

No immediate plan to close Brady post office

Written by Deb Egenberger
Friday, 09 November 2012 15:10 -



Residents voice opinions on office hours

Brady residents are adamant. They want to keep their U.S. Post Office open.

About 30 people crowded the post office lobby Monday afternoon to show support during a meeting with area manager of post office operations Kelly Lacey.

In addition, Lacey received a list of 152 names of residents who signed a petition in favor of allowing the post office to stay.

"I think this is the biggest turnout we've had at one of these meetings," Lacey told the crowd.

With an estimated loss of \$15 billion by the postal service this year, 3,700 small post offices across the country, like the one in Brady, have faced closure.

Lacey said there is no plan to close the Brady office.

"We're no longer looking at that as an option," she said.

What will happen in January, though, is a reduction in hours.

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“To help small communities retain their local post offices, we’ve decided the best thing to do would be a reduction in hours,” Lacey said.

Customer surveys were sent to all 406 Brady addresses about a month ago with 162 returned.

Surveys asked residents to choose between a realignment of hours, moving postal services into a local business or moving all postal operations to a nearby post office.

Of those surveys returned, 149 respondents or 92% chose the realignment of hours.

So Lacey told the group gathered that Brady’s post office will definitely remain open, at least for now, with retail window operations reduced from eight hours to four hours daily.

Some post offices, Lacey said, will see hours reduced to only two. Others across the country will be closed.

Lacey told the crowd the suggested hours were 8 a.m. to noon weekdays and 8-9:30 a.m. on Saturdays.

Concerns came from residents who work out of town.

“What about earlier?” Marla Fattig asked. “I work out of town and I already have trouble getting in here to mail packages.”

Fattig said if she uses another post office for her shipping, it affects the business in Brady.

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Jeff Miller, Brady village board chairman, also works out of town. He said he can spend as much as 45 minutes waiting in line at the North Platte post office.

“If you ask all these people to go elsewhere to mail packages and things, that wait is only going to get worse.”

Former postmaster Carol Reddick said she remembers people driving from other communities to use the Brady post office because it was faster.

Lacey said the four-hour operation time is cut and dried but the hours chosen to be open were debatable.

Joyce Lydic suggested 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. so the window could be open during the lunch hour.

Ruth Rayburn asked if another hour might be possible.

Current postal clerk Jeaninne Davis said she is busiest with window business in the morning but afternoon rushes do occur.

Miller asked if extended hours during the holidays might be an option.

“It seems like that might be a good business decision,” he said.

Lacey said the government is looking at the big picture and more holiday hours are not planned.

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She did remind patrons that click and ship revenue from online purchases of stamps and other postage are credited to the 69123 zip code and will be taken into consideration for further changes.

She said from information received at the meeting Monday and survey responses, the 8 a.m. to noon option for hours seems the likely choice.

A final determination will be posted in a week in the post office lobby with the effective date Jan. 12, 2013.

As of now, rural route deliveries and pickup from the outside mailbox will not change.

Lacey said the postal service may consider changes to the rural routes in the future but right now there is no plan to eliminate them.