

BEFORE THE
POSTAL RATE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, DC 20268

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POSTAL REGULATORY
COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

In the Matter of:

AMORET MO 64722
Post Office State ZIP Code

Docket No: A2012-42

Postal Regulatory Commission
Office of the Chief Admin. Officer

Michael K Bell, Petitioner(s)

NOV 29 2011

PARTICIPANT STATEMENT

1. Petitioner(s) are appealing the Postal Service's Final Determination concerning the AMORET post office. The Final Determination was posted OCT 4, 2011.
(date)

2. In accordance with applicable law, 39 U.S.C. § 404(d)(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 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:

Appeal of Final Determination to Close the Amoret, MO Post Office 64722

Postal Regulatory Commission:

My name is Mildred Bell, former postmaster of the Amoret, MO Post Office. I served as postmaster at Amoret for 18 years. I believe management at all levels involved in the proposed permanent closing of our post office has not responded adequately to our concerns. It is apparent that nearly all the responses were merely form letter type prepared language and it is difficult for the reader to know whether this is a Final Determination or a Proposal, or whether or not our post office was emergency suspended, or whether or not we have a non-career person operating the post office. I believe that our thriving community deserves the full attention of postal management at all levels of the process before eliminating our cherished post office. The document is signed by Dean J. Granholm, Vice President Delivery and Retail Post Office Operations or maybe by an automatic signature device and it is hard to understand how anyone reviewing this document did not see the blatant errors.

Please consider the following:

The cover page of the Final Determination indicates date of posting as 10/04/2011 and date of removal as 11/05/11 as date of removal. Yet the round date indicates that the document was removed on November 8, 2011. This indicates a failure to follow instructions at the local level.

I RESPONSIVENESS TO COMMUNITY POSTAL NEEDS

The Butler Post Office, 15.42 miles away is the office providing rural carrier service and they indicate that there are three other post offices located within a 15 mile radius. No explanation given as to why we could not receive service from a post office closer or why they chose to provide service from a facility so far away.

USPS stated that declining revenue was a consideration for taking this action. Aren't nearly all post offices experiencing declining revenue? However, the financial numbers stated show that in FY 2010 there was an increase in revenue from fiscal years 2009 and 2008. No financial figures for FY 11 were included. Therefore, using declining revenue as one of the reasons for taking this action is absolutely wrong.

USPS states that regular and effective service will be provided by a rural carrier emanating from a post office more than 15 miles away. How can they determine that when so many customers indicated valid reasons why rural delivery would be inadequate for their needs while receiving answers from USPS that simply did not address the issues adequately?

The community meeting held on May 23, 2011 was conducted by Joanne Dean, Discontinuance Coordinator which is a lower level management position in the district. Handbook 101, Post Office Discontinuance Guide says that the District Manager or Manager of Post Office Operations (MPOO) should conduct the meeting and the Discontinuance Coordinator should assist (copy attached). It appeared to the residents attending the meeting that a decision to close our post office was already made and that

the district manger apparently chose to not comply with the rules or couldn't be bothered because it wasn't important enough.

USPS stated that the office averaged eight transactions a day accounting for eight minutes of retail work load daily. This is incorrect. The officer-in charge (OIC) apparently did not understand the study and resigned from the position before the community meeting. I strongly believe that another transaction study should be conducted by the current OIC and that the OIC be given clear instructions on how to complete the study. I worked in this office for 18 years and I know that the results of the transaction study were very much understated.

The location of the Amoret makes it more than a post office for the community because it is located on state highway 52 connecting major highway 69 in Kansas to major highway 71 in Missouri. The post office has easy access for tractor trailer trucks and our flag proudly flies so that all travelers from around the nation and commuters from other towns can see our post office. The other post offices in the area do not have the easy access from the highway that we do.

Our community consists of mostly senior citizens and many can't drive to Butler. One elderly customer could never negotiate all the steps at the Butler Post Office. He merely drives up to the Amoret Post office and honks the horn and the postmaster brings him the mail. Several other customers that do not have a car enjoy the daily walk to the post office.

Customers should not be expected to wait in the boiling sun or in the cold and wind to conduct business with the rural carrier whose schedule will vary from day to day. Customers have tried to mail parcel post packages with the rural carrier from Butler. The Butler postmaster said that the rural carrier will only pick up priority mail, express mail, and prepaid articles. Does the Postal Service really want to give up the parcel post business and money order business?

The community of Amoret cannot get grants for sewer repairs and water lines that need to be replaced if they do not have keep their zip code 64722.

Numbered customer questions in 1. Responsiveness to Community Postal Needs

6. Does this mean that special needs customers will receive door delivery instead of roadside delivery if requested? If so, we would like to know how many exceptions have been made by the Butler postmaster in the past that required the rural carrier to provide service other than to roadside/cluster boxes.

7. If USPS will follow all the requirements of Title 39, shouldn't they also follow the rules in Handbook 101, Post Office Discontinuance Guide?

8. The Amoret lease is with United PO Investments Corp. Memphis, Tennessee and expires February 28, 2022.

10. USPS did not state that a copy of the official record would be made available. They said a copy of the proposal would be made available. Customers were not even aware that

this information was available to them.

11. Confusing response to customer's question. They indicate that a study is to be conducted and this is a Final Determination.

12&13. Inappropriate reply. How can the customer leave a note in a locked mailbox in cases where customers do not want to leave cash in an unlocked mailbox?

14. Inadequate reply. Is renting a post office box at a post office 15 miles away a suitable response to the customers concerns about erecting a mail box?

15. Inappropriate reply. This is a generic reply to a very serious customer concern. Shouldn't they have contacted the police and/or postal inspection service to determine specific information in the Amoret/Butler area?

16. Inadequate response. Traveling 15 miles to pick up left notice articles was not even addressed.

18. Inadequate reply. How can personalized service be provided by a rural carrier emanating from an office 15 miles away?

21. See numbers 12 and 13 above.

32&33. See numbers 12 and 13 above.

35. Inadequate reply. Customers should be able to receive a local postmark on outgoing mail by giving the mail to the postmaster and requesting it.

37. Insincere reply. If USPS was to consider establishing a CPO, shouldn't it have been done during the study process?

The headings in bold type stating the advantages and disadvantages say proposal. Shouldn't it say Final Determination? This is another example of haphazard case work and inattention to detail.

USPS lists CBU's as an advantage. Were CBU's offered?

USPS omitted the loss of convenient post office box service in the disadvantages.

II EFFECT ON THE COMMUNITY

10. Used the term proposal again. No indication that customers were advised that they could obtain a copy of the official record at either the proposal phase or the Final Determination phase.

III ECONOMIC SAVINGS

No indication on when the lease expires and if they have liability to honor the terms of the lease.

No breakdown of the rural carrier costs. Salary, fringe benefits, private vehicle or

government vehicle, vehicle allowance costs for rural carrier.

VI SUMMARY

Second sentence first paragraph says that if the office has a non- career PMR(s), they may be separated from the service. They should be specific and know what the situation in our town is. This is another example of extremely poor attention to detail at all management levels of the Postal Service.

MY OPINION

Post offices in urban areas may be a convenience to many customers, but in our small town it is a necessity for nearly all our residents. We are proud to see the American flag raised and flying in the breeze every day. To remove our post office would be a severe reduction in service as evidenced by the information provided above. We are the victims of extremely poor attention to our community's needs and very poor attention to detail demonstrated by postal management at all levels.

Sincerely,


Mildred Bell

Retired Postmaster

Attachment: Here's the portion from the PO-101

253 Conducting the meeting

The Manager, Marketing, has the overall responsibility for the community meeting. The Discontinuance Coordinator should assist with coordinating the following activities.

- a. The Manager, Marketing, sets up the meeting location and required equipment.
- b. The Discontinuance Coordinator places the sign-in sheet near the entrance of the meeting room and encourages customers to sign in.
- c. The District Manager or MPOO conducts the Management Presentation and provides response to customer questions.
- d. The Manager, Consumer and Industry Contact, with assistance of the Discontinuance Coordinator, has responsibility for collecting customer comments and management responses.