

USPS Delays Closing Post Offices Until Mid-May 2012

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Wednesday, 21 December 2011 21:48 - Last Updated Wednesday, 21 December 2011 21:48

Officials of the U.S. Postal Service (USPS), in response to a request made by multiple U.S. senators, agreed to delay the closing or consolidation of any post office or mail processing facility until May 15, 2012.

USPS officials have discussed closing 252 mail processing centers and 3,700 post offices. The latter figure included post offices in Brownville and Nemaha, and locations in other Southeast Nebraska counties.

Postal Service officials will continue all necessary steps required for the review of these facilities during the interim period, including public input meetings.

Public input meetings were conducted last April in Nemaha and in October at Brownville. More than 60 persons attended the Nemaha meeting and more than 50 persons attended the Brownville meeting. There were similar meetings in other affected Southeast Nebraska communities.

Other Southeast Nebraska post offices under consideration for closing included: Clatonia, Crab Orchard, Dawson, Douglas, DuBois, Dunbar, Elk Creek, Filley, Manley, Nehawka, Otoe, Rulo, Shubert, Stella, Table Rock, Unadilla and Verdon.

The facilities were studied for closing based on declining workload and insufficient customer demand. More postal customers are conducting business online, on their smart phones and at their shopping destinations.

In November, the Nebraska Legislature approved a resolution urging USPS officials to reconsider the study that could lead to post office closures in rural Nebraska. The state senators thought that postal officials should study pension costs and other expenses before closing offices that were widely viewed as crucial to small-town economies.

Postal Service officials hoped that this period of delayed closing and consolidation will help facilitate the enactment of comprehensive postal legislation. Given the Postal Service's financial situation and the loss of mail volume, the Postal Service must continue to take all steps necessary to reduce costs and increase revenue.

The Postal Service receives no tax dollars for operating expenses. It relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.