

Strikers near settlement



Lane County employees will spend their fourth day picketing today. Although negotiations with the county are deadlocked, most important county operations continue and deficiencies in

most areas have been filled. The union says the issues that need to be discussed are wages and fringe benefits.

Photo by Keith Allen

By KEN HASWELL
Of the Emerald

While striking county employees picketed outside, Lane County commissioners met yesterday to hear a report that the strike, now in its fourth day, has not had a crucial impact on the county.

Lane County General Administrator George Morgan reported that because of several county departments transferring personnel, most deficiencies in critical areas of county services have been relieved. "I would say that there has been an impact, but not a serious impact (on the county)," said Morgan.

Some county facilities have been consolidated because many positions require only one or two persons, he said.

"But I think that at the present

time, I can advise you that county operations — important county operations — are being properly staffed and maintained," Morgan said.

Jeff Schrader, representing the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Union, said the two striking locals seemed "interested in strictly getting to the table, face to face, with the commissioners."

"The only way that we're ever going to get a settlement is to sit down face to face and discuss the issues," he said.

"The only issues are wages and other fringe benefits, and the only thing that we're interested in talking about is the wages and other fringe benefits."

He adds it is in the best interest of the union, the county and the public "to get back at the table and try to work out an agreement that will not only sa-

tisfy the needs of the union, but also those needs of the county as a whole."

The two striking groups, AFSCME locals 626 and 2831, represent nearly 800 county public works and courthouse employees.

Schrader confirmed a report that U.S. Congressman Jim Weaver, D-Oregon, told the union that the county will receive \$916,000 more in timber receipts than had been expected.

The union says that surplus is one of 27 different areas in the county budget where money can be found to pay for the union's wage increase demands.

The county has already settled with county nurses. They will receive an 11 percent wage increase, retroactive to July. And 193 members of the sheriff's department's AFSCME local voted Thursday on a 16 percent increase offer.

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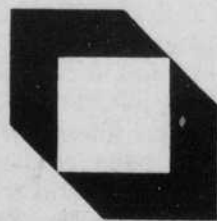
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