

A letter to the Members

Of the APWU Nashville Local 5 +
From Cassie Williams, Vice President

Open letter to the membership,

These are challenging times for postal workers attempting to enforce their rights under the Union contract and while working my bid job, I am often asked to help with grievances from both my co-workers and stewards. I have tried as much as I can but have found it harder and harder to do so under our current Local Union administration.

Focusing on my duties mandated by our local Constitution, Vice President -a position I vehemently ran on, has also become most difficult if not impossible. Hardships have been created for me as I try to overcome obstacles that are preventing me from doing my job as VP to the best of my abilities.

Nashville Local 5 Constitution:

Document 1 is the job description of the Vice President where it clearly states the VP processes all appeals to step 3 and 4 from our local. You may hear from some that this is simply putting postage on an envelope and making copies. That is ridiculous. The membership did not mandate these critical duties as the last chance to perfect grievances as they leave the local to be performed by the VP to have it reduced to placing the information presented by the step two steward in an envelope and applying postage. Nor with my training and experience was applying postage the job I ran for and was elected to. I have heard claims that my predecessor did exactly that only copying and applying postage. If that is the case I can only say I take my responsibilities under the constitution much more seriously.

Section 2.

The Vice President shall work closely with the President and shall perform any tasks assigned by the President. He/she shall be responsible for processing Step 2 Appeals to Arbitration and Appeals to Step 3, and for filing all Step 2 Appeals to Arbitration and Step 3, and Step 4 Grievance Appeals and all arbitration grievance cases. In the absence of the President, he/she shall be vested with the same authority and power of the President and shall perform his/her duties as such. He/she shall, in the absence of the President or Secretary-Treasurer, be authorized to countersign checks and execute all necessary fiduciary documents. He/she shall, by virtue of office, be a Delegate to all regular State and National Conventions, etc., of the American Postal Workers Union and the National President's Conference. He/she shall be responsible for bank reconciliations. He/she shall deposit all monies of the Local into the appropriate financial institution. He/she shall be elected by the general membership.

Document 2 is an email from President Pullen to Nita Fournier (USPS Tennessee District Labor Relations Manager) where he shockingly informs management that I am not a steward anywhere! While processing grievances for Step 3 appeal I routinely discover missing information, information requested but not provided and arguments that need to be added with supporting documentation to the grievance file in order to give grievances the best chance at being successful for the membership. Having had my information requests related to working on these appeals suddenly denied by management I was pursuing action against management for impeding and preventing grievance work by the union. That is when I was given President Pullen's email with his instructions to the USPS that I am not a steward in any capacity. This instruction is a direct violation of our constitution by the president. In Article 17 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) it mandates the local president will provide a list of stewards to management. He is the only person who can authorize stewards for Nashville Local #5. By refusing to add me to this list in any way he removes any ability I must process step 3 and 4 appeals because only a steward can process these appeals. Refusing to follow the direct instructions of the membership memorialized in our constitution is an insubordinate and unconscionable act. This is not the full damage to his missed guided and reckless attack on his VP. I have been doing my job processing step 3 and 4 appeals. By informing management that effective September 25, 2017 I am not a steward in any way he gives management the ability to have any grievance I appealed after that date thrown out because it is procedurally deficient!!! (This email is the same as if President Pullen sent a statement to management that he agrees a whole bunch of grievances have exceeded time limits or were filed by the wrong steward!)

Document 2: Email from President Pullen to Labor Manager Fournier:

Recently I was given proof by management that the root cause of this harassment was not by the USPS but our very own elected officers of the APWU Local 5.

Sent:
To:
Subject:

Chatman, Dorthea D - Nashville, TN
Monday, September 25, 2017 9:10 AM
Lucas, Monica L - Nashville, TN
FW: APWU Union Stewards

fyi

Dorthea D. Chatman
Labor Relations Specialist
525 Royal Parkway
Nashville, TN 37229-9401
615/872-5565
FAX 615/872-5763

From: Pullen, Keith W - Nashville, TN
Sent: Monday, September 25, 2017 2:43 AM
To: Fournier, Nita - Nashville, TN
Cc: Pullen, Keith W - Nashville, TN; Chatman, Dorthea D - Nashville, TN; Jolley Jr, Joe H - Nashville, TN
Subject: APWU Union Stewards

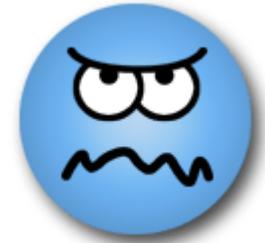
Ms. Nita Fournier,

It has come to my attention that my VP Cassie Williams has been doing grievances and seeing employees on the clock as a Union Steward. I just wanted to let you all know that VP Cassie Williams is not a Union Steward anywhere. Management should not be letting her do Union Business on the Clock since she is not a Steward. Myself and my Director Jim Schmidt and Assistant Director Joe Jolley are trying to Bargain in good faith and this is why I'm letting you know this. The only thing that VP Cassie Williams should be doing for Union on the Clock is Step 2 Denials for Step 3 after Director Jim Schmidt or Assistant Director Joe Jolley receive them from Ms. Dorthea Chatman. We are trying to work together and do the right thing and I know both sides are not always going to agree but I do hope that Management will stop letting VP Cassie Williams from doing all of this Union time on the clock.

Thank you,
Keith Pullen
APWU Local
President

While he mentions step three appeals in his email he cannot split the baby in this manner. To appeal step three grievances you have to be a steward. His wanting to inform management of my duties of appealing grievances while intentionally and deliberately keeping me off the stewards list is in direct conflict with Article 17 of the CBA. Our constitution gives the right to name Clerk Craft stewards to the Clerk Craft Director but his selections hold zero weight with management. Only the President's stewards list will be recognized by the USPS and the President has the responsibility to include as a minimum to his stewards list the VP for step 2 grievances in all crafts as I appeal all crafts grievances to step 3 and 4. I must note I find it offensive to our Maintenance and Motor Vehicle Craft members that in President Pullen's email he only lists Clerk Craft omitting the other crafts. As far as President Pullen trying to work together with management to do the right thing, all this email does is work with management to harass and prevent an elected union officer from doing her job and put many grievances at risk affecting many of our members. I am sure management looks forward to working together more like this in the future.

Document #3 is management informing President Pullen that his prior instructions that under no circumstances is *Cassie Williams a steward* has the consequence of making me ineligible to process appeals to step three and step four. The local unions constitution specifically gives these duties to me as Vice President. Article 17 mandates the local President authorizes all stewards from the local by providing a list to management. President Pullen did not authorize *Cassie Williams as a steward* on this list and emailed management stating he intentionally and willfully did not authorize me as a steward. This puts all step 3 and 4 grievances appealed by me at risk of being thrown out because I am not a steward authorized to process grievances by president Pullen. While our constitution states the Craft Director under the advice of the president chooses stewards for their craft, this cannot be in conflict with Articles 15 and 17 and does not relieve the president of his obligation under Article 17 to place all persons processing grievances on the stewards list he provides to management.



Document #3



From: Fournier, Nita - Nashville, TN
Sent: Friday, October 13, 2017 7:52 AM
To: Pullen, Keith W - Nashville, TN
Cc: Cassie Williams; Schmidt, James T - Nashville, TN
Subject: RE: Step 3 Denials

Mr. Pullen,

Under Art 17.2: " The union will certify to the Employer in writing...." In specific work locations, on their tour"

If you want to designate a steward as the Step 2 designee, it must be clearly identified in a written format (on paper with your letterhead).

NITA FOURNIER
MANAGER, LABOR RELATIONS
525 ROYAL PARKWAY
NASHVILLE, TN 37229-9994

615-885-9207 OFFICE
413-304-1022 CELL
650-577-5017 FAX

Is it necessary to print this document?

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1

copying of this message is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify us immediately by telephone at the number listed above.

From: Pullen, Keith W - Nashville, TN
Sent: Friday, October 13, 2017 5:22 AM
To: Fournier, Nita - Nashville, TN <nita.fournier@usps.gov>
Cc: Pullen, Keith W - Nashville, TN <keith.w.pullen@usps.gov>; Cassie Williams <illwill4000@gmail.com>; Schmidt, James T - Nashville, TN <James.T.Schmidt@usps.gov>
Subject: Step 3 Denials

Ms. Nita Fournier,

Vice President Cassie Williams informed me that Monica Lucas told her that she must have a authorization for her to do Step 2 denials for Step 3's under Article 17. I read Article 17 and it don't say anything about giving authorization of VP Cassie Williams to do the Step 2 denials for Step 3's. But if you do need authorization I'm just letting you know that I do authorize VP Cassie Williams to do Step 2 denials for Step 3's. If you have any further questions please let me know.

Thank You,
Keith Pullen
APWU Local
President

Explained again to president Pullen the importance
of adding my name to the steward's list .
No Response



me

to keith, Keith

Dec 11, 2017 [View details](#)

Hello. Hope you are having a good evening. I want to bring this issue to your attention *once more*. Article 17 states that the President MUST notify management in WRITING of the stewards that are involved in the grievance procedure. The Vice President's duties are 'perfecting' the step 3 Appeals. I am having an issue in this area. I MUST add important information that is missing from the files, this necessitates filing RFIs with management. Not being on the steward list the union President provides management per ARTICLE 17 has led management to deny RFIs I submitted. This prevents me from performing my constitutional required duties. In our local constitution, it states that the Director of the Craft will make the steward's list out (and as all of the paragraphs state: **with the advice of the President**). Although I understand the problem with our local constitution being muddled, management uses this to their advantage. The clerk craft director's making of a list cannot supersede the Local Constitution. Please add my name to ALL the steward

Director of the Craft will make the steward's list out (and as all of the paragraphs state: **with the advice of the President**). Although I understand the problem with our local constitution being muddled, management uses this to their advantage. The clerk craft director's making of a list cannot supersede the Local Constitution. Please add my name to ALL the steward lists as soon as possible. If you do not, I will not be able to complete my constitutional mandated duties. Please remedy this ASAP for I have grievances that need to be turned before 3 days, plus more on the way.

Thank You.

In Solidarity,

Cassie Williams

...

--

Cassie Williams
Vice President
Nashville Area Local 5

!

When I finally understand that my president was responsible for interfering with me performing the VP duties I confront Keith with his actions.

Your actions Inbox ☆



me

to keith

[Hide details](#)

From Cassie Williams illwill4000@gmail.com

To keith pullen k.pullen2012@att.net

Date Jan 17, 2018, 8:43 AM

Hello.

According to the information I have received from Labor submitted to them by you, I am unable to do the job I was voted in office for. I have reached out to you many times on this issue but you did not disclose that you were the moving party to cut off my rights and duties as Vice President. You are sworn to uphold the Constitution of our Local and have taken direct action to circumvent this same constitution. This is a disservice to the members you were elected by to uphold the constitution and shockingly an anti-union action.

Respectfully,

Cassie Williams



He pretends to not understand or is clueless as to the consequences of his actions as president of our local.



Keith Pullen

to me

[Hide details](#)

From Keith Pullen k.pullen2012@att.net

To Cassie Williams illwill4000@gmail.com

Date Jan 17, 2018, 9:00 AM

Security Standard encryption (TLS) [Learn more](#)

I have no clue what you are talking about or accusing me of not doing something, please collaborate what you are talking about?

Sent from my iPhone

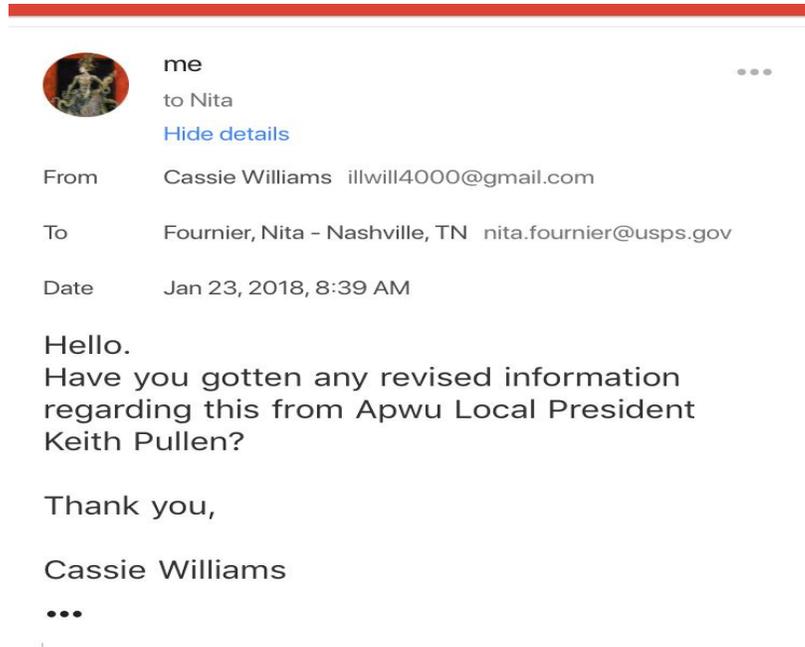
...

On Jan 17, 2018, at 8:43 AM, Cassie Williams <illwill4000@gmail.com> wrote:

Hello.

According to the information I have received from Labor submitted to them by you, I am unable to do the job I was voted in office for. I have reached out to you many times on this issue

Latest update: Labor still has no certification



I believe the membership has a right to know the actions affecting their union. Thank you for reading.

In solidarity,

Cassie Williams

