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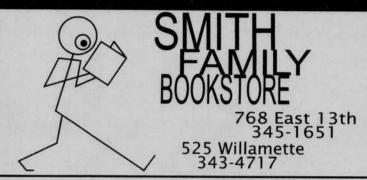
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Bus: LTD to establish medical savings account

Continued from page 1A

The contract agreement calls for the union to retain its Preferred Provider Organization plan while LTD establishes a medical savings account to compensate unionized employees for any extra costs they may incur under the plan.

"Our members will not see any extra costs associated with their medical plan," ATU Division 757 Vice President Jonathan Hunt.

Vobora said the health-care plan is one that should meet the district's needs while allowing employees to enjoy the health-care coverage they've always had.

"It's probably not exactly what we were looking for, but it has the controls in there that we believe will give us a good opportunity to control costs," Vobora said. "I think our board and our district should be commended for moving to a point where we could get an agreement and get back to what we're supposed to be doing, which is getting people moving around this community."

Vobora and union representatives said it is crucial that relations between the district and the union improve in time for the 2007-09 contract negotiations.

The district is hoping to work with employees to help them understand its spending habits "so they feel part of the process and they feel like they have all the information they need," Vobora said.

Hunt said the relationship between the district and the union has been strained but the chances of it improving are high.

"It's going to take some time. However, we are professionals and we will be back to work in our normal manner Monday morning," Hunt said.

Piercy said conflict between the district and the union highlighted the importance of management and labor having a good relationship.

"We've been reminded how important public transportation is to the well-being of our community," Piercy said.

meghanncuniff@dailyemerald.com



TIM BOBOSKY | PHOTOGRAPHER

LTD bus driver and union member Lisa M. Nicholson cast her ballot during a meeting Sunday afternoon to decide the fate of LTD's proposed contract.



Sociology adjunct professor Chuck Hunt, left, walked away after talks with students from the College Republicans group on Friday. Junior Allie Senger and freshman Jenna Randall protested the LTD strike across the street from the Eugene

KATE HORTON | PHOTOGRAPHER



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