

If you recall back in April of this year, the Postal Service started the process of eliminating mail processing in Butte. They started by moving all outgoing mail processing for southwest Montana (everything with a 597 zip code) from Butte to Great Falls, and now they are considering doing the same for incoming mail.

This is a poor decision that will affect all of southwestern Montana, and it will change our current next-day service to sub-standard 2-3 day mail delivery. This is all on the heels of the Postmaster General agreeing to Congress for a moratorium on closing facilities until May, but it appears he is laying the groundwork to do just that in the interim.

If we lose our incoming mail processing center, it will cost jobs within and beyond the walls of our local post office. Whether you are a small business owner, a young adult waiting for a college acceptance letter, or a senior citizen or a disabled veteran receiving medication through the mail, this decision will negatively affect you. Please stop and think of what the loss of next day mail will mean to you, but more importantly I need you to share your thoughts with the Postal Service.

With this in mind, the Postal Service is conducting a presentation and collecting public comments on January 3, 2012, at 7 p.m., in the Montana Tech auditorium. If we have learned one thing from the April meeting, it is the Postal Service is not very well prepared, and they do not accurately record our testimony. We need to make sure that we pack the auditorium, stand together as a community, and make our voices heard.

In preparation for the USPS presentation on January 3rd, we are holding a community meeting at 6 p.m., this Thursday, December 29th, at the Butte Civic Center, to help all of us better prepare to let the agency know how we feel.

For those who cannot attend either meeting, please submit written comments to the USPS, Manager, Consumer and Industry Contact, Dakotas District, PO Box 7570, Sioux Falls, SD 57117-7570. Please note the USPS will accept public comment up to 15 days after the January 3, 2012 meeting.

Also, in order to ensure the Postal Service accurately records our comments, we will be keeping a copy to make sure every comment is heard. Please send a copy of what you submit to the Postal Service, or plan on submitting at the January 3rd meeting, to the Butte Local Development Corporation, 480 East Park Street, Suite 101, Butte, MT 59701.

The people of Butte and southwest Montana have a long history of fighting for what is right, let's not let them sneak this through without a fight!

Paul Babb
Butte-Silver Bow Chief Executive