



# American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

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*We Try To Be Letter Perfect For You*

## General Membership Meeting Minutes March 18, 2017

**Meeting Called to order by President Alex Aleman at 11:40.**

**The Invocation** was given by Recording Secretary Yolanda Deleon.

There was a **Moment of Silence** to remember all past union members of Local #195 who are no longer with us.

The **Pledge of Allegiance** was led by MVS Craft Director Faron Hierholzer.

A saxophone rendition of America the Beautiful was performed by Union member Richard Fuentes.

**Roll Call of Officers:** Alex Aleman, Sterling Ricks, Jeff Greenlee, Yolanda Deleon, Chris Rincon, Carlos Barrios, Sandra Lira, Ruben Hernandez, Faron Hierholzer, Dennis Barboza, Barry Payne, Jarrett Williams, and Letty Alejandro. **Absent was:** Lloyd Burrows

**Motion to suspend the regular order of business** to the April General Membership meeting to allow our special guest speakers to address the membership was made by Clerk Craft Director (Plant) Criscencio Rincon; second was made by Executive Vice President Sterling Ricks; passes.

President Aleman welcomed all to our 100 year anniversary and stated that this is a great accomplishment. It will happen only once in our lifetime.

President Aleman introduced the Congressman from the 35<sup>th</sup> Texas Congressional District, Mr. Lloyd Doggett. Congressman Doggett has been a supporter of Postal Workers and the Postal Service.

Congressman Doggett reported that the House removed protections for whistle blowers and union representatives. There is much work to do. Programs such as Meals on Wheels are in jeopardy from the new administration. On the positive side, there was approval of bi-partisan Postal Reform bill led by Elijah Cummings (D) and Jason Chavitz (R). There is more work to be done to pass legislative progress. The Ways and Means Committee wants to add all Medicare eligible retirees on Medicare. \$30 billion has been contributed by Postal Workers. Congressman Doggett stated that he has always looked to our Local for guidance on postal issues. He stated that the Trump administration threatens American families and instead of "draining the swamp" it is being filled with billionaires; the entanglements with the Russians – there is much to be done. High pharmacy pricing – it's a continuing struggle.

Congressman Doggett reported that he will be holding his third Town Hall meeting next Saturday at La Trinidad. He is not afraid to host these meetings. He pledged his continued support to Postal Workers and stated that "my priorities are your priorities".

Linda Chavez-Thompson, AFL-CIO Vice President Emerita addressed the membership. She stated that she was much honored to attend our 100 year anniversary. This is International Women's month and behind every success there is a woman. She read our newsletter and read about the history of our union. Starting a union is not easy. The reasons are improving working conditions, pay, the lack of fairness, dignity and wanting something better for themselves and their families. Union members have to uphold the history, the fight continues for fairness, better wages and dignity and respect. Mrs. Chavez-Thompson began in the Labor movement December 8, 1967. She was born and raised on a cotton farm hoeing cotton at age 10 and went with her parents. The parents made 50 cents an hour and kids made 30 cents. She did this from 7 am to 6 pm, five days a week until she was 19 years old. It was then that she had her first job as secretary for a Lubbock contractor answering phones, interpreting for a majority of workers that were Hispanic. At age 54 her dad could no longer work in the fields and she encouraged him to be a helper at the company she worked at. He began working there and when he received his first check, he had tears in his eyes and told her that he earned more in 1 week than he had worked in a month at the farm. The Labor movement gave her father dignity, a good paycheck and a pension, health care for him and her mom. We have reasons to continue the legacy of this local union, to fight the good fight for ourselves and for the dignity and respect and demand it. We have to love the labor movement and hand it over better to those after us, than when you came in. Thank you for what you do and what you will do.

Pete Gallego, who formerly served the 23<sup>rd</sup> Texas Congressional District, addressed the membership. He thanked the Local, who was the first to help in his run for congress. He stated that it was a great privilege to serve. He is happy for our 100 year anniversary but he is worried about our next 100. He stated that when his son was born that his life was never the same. He reminded us that we need to vote for people like us, for someone who has our interest at heart. We need to do more together for our next 100 years. Next time we have to do better. Members have to recognize the right guy or girl. Make our world a better place.

President Alex Aleman reported that the Executive Board had dinner on Monday with President Mark Dimondstein. He was in San Antonio for the AFL-CIO winter meeting at the Hyatt, the first River walk Union hotel. It was great meeting with Mark and listening to him; he asked a lot of questions and about things going on the workroom floor. President Aleman then read a letter from President Dimondstein that stated....on behalf of all the National Officers and the 200,000 members of the American Postal Workers Union; I extend enthusiastic congratulations to the San Antonio Area Local on the occasion of your 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. What a great milestone in the ongoing and continuing struggle for respect and dignity on the job, decent wages and benefits and a real voice at work for postal workers and workers everywhere. The San Antonio Alamo Area Local holds a proud place in APWU's history and postal workers' march of progress. In 1917, when our local was formed, postal employees and the National Federation of Postal Clerks had been under a national gag order banning employees from talking to anyone, including Congressional representatives, regarding workplace issues and their national president had been fired as the struggle for the eight-hour day at the post office was in full swing. To organize your local in this repressive environment took courage and a determination to sacrifice for needed change on the part of your local leaders and members. On to the next century of struggle and progress! He closed: In Union solidarity, Mark Dimondstein, President.

John Marcotte, the APWU Health Plan Director echoed what was said by President Dimondstein. The National Executive Board asked him to convey their congratulations on behalf of the Board. Brother Marcotte recognized Jack Crawford, our NBA, and Carlton Williams, the TPWU president who were in attendance. When John was the Legislative director Congressman Doggett and Gallego worked with APWU staff and there was always respect. During World War I, World War II, 9/11, the Gulf War, the Local was there during it all.

The San Antonio Alamo Area Local 100<sup>th</sup> year Anniversary plaque was unveiled and President Aleman read the plaque to the members in attendance.

President Aleman recognized past Local Presidents: Herb Diaz and his wife, Robert Mendoza, Gilbert Uriegas.

President Alex Aleman remembered Lydia Gonzalez, our local secretary for over 30 years who recently passed away.

Also in attendance was Sam Lisenbe, NBA; Jack Crawford, NBA, Frank Romero, Retired National Organization Director, Dolores Perez McIntosh, the former wife of Rudy Perez Jr. was in attendance.

**Motion to adjourn** was made by Vice President Sterling Ricks; second by sister Monique Kyles. Meeting was adjourned at 12:31 p.m.

Mariachis Los Parientes de Pedro Moreno played while the members enjoyed a delicious meal of brisket, sausage, potato salad, green beans, and corn was enjoyed by all. The McIntosh Family paid for the Mariachis. Thank you!

As well as a delicious cake made by fellow union member George Deleon's wife.

President Aleman thanked Union Treatment Center for their sponsorship of \$1,500; Platinum Wealth for their sponsorship of \$500 for our event and the Retiree's Chapter for their sponsorship.

The members enjoyed the Bar BQ Plate from Grady's, mariachis, margaritas, beer, and a live band that also entertained us lead by fellow union brother Richard Fuentes.

Members gathered after the meeting to share union stories and experiences from the past.

The Local gave away ten \$50 Chili's gift cards to members in attendance. The winners were drawn from the sign-in book. The winners were: David Hernandez, Robert Thomas, David Bell, Alan Belton, Michael Porter, Paul Baker, Letty Alejandro, Sandra Lira, Ross Camacho, and Cecilio Ochoa.

Four \$25 Visa gift cards donated by Vivian Kolenda of American Benefits were won by: Cruz Delgado, Jarrett Williams, Maria Carden, and Clarice Khan.

Platinum Wealth Winners were: Sterling Ricks, James Hernandez, and Charles Minton.

Union Treatment Center winners were: Richard Fuentes who won a Nutri-Bullet blender; Ron Odom who won a wireless speaker; and Debbie Padilla who won a George Foreman grill.

The winner of the 55" TV was Al Lara, Tour 3.

\$611 was raised for COPA.

Respectfully submitted by:

  
Yolanda DeLeon  
Recording Secretary  
SAAAL

  
Alex Aleman  
President  
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