

SEP 30 2011

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Postal Regulatory Commission:

Please allow this letter to express our opinion regarding the Balm Post Office; we strongly appeal its closing. The Post Office has been a landmark of our community for over a century; and even to this day, we have been provided superior service since moving to Balm 26 years ago.

There are some events and/or situations I would like noted. If Balm Post Office were to be shut down, then we would have to travel eight miles one way to retrieve our mail. We check our mail daily, so this will require a huge adjustment in our everyday routine. Five years ago, our community had the opportunity to have mail delivered to their homes. If you elected to do so, you would place a mailbox in your driveway and your city would be classified as Wimauma. Those who did not participate would still be classified as Balm. As you can predict, the community was mixed with Balm and Wimauma zip codes; this has also created mayhem when receiving packages through UPS or FEDEX. UPS and FEDEX had informed us that Balm doesn't exist in their data base, but the driver's were still delivering mail with the city name of Balm because it was their everyday route. If we were expecting mail through U.S.P.S., even though the city name reflected Balm, the package would be sent to the Wimauma Post Office. Either the package would be delivered back to the sender, or the package would be lost. We tried to create a relationship with Nancy, the Wimauma Post Master, to hold our packages; however, she has been non-cooperative and returns our mail to the sender.

Secondly, it was mentioned at one of hearings that the Balm Post Office averages only 36 transactions daily (accounting for only 43 minutes of retail). That figure may be true, but is misleading. Most of the new Balm residents have mailboxes in their driveways, which is linked to Wimauma. Is it possible they don't know about Balm Post Office, or do they only travel to Wimauma for business? Another topic mentioned was the census report. The census is only reliable if a sampled population replies; we have not received that survey through our PO Box for years.

We have filled out all questionnaires and attended all meetings regarding the Balm Post Office closing; we took a great interest in attending the meeting that had District Director, Blaine Gravitt, as a host. Many suggestions were made, but no more communication or follow up beyond the meetings. Please consider what actions can take place to save our landmark. It is very important that it remains an active site in Balm.

Thank you,

George and Marilyn Fears

P.O. Box 253

Balm, FL 33503