

Postal Regulatory Commission  
Office of the Chief Admin. Officer

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To Whom It May Concern:

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THE APPEAL:

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I am writing to you today, not only because my post office is in jeopardy of closing, but so are many others across the United States. I hope and pray that you will put a stop to the closing of the Fishers Landing Post office next month, as well as many others across the country.

I understand the USPS is facing a financial crisis like many corporations in America. I also understand it's the only government agency not funded by the government. In hindsight, I feel the government made a mistake spinning it off. Instead of being a government agency providing a service to the people, USPS is just another organization competing for business like other big name American Corporations. The focus is now on the almighty dollar, protecting higher ranking corporate employees with fancy job titles, and placating their counterparts in the union, - rather than just providing a break-even service to the American Public. The United States Postal Service.....a government agency formed to deliver mail from one end of the country to another. Its' mantra is to provide a SERVICE to the American public that funds it, rather than being a corporate conglomerate hiding behind Union rules while in pursuit of a profit, it was never designed by Congress, aka the people, to achieve.

USPS, like many large corporations enjoyed the economic haydays of growth and expansion over the past years. They employed more levels of management, engaged many new departments and expanded to several districts. They grew to have an excessive overhead and when the economy turned they are finding they can no longer support it. In my career in the telephone industry, I have seen this as well and was involved in the painful downsizing which Verizon went through. Many businesses have cut back and survived. Others were not so fortunate. A third group was bailed out by the US Government. Hopefully USPS will not have to be bailed out. I have read where USPS has started to merge district offices and some operations. I feel they have just notched the tip off the iceberg and have a long way yet to go. Only by reducing overhead and excessive management will they stand a chance. Cutbacks will have to be made at the bottom as well. However, it is my firm belief that you cut back hours and delivery days NOT post offices. I feel that closing post offices will eventually lead to the demise of the postal system.

Here in Fishers Landing, our Postmaster retired over 3 years ago. Since that time, I believe we have had 6 OIC's (Officer in Charge). There were some individuals that were capable of doing the job and some who were not. It only takes one or two bad experiences at any place of business, before one goes elsewhere. The USPS says our revenue has decreased over the past few years. Well..... We haven't had a postmaster that cared about revenue as evidenced, for example, in that there are no packaging supplies to purchase, ( Please see my attachments), unless you want to pay extra for priority over first class and parcel post. If your items don't fit in a priority flat rate box, you were and to this day are, sent elsewhere. The attachments show what our "packaging supplies" display looks like in Fishers landing, and has looked like for years.

My wife is a PMR and also currently an OIC in a single person Post Office. She gives the children lollypops. Going to the post office is a fun experience for them. When the mail has a letter addressed to them from grandparents in another state, she says their faces light up. Will they get this same feeling going to a Kiosk for their mail? Getting the mail won't be any more significant than taking out the garbage as there won't be a social connection with the postmaster/postal system. The younger generation won't grow up to appreciate the postal service if you close all the home town offices.

My middle daughter was 7 when my mother passed away. One of her fondest memories of her grandmother when we visited was Grandma taking her and her sister for a walk to the post office to get the mail in the morning. My oldest daughter lives in Glasboro, NJ and commutes into the City of Philadelphia, where she works as a teacher. When she comes to visit she likes to shop for gifts for her sister and her family. She wraps and leaves them for her my wife or myself to mail at the appropriate time. (birthdays or Christmas.) " You don't understand how hard it is for me to get to a post office and then I have to wait in line forever." As you close more and more offices, lines will be bigger at places they aren't now. More and more people will move away from sending gifts and will just mail gift cards. If you think mail volume is down now, watch it decrease- even more after you close the post offices. The path that the USPS is walking will be self fulfilling in that the Post Office will disappear.

I have tried to explain why shutting down post offices across America, is bad for the American Public.

#### **WHY KEEP the FISHERS LANDING PO of a 137 YEARS OPEN**

Now, let me speak specifically on behalf of Fishers landing.

First of all the post office in FISHERS LANDING IS the center of our community and houses our only community bulletin board... The Response from USPS is "many retail outlets and grocery stores are now displaying a public bulletin board' We don't have a retail outlet or a grocery store .We have two seasonal marinas , one seasonal church and one seasonal restaurant, as well as a volunteer fire department. Anything else USPS shows as a business is either an internet sales business, a business in another zip-code /delivery area, or a self – proprietor without a public office.

To be clear let me repeat. We are a bedroom community in the winter and in the summer a waterfront residence. We have one seasonal evening restaurant, 2 seasonal marinas and a church open about 2 months. We do NOT have a diner, a gas station, a grocery store or a library. We meet and exchange news at the post office. The current PMR can probably tell you more about the names/addresses/ and knows more than he cares to about the people in the Landing than any of the residents. That's what a USPS postmaster is about. It's the American way. They keep telling us we need a CPU or Village Post Office Concept (new) (yes, they mentioned it about 2 months before they publicized it.)We don't have a year round business to offer it. Shutting down the post office is very detrimental to the community. NO it's not an economic detriment; it's a social one, an American one. Shutting down local post offices is like killing small communities, and every post office you close will turn that many more people away.

Many years ago our post office was established in lieu of delivering to our doors. We don't have a route and the majority of people served by the post office get free boxes. Now many years later we are being penalized for not bringing in revenue. We offered to pay for our boxes and were told its illegal (postal regulations say you get a free box, if there is no service to your home). We asked for part time hours with a casual labor (they don't receive benefits and although they can do the job of a postmaster are the least paid employees or rather temps employed by USPS). We were told it's against the regulations and Union Rules as well. We asked to be made a station of another office and then give us a temp. They said we still need a clerk and again they come with benefits. It's a no win any we turn.

### **WHY the New "VILLAGE POST OFFICE IDEA" does NOT WORK for Fishers landing**

The USPS says they have this new Village Post Office idea, but it doesn't fit as we have no businesses. In short they offered us nothing and refuted every suggestion we made. They had already made up their mind 3 years ago. But rather than tell the Fishers landing Community, and give us suggestions to generate revenue, they sent us a few Officers in Charge, and then set us up to fail the Revenue Test. Now the USPS can say our revenue has decreased. Of course it has, but who is responsible for setting us on the path to a failure?

The USPS came to us in one 4hr. meeting in 137 Years of Business and said our post office was under review and asked for comments. What the community now realizes is this was all a set of legal proceedings. They tell us they have us under review, we comment & they refute etc...

### **Are the COSTS Really JUSTIFIED and is CLOSING the FISHERS LANDING Post Office the BEST DECISION?**

How much money is USPS really spending just to close one office? Let alone the rest of the first 2200 or the next 3500 under review. What we have been told is the date of removal is 9/10/11. I assume that means the last day of service at the post office? The letter states the Clayton Post office "will provide rural and retail services" Since we haven't received instructions to put up a mail box by the road, I would assume the USPS is building a kiosk of sort. But they haven't started constructing one. How much does that cost? They must have to either rent or purchase the land and maintain it? It also says they have to restore the facility leased to its original condition. They refused to answer the question on what it cost to break the lease.

So if I understand correctly USPS is closing 5000 plus offices over the next year or so, building and maintaining kiosks, breaking leases, & removing all postal boxes and returning the buildings to pre-post office conditions (that's a huge cash outlay & poor business decision for a cash -poor company) as well as hiring new carriers/contractors, training them, and letting already trained personnel go off the payroll (another Big Cost). All these offices are operating with an Officer in charge, is my understanding, since if there is a postmaster in the location, you can't close them. All those Officer in charge came from another office, and ultimately when everyone moves back, someone becomes the surplus and another

trained person leaves the payroll...these are" JOBS", and the multiplier effect of those JOBS in the small communities is lost forever.

My Point is that for the first 4 – 5 years or longer, the USPS won't even see a break even cash flow from each office it has closed, and it will have saved no real dollars and turned away how many thousands of angered customers to alternative service providers?

### **HOW ABOUT SOME ALTERNATIVES the USPS and the UNIONS CONTROL for Fishers Landing;**

If the USPS appealed to Congress, just changed the postal law and negotiated with the Union to allow these offices to be staffed a few hours a day by a casual employee, you would save Millions, and keep the American public happy. (A novel approach--- Happy Customers)

I understand you will have to continue to pay rent and utilities, but by going from a fulltime with benefits employee to a temporary one with partial benefits you should be able to save considerably. And the offices that are open a few hours each day would show a decrease in Operational Costs. Maybe the Post Office could become its' own insurer like a Big Corporation and offer some level of benefits to the temp workers, and then they could be able to pay some level of Union Dues creating a "win - win" for both sides of the labor equation.

### **What are the "Real Costs \$ and Personal" and the Real Savings for Closing Fishers Landing**

More specifically, during this appeal to keep our Fishers landing office, I feel the majority of the published info was bogus and or made up to support the "Close the Post Office Scenario".

In the first letter to the community, The USPS published that we had 69 post office box customers. I believe that was not only a low figure, but they did their survey in the mid of winter. Ironically they handed our 84 questionnaires to delivery customers? How does one hand out 84 questionnaires to 69 customers? Regardless, they did a sample test of transactions during the winter when we have 100 folks in town, and never did one in the summer, although they have had 3 years to accumulate information. It would seem logical if you did one in mid winter you would also do one in mid summer and average the two since this is a tourist area. I propose to you to look in to the matter and see we have approximately 150 customers, if not more, at this time.

They stated they could save around 35 K if they closed the office and got a carrier. They say this alternate service costs 12,500 a year. If you factor in buying or renting land, building and maintaining a kiosk and paying a carrier, there's no way in anyone's imagination it can be done for \$12,500. The USPS seems to believe a carrier delivering mail to 69 winter customers will work for the same fee in the summer when he has 150+ customers .The paperwork alone for those 80 customers would be a nightmare. With a temp working 16-24 hours a week, the community is willing to propose a plan that

could cut the labor costs to be comparable to the savings and this was rejected out of hand. Because a USPS temp is not allowed, so we have asked for the following;

What about a "Postal Contract Worker, like the Mail Drivers that the USPS currently contracts? Why is this course of action to create a 16 to 24 hour Postal Environment for Fishers landing not being pursued by USPS? This would give Fishers landing the Postal Services, and the Community Services that we currently enjoy at a lower cost to USPS?

### **Conclusion and Appeal**

What it comes down to, is that postal law, or rather the government regulations that impose rules on the small town post offices that are neither logical nor cost effective. I implore you to put an end to this. Save the small post offices, the heart of America, change the antiquated laws that prevent the USPS from being cost-effective in the modern day an age without killing an integral part of American life.

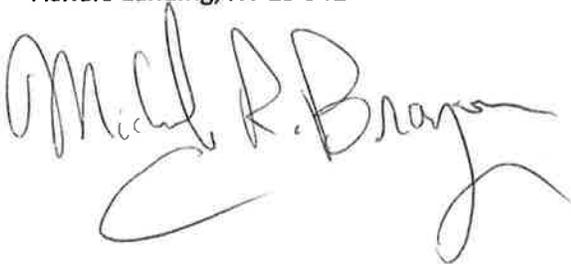
I am afraid I don't know the formal language for an appeal, but, I offer this letter as an appeal to you to keep the Fishers Landing Post office open and to also save thousands of other post offices thru- out America. By doing this , you will be helping to preserve the United States Postal System.

Thank you for attention to this letter, and I look forward to a common sense reply to this sincere appeal;

Michael Brayen

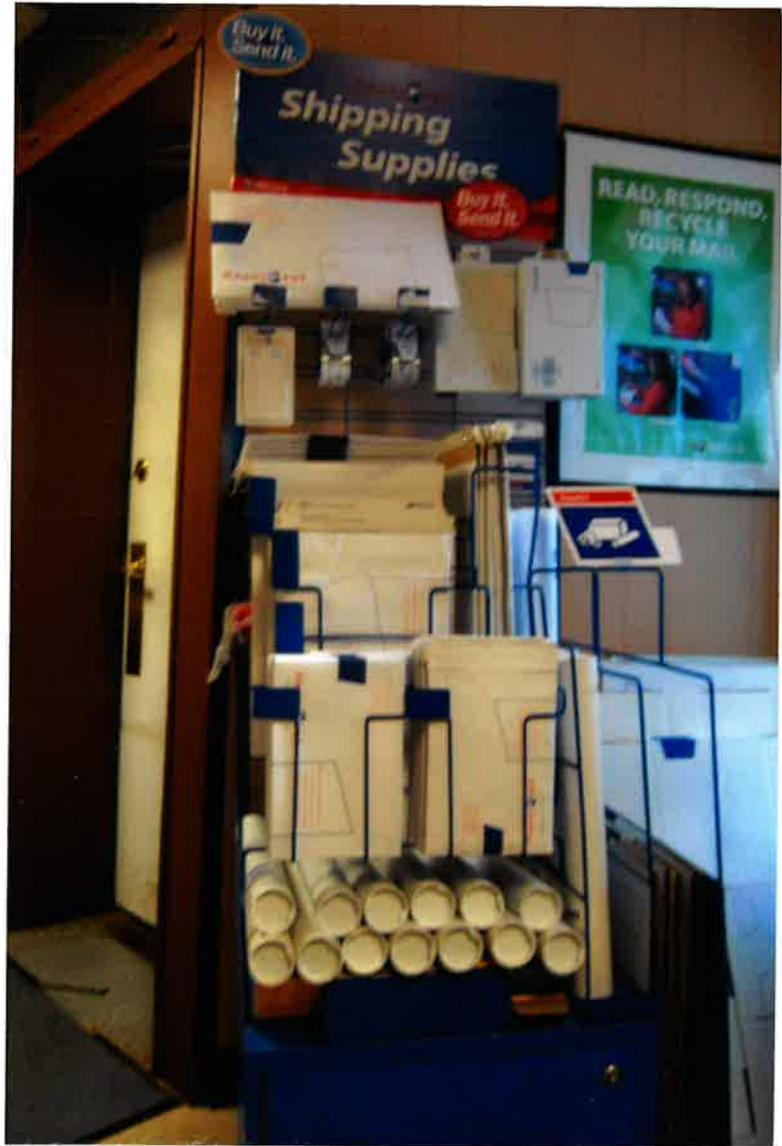
Box 453

Fishers Landing, NY 13 641

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael A. Brayen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "M" and a long, horizontal flourish at the end.



**Fishers Landing  
Post Office**



Three Mile Bay  
Post Office



Depauville  
Post Office