



September 18, 2014

The Honorable Rick Larsen
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4702

Dear Congressman Larsen:

This responds to your August 7 letter to Postmaster General Patrick R. Donahoe regarding the Shaw Island Post Office.

Thank you for writing. Please be assured that the U.S. Postal Service is committed to serving rural America and to preserving the role of the Postal Service in every American community. As such, on May 9, 2012, the Postal Service announced a new strategy that could keep the nation's smallest Post Offices open for business, while providing a framework to achieve significant cost savings as part of our plan to return the organization to financial stability.

Specifically, the Post Office Structure Plan (Post Plan) will keep an existing Post Office in place, should the local community support that option, with modified retail window hours to match customer use. Access to the retail lobby and to Post Office boxes will remain unchanged, and the ZIP Code and community name will be retained. Under this plan, the Postal Service will operate approximately 13,000 Post Offices—such as the Shaw Island Post Office—for less than eight hours per day. The Postal Regulatory Commission has analyzed the Postal Service's Post Plan and on August 23, 2012, issued an advisory opinion finding that its objective is consistent with public policy.

As part of the process, the Postal Service is engaging affected communities in order to present options, gather the input of its customers, and make reasonable and responsible decisions. First, surveys are sent to all homes and businesses served by a Post Office, followed by a community meeting at which time the survey results are shared. If a community supports the option of keeping a Post Office in place with modified window hours, customers are able to provide their input in determining the schedule for the operating hours (i.e., what time of day is optimal).

As you are aware, a community meeting was held July 31 regarding Shaw Island during which the customer survey results were shared. Based on the input provided at the meeting and operational needs of the Postal Service, the new hours of operation at the Shaw Island Post Office will be from 10:30 a.m. To 2:30p.m., Monday through Friday, effective October 6.

Page 2

Regarding the new retail hours, the Postal Service recognizes the concern that Shaw Island is a community only accessible via a ferry, however, a careful evaluation was completed for this Post Office and according to our retail analysis it only generates about 3.5 hours of revenue per day. Additionally, the ferry schedule shows frequent trips to and from the island daily.

We wish we could continue full-time operations at all of our Post Offices regardless of reduced workload, customer demand and revenue. Unfortunately, it is simply not possible. In the face of an unprecedented set of financial challenges, the Postal Service must implement major cost reduction efforts throughout its retail, delivery and mail processing operations.

The Postal Service is a self-supporting agency that funds its operations from the revenue generated by the sales of our products and services—not taxpayer subsidies received through the Congressional appropriations process. Despite success in reducing controllable expenses as mail volume and revenue have declined, the Postal Service ended fiscal year 2013 with a record net loss of \$5 billion. More recently, the Postal Service lost \$1.9 billion in the second quarter of fiscal year 2014. This marks the 20th of the last 22 quarters it has sustained a loss.

If I can be of assistance with other postal issues, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David P. Coleman', written over a light blue horizontal line.

David P. Coleman
Government Relations Representative

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 1, 2014

The Honorable Patrick R. Donahoe
Postmaster General and Chief Executive Officer
United States Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW
Washington, D.C. 20260-0010

Dear Mr. Postmaster General:

Our constituents recently alerted us to proposed changes at the Mt. Baker Station and Lynden retail post offices in Washington state regarding the last mail pickup of the day. These proposals indicated the last daily mail pickup at these locations would occur well before these offices close to the public. Your staff shared that these proposals were publicized in error and the changes will not move forward on July 1, as was indicated.

We understand the Postal Service may still consider mail pickup time changes at these and other locations. Final pickups before retail offices close will leave mail sitting overnight in the office where it was posted. We are concerned this will slow down mail service for our constituents. If these or similar proposals do move forward in the future, we request that your office provide information to address these concerns. Small businesses rely on postal services to conduct their work and should be able to deliver their mail to the post office at the end of the day knowing it will get picked up in a timely way. Additionally, many people cannot get to the post office until they finish work. We will continue to monitor this closely, and appreciate your consideration of these issues.

We also request that you share information that explains how the Postal Service is meeting service standards across the First and Second Congressional Districts of Washington. This information will help us as we work with our colleagues to pass legislation that restores the Postal Service's financial stability while maintaining high quality service for our constituents in Northwest Washington. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



Suzan DelBene
Member of Congress