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Parkrose decides not to contract out bus drivers

An energetic five-month campaign by OSEA saves school bus driver jobs

By DON McINTOSH
Associate Editor

In a dramatic turnaround, Parkrose School Board rejected its superintendent's plan to contract out school bus transportation to a private corporation, First Student. The 3-to-2 vote took place at 10 p.m., three-plus hours into the board's Feb. 24 meeting, as a packed house of Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA) members and supporters watched.

The district — located in outer Northeast Portland — announced its intention to outsource student transportation last September. It then paid for a state-mandated cost comparison, and received bids from four companies. Superintendent Karen Gray proposed

to award the contract to UK-headquartered First Student, sell the district's bus fleet for \$350,000, and lay off district school bus employees at the end of the school year. Though the district estimated the move would save money, the cost comparison indicated nearly all the savings would come from cutting employee retirement and health benefits.

But OSEA waged a vigorous campaign to defend the jobs of its 22 members — drivers, a dispatcher and a mechanic. Rallying behind the slogan "Keep It Local," the union blanketed the district with lawn signs, and went door to door to talk to residents. It even aired a television ad featuring a mom and her daughter — touting the value of the district directly controlling its "first classroom of the day."

For months, OSEA rallied outside board meetings, mobilizing members and residents to attend. Board members got calls from dozens of residents, and from state legislators representing the Parkrose district — State Rep. Jessica Vega Pederson and State Sen. Michael



OSEA holds its final anti-outsourcing protest before the Feb. 24 Parkrose School Board meeting. In a 3-2 vote, the Board kept school bus drivers as district employees.

Dembrow — all opposed to the plan. The anticipated savings were said to be intended to hire more teachers, but the Parkrose teachers union also stood with OSEA in opposing the outsourcing. On the day of the big vote, board members got a letter opposing outsourcing from

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'Right-to-work' initiative dropped

SALEM — Sponsors of two anti-union initiative petitions — including a so-called right-to-work measure for public employees — have agreed to withdraw their measures aimed at the Oregon ballot in November. In exchange, a labor-backed coalition that sponsored pro-union counter-measures agreed to do the same.

The announcement was made March 3 by Gov. John Kitzhaber.

In all, 13 measures were withdrawn. Most of them were still waiting to be certified by the secretary of state. The right-to-work measure, Initiative Petition 9, had been certified and was in the early stages of collecting signatures. None of the measures had qualified for the ballot.

The governor's announcement follows an agreement Kitzhaber brokered in February between the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and many of the state's largest hospitals. Following that agreement, an additional five ballot initiative petitions

were withdrawn.

Kitzhaber, who is up for re-election this year, has talked for more than a year about wanting to keep the initiatives off the ballot in order to avoid a bruising, expensive ballot measure battle. He began formal discussions with initiative sponsors several months ago.

"This is an unprecedented moment in Oregon's long history of ballot measure politics," Kitzhaber said in a press release. "Over the last three years, we have shown time and time again that no matter how wide the ideological divide might be, people on different sides of issues are able to come together for the greater good of Oregon and our citizens."

At press time, the secretary of state's website showed the following anti-union initiative petitions had been withdrawn: IP 1 (public employees cannot contribute to unions using payroll deductions if funds are used for political purposes), and IP 9 (dubbed the "Pub-

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PHOTO COURTESY OF IBEW LOCAL 659.

Medford teachers end 16-day strike

MEDFORD — Over 500 Medford school teachers went back to work Feb. 24, ending a 16-day strike with a tentative agreement on a new three-year contract that both sides compromised to achieve.

Medford Education Association members voted Feb. 27 to ratify the agreement. It includes cost-of-living wage increases of 1.9, 2.5 and 3 percent, plus a 2.1 percent salary increase to add back four work days. But some of those gains will be eaten up when teachers' contribution to health insurance doubles from 5 percent of the premium to 10 percent by the end of the contract. The union also agreed to phase out the current early retirement health insurance benefit. Teachers who retire this year and next can stay on the system's health insurance plan until they are eligible for Medicare.

Schools closed the first three days of the strike, idling 12,100 students. But the district hired more than 165

substitute teachers, and reopened some schools Feb. 9 on half-day schedules with what even the Medford Mail Tribune newspaper called "dumbed down class selections." Schools were surrounded by picketing teachers and security guards, and students stayed away. Attendance dropped from 68 percent the first day to 44 percent by the end of the strike.

The Medford School District said it does not plan to add days to the school year to make up for lost instructional time during the strike.

Striking teachers were supported by many parents during the strike, which raised the profile of unions in an area of Oregon where they have been less prominent. A Feb. 15 community solidarity rally organized by Southern Oregon Jobs With Justice drew an estimated 600 participants — more than any Medford demonstration in recent memory. And other labor organizations stepped up in solidarity, including In-

ternational Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), Service Employees, American Postal Workers Union, Oregon Nurses Association, United Food and Commercial Workers, AFSCME, Southern Oregon Jobs With Justice, and the Oregon AFL-CIO community coalition Oregon Strong Voice.

With the support of IBEW Local 659 Business Manager Lennie Ellis, two staff members joined teachers on the picket line with food and helped organize a community support phone bank. IBEW Local 1245 in Vacaville, California, sent two "organizer stewards" to help with strike support for a week.

"We felt like the community got behind it," said Local 659 organizer John Hutter. "The strike was unfortunate, but it was a great community builder for us and for the teachers. All 600 of them know who we are now, and some of them asked us 'What can we do to help you when the time comes?'"

Portland State University professors set timetable for strike

Top issues are low pay, job insecurity, and lack of respect

By **DON McINTOSH**
Associate Editor

Portland State University professors have had enough. In 10 months of fruitless bargaining and 40 hours of mediation, university administrators haven't addressed their complaints of low salaries and minimal job security.

So on Feb. 24, the PSU chapter of the American Association of University Professors (PSU-AAUP) filed a formal declaration of impasse with the state Employment Relations Board. The two sides submitted final offers March 3. That triggered a 30-day state-mandated cooling off period, at which point union members could strike or the administration could impose its terms on them.

PSU-AAUP Executive Director Phil Lesch said a strike is likely at this point, given how far apart the two sides are.

In a show of strength that the union called its "best hope for avoiding a strike," faculty members picketed and rallied at the university Feb. 27. They were joined by hundreds of students organized by the PSU Student Union. In the month leading up to the rally, at least 626 students had pledged via text message to attend, even if it meant walking out of classes to do so. Judging from the size of the crowd, most of them kept the pledge.

At the rally and picket, chants criticized administrative bloat, and called for tuition dollars to go toward "instruction, not construction." Picket signs blasted the obscenity of the public university president's salary. PSU President Wim Wiewel gets \$512,786 a year in compensation and lives rent-free in a university mansion.

"This fight is bigger than PSU," PSU economics professor Mary King told rally-goers. "It's the fight for public education in this country."

Faculty "tenure" used to be the norm at universities. In the name of academic freedom, professors once tenured could

not be terminated except for gross negligence. But more and more, American universities are shifting classroom instruction to part-time and temporary instructors who often lack health insurance or retirement benefits. PSU-AAUP is actually the most privileged group at PSU, because it represents full-time year-round faculty; a sister union affiliated with American Federation of Teachers (AFT) represents their coworkers who are "adjunct" faculty, part-time term-to-term instructors.

Lesch said of the 1,270 faculty members in the PSU-AAUP bargaining unit, only about 300 are tenured full professors and thus can consider themselves permanent employees with job security. About 250 more are tenure-track assistant professors on one-year contracts. Lesch described tenure track as a grueling probationary period lasting six years. Another 420 are fixed-term faculty "instructors" who are not on a path to tenure. Most instructors earn about \$37,000 a year, while tenure-track faculty earn \$50,000 to \$60,000 a year. Tenured professors have a starting salary of \$62,000.

"We end up losing most of our tenured faculty members when they get tenure," Lesch said, "because at \$62,000 a year that's less than half what they can earn most anywhere else in the country."

AAUP activist David Osborn said some of the union's top demands are stability and equity. Stability means



Hundreds of PSU students turned out Feb. 27, joining their professors in calling on the university administration to reach a fair contract settlement with the campus chapter of American Association of University Professors.

professors would be regular full-time employees, not seasonal workers laid off according to administration whims. Osborn, for example, has a master's degree from the London School of Economics and has been teaching at PSU for four years. Yet Osborn said he gets laid off every June, and doesn't learn until a few weeks before fall term whether he's been hired back to teach classes.

By equity, they mean they want to catch up to faculty salaries at peer universities.

AAUP executive director Lesch says PSU's wage increase offer — 1 percent a year for two years — would have salaries dipping further behind. And faculty would lose buying power to inflation, which has been about 2 percent in recent years. AAUP is proposing two 5 percent raises.

But behind the union-management dispute is also a struggle for respect and over who controls the university.

"Administrators think that the students and faculty exist for their benefit," Lesch said. "They're really committed

to building an administrative empire. People are frustrated with that."

As for respect, PSU administrators aren't showing it. The administration scheduled two events to coincide with the student-faculty rally: a "party" for students featuring free lunch and bowling to celebrate the 25,000th "like" on the PSU Facebook page, and a lunch for fixed-term faculty with the administration's chief negotiator, university vice president Carol Mack, to talk about "career strategies."

AAUP members' next plan is to take their protest to the PSU Board of Trustees, which meets March 12 1-5 p.m. at PSU's University Place Hotel.

Barbara Roberts to keynote retirees' club convention March 8

Former governor Barbara Roberts and progressive radio talk show host Carl Wolfson will be guest speakers at the Oregon Alliance for Retired Americans 2014 state convention Saturday, March 8.

The daylong convention will be held at the Madison Grill banquet room, 1125 SE Madison, Portland. It starts at 10 a.m. Registration is \$10, which includes lunch.

For more information, call 503-675-7764.

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Ludlow, Smith have harsh words for Teamsters, AMR

Clackamas County Commissioner Tootie Smith had some harsh words for the Teamsters Union, and County Chair John Ludlow took a potshot at American Medical Response (AMR) during recent meetings of the Board of Commissioners. The two elected officials were on the losing end of a 3-2 vote to award a new multi-year ambulance service contract to AMR.

Approximately 140 paramedics, emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and dispatchers at AMR are members of Teamsters Local 223. They have provided ambulance service in Clackamas County since 1993.

The Board of Commissioners opened the contract last year, and AMR was the only company to submit a bid. Nonunion rival Metro West Ambulance had a proposal written, but missed the deadline to submit it.

Metro West also is a rival of the Teamsters Union. Local 223 tried unsuccessfully to organize its employees in 2012. The company, which provides ambulance service for Washington County, hired an expensive anti-union consultant who ran a classic "union avoidance" campaign. Several unfair labor practice charges were filed and the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) determined that Metro West broke the law when it threatened, demoted and fired union supporters. The company was ordered to reinstate a terminated employee and reimburse him back pay with interest.

As AMR was the sole bidder, a majority of the Board of Commissioners

voted in May 2013 to accept AMR's bid and issue an intent to award the contract. The vote was 3-2, with Smith voting with the majority (Commissioners Paul Savas and Martha Schrader). Ludlow and Commissioner Jim Bernard were opposed. Clackamas County then posted AMR's bid on its website.

Shortly thereafter, Smith changed her vote to award the contract to AMR, saying she wanted to see more bids. The reversal outraged employees, the Teamsters Union, and Clackamas County residents, who flooded weekly board meetings to testify against the Board's action. The reversal also led to AMR filing a \$20 million tort claim against the County.

Arguing amongst commissioners went back and forth for months.

Finally, at a Feb. 4, 2014 Board meeting, Commissioner Bernard announced that after talking to his wife, he had a change of heart and now supported awarding the contract to AMR. He made a motion to do so, and Savas and Schrader concurred.

Ludlow and Smith, both first-term commissioners supported by the Tea Party, were furious.

Smith, who is running for Congress in the 5th District, faulted AMR employees, unions, and the media for the contract controversy. "I have tried to exercise due diligence and maintain our oversight responsibilities while resisting the environment of political pressure, judgment, accusations, and biased media scrutiny," she said.

"I'm really sad to say that over the weekend, I believe, the pressure was



On the losing side of a 3-2 vote to award a new ambulance contract to AMR, Clackamas County Chair John Ludlow and Commissioner Tootie Smith had some harsh words for the company and its workers' Teamsters union.

exerted so great by the Teamsters Unions with threats, accusations to family members and friends, of which I have received, that one of our board members has thrown in the towel.

"Although this may be a Pyrrhic victory for the Teamsters at the moment, you can just take it at that, because it will not stand."

She wasn't finished.

At a Feb. 6 Commission business meeting, Smith said that during the course of the contract award process she had received anonymous phone calls threatening to kill her, "wanting to off me. I take that personal.

"And I know some of the tactics of the Teamsters Unions have been very vicious," she continued. "I know people's tires who have been sliced, twice. And you're all sitting there acting inno-

cent and the people saying, 'oh, that didn't happen to us.'

"I intend, to my dying days on the commission, to shine a light on union tactics. Just because I disagree with you does not give anybody permission to do bodily harm or threaten any commissioner — because many commissioners have been threatened with what you can't even believe. I'm going to put a stop to that on my dying day."

Savas later responded, saying it was unfair for Smith to associate the Teamsters Union and AMR with any threats she might have received.

"I just think that without any evidence to show an association, somewhat casts an aspersion on that group, that I think is unfair. Especially when those folks are out there saving lives. I just think that — unless there's evidence that says otherwise — people are going to make linkages that I don't think will be fair."

Ludlow then took a potshot at all AMR emergency responders. He told a story of a man who approached him just last week, and said:

"Mr. Ludlow, if you were in need of help, I would put aside my personal feelings about you and I would give you the same outstanding service that we give everybody.

"That very day, on this floor, one of our employees went down," Ludlow continued. "I mean down to the ground writhing in pain, moaning. And American Medical Response was late. We have the tapes. We know everything about that, and how long it took them to get here."

Ludlow said the Fire District responded within six minutes, and that he came to the scene "even after the ambulance arrived and the man was still hurting badly and needing to be transported to a hospital.

"So, I hope that good service that was promised continues," he said scornfully. "And I pray to God I don't have a heart attack."

At the next Board of Commissioners meeting on Feb. 27, AMR employee and Teamsters Union steward Charles Savoie used the public comment period to go over the dispatch log with Ludlow, before asking that Ludlow apologize to

AMR and the responding paramedic "which were vehemently denigrated."

Savoie told commissioners that AMR was not late too the call to help the Clackamas County employee. The 9-1-1 call was for medical assistance for a person with non-traumatic back pain.

"Accordingly, an ambulance was dispatched Priority 2, no lights and sirens," Savoie said.

The closest ambulance was headed to the scene, Savoie continued, when it was diverted to another call that had been triaged as potentially life-threatening. The next closest ambulance was assigned to the call, and it arrived within 12 minutes, which is within the time frame established by the county.

"Therefore, the ambulance was not late, contrary to what Commissioner Ludlow so authoritatively stated," Savoie said, before asking for an apology.

"All I know, is I know the tapes Ludlow responded,

Ludlow stammered briefly, and responded:

"All I know is that — and I know the tapes and what time you got into the elevator, etcetera. I don't care about non-life-threatening. I've never seen, or I've rarely seen, anybody in that kind of agony. I don't care what the fire department said to you.

"I've said my piece about ambulance service and I'll say it again, I pray to God I don't have a heart attack. Because I saw a man writhing in pain, worse than I've ever seen, and I thought the response was late. I'll still stick with that. So you won't get an apology from me today."

Commissioner Savas said he also looked into Ludlow's allegation. Savas said there was a response and an assessment of the patient right away by the fire department. "I do know that they decided to stabilize the employee, and they took their time about how they approached it. So there was no need for immediate transport. The appropriate actions and activities occurred with no compromise."

"I don't know what compromise means," Ludlow retorted. "All I know is what 'late' means, and I'll still say it, that they were late."

(Editor's Note: In preparation for the competitive bidding process, AMR employees and the Teamsters agreed to open their collective bargaining agreement mid-contract — at which time they voted to forgo a 2 percent wage increase that was due in June 2013. Those wage concessions, along with concessions on profit and efficiencies gained in sub-contracts, allowed AMR to reduce its costs by 19 percent. The five-year, multi-million-dollar contract goes in effect May 1. After that, the Board can extend its terms for up to five additional years.

AMR's union contract with the Teamsters expires in June 2014. The sides are currently in bargaining.)



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CWA gets bare-bones contract with Fund for the Public Interest

Workers at a Portland call center run by the Fund for the Public Interest finally have a union contract — two years and four months after joining Communications Workers of America (CWA) Local 7901.

Fund for the Public Interest, headquartered in Boston, runs street, door-to-door and telephone fundraising for state “public interest research groups” like OSPIRG and a spinoff network of state environmental groups like Environment Oregon. It also has contracts to do fundraising for groups like Human Rights Campaign.

In spite of those groups’ progressive reputation, the Fund is an abusive employer, churning through and terminating personnel at a prodigious rate. That’s what prompted its Portland call center workers to unionize, but the Fund didn’t stop being an abusive employer just because federal law told it to bargain in good faith with employees.

In fact, CWA contended in charges filed with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), managers used the Fund’s existing draconian rules to eliminate union supporters one after another — firing them for trivial offenses, or more commonly for missing fundraising quotas. The Fund fired the worker who first called the union, all eight of the workers who presented the original union petition to a manager, all four workers who volunteered on the union’s initial bargaining team, and several who replaced them, for a total of at least 13 supporters fired — in a call center that employs about 25. But as thousands of American workers have learned, the NLRB is a toothless bureaucracy when it comes to stopping employers from firing union activists.

Proving a worker was fired for supporting a union isn’t easy. CWA filed multiple charges protesting the firings, but only one charge went anywhere: Af-

ter an August 2013 hearing, a federal administrative law judge ordered that fired union activist David Neel be reinstated with back pay. The Fund appealed the judge’s order, and offered to reinstate Neel pending resolution of the appeal. But the Fund also told Neel he’d be terminated if the Fund won its appeal. That wasn’t the unconditional reinstatement offer CWA believed the judge ordered. Neel, who now does similar fundraising work for the Oregon Working Families Party, declined to accept, holding out for an unconditional offer in the event he wins the appeal, which is still pending.

The Fund may have thought the union effort would peter out, but it didn’t. When union supporters were fired, their pro-union coworkers waged short strikes to protest — and trained and oriented new hires. CWA Local 7901 President Madelyn Elder said a pro-management employee tried to circulate a



Current and former workers at Fund for the Public Interest Portland call center staged a short strike and protest Oct. 11, 2013, the two-year anniversary of their vote to unionize. Protesters marched outside the headquarters of OSPIRG, one of the nonprofit groups that the call center workers raise money for.

State to include apprenticeships in education goals

SALEM — The Oregon Legislature has amended the state’s 40-40-20 Education Plan to include state-registered apprenticeships.

The plan sets a goal to ensure all Oregonians have a high school diploma or equivalent by 2025, and that the vast majority have some form of degree or certificate beyond a high school education. The goal is that 40 percent will have a bachelor’s degree or higher, 40 percent will earn an associate’s degree or post-secondary credential, and 20 percent will have a high school diploma or equivalent.

The legislative and rule-making intent was to include non-college education programs in the “middle 40” of the goal, but it wasn’t clear what programs

were included.

At the Oregon AFL-CIO convention in Bend last September, delegates passed a resolution directing the state labor federation to pursue legislation that would ensure that apprenticeship training was part of the “middle 40.”

It just so happened that then-state Rep. Michael Dembrow (D-Portland) was a delegate at the convention. Dembrow is a community college instructor and member of the American Federation of Teachers.

Dembrow, now a state senator, talked up the resolution to his colleagues. State Rep. Chris Gorcek (D-Troutdale), a community college instructor representing a district with many apprenticeship training centers in

it, took interest in the idea and approached the Oregon AFL-CIO about drafting a bill.

House Bill 4058 made clear that apprenticeship programs registered with the State Apprenticeship and Training Council were to be included as a post-secondary credential.

The bill passed in the House 59-0, and passed in the Senate 29-0.

“By explicitly including registered apprenticeship programs in our education goals, we are ensuring that no matter how students learn, they know there is a path for them after high school into a good career — be it through college or an apprenticeship program,” said Tom Chamberlain, president of the Oregon AFL-CIO.

petition to dump the union, but no coworkers would sign.

But contract negotiations consisted of stonewalling. Telephone fundraising director Pat Wood flew out to Portland once a month from Boston, and said “no” to union proposals, even those as trivial as automatic payroll deduction. Over the course of two years of negotiations, the Fund refused to agree to the most basic union contract rights, such as not disciplining workers without “just cause,” or the requirement that represented employees pay union dues.

But in February, the Fund dropped its hard line on the requirement to pay union dues, and that was enough. What made the difference, Elder thinks, was union pressure on the Human Rights Campaign, a gay civil rights group, to switch its fundraising to another contractor. Elder said once that became a real possibility, the Fund settled.

Call center workers ratified a new four-year agreement Feb. 25 in a unanimous vote. The contract contains no

raises or additional benefits, but it codifies existing workplace policies, and addresses worker concerns about pay instability and job security by limiting performance-based pay cuts to \$2 an hour per pay period, and giving workers a third missed-quota week, once a year, before being terminated. Elder said that saved one worker’s job right off the bat.

The contract contains a grievance procedure consisting of appeals up through four levels of the Fund chain of command. But unlike most union contracts, there’s no provision for resolving grievances through binding arbitration. But Elder said that means workers retain the right to strike if a grievance isn’t resolved to their satisfaction; most union contracts bar workers from striking during the term of the contract.

The CWA-Fund contract runs through February 2018. It covers the Fund’s Portland call center workers, but not its thousands of canvass employees or its call center workers in Sacramento and Boston.

Boeing announces plan to build 777X wing in Everett

EVERETT, Wash. — Boeing Co. announced Feb. 18 that it will construct a 1-million-square-foot factory in Everett to build the 777X carbon composite wing. The company confirmed, too, that the airplane will be assembled in Everett, though it didn’t say where.

“This isn’t just a five-year decision or a 20-year decision, this is a 50-year decision,” said Boeing CEO Ray Conner at a press conference with Gov. Jay Inslee, U.S. Sen. Maria Cantwell, local politicians, and International Association of Machinists Aerospace Coordinator Mark Johnson.

The Machinists Union represents approximately 31,000 manufacturing workers at Boeing plants in Everett, Portland, and Wichita, Kansas. They are members of Machinists District Lodge 751, Machinists District Lodge W24 (Lodge 63), and District Lodge 70.

Conner and the other elected officials praised union members for approving a controversial concessionary contract extension through 2024.

Boeing had threatened to leave Washington if the Machinists didn’t agree to the contract extension and if lawmakers didn’t agree to extend tax breaks for the Fortune 500 company.

Many union members thought the company was bluffing. After all, plane production, stock prices and profits were at all-time highs. And they still had more than two years remaining on their existing collective bargaining agreement.

Lawmakers responded quickly. In a special session called by Gov. Inslee, the Washington Legislature passed a bill giving Boeing \$8.7 billion in extended tax breaks over the next 16 years. It also passed new laws that expedited the permitting process for

777X-related construction. It was the largest state subsidy for a corporation in U.S. history.

The Machinists weren’t so easy.

A week after the Legislature handed Boeing the huge tax break, workers rejected Boeing’s contract proposal by a nearly 2-to-1 margin. The offer included ending the defined benefit pension plan and paying more out-of-pocket for health insurance.

Shortly after the vote, Boeing put out a request for proposal (RFP) and received offers from 22 states to build the new 777X. The RFP whipped federal, state and local politicians into near-hysteria, as they feared the loss of thousands of family-wage jobs in the state. Politicians pleaded with the union to go back to the table and make a deal.

They got the attention of Machinists international union. Union officials returned to the bargaining table, got a

slightly better deal (though it still ended the pension plan and increased health insurance co-pays), and ordered a vote — all against the wishes of the leadership of District Lodge 751.

With pressure to ratify the contract coming from the governor, area mayors, elected officials, and the media, Machinists on Jan. 3 passed the contract extension by fewer than 600 votes.

“The Machinists made a very difficult decision,” Inslee said. “We owe respect to the Machinists for making a decision that helps the entire economy of the state of Washington.”

In a post-ratification-vote interview with the Puget Sound Business Journal, Machinists International President Tom Buffenbarger said he was convinced that Washington was not on Boeing’s final list of sites for the 777X, and that the company might have moved Air Force tanker production to Long

Beach, Calif., had the contract extension been nixed.

“I did have a fear of it leaving Seattle because of the domino effect,” Buffenbarger told the Business Journal. “All of these (disputed contract provisions) mean nothing if Boeing built the plant somewhere else, because people wouldn’t have had a job.”

Conner wouldn’t say how many new jobs will be created, but the Seattle Times reported that during the 777X site-selection competition, Boeing projected the high-tech wing facility alone would provide 2,760 jobs at peak employment in 2024.

At the Feb. 18 press conference, Conner said “We’re going to be here. We’re going to start tearing down buildings, and we’re going to start pumping hundreds of millions of dollars into this area.”

United Auto Workers seeks new election at VW plant

The union alleges that unprecedented interference from politicians tainted the election

The United Auto Workers (UAW) is urging the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to apply something called the “Westwood Test” to the union’s challenge of the Chattanooga, Tennessee VW union election results, reports Workers Independent News.

The five-factor test has been used in past cases to decide whether results were tainted. The UAW says anti-union Tennessee politicians and right-wing groups interfered so much that it created “a general atmosphere of fear of reprisal rendering a free election impossible.”

Despite having a neutrality agreement with the German carmaker (the company allowed union organizers into break rooms), UAW lost the Feb. 12-14 election by 86 votes. There are 1,570 workers at the plant, where they make the VW Passat.

Workers in virtually all of VW’s other 105 plants worldwide are union members who work under joint labor-management “works councils.” That is what the union and VW wanted to establish in Tennessee.

On the first day of the union vote, U.S. Sen. Bob Corker (R-Tenn.) told reporters he “had conversations today and based on those am assured that should the workers vote against the UAW, Volkswagen will announce in the coming weeks that it will manufacture its new mid-size SUV here in Chattanooga.” Corker refused to name his source.

Volkswagen Chattanooga CEO Frank Fischer disputed Corker’s claim: “There is no connection between our Chattanooga employees’ decision about whether to be represented by a union and the decision about where to build a new product for the U.S. market,” Chattanooga.com reported.

Also during the union campaign, several Republican state legis-

lators and Republican Gov. Bill Haslam threatened to take away state-sponsored tax breaks for further expansion in Chattanooga if the union won. [State and local subsidies to get the VW Passat plant in Tennessee totaled \$554 million, the second-costliest package for a foreign-owned auto plant in U.S. history.]

On top of that, several right-wing groups and individuals — led by the National Right to Work Committee, the Koch brothers and Grover Norquist — poured millions of dollars into an anti-UAW radio and billboard campaign tying the union to President Barack Obama and gun control.

In its appeal to the labor board, UAW said Gov. Haslam and the state lawmakers were the main culprits, before Corker jumped in on Feb. 12, after the voting had already started.

“The threats were very significant, because state financial incentives were a key component” that convinced VW to build in Chattanooga in the first place, UAW told the labor board.

The same incentives “are a key component” for any future VW decision on “expansion, full capacity utilization and heightened job security” in Chattanooga, the union added.

The Westwood Test arose from a unionization drive at Westwood Horizons hotel in Los Angeles during the 1980s, reported Workers Independent News. In that case, some workers threatened and harassed other workers to pressure them to vote for the union. Workers voted for a union, but the hotel challenged the results and the NLRB ordered a new election.

To meet the Westwood Test, the NLRB would have to decide that the threats made at the VW plant would affect all voting workers, were widely made, and that those making the threats had power to carry them out. It would also need to determine whether workers acted or voted in fear of the threats, and whether the threats coincided with the election.

The UAW has until March 7 to finish making its case and the NLRB will then decide whether to proceed.

Technically, the union filed its case against Volkswagen. But the

NLRB filing barely mentions VW, except to point out that the firm’s officials refuted the Republicans’ claims in the election’s final days.

Days after the union election, Reuters reported that Volkswagen’s top labor representative suggested the company may not construct its next U.S. plant in the South.

Bernd Osterloh, a member of VW’s supervisory board and head of VW’s works council, was quoted in the German newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung*: “I can imagine fairly well that another VW factory in the United States, provided that one more should still be set up there, does not necessarily have to be assigned to the South again.

“If co-determination isn’t guaranteed in the first place, we as workers will hardly be able to vote in favor,” of potentially building another plant in the South.

(Editor’s Note: Press Associates Inc. contributed to this report.)

Drywall firm ordered to pay \$550,000 in back wages

The U.S. Department of Labor has obtained a consent judgment from the U.S. District Court ordering Issaquah, Washington-based drywall installer Summit Drywall Inc. and its owner Thomas Kauzlarich to pay \$550,000 in overtime back wages and liquidated damages to 384 current and former employees.

The Seattle District Office of the DOL’s Wage and Hour Division found that Summit Drywall violated the Fair Labor Standards Act’s overtime and record-keeping provisions from Oct. 15, 2009, through April 15, 2013.

Investigators also found that employees working as drywall hangers and tapers were paid on a piece-rate basis and were not compensated for all hours worked, including time spent traveling and transporting equipment to the job site. Additionally, the employer failed to keep accurate records of hours worked, as required.

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Official Notices

BAKERY, CONFECTIONERY, TOBACCO WORKERS AND GRAIN MILLERS 114

Executive Board meets 9 a.m. Tuesday, March 25, in the meeting room at 7931 NE Halsey, Suite 205, Portland.

BRICKLAYERS AND ALLIED CRAFTWORKERS 1

Members meet 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 18, at 12812 NE Marx St., Portland.

CEMENT MASONS 555

Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, March 20, at 12812 NE Marx St., Portland.

CENTRAL OREGON LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 5:30 p.m. Monday, March 31, at the Social Justice Center, 155 NE Irving Ave., Bend.

COLUMBIA-PACIFIC BUILDING TRADES

Delegates meet 10 a.m. Tuesdays, March 11 and March 18, at Kirkland Union Manor II, 3535 SE 86th, Portland. **PLEASE NOTE:** Change in meeting day back to Tuesdays.

ELECTRICAL WORKERS 48

Electrical Workers Minority Caucus meets 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 11, in the Executive Boardroom. Residential Unit meets 6 p.m. Tuesday, March 11, in the Dispatch Lobby.

Wasco Unit meets 6 p.m. Wednesday, March 12, at Northern Wasco County PUD, 2345 River Road, The Dalles.

Sound and Communication Unit meets 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 12, in the Meeting Hall.

Washington Unit Meeting meets at 6 p.m. Thursday, March 13, at the Longview Hall, 1145 Commerce Ave, Longview, Washington.

Bylaws Committee meets 5:30 p.m. Monday, March 17, in the Executive Boardroom.

Executive Board Meeting meets 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 19, in the Executive Boardroom.

Meetings are at 15937 NE Airport Way, Portland, unless otherwise noted.

DEATH ASSESSMENTS: No. 2379, Paul L. Schweitzer; No. 2380, Sylvester A. Spieker; No. 2381, Lloyd B. Knudsen; and No. 2382, Paul Georgeades. The March 2014 assessment is \$1.50.

ELEVATOR CONSTRUCTORS 23

Members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, March 13, preceded by a 5:30 p.m. Executive Board meeting, at 12779 NE Whitaker Way, Portland.

FIRE FIGHTERS 452

Members meet 6 p.m. Wednesday, April 2, at 2807 NW Fruit Valley Rd., Vancouver, Wash.

FIRE FIGHTERS 1660

Members meet 8 a.m. Thursday, March 13, at 4411 SW Sunset Dr., Lake Oswego.

GLASS WORKERS 740

Eugene area members meet 5 p.m. Monday, March 10, at Best Western Grand Manor Inn, 971 Kruse Way, Springfield.

Salem area members meet 5 p.m. Tuesday, March 11, at Candalaria Terrace, Suite 204, 2659 Commercial St. SE, Salem.

INSULATORS 36

Executive Board meets 6 p.m. Wednesday, March 12.

Members meet 7 p.m. Friday, March 14. Meetings are at 11145 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

IRON WORKERS 29

Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, April 3, preceded by a 5:30 p.m. Executive Board meeting, at 11620 NE Ainsworth Circle #200, Portland.

IRON WORKERS SHOPMEN 516

Executive Board meets 6 p.m. Thursday, March 13. Members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, March 27. Meetings are at 11620 NE Ainsworth Cir., #300, Portland.

LABORERS 320

Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, March 13, at Joe Edgar Hall, Teamsters' Complex, 1850 NE 162nd Ave., Portland.

LABORERS 483

MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES

Members meet 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 18, preceded by a 5:30 p.m. stewards' meeting, at the Musicians Hall, 325 NE 20th Ave., Portland.

LABORERS/VANCOUVER 335

Members meet 7 p.m. Monday, April 7, preceded by a 6:15 p.m. Executive Board meeting, at the Vancouver Labor Center, 2212 NE Andresen Rd., Vanc.

LANE COUNTY LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 26, at 1116 South A St., Springfield.

LANE, COOS, CURRY & DOUGLAS BUILDING TRADES

Delegates meet at noon Wednesday, March 26, at the Springfield Training Center, 2861 Pierce Parkway, Springfield.

LINN-BENTON-LINCOLN LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 26, preceded by a 6:30 p.m. Executive Board meeting, at 1400 Salem Ave., Albany.

LINOLEUM LAYERS 1236

PLEASE NOTE DATE CHANGE. Portland area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, March 20, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland. **PLEASE NOTE:** This meeting is SPECIAL CALL to vote on a tentative agreement.

MARION-POLK-YAMHILL LABOR COUNCIL

Executive Board meets 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 11, followed by a 7 p.m. general meeting at 1400 Tandem Ave. SE, Salem.

METAL TRADES COUNCIL

Executive Board meets 10 a.m. Thursday, March 13.

Delegates meet 5 p.m. Tuesday, March 25. Meetings are at IBEW Local 48 Hall, 15937 NE Airport Way, Portland.

MID-COLUMBIA LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 11, at 3313 W. 2nd, The Dalles.

MULTNOMAH COUNTY EMPLOYEES 88

General membership meets 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 19, preceded by a 6 p.m. stewards' meeting, at the AFSCME Union Office, 6025 E Burnside, Portland.

land.

NORTHWEST OREGON LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 7 p.m. Monday, March 24, at IBEW Local 48 Hall, 15937 NE Airport Way, Portland.

OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES 11

Members meet 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 11, at 3815 Columbia St., Vancouver. **PLEASE NOTE:** Nominations will be accepted for the following positions: Executive Secretary-Treasurer (3 year term); Utilities (2 year term); Public Employees (2 year term); Labor Organizations (2 year term), At-Large (2 year term); Trustee (3 year term); and Trustee (2 year term). Nominees must be present to accept, or have written acceptance of nomination submitted at this meeting. Nominations will be held in accordance with Article VII, Sections 1-4 of the Constitution of the Office & Professional Employees International Union, Local No. 11 which states the following:

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS
Section 1. Nomination of officers shall take place on the second Tuesday in March at the General Membership meeting of each year. No person may be nominated, appointed or elected, or in any way represent the members of this Union unless he or she has been a member of this Union in continuous good standing for at least twelve (12) months preceding the election.

Section 2. No member shall be a candidate for more than one (1) office.

Section 3. Members need not be present to be nominated for any union office. Those members, who by virtue of geography are unable to either attend or have other members from their area attend to place their name in nomination, may notify the Union office of their desire to be nominated. The Executive Secretary Treasurer shall nominate or cause to be nominated those same members. The members, who are not present at the nomination meeting to accept the nomination, must have their acceptance of the nomination in writing, available at the nomination meeting. Only those candidates who accept the nomination shall be considered valid candidates.

Section 4. Except as provided for in Section 3 above, write-in nominations or nominations by proxy shall not be allowed.

***only members that reside outside of Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington Counties in Oregon, and Clark County in Washington may utilize the geographical exception in Section 3.

OPERATING ENGINEERS 701

District 4 members meet 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 1, at Cousin's Restaurant, 2114 W. 6th St., The Dalles.

District 4 members meet 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, April 2, at the Pheasant Cafe, 149 E. Main St., Hermiston.

District 1 & 5 members meet 7:30 p.m. Friday, April 4, at 555 E. First St., Gladstone.

District 1 members meet 7:30 p.m. Monday April 7, at Longview Red Lion, 510 Kelso Dr., Kelso.

District 3 members meet 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 8, at North Bend/Coos Bay Labor Center, 3427 Ash St., North Bend.

District 3 members meet 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 9, at Holiday Inn Express, 285 Peninger Rd., Central Point.

District 2 members meet 7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 10, at the Comfort Suites, 969 Kruse Way, Springfield.

PAINTERS & DRYWALL FINISHERS 10

Members meet 6 p.m. Wednesday, March 19, at 11145 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland. **PLEASE NOTE:** Special called vote on MASH fund and Returning Shipyard dues. Website: www.iupatlocal10.org

ROOFERS & WATERPROOFERS 49

Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, March 13. Executive Board meets 7 p.m. Thursday, April 3. Meetings are at 5032 SE 26th Ave., Portland.

SHEET METAL WORKERS 16

Portland area members meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, March 11, at the Sheet Metal Training Center, 2379 NE 178th Ave., Portland

Medford area members meet 4 p.m. Wednesday, March 12, at Wild River Pizza, 2684 N Pacific Hwy., Medford.

Eugene area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, March 13, at the Local 16 Hall, 1887 Laura St., Springfield.

Coos Bay area members meet 4 p.m. Thursday, March 20, at Abby's Pizza, 997 First St., Coos Bay.

Women of Sheet Metal Workers Local 16 (WOSM) meet 4:30 p.m. Friday, March 21, at Beaulahland, 118 NE 28th Ave., Portland. Children are welcome.

Portland area VOC members meet 6 p.m. Wednesday, April 2, at the Sheet Metal Training Center, 2379 NE 178th Ave., Portland.

SIGN PAINTERS & PAINT MAKERS 1094

Members meet 3:30 p.m. Monday, March 17, in the District Office, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

SOUTHEASTERN OREGON LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 6:30 p.m. Thursday, March 13, at the Woodworkers Hall, 3836 Altamont Drive, Klamath Falls.

SOUTHERN OREGON

CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, March 11, at the Labor Temple, 4480 Rogue Valley Hwy. #3, Central Point.

SOUTHWESTERN OREGON

CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 6 p.m. Monday, April 7, at the Bay Area Labor Center, 3427 Ash, North Bend.

SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON

CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 6 p.m. Thursday, March 27, preceded by an Executive Board meeting, at a location to be determined.

UNITED ASSOCIATION 290

Portland area members meet 7:30 p.m. Friday, March 21, at 20210 SW Teton Ave., Tualatin. The following locations will be able to participate remotely in the Regular Business Meeting at 7:30 on the 3rd Fri-

day of every month: Bend, Eugene/Springfield, Eugene, Medford, and Salem.

Astoria area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, March 27, at the Astoria Labor Temple, 926 Duane, Astoria.

Brookings area members meet 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 25. Please contact Craig Spjut at 707-496-1767 for location information.

Coos Bay area members meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, March 25, at the Coos Bay Training Center, 2nd & Kruse, Coos Bay.

Klamath Falls area members meet 5 p.m. Tuesday, March 25, at 4816 S 6th St., Klamath Falls.

The Dalles area members meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, March 25, at the United Steelworkers Local 9170 Union Hall, The Dalles.

Memorial service set for former AFL-CIO political director Knudsen

A memorial service for Lloyd Knudsen will be held Friday, March 28, from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the IBEW Local 48 Hall, 15937 NE Airport Way, Portland. Lunch will be served.

Knudsen, a former political coordinator of the Oregon AFL-CIO and director of the Portland Metal Trades Council, was a 71-year member of Local 48. He died Jan. 31 at age 88.

For more information, call Sam Gillispie at 503-598-6364

Avakian to speak about veterans' laws at upcoming LERA meeting

The Oregon chapter of the Labor and Employment Relations Association (LERA) and the Oregon Public Employer Labor Relations Association will discuss veterans' preference laws, Portland's paid sick leave law, and other topics Tuesday, March 11, at PGE 3 World Trade Center, 121 SW Salmon, Portland. Registration begins 8:15 a.m. with the program starting at 9 a.m. Cost is \$25.

Leading the discussion will be Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian.

For more information or to register, contact Marsha.Chadwick@homeforward.org.

Wyden will discuss national security policies March 18 at Wayne Morse Legacy Series

How does one ensure that both liberty and security are protected in this age of enhanced surveillance? U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, widely recognized as a leading voice in the U.S. Congress for more open and transparent national security policies, will discuss the tension between civil liberties and national security and how we can preserve liberty and security Tuesday, March 18, at 7 p.m. at First Congregational Church, 1126 SW Park Ave, Portland.

The event is part of the Wayne Morse Legacy Series, which discusses the relevance of Morse's principles to important current issues of national security and military affairs, through non-partisan, free public programs in Oregon and Washington, D.C. Morse is a former U.S. senator from Oregon.

The Wayne Morse Legacy Series is sponsored by the Wayne Morse Center for Law and Politics, the Oregon Historical Society and the World Affairs Council of Oregon. The event is free and open to the public.

Registration is required. To register go to worldoregon.org.

Retiree Meeting Notices

ALLIANCE FOR RETIRED AMERICANS OREGON CHAPTER
Annual State Convention, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Saturday, March 8, at the Madison Grill banquet room, 1125 SE Madison St., Portland. All retirees are welcome to attend.

BAKERS 114
Retirees meet 11:30 a.m. Thursday, March 27, at Izzy's Pizza & Buffet, 1307 NE 102nd Ave. & Halsey, Portland.

ELECTRICAL WORKERS 48
Retirees, wives and friends meet for lunch 11:30 a.m. Tuesday, March 11, at Russellville Park Plaza, 20 SE 103rd, new west bldg. For reserva-

tions and more information, please contact Glenn Hodgkinson at 503-656-0028.

ELEVATOR CONSTRUCTORS 23
Retirees meet 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, March 12, at HomeTown Buffet, 10542 SE Washington St., Portland.

IRON WORKERS 29
Retirees meet 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, March 12, at the Iron Workers 29 Hall, 11620 NE Ainsworth Circle, Portland for a catered lunch.
Retirees meet 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, April 9, at Almost Home Restaurant, 3310 Market St., NE, Salem. All retirees, spouses and

widows are encouraged to attend.

OREGON AFSCME
Retirees meet 10 a.m. Tuesday, March 18, at the AFSCME office, 6025 E. Burnside, Portland. Call Michael Arken for information 1-800-521-5954 ext. 226.

SHEET METAL 16
Retirees meet 11:30 a.m. Thursday, March 13, at Izzy's, 1307 NE 102nd, Portland.

UNITED ASSOCIATION 290
Retirees meet 10 a.m. Thursday, March 20, at 20210 SW Teton Ave., Tualatin.



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- Tacoma - 253.759.9291
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Eastern Washington

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- Kennewick - 509.737.8555
- Pasco - 509.542.9981
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- Spokane (North) - 509.468.0866
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AFSCME #88 backs Francesconi for Multnomah County chair

By DON McINTOSH
Associate Editor

Former Portland City Commissioner Jim Francesconi won AFSCME Local 88's endorsement in his race for Multnomah County Chair Feb. 19. The endorsement came after Francesconi squared off against two-term county Commissioner Deborah Kafoury at a candidates forum for Local 88 members. Local 88 represents about 3,000 Multnomah County employees, and the candidates are vying to succeed Jeff Cogen, who resigned after exposure of an extramarital affair with a County employee.

Chances are, most voters don't know much about the government of Oregon's most populous county, but Local 88 members do. It's a \$1.5-billion-a-year operation with a broad portfolio of responsibilities: Not only bridges, libraries, courts, jails, and elections, but public health, animal control, restaurant inspections, property tax collection, policing and road maintenance in unincorporated areas, and services for seniors, the developmentally disabled and mentally ill, domestic violence survivors, addicts and ex-offenders. Whoever is elected chair will be responsible for all that, and will be the boss of Local 88 members' bosses.

After intensive candidate interviews, Local 88's volunteer Political Action Committee was evenly split over whether to endorse Francesconi or Kafoury. That left the decision wide open Feb. 19 at the union's monthly general membership meeting. Members packed into Oregon AFSCME's Portland office to hear Francesconi and Kafoury answer their written questions. [A third candidate — restaurant manager and Dominican immigrant Aquiles Montás — also took part in the candidates forum, but didn't get serious consideration for endorsement.]

In the members-only debate afterward over who to endorse, several Lo-



Jim Francesconi (standing), a former Portland city commissioner, and Deborah Kafoury, a two-term Multnomah County commissioner, squared off at a candidates forum Feb. 19 sponsored by Multnomah County Employees Local 88, an affiliate of AFSCME. Both are vying for the open seat at Multnomah County chair.

cal 88 members said they were impressed by Francesconi's self-presentation as a champion for minority opportunities and for Multnomah County's impoverished outer east side.

Members described Kafoury as a known quantity with a strong understanding of the County, and said she's always had a good relationship with Local 88.

But members had a hard time identifying any specific achievement during her time in office. Reelecting her would bring "more of the same," members said, whereas Francesconi would be more likely to shake things up.

Francesconi told the Labor Press he was deeply honored to get Local 88's endorsement. The race for chair is his first return to politics 10 years after he suffered a humiliating defeat in a race for Portland mayor. Francesconi was endorsed by AFSCME Local 189 and other unions in that 2004 campaign, but

got 38 percent of the vote in the general election — after outspending former police chief Tom Potter more than 15-to-1. The defeat came up at the Local 88 candidates forum when the candidates were asked to identify their biggest mistake.

"During the mayor's race, I took too much money from downtown interests," Francesconi said. "That wiped out 25 years of working in the community and created the impression that I only cared about them."

Francesconi spent 18 years representing plaintiffs in personal injury cases, including migrant farmworkers and public employees. At one time, now-labor-commissioner Brad Avakian was his law partner. In 1996, he outpolled former state representative Gail Shibley to win a seat on Portland City Council, and was re-elected in 2000. In 2002, Francesconi sponsored a living wage ordinance to improve wages and

benefits for janitors, security guards and parking attendants employed by City contractors, after a three-year campaign by Portland Jobs With Justice.

After losing the mayor's race, Francesconi joined the Haglund Kelley law firm and took personal injury and medical negligence cases. He also represented minority contractors and a pair of unions, Operating Engineers Local 701 and the Pacific Northwest District Council of Carpenters, in crafting a "community benefits agreement" endorsed by the Portland City Council, which sets out requirements that public construction projects use union la-

bor, minority contractors, and apprentices. The Carpenters have endorsed his bid for County chair. Local 701's endorsement interview was rescheduled to March 9 because of snow.

Kafoury, meanwhile, is backed by dozens of current and former city, county, and state elected leaders, and four labor organizations thus far: International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 48, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555, the Columbia Pacific Building and Construction Trades Council, the International Longshore & Warehouse Union, and Oregon Nurses Association.

Unionists to bowl for Muscular Dystrophy Association on April 13

The 25th annual Labor Bowl Challenge for the Muscular Dystrophy Association will be held Sunday, April 13, at Sunset Lanes in Beaverton.

The Labor Bowl Challenge consists of four-person teams that compete for prizes. Money is raised through pledges and from a silent auction, and goes to buy wheelchairs and braces for children, as well as for research and summer camps.

Muscular dystrophy is a hereditary condition marked by a progressive weakening and wasting of the muscles over time.

Since its inception in 1989, union members have donated \$351,025.75 to MDA.

The event is coordinated by the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) Branch 82 and the Northwest Oregon Labor Council.

For more information, or to sign up and receive fundraising packets and instructions, call Jim Falvey, president of Letter Carriers Branch 82 at 503-493-

5903. To donate silent auction items, call NALC's MDA Coordinator Debby Burbank at 971-404-5384.

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Labor groups oppose Tigard ballot measure targeting high-capacity transit

Two large labor organizations are opposing a ballot measure in Tigard that they say is designed to cripple the Southwest Corridor Plan — a high-capacity transit connection between Portland, Tigard and Tualatin.

Delegates to the Columbia Pacific Building and Construction Trades Council (CPBCTC) and the Northwest Oregon Labor Council voted last month to oppose Measure 34-210. Ballots in the vote-by-mail special election will be counted the evening of March 11. It is the only item on the ballot.

Union officials believe backers of

PERC gathering March 20

The 28th annual Public Employment Relations Conference (PERC) will be held Thursday, March 20, at the Salem Conference Center. PERC is a gathering of public sector labor relations professionals from across Oregon, including attorneys, neutrals, and representatives from both unions and management.

For more details and registration information visit lerc.uoregon.edu or contact Helen Moss at hmoss@uoregon.edu.

On March 11: Say 'NO' to Tigard Measure 34-210

the measure arranged for a special election (rather than wait until the May primary) in hopes that fewer residents will turn out to vote, thus giving it a better chance of passing.

If passed, the measure will make it the official policy of the City of Tigard to oppose the Southwest Corridor Plan unless it is specifically approved by voters. It will also require the City to send annual letters to every state and federal elected official from Oregon reminding them of their opposition to high-capacity transit. Unless there is a specific measure passed by the voters first, the City couldn't amend its comprehensive plan or land-use regulations to prepare for any transit project, bus or rail.

Metro, TriMet, Portland, Tigard, Tualatin and other area cities have been working on the Southwest Corridor Plan for years. The idea is to bring a high-capacity transit line from Portland to Tualatin, either by MAX light rail or bus rapid transit.

Willy Myers, executive secretary-treasurer of CPBCTC, said backers of the measure are anti-light-rail conservatives, libertarians and Tea Partiers who are trying to gain a foothold in Washington County. One of the backers is the Oregon Transformation Project, an organization that helped elect conservatives John Ludlow and Tootie Smith to the Clackamas County Board of Commissioners.

"Their stated strategy is to make an anchor city oppose light rail to stop the funding and thus kill a \$2 billion union construction project," Myers told delegates to the NOLC meeting Feb. 24. "It's time for labor to hold the line and defeat this poorly written and community-damaging ballot measure."

The Tigard City Council, Tigard Chamber of Commerce, the Westside Economic Alliance, the Oregon Environmental Council and dozens of other groups also oppose Measure 34-210.

The Tigard City Council, which was unanimous in its opposition, pointed out that Tigard's current city charter already gives residents a transit vote. The charter states that voters must approve any new city fees or revenues for light rail construction in Tigard.

Local Motion

January 2014

A list of Oregon and Southwest Washington workplaces deciding whether to be union-represented — as reported by the National Labor Relations Board and the Oregon Employment Relations Board.

Voting in union elections

Date	Workplace (Location) Union	Yes	No
1/24	Hydro-Temp Mechanical (Wilsonville) Sheet Metal Local 16	8	16

Requesting a union election

Workplace (Location) Union	Number of workers in unit
Jaspers Foods Management (Wilsonville) Bakers Local 114 DECERT	5
Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center (Corvallis) SEIU Local 49	60

LEGEND

: workers will be union-represented : workers will be on their own

DECERT : A decertification election occurs when some union-represented workers declare that the union no longer has majority support. A 'yes' vote is a vote for the union.

Union members pass the hat, collect \$450 for slain worker

Delegates to the Northwest Oregon Labor Council "passed the hat" at the Feb. 24 monthly meeting and collected \$450 for the memorial fund of AF-SCME member Grady Waxenfelter.

Waxenfelter, a Clackamas County



GRADY WAXENFELTER

weighmaster and a member of AF-SCME Local 350, which represents Clackamas County workers, was shot and killed Feb. 6 after pulling over a commercial logging truck with no license plate.

As of press time, the alleged killer was still at large. Police have identified the suspect as Dirck Morgan White, 41, of Washington state. White has a long criminal record in Washington.

Waxenfelter, 47, a resident of Estacada, had been a Local 350 member since 1987, when he started with the county as a mechanic. He was promoted to senior mechanic in 1999, and

has been a county weighmaster since 2005.

Under Oregon law, weighmasters have the same authority as police officers to issue citations and even make arrests.

The Clackamas County Sheriff's Office has announced a \$7,500

reward for information leading to an arrest, with \$5,000 coming from the county and an additional \$2,500 donated by O'Malley Brothers Trucking, where the suspect was employed.

Local 350 has established a memorial fund to benefit Waxenfelter's family. He has a wife and three grown children.

Donations to the fund can be made to: AFSCME Waxenfelter Memorial Fund, c/o Sterling Bank, 25529 SW Glen Dr., Wilsonville, OR 97070. You can also make a donation at any Sterling Bank branch; the account number is 9944634964.

Free tax preparation available

Labor's Community Service Agency is spreading the word that low- to moderate-income Oregonians can have their income tax returns prepared free by trained volunteers statewide. CASH (Creating Assets, Savings and Hope) Oregon, a non-profit group in partnership with AARP Tax-Aide, supports free tax preparation in 32 counties in Oregon at more than 140 tax sites.

Many people who earn very little may be eligible for a refund. Tax credits

that many could qualify for are the Federal and Oregon Earned Income Tax Credit, the Federal Child Tax Credit, and the Oregon Working Family Child Care Credit.

Trained volunteers will help taxpayers sort through their questions and provide assistance.

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Labor council stays out of Portland City Council races — for now

Delegates vote to endorse Deborah Kafoury in heated race for Multnomah County chair

Delegates to the Northwest Oregon Labor Council (NOLC) voted Feb. 24 to stay out of Portland City Council elections until the City has a new collective bargaining agreement with the District Council of Trade Unions (DCTU). City employees represented by seven unions rejected a tentative agreement Feb. 10 after nearly a year of contentious bargaining. The City has filed an unfair labor practice charge against the DCTU and, at press time both sides were in a 30-day cooling off period after having submitted their "last, best and final" offers to a state mediator on Feb. 25.

Commissioners Dan Saltzman and Nick Fish are running for re-election.

Neither has what is considered to be serious opposition. Both commissioners have endorsements from various union locals not associated with the city.

In other political action, NOLC endorsed Deborah Kafoury for Multnomah County chair.

Kafoury resigned as county commissioner to run for chair. The seat opened mid-term, following the resignation of Chair Jeff Cogen. Kafoury is being challenged by former Portland city commissioner Jim Francesconi. Both candidates have received endorsements from various labor unions. Kafoury, however, was able to attain a two-thirds majority vote by NOLC delegates.

In Multnomah County, NOLC also endorsed incumbent Commissioner Loretta Smith; Jules Bailey, who is seeking Kafoury's old seat; and the re-election of Sheriff Dan Staton.

In Clackamas County, NOLC endorsed Commissioners Paul Savas and Jim Bernard for re-election.

In Washington County, the labor

council is backing Commissioner Greg Malinowski for re-election, and former Congresswoman Elizabeth Furse, who is trying to unseat incumbent Commissioner Bob Terry in District 4.

At Metro regional council, NOLC endorsed the re-election of president Tom Hughes and the re-election of Councilors Shirley Craddick, Carlotta Collette, and Kathryn Harrington.

NOLC took action on two ballot measures that will be on the May ballot.

Delegates voted to oppose the Portland Public Water District ballot measure. Measure 26-156 would strip the Water Bureau from the city, taking with it several hundred union jobs, and placing them under a new water board.

Five large corporate backers covered more than 90 percent of the costs to buy enough signatures to qualify for the ballot. It includes \$55,000 from Superfund polluter Wacker Siltronic and \$50,000 from timber baron Harry Merlo, formerly of Louisiana Pacific. The group spent more than \$130,000

on paid signature gathers.

The labor council also endorsed a local-option levy for Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue. TVF&R is Oregon's largest fire district, serving approximately 452,000 citizens in the cities of Beaverton, Durham, King City, Rivergrove, Sherwood, Tigard, Tualatin, and Wilsonville, as well as unincorporated portions of Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties.

Brian Smith, vice president of the 350-member Tualatin Valley Fire Fighters Local 1660, told NOLC's Executive Board the fire district levy hasn't sought an increase in nearly 15 years. A local option levy of 25 cents

per \$1,000 of assessed property value initially passed in 2000. Voters renewed the levy in 2004 and again in 2008. The money allowed for the hiring and/or retention of 36 firefighter medics; the addition of two rescue units; replacement of firefighting safety equipment, including breathing devices and thermal imagers; purchase of rescue tools for accident scenes; construction of a new training tower, and more.

In May, TVF&R will seek an additional 20 cents, or 45 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value. At press time, the local option levy had not received a ballot number.

Workers consider strike after City of Portland worsens its offer

The City of Portland doesn't appear to be in a hurry to get a deal with its 1,600 workers who are represented by the seven-union District Council of Trade Unions (DCTU).

Two weeks after DCTU members rejected a tentative contract agreement Feb. 10, the City submitted a "last, best, and final offer" that contains even less favorable terms. DCTU unions are now determining, one by one, whether to accept those terms or authorize a strike. Each DCTU union has its own process for deciding.

Credit union to celebrate 60th anniversary at annual meeting April 15

Mark your calendars for Tuesday, April 15, to attend the IBEW & United Workers Federal Credit Union's 60th anniversary annual meeting.

The meeting will be held at the IBEW Local 48 Hall, 15937 NE Airport Way, Portland, starting at 7 p.m.

For more information, call the credit union at 503-253-8193.

Under Oregon's Public Employee Collective Bargaining Act, the City workers may legally strike as soon as March 28 — at the expiration of a 30-day cooling-off period. Alternately, the City could "implement" its offer. (That's labor relations parlance for when an employer imposes its terms on workers without their agreement.)

Oregon AFSCME Council 75 Executive Director Ken Allen said if the City implements, it would be like nuclear war.

"[With this worsened proposal], they hope to punish," said DCTU chief negotiator Rob Wheaton, a union rep for AFSCME Local 189, the largest of the DCTU unions. "It underscores the City's paternalistic attitude toward labor relations: 'You guys have not behaved. We're going to punish you.' They don't see labor unions as equal partners."

Wheaton said he doesn't believe the City will implement, considering that it's facing political attack by a group of big water users. A ballot initiative on the May primary ballot would take water and sewer operations out of City con-

trol and hand it over to a newly created public utility district. The proposed district would be led by an elected board, but the initiative contains many restrictions on who could serve. AFSCME has so far contributed \$20,000 to the campaign, making it the largest funder of the "no" campaign so far.

"It's going to be very difficult for them to do such an egregious act as implementing an agreement on us, while continuing to ask for political support," Wheaton said.

Texas Hold'em poker tournament March 15 for Doernbecher kids

The third annual Unions for Kids Texas Hold 'em Poker Tournament will be held Saturday, March 15, from 4 to 10 p.m. at Sheet Metal Workers Local 16 Hall, 2379 NE 178th Ave., Portland.

Buy-in is \$50. Top three winners will receive Visa gift cards of \$1,000, \$500 and \$250.

All proceeds from the tournament, which is in association with the Union for Kids Motorcycle Poker Run held in June, go to Doernbecher Children's Hospital.

For more information or to register, call Emmy at 503-254-0123.

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...‘Right-to-work’ initiative dropped in Oregon

(From Page 1)

lic Employee Choice Act,” which would have removed any requirement that public employees pay union dues or any share of the costs that unions incur to represent them).

Similar right-to-work laws have been passed across the country in recent years, most notably in Wisconsin, Ohio and Indiana.

Also withdrawn were union-backed initiative petitions 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 29, 30, 32, 33 and 35. Our Oregon sponsored all but IP 35. Ten of the measures were different versions of proposals to raise taxes on big corporations and the wealthy. The others were counter-initiatives to IP 9. Under Oregon law, if two ballot measures contradict each other and both pass, the one that gets the most votes prevails.

IP 35, “Employee Rights At Work,” was sponsored by Oregon AFSCME Council 75 political director Joe Baessler. It said that any initiative that alters laws on minimum wage, family leave, payroll deduction, or collective bargaining would be required to describe current law and specify whether the initiative enhances or restricts employee rights, a determination that would be made by the state labor commissioner.

Two other initiatives — one pro-

union and one anti-union — were not withdrawn.

Initiative Petition 2 is a constitutional amendment that would prohibit public employees from using payroll deductions to transfer funds to/on behalf of unions. It has yet to be certified for signature gathering. The chief petitioner is Nicholas Urhausen of Eugene.

Initiative Petition 36, “Protect Workers Right to Contribute,” names Service Employees International Union Local 503 political director Arthur Towers as chief petitioner. IP 36 says that “no law shall restrict the ability of employers and their employees (either individually or through their bargaining representative) to negotiate and agree upon terms governing payroll deductions.”

Neither petition has been certified for signature gathering.

In a press release following Gov. Kitzhaber’s announcement, Oregon AFL-CIO President Tom Chamberlain thanked everyone who was involved in the conversations that removed the measures from the ballot.

“I look forward to working with union members, community leaders, and employers in our state as we continue to chart the best path ahead for Oregon.”

“The best news out of this deal is that Oregon workers will not have to

face a major, multi-million dollar attack from out-of-state corporate interests,” said Scott Moore, spokesperson for Our Oregon. “While the Koch Brothers and ALEC are moving these anti-worker laws around the country, we won’t have to face that threat this year.”

In a joint press release, the Oregon Education Association and SEIU said that as advocates for working people, public education, and an economy that

works for the middle class, “(we) will be working closely together to secure more funding for schools and the services that Oregon’s communities need and deserve. We’ll be fighting to make sure that big corporations and those who are not paying their share are doing their part. And we’ll fight to keep Oregon the kind of place where working parents can realistically dream of a better tomorrow for their kids.”

Chamberlain added that the agreement doesn’t mean labor will sit out the 2014 election.

“There are still important decisions to be made, and now that our state isn’t fighting for the future of the middle class and our economic bottom line on the ballot, it is crucial to turn our attention to electing pro-worker leaders who can fend off battles like this in our Legislature,” he said.

...Parkrose won’t contract out bus drivers

(From Page 1)

the head of the district’s parent-led fundraising organization. And the statewide leadership of OSEA and of the Oregon AFL-CIO showed up to show their opposition.

Yet OSEA leaders didn’t know what the outcome would be going into the Feb. 24 board meeting. Of the five board members, only Portland schoolteacher Erick Flores had openly criticized the outsourcing proposal. OSEA thought retired teacher Mary Lu Baetkey would also lean against it, but software engineer and board chair Ed Grassel was plainly for it, and Port of Portland HR manager James Trujillo signaled his support too. That left vice

chair Thuy Tran, an eye doctor, as the swing vote. When she spoke against the plan, the room erupted in applause.

“We need to know our kids,” Tran said. “We need to control our environment from A to Z.”

Reading, writing, and arithmetic are important, Tran said, but the district is responsible for much more than that. Three quarters of the district’s 3,500 students are eligible for free or reduced cost lunch. Parkrose School District takes responsibility for the physical, emotional and psychological well-being, the meals — even the clothing — of the kids in its charge. And that requires a team effort, Tran said, from the time students are picked up in the morning until they return home.

Tran likened the Parkrose staff cuts of recent years to amputating body parts, and said she would refuse to cut any more.

And with that, she joined Baetkey and Flores in a 3-2 vote to reject the proposal to contract with First Student.

OSEA represents school support workers, and has repeatedly fought school district efforts to contract out school bus, custodial, and cafeteria operations.

OSEA Executive Director Rick Shidaker said he sees no villains at Parkrose. Just as in other districts, the push to outsource at Parkrose is a response to real budget limitations. But the union contends that slashing district worker wages and benefits is not the right solution.

“Every single worker has value,” Shidaker said, “and every single worker should have a living wage, which includes the ability to retire after a long career.”

In Parkrose, OSEA did everything it could to reach out to the community, and found that its message resonated.

“The community reacted, and the message got to the board,” Shidaker said. “They recognized the importance of keeping it local, and keeping it in the community. This is not just a victory for unions. It’s a victory for the community.”

Portland teachers ratify new contract

Teachers at Portland Public Schools voted Feb. 27 to approve a new three-year contract, which was ratified by the district board March 3.

The deal was reached Feb. 18 — two days before a strike was set to begin — and involved compromises on both sides. The district let go its demand to eliminate a provision limiting teacher workload, and went the other direction, agreeing to hire 150 teachers to reduce class sizes and workloads for teachers.

Portland Association of Teachers agreed to phase out an early retirement incentive, and simplify the transfer process. The contract also provides annual raises of 2.3 percent, and adds two more days to the school year. The district will continue to pay 93 percent of health insurance premiums.

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