



NALC CONVENTION CHRONICLE

COVERING THE THIRD SESSION:
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5, 2026



STANDING TOGETHER

President Renfro leads a Letter Carrier Cheer for AFGE President Everett Kelley.

After President Brian L. Renfro opened Wednesday's session at 10:02 a.m., the day kicked off with Charles Kirchen, president of Lawton, OK Branch 1123, performing the "The Star-Spangled Banner" on electric guitar and Los Angeles, CA Branch 24 member Matt Kozlo leading the Pledge of Allegiance. The Rev. Dr. N'Yisrela Watts-Afyrie of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church gave the invocation.

Renfro recognized a fallen carrier who had been left off the previous day's memorial presentation and called for a moment of silence.

The NALC president recognized the military veterans in the convention hall and asked those who had served to stand for applause. "Thanks for your service to the country, the American people and this great union," Renfro said.

He told delegates that to have more time for consideration of constitutional amendments, committee reports and nominations for elections, the general

session schedule for Wednesday and Thursday would be modified. Wednesday's afternoon workshops would be canceled to extend union business until 6 p.m., and Thursday's morning and afternoon workshops would be canceled to allow the general session to run from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. A vote was taken to suspend the convention rules in order to do so, and had no objections.

Renfro mentioned that due to the modified schedule, there would be no Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) presentation and instead encouraged attendees to visit the MDA booth in the exhibit hall to voice support. He also shared that Los Angeles Branch 24's fundraiser the previous night raised more than \$10,000 for the organization.

The president reminded attendees that the convention remained in executive session, so only credentialed delegates were allowed to be in the hall and that the session would not be livestreamed on YouTube.

He explained that because Amendment 15 regarding presidential duties was adopted and part of the *NALC Constitution*, and that no later proposed amendment would modify it or conflict with Robert's Rules of Order, any of the subsequent proposed amendments to the section would not override the language of Amendment 15.

Renfro invited National Trustee Sandy Laemmel to the stage for continuation of constitutional amendments. During the process, questions arose concerning the practice of voting on the recommendations of the Executive Council. Ultimately, a vote was taken to determine whether voting should be on the Executive Council's recommendations or to vote on the adoption of the amendments themselves. By a teller vote of 3,016 to 1,426, the delegates determined that the convention would continue with the longstanding practice of voting on the Executive Council's recommendations.

Attention then turned back to amendments related to the duties of the president in the collective-bargaining process and



International Secretary of SEKO Jens Saverstam

appointment of positions, which were either voted down or withdrawn.

OVER THERE, OVER HERE

President Renfro introduced Jens Saverstam, international secretary of SEKO, the Union of Service and Communication Employees, which represents postal workers in Sweden. He is also deputy world president for UNI Global Union Post & Logistics. Renfro explained that “our affiliation with UNI is so important because it gives us a preview into fights that might come our way, as I discussed in detail on Monday morning. Right now, post offices worldwide are facing the same issue: How do we fund universal service when letter mail volume has dried up and the parcel market is increasingly competitive? We face the same challenge. By learning from how other countries react, we can build our strategy to fight back.”

Saverstam informed the delegates that the European Union is in the process of rewriting the minimum standards for postal systems within its borders.

“We need to fight now,” he said. “This is the time to fight for the delivery service of letters. We are seeing in Europe a big threat to that. A lot of countries have gone to less service. Some have gone to two days a week. Some have gone to one day a week. The country of Denmark has abandoned the letter service in their country. Posts are not delivering anymore.”

There have been thousands of complaints against the private companies that have taken over delivering the mail, he said, but it is too late for countries that have privatized to go back.

In UNI’s fight to protect postal systems through the minimum standards, Saverstam said that its most important demand is for “parcels to be a part of the

universal service obligation. Why is this so important? We see that parcels are the future for the post.”

UNI has called on national governments to invest in the post, offer full-time jobs and come to beneficial collective-bargaining agreements. “Let us fight for that,” he said.

“When something is happening in Europe—it’s a big postal market—it will also happen in other parts of the world,” he added. “It’s good to have readiness and it’s good to have your members with you.”

Delegates thanked Saverstam with a Letter Carrier Cheer.

The convention then returned to the amendment process. Proposed amendments to reduce the pay of Executive Council members, change the duties of some of those officers, the removal of officers, and the publishing of resolutions were voted down.

An amendment that would present any tentative agreement to the Executive Council for review and acceptance was approved by a voice vote. An amendment to expand who can be covered by the Mutual Benefit Association to include niece, great-niece, nephew and great-nephew passed as well.

STANDING TOGETHER

President Renfro next introduced National Rural Letter Carriers’ Association (NRLCA) President Don Maston, who told the crowd that unions must stand together when lawmakers attempt to influence the future of the Postal Service when so much is at stake.

USPS’s financial challenges can be addressed in two very different ways: “Congress can strengthen the Postal Service so it can continue fulfilling its public mission, or Congress can use this as an excuse to reduce service, close facilities, cut the workforce, abandon communities, and prepare the remaining pieces for privatization,” he said. “Our position is clear: The Postal Service is not a private business. It’s a public institution with a universal service obligation.”

Maston recognized NALC’s leadership in getting the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act introduced and mentioned the murder of Chicago, IL Branch 11 carrier Octavia Redmond on her route in 2024. “Nothing demonstrates the need for passage of this

legislation more,” he said. “We can honor her by refusing to accept violence against letter carriers as just another part of the job.”

Returning home safely at the end of the day should be a given, Maston said. That same principle applies to extreme heat, he added, pointing to NALC’s loss of Jacob Taylor of Dallas, TX Branch 132 last year. “We need enforceable heat protections,” he said, adding, “Managers must understand that no delivery target is more important than a carrier’s life.”

Letter carriers must also defend the Postal Service’s role in our democracy. “Let me be clear: Letter carriers pick up and deliver election mail. We do not determine who is eligible to vote. We do not enforce state election laws, and we should never be placed in the position of accepting or rejecting a customer’s ballot,” he said. “The Postal Service must remain neutral and independent to remain trusted.”

Unity is the most important factor in achieving our goals. “The challenges before us may be significant, but they are not insurmountable—not when we stand together,” the NRLCA president said. “Together we can defend the public Postal Service. Together we can protect the safety of every postal worker. Together we can preserve the Postal Service’s trusted role in our elections. And together we can achieve fair contracts and protect good-paying union jobs.”

The delegates gave Maston an enthusiastic Letter Carrier Cheer.

‘WE’RE STILL HERE’

Renfro then welcomed American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) President Everett Kelley to the lectern.

Kelley reviewed the tremendous challenges federal unions have endured under unprecedented assaults from the Trump administration, which yanked the collective-bargaining rights of 950,000 federal employees, canceled many union contracts and fired workers using the ridiculous excuse of protecting national security.

“It was never about security,” Kelley said. “It was about silence.”

Letter carriers should be ready for similar attacks, he said, in the form of efforts to privatize USPS.

“Privatization means somebody gets rich, and somebody gets left behind,” he said.

Kelley told the delegates that AFGE hasn’t rolled over in the face of the assaults. “They thought if they could take the contracts, they could take the unions. They forgot that giving up is not in our DNA,” he said. Protests and court battles have won back many contracts and reinstated many workers.

Noting NALC’s slogan, “Fight like hell!” Kelley said, “I want every individual in this room to know that AFGE is fighting like hell with you.”

Rallying the delegates to stand together against the threats, Kelley told them, “Power is never given—power is taken, and we have to take it together.”

“Don’t grow weary,” he urged the delegates. “Because they’ve thrown everything they have at us: executive orders, they terminated contracts, mass firings, attacks on our dues. They tried to break us financially. They tried to break us spiritually. But we’re still here, still organizing, still fighting!”

“We are unbowed, and we are unstoppable!” he said. “We refuse to bend in the face of adversity!”

The delegates rewarded Kelley with a Letter Carrier Cheer.

SPECIAL APPEALS

The convention remained in executive session for motions that could not be considered during the amendment process. A motion to extend the deadline for branches to notify the election commissioner that they would not be voting unit rule for the AFL-CIO delegate election was passed, and the deadline was set for the end of the general session on Wednesday.

A motion to hear an appeal of an Executive Council decision on Article 10 charges was made and passed. As part of the motion, the method of the appeal was defined with each party receiving six minutes to address the convention. In order to give the parties time to prepare, it was decided to hear the appeal on Thursday, President Renfroe said.

Another motion was passed to have the Committee on Appeals make a decision on a delegate’s appeal and not wait any longer for the branch to respond to the request for information from the committee. President Renfroe said that the committee would issue a decision by Friday.

A motion to accept all resolutions approved by the Executive Council *en bloc* passed and was later amended to not include any resolutions that were submitted after the *Resolutions and Amendments* book was published. Those would be shown on-screen and read for the body.

The general session took a recess of 30 minutes before exiting executive session and the livestream was resumed.

NOMINATIONS

President Renfroe called the convention back to order at 4:37 p.m. and turned to the next order of business, as required by the *NALC Constitution*: calling for nominations for national and regional office, which were offered from the floor as follows (uncontested nominees were elected by consent; contested nominees are listed in nomination order):

President (contested)

- Nicole R. Rhine, Lincoln, NE Br. 8
- Lucien “Lew” Drass, Huntsville, AL Br. 462
- James Henry, Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100
- Michael Caref, Chicago, IL Br. 11

Executive Vice President (contested)

- Corey Walton, Nashville, TN Br. 4
- Manuel L. Peralta Jr., Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100

Vice President (contested)

- Mark S. Camilli, Northeastern NY Br. 358
- Kimetra Simpson-Lewis, Dallas, TX Br. 132

Secretary-Treasurer (contested)

- Raquel “Rocky” Acasio, San Diego, CA Br. 70
- Mack I. Julion, Chicago, IL Br. 11

Assistant Secretary-Treasurer (contested)

- Larissa Parde, Lincoln, NE Br. 8
- Esteban Ramirez, San Antonio, TX Br. 421

Director of City Delivery (contested)

- Christopher Jackson, Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100
- David L. Mudd, Louisville, KY Br. 14

Director of Safety and Health (contested)

- Shawn Boyd, Dallas, TX Br. 132
- Rob Kosier, Milwaukee, WI Br. 2

Director of Retired Members (contested)

- Anita Guzik, Los Angeles, CA Br. 24
- Daniel Toth, Lorain, OH Br. 583

Director of Life Insurance (contested)

- Phillip C. Rodriguez, Salt Lake City, UT Br. 111
- James W. “Jim” Yates, Long Island Merged, NY Br. 6000

Director, Health Benefit Plan (contested)

- Stephanie Stewart, Central Iowa Merged Br. 352
- Henry Cordero, Beverly Hills, CA Br. 2293
- Kevin Sommers, State College, PA Br. 1495

National Trustees (three positions, contested)

- Charles P. Heege, New York, NY Br. 36
- John A. Cruz, Brooklyn, NY Br. 41
- Elise M. Foster, Chicago, IL Br. 11
- Jeffrey Wagner, West Palm Beach, FL Br. 1690
- William Heller, Knoxville, TN Br. 419
- Sandra D. Laemmel, Detroit, MI Br. 1
- Howard K. Komine, Honolulu, HI Br. 860
- David J. Grosskopf Jr., Buffalo-Western New York Br. 3

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Region 1 NBA (contested)

- Allan Rios, Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100
- Christopher Reed, Kailua Kona, HI Br. 5516

Region 2 NBA (contested)

- Nick Vafiades, Longview, WA Br. 2214
- Debra Dixon, Br. 351, Olympia, WA

Region 3 NBA

- Ronald Morgan, Chicago, IL Br. 11

Region 4 NBA

- John Robles, Centennial, CO Br. 5996

Region 5 NBA

- David A. Teegarden, Kansas City, MO Br. 30

Region 6 NBA (contested)

- Walter McGregory, Southeast MI Br. 2184
- Kyle D. Inosencio, Grand Rapids, MI Br. 56

Region 7 NBA (contested)

- Patrick Johnson, Milwaukee, WI Br. 2
- Elliot Simmons, Bismarck, ND Br. 957

Region 8 NBA (contested)

- Steve Lissan, Nashville, TN Br. 4
- Danna Chambless, Nashville, TN Br. 4
- Christopher Strickland, Tuscaloosa, AL Br. 1096

Region 9 NBA (contested)

- Cliff “Eddie” Davidson Jr., Durham, NC Br. 382
- Caroline Jones, High Point, NC Br. 936

Region 10 NBA (contested)

- Karrie Blough, Houston, TX Br. 283
- William Moody, Austin, TX Br. 181

Region 11 NBA (contested)

- Michael Brim, Columbus, OH Br. 78
- Mike Hayden, Toledo, OH Br. 100

Region 12 NBA (contested)

- Brian Thompson, New Castle, PA Br. 22
- William Kriebel, Bethlehem, PA Br. 254

Region 13 NBA (contested)

- Jerry Kerner Jr., Baltimore, MD Br. 176
- Vada E. Preston, Tidewater Virginia Br. 247

Region 14 NBA (contested)

- Kenneth Janulewicz, Worcester, MA Br. 12
- Tom Rooney, Boston, MA Br. 34

Region 15 NBA (contested)

- Roy Jancio Jr., New Jersey Merged Br. 38
- Orlando Gonzalez, New York, NY Br. 36

Renfroe then reviewed the voting process for AFL-CIO delegates and asked for nominations from the floor.

NALC’s membership size means that the union can send nine delegates to the federation’s convention. The NALC president and secretary-treasurer serve as delegates by virtue of their offices; elections for the remaining seven will take place on Thursday.

The nominees are (in nominating order):

- Pascual Ortiz, New York, NY Br. 36
- Jamie Lukens, Barberton, OH Br. 897
- Jeff Parr, Santa Rosa, CA Br. 183
- C Moline, Seattle, WA Br. 79
- Joshua Towne, Pawtucket, RI Br. 55
- Jarod Miner, Pueblo, CO Br. 229
- Ethel Bibbs, Beaumont, TX Br. 842
- Tim Greene, Asheboro, NC Br. 2560
- Lloyd Doucet Jr., New Orleans, LA Br. 124
- Paul Rozzi, Pittsburgh, PA Br. 84
- Homer Hernandez, San Antonio, TX Br. 421
- Zach Schassberger, Ann Arbor, MI Br. 434
- Sarah T. Cuello, Oak Brook, IL Br. 825
- Catherine Jones, Minneapolis, MN Br. 9
- Michael J. O’Neill, New Jersey Merged Br. 38
- Trevor Haas, Dallas, TX Br. 132
- Kimberly Mortensen, Salt Lake City, UT Br. 111

- Chris Persampieri, Southeast MA Merged Br. 18

- Derek J. Simpson, Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100
- John Murphy, Naples, FL Br. 4716
- Michael Townsend, South Florida Br. 1071
- Cindy Connors, Staunton, VA Br. 513
- Alex Criego, Pittsburgh, PA Br. 84
- Elaine Jones, Detroit, MI Br. 1
- Aaron LeDuc, Fond du Lac, WI Br. 125
- Margo O’Neill, Central Iowa Merged Br. 352
- Jamie Drayton-Bey, Virginia Beach, VA Br. 2819

- Ron S. Zalewski, South Macomb, MI Br. 4374
- Jon Morris, Fort Worth, TX Br. 226
- Cristal Czajkoski, South Suburban Merged, IL Br. 4016

Renfroe said Board of Tellers Chair Andrew Weiner will explain the AFL-CIO delegate election process tomorrow.

Following some announcements by Secretary-Treasurer Rhine, the convention was adjourned at 6:29 p.m.

Ronald Morgan celebrates after being elected NBA for Region 3 by acclamation.



NALC AUXILIARY

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5

SUBMITTED BY CRYSTAL BRAGG, NALCA SECRETARY

The Auxiliary convention opened with the Pledge of Allegiance and the collect. Secretary Crystal Bragg gave an update on the amount of registered delegates, which now is 41.

The Audit Committee requested more records before it can complete the report. The committee will have until Thursday to give its report.

Tuesday’s minutes were handed out for review. Peggy Morris’s name needed to be added to the list of people who died. The minutes were passed with the change.

A motion was made by Cathy Dye of Aux. #202 in Washington to reimburse Tessa Fisher, NALCA chaplain, for expenses related to the memorial services at the 2016 convention in the amount of \$448.83. It was seconded by Andrea Kidd of Aux. #260 of Oregon. It was voted on and passed.

Donations were collected for MDA and the Letter Carrier Political Fund.

The dissolution of the Oklahoma State Auxiliary’s financial assets was received, and it was voted on to distribute \$2,000

to the NALC Disaster Relief Fund and \$500 to MDA, according to Article IX, Section 8(d).

Elections: There was only one nominated candidate each for the offices of president, secretary and treasurer, therefore they are declared elected: President Warditra Hughes, Secretary Chundra Thurmond and Treasurer Lynn Logen. The new board will be sworn in on Thursday.

The meeting was recessed until Thursday at 9 a.m.