

February 12, 2010

Postal Regulatory Commission
901 New York Avenue NW Suite 200
Washington, DC 20268-001
ATT: Richard Oliver-Docket # PI 2010-1

Dear Postal Regulatory Commission,

Our Post Office in Port Byron, IL 61275 was suspended on January 23, 2010 because the roof was leaking and some tiles fell down. We had no warning and we have over 2000 residents and the Post Office is a level 16.

The roof has been leaking since last August. We have had quite a lot of rain this year. The Landlord is financially strapped and didn't have the money to repair the roof, but he has nine more years to go on his lease and he offered to forego his rent (\$325.00) a month if the USPS would repair the roof. They refused.

There are three other buildings available to house the Post Office. One owner offered it rent free and the Postal Officials turned him down. It is quite evident that they have no intention of every reopening the Port Byron Post Office.

The Town offered to help the Landlord with repairing the roof. The USPS responded by submitting a list of repairs that they wanted done before they would move back into the Post Office. Some of it has to do with asbestos. The USPS Maintenance Employee contributed to the problems when he tore up the floor tiles removing postal equipment. It is very obvious that they do not plan to move back in.

As Mayor, I have contacted Real Estate in Colorado and spoken to John Walters and Sharon Ott about the available space in the Village of Port Byron that could be used as a temporary post office. I also informed them that we have two individuals in the community that would be willing to purchase and repair the existing postal building. They are aware that we will do anything necessary to assist the postal service in restoring our post office to Port Byron.

We had a Community Meeting on February 4, 2010 and we mentioned the different buildings available. The USPS Officials said they couldn't make any decision on the buildings; it has to be done by Real Estate. We have been told by Betty Eickler, Chair of the Committee to Prevent Post Office Closings, that it is the District Manager who makes the decisions. This information is in Handbook, 101, (132.1) the USPS's guide on closing post offices. The district manager, Customer Services and Sales, is responsible for overseeing the Post office discontinuance investigations within the district and must provide written approval before any investigation is initiated. Real Estate does not have this power.

Lori Cross, the Post Office Operating Manager, said she could not answer our questions. Was she so ill prepared or was she simply avoiding difficult questions? Why even have a meeting? The Community was asked where could they put the NDCBUs? No one would have them on their property. The NDCBs were ordered before January 22, 2010 and definitely before our Community Meeting. This is a strong indication that they are not reopening the Port Byron Post Office. We have to do our business at the Hampton Post Office and since we are over 2000 Customers, we do not feel this Post Office can meet our needs and supply us Post Office boxes and the service that we now have. We are a growing community and we deserve our own Post Office.

We object to this Temporary suspension because it is really a closing without giving us our rights according to Title 39. We should have had 60 days to object and 30 days to contact the PRC. We also object for the following reasons:

1. No notice
2. Not given much notice on Community Meeting on February 4, 2010 with approximately fifty residents in attendance.
3. We have three alternative sites in our village, a vacant grocery store, a new, unfinished building on Main Street and a vacant building across from the Village Hall. The response from the postal service has been minimal. They gave no assurance that they would even look at the sites.

The closing of the post office has caused a great hardship on business, elderly and handicapped residents with in our Village. The current post office in Hampton is small and is not properly equipped to process bulk mail necessitating the clerk to hand scan each item. The Port Bryon post office was a modern facility. The elderly population of our Village now has the added burden of traveling seven miles for their postal services. Handicapped residents have been put at a disadvantage as well making their lives more complicated. Here at Village Hall we have noticed a dramatic decrease in the amount of daily mail we receive. Many residents have voiced the concern that it is a major inconvenience to travel the seven miles to pick up their mail.

As a community we need our post office in our Village. We appropriate your assistance in this matter.

Very truly,

Robert Wilson
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