

AUG 30 2011

BEFORE THE
POSTAL REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, DC 20268

In the Matter of:

Bigelow AR 72016
Post Office State ZIP Code

2011 AUG 30 P 2:22

RECEIVED
Docket No: A2011-29
COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Brad Akridge , Petitioner(s)

PARTICIPANT STATEMENT

1. Petitioner(s) are appealing the Postal Service's Final Determination concerning the Bigelow post office. The Final Determination was posted 7/1/11.
(date)

2. In accordance with applicable law, 39 U.S.C. § 404(b)(5), the Petitioner(s) request the Postal Regulatory Commission to review the Postal Service's determination on the basis of the record before the Postal Service in the making of the determination.

3. Petitioners: Please set out below the reasons why you believe the Postal Service's Final Determination should be reversed and returned to the Postal Service for further consideration. (See pages 1-2 of the Instructions for an outline of the kinds of reasons the law requires us to consider.) Please be as specific as possible. Please continue on additional paper if you need more space and attach the additional page(s) to this form.

(See Attached)

The provision in the Postal Reorganization Act that calls for the Postal Service to provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal service to rural areas, communities and small towns where the post office is not self-sustaining. No small post office shall be closed solely for operating at a deficit, it being the specific intent of the Congress that effective postal services be insured to residents of both urban and rural communities. This should include Bigelow's Post Office.

In the Final Determination letter, section IV Economic Savings (see attached), it lists the postmaster salary, fringe benefits, annual lease costs, and annual cost of replacement service. This is not a full disclosure of all expenses and savings. The postmaster's salary is listed at the highest possible value. The cost of replacement service is not high enough to pay for additional salary and mileage to current carriers and also to hire an additional carrier as mentioned at the public meetings with the Postal Service. The loss of revenue from the post office is not figured in, affecting the total annual savings.

The Postal Service stated a reason for closure was the postmaster position was vacant. This job was not posted and therefore the Postal Service has not made an effort to fill this vacancy for the past year.

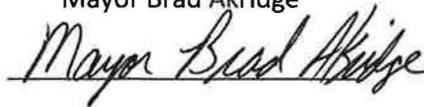
The hardship that will be placed on your elderly and disabled customers, East End School System, Town of Bigelow, Town of Fourche, and the surrounding area serviced by this post office would be devastating to the eastern part of Perry County. The financial burden on your customers and your postal employees could be more than some could handle during these economic times.

One of the Postal Service representative's statements was that it could not afford the rent increase on the current facilities, which was in the original agreement. The local owners of the property stated, in a letter to the post office, that they would leave the rent at the current rate with no increase. This agreement would cost the property owners \$200,000.00 over the next fifteen years but they are more concerned with keeping Bigelow's Post Office open.

We feel that, as citizens of the United States, we are entitled to the same efficient postal service provided to our counterparts in urban areas. The Postal Reorganization Act is explicit in pointing this out. We petition you, as members of the Postal Regulatory Commission, to respectfully consider our protest and order the Postal Service to give additional considerations to our service needs.

Respectfully,

Mayor Brad Akridge

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mayor Brad Akridge". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the printed name.

IV. ECONOMIC SAVINGS

The Postal Service estimates an annual savings of \$ 109,808 with a breakdown as follows:

Postmaster Salary (EAS-16, No COLA)	\$ 73,757
Fringe Benefits @ 33.5%	\$ 24,709
Annual Lease Costs	+ \$ 29,493
Total Annual Costs	\$ 127,959
Less Annual Cost of Replacement Service	- \$ 18,151
Total Annual Savings	<u>\$ 109,808</u>

V. OTHER FACTORS

The Postal Service has identified no other factors for consideration.

VI. SUMMARY

The Postal Service has determined to close the Bigelow, AR Post Office and provide delivery and retail services by rural route service under the administrative responsibility of the Conway Post Office, located 13 miles away.

The postmaster was reassigned on July 31, 2010. If the office has a noncareer PMR, they may be separated from the Postal Service. No other employee(s) will be adversely affected. Post office workload has declined. Effective and regular service will continue to be provided by rural route service.

The Bigelow Post Office provided delivery service to 1,058 customers and 256 PO Box customers. The daily retail window transactions averaged 40. There are one permit mailers or postage meter customers.

There will no longer be a retail outlet in the community. However, delivery and retail services will be available from the carrier, alleviating the need to travel to a Post Office for service. The Postal Service will save an estimated \$109,808 annually. A disadvantage to some may be in meeting the carrier to transact business. However, it is not necessary to be present to conduct most Postal Service transactions.

Taking all available information into consideration, the Postal Service has determined that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages and this final determination is warranted.

VII. NOTICES

- A Support Materials. Copies of all materials upon which this final determination is based are available for public inspection at the Bigelow Post Office, Houston Post Office and Conway Post Office during normal office hours.
- B Appeal Rights. This final determination to close the Bigelow Post Office may be appealed by any person served by that office to the Postal Regulatory Commission at 901 New York Ave NW, Suite 200, Washington DC 20268-0001. Appeals must be received by the Commission within 30 days of the date this final determination is posted. If an appeal is filed, copies of appeal documents prepared by the Postal Regulatory Commission or the parties to the appeal will be made available for public inspection at Bigelow Post Office, Houston Post Office and Conway Post Office during normal office hours.



Dean J Granholm
Vice President of Delivery and Post Office Operations

06/28/2011
Date

Pocket No. A2011-29