors. If you know someone or a business that might be willing to become a sponsor, let Nathan know and he will contact them.

DIRECTOR OF VETERAN AFFAIRS by Jimmy Fleming - no report

LEGISLATIVE by Chad Mortensen - no report

TRUSTEES by Chad Mortensen - no report

COMPENSATION by Bob Jewell

HEALTH BENEFITS by Jim Kerekes no report

ORGANIZER by Justin Lindquist -not present

SAFETY AND HEALTH by Justin Lindquist –not present

DIRECTOR OF RETIREES by Jeff Asay – no report

TREASURER by Mike Madsen

- We brought in \$2,000 less than we spent last month.

VICE PRESIDENT by Destiney Carrillo

- Steward training is next Wednesday on Zoom only. There will be InformalA and new steward training.

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT by Mike Hansen

- 550 grievances so far this year. Mike Carif will be here next month.

PRESIDENT by Mike Wahlquist

The HOA meeting was last night. We were asked to always make sure the doors are closed when you exit the meetings. There have been several people entering the building without approval.

NEW BUSINESS:

NOMINATIONS FOR AFL-CIO CONVENTION (OPEN THROUGH MAY THE UNION MEETING).

- Nominees for AFL-CIO Convention: John Mister, Jim Kerekes, Fernando Palofox, Phil Rodriguez, Kim Mortensen, Josh Thibodeau, Garreth Davies, Chad Mortensen, Keith Warner

- Stormy Blood's appeal regarding removal of steward duties was tabled for a couple of months because meetings ended before all business could be completed. Tonight a motion to postpone her appeal indefinitely was made. The motion passed.

- Last Month four items were held out of the Budget for

discussion, while the rest of the budget was approved.

1. A motion was made to move Progressive Permissive remedies from line 7 to line 5 as other income. The motion passed.

2. Page 3 item 54 Lobbying Money. Motion to add \$4,500 to the \$500 originally budgeted. The motion passed.

3. Page 4 item 71 A motion to increase the budget of Benefit Reimbursement by \$7,600 for a total of \$9,200. The motion passed

4. Page 4 item 57 Motion to eliminate the Miscellaneous Budget item of \$5,000. The motion passed. The 2026 budget is now officially approved.

PROPOSED BYLAW CHANGE: Section 7. Salaries of the other elected officers are as follows: G. The Health Benefits Representative shall receive a monthly salary of 3 hours at NALC City Carrier Grade 2, Step P, Carrier Technician rate. • The amendment is to change the number of hours from 3 hours to 4 hours. • The bylaw change was approved. • A motion to endorse the 3 politicians who spoke tonight, **Sim Gill as S.L.Co. District Attorney, Erin Gemison for House district 34, Iva Williams for House district 42** was made. A motion to amend the motion to add **Zach Robinson for S.L.Co. Council at Large** was made and passed. The original motion as amended passed.

- Motion to extend the meeting for 10 minutes. The motion passed

- A motion was made to endorse Evan Done. The motion failed.

GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION: none

FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE SERVICE: none

DRAW AND ADJOURN: 9:07 pm

• **\$50 DRAWING WINNERS:** Josh Thibodeau and Alicia Chadwick

• **RETIREES – \$50** (Doug Hardy was not present). Next month it will be \$75.

• **PROGRESSIVE A - \$100** (Kimberly Francisco was not present). Next Meeting it will be \$125.

• **PROGRESSIVE B - \$50** (7-5 Richard Franz was not present). Next Meeting it will be \$75



National Association of
Letter Carriers
2261 South Redwood
Road, Suite 14
Salt Lake City, Utah
84119

Non-Profit
U.S. Postage
Paid
Salt Lake City,
UT
Permit No. 1981

UPCOMING DATES:

May 7	Eboard
May 9	NALC Food Drive
May 14	Branch Meeting
May 20	Steward Training
June 4	Eboard
June 11	Branch Meeting
June 17	Steward Training
June 18	MDA Bowling Night

Please register for the
May Zoom meeting at
Branch 111.com or
use this QR Code
You need to register
every month



NALC BRANCH 111



Come for fun, bowling and food!
Event is free but donations to MDA are appreciated

🕒 THURSDAY
JUNE 18, 7-9PM 🕒

📍 Bountiful Bowl 📍
(409 s 500 w Bountiful)

President
Mike Wahlquist
385-216-0476

Executive Vice-President
Mike Hansen
801-628-1848

Vice-President
Destiney Carrillo
562-370-3590

Treasurer
Mike Madsen

Secretary
Steve McNeas

Sergeant-at-Arms
Mike Simonsen

MBA & OWCP
Bob Jewell
801-244-0929

Editor
Nathan Chester
Natech-
ester8@gmail.com

Director of Retirees
Jeff Asay
801-597-2380

L.C.P.F. Coordinator
Josh Thibodeau
801-953-6343
J.thibodeau77@gmail.com

Legislative
Chad Mortensen

Health Benefits
Jim Kerekes
801-557-6033

Organizer
Justin Lindquist
801-301-9293

Safety & Health
Justin Lindquist
801-301-9293

Food Drive
Josh Jessop

MDA
Nathan Chester
801-450-0617

Director of Veteran Affairs
Jimmy Fleming
vet-
eransaffairs@branch111.com

Trustees
Chad Mortensen
Kirk McLaughlin
Kortnie Chatterton