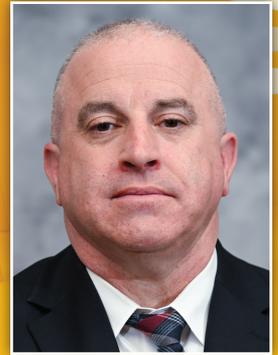


# BROTHERS & SISTERS, HAVE YOU ATTENDED A BRANCH MEETING?

DANIEL ST. MARIE, NORTHEASTERN REGION VICE PRESIDENT,  
LOCAL 301 PRESIDENT



If your answer is “No”, give one a shot! Maybe the question should really be, “Why haven’t you attended a Branch Meeting?”

Typical Branch Meetings consist of your Local Union Officers (President, Vice President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary, and State Executive Board Member) in attendance as well as your Branch President and Stewards. From there, meeting attendance varies depending on the Branch. You might expect a larger Branch to have better attendance but that is not always the case. I’ve seen smaller branches with better attendance numbers than a much bigger Branch. Don’t get me wrong, it’s not a competition, but why is there such a big discrepancy when these meetings discuss issues important to our livelihood.

Union Meetings serve as the democratic foundation where members discuss workplace issues, strategize on actions to be taken, and foster solidarity among members. Information can be disseminated about ongoing negotiations and workplace changes, while ensuring that the Union’s direction reflects the collective voice of its membership.

Union Meetings began in the early 19th Century as workers sought to address poor working conditions and low wages. The meetings were often informal and focused on collective action, such as strikes and protests. By the

mid-19th Century, as labor unions became more organized, formal meetings were established to discuss strategies, grievances, and collective bargaining efforts. The National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) of 1935 significantly influenced

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union meetings by legally protecting workers rights to organize and meet. This legislation encouraged more formalized and frequent meetings to discuss labor rights and negotiate with employers.

## **ARTICLE VII OF THE NPMHU UNIFORM LOCAL UNION CONSTITUTION COVERS MEETINGS:**

- **Section 1.** The Branch President of each branch, subject to the approval of the Local President, shall



schedule branch meetings. Regular members shall be provided with reasonable notice of such meetings.

- **Section 2.** The order of business to be followed at meetings of this Local Union shall be determined by the Local Union President.
- **Section 3.** Reasonable efforts shall be undertaken to accommodate both smokers and non-smokers during meetings.
- **Section 4.** Members currently detailed to a supervisory or managerial position with the Postal Service (including any EAS position involved in discipline of employees or application of the National Agreement) or with the USPS Office of Inspector General or the Postal Inspection Service (or as a confidential informant), shall immediately be prohibited from attending any meetings of this Local Union to the extent that such meetings may discuss labor-management relations, terms or conditions of employment, or other matters related to the negotiation or administration of contracts and/or the filing or processing of grievances.

#### WHAT DOES AN NPMHU BRANCH MEETING OFFER?

- It's an opportunity to meet and ask questions of your Local Union Officers and Branch Leadership.
- It's an opportunity to meet fellow Union Brothers & Sisters.
- You can get an update on the financial condition of your Local.

- You can get an update on NPMHU Contract Negotiations.
- You can get an update on legislation affecting the USPS and its employees.
- You can get an update on contract administration within the Local, including recent Local and National Arbitration Decisions that may have an effect on Mail Handlers, and grievance activity within your Branch.
- You can get an update on safety issues in your Facility.
- It's an opportunity to review the minutes from the most recent Local Executive Board and/or Council Meeting.
- You can voice your feelings/opinions on a particular supervisor, MDO, or Plant Manager or general issue without fear of retribution.

Branch Meeting notification is posted on the union boards in your facility. Branch Presidents try and pick the best day and time for optimum attendance. Location can be a union hall (LIUNA, IBEW, etc.), a hotel conference room, or a Tavern/Restaurant. Our Southern Maine Branch is having an upcoming meeting at the Maine Military Museum. Some Branches offer coffee and doughnuts; at others you might get a slice of pizza.

Branch Meetings are for our Membership. They are an excellent in-person opportunity for the Union to communicate with our Members and vice versa. Information can be shared that might otherwise not be able to go up on a bulletin board in your facility.

Give One A Shot!!!