

Oregon Employment Relations Board judge rules against city in Oswalt case

An administrative law judge for the Oregon Employment Relations Board has ruled the City of Portland committed numerous Unfair Labor Practices (ULPs) against Portland Police Bureau employee Angela Oswalt and her union, Local 189 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME).

As a result of the ruling, the union contends Oswalt should be placed back to work immediately; she has been on paid administrative leave since April 2007.

"This recommended order vindicates our contention that Angela Oswalt was targeted for her union activities," said James Hester, staff representative for Oregon AFSCME Council 75. "The city needs to come to its senses, understand it has no case and put her back to work. Moreover, the city should stop wasting taxpayer money on this case."

Oswalt was recently given a letter from the city advising her the Police Bureau intended to terminate her from her non-sworn police clerk position.

Hester says it was foolish for the city to initiate such an action while the



ANGELA OSWALT

ULP case was pending on the same issues, and it would be "even more foolish now" for the city to proceed with the termination process.

"The city has no legs to stand on given the ULP ruling," said Hester. "Angela is ready and anxious to simply go back to work."

The city's proposed termination case hinges largely on allegations that Oswalt refused to answer questions in an Internal Affairs investigation.

While Oswalt answered several of the queries during a series of interviews, she declined to answer any questions related to her activities as a local union vice president and shop steward.

In the 64-page ULP decision, Administrative Law Judge Larry Witherell ruled:

"We conclude that Oswalt was engaged in protected activity and that the City engaged in adverse action against her because of her protected activity."

Witherell's proposed order finds that the city violated two state statutes regarding Oswalt and her protected activity, orders the city to "cease and desist" from violating those statutes and orders the city to "discontinue any action taken against Angela Oswalt ... and rescind any action taken against Angela Oswalt ..." based on her protected actions.

"We believe Judge Witherell's decision makes the proposed termination case against Ms. Oswalt tainted and invalid," said Hester. "The city needs to stop persecuting her and allow her to go back to work."

Classified employees ratify four-year contract at Portland School District

The Portland Federation of Teachers and Classified Employees Local 111 ratified a new four-year contract with Portland Public Schools. The vote, held April 9, was by a 94 percent margin, said Local 111 President Tom Smith.

The 1,360-member unit represents teachers, classroom paraprofessionals, secretaries, clerks, occupational and physical therapists and assistants, campus monitors, community agents and driver's education instructors employed at Portland Public Schools.

Local 111 is an affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers-Oregon, AFL-CIO.

The Portland School Board ratified the contract at its meeting April 28.

Under the agreement, PFTCE employees will receive a 2.5 percent cost of living adjustment (COLA) retroactive to July 1, 2007; an additional 2.5 percent COLA on July 1, 2008, plus step increases of between 2.5 to 5 percent for eligible employees not at the top of their wage scale on July 1, 2008.

On July 1, 2008, employees also will receive a one-time "longevity bonus" of 1.5 percent.

This means that every employee would receive, at a minimum, an increase in base wages of 5 percent in

the next four months, as well as a significant lump sum for retro pay.

With the step increases and longevity pay, every employee — depending on pay scale — will receive a total wage increase of between 6.5 and 10 percent.

The school district's monthly health care premium contribution will increase by \$46 per month (to \$826) in October 2008, and an additional \$50 a month in October, 2009.

The agreement includes a wage re-opener to cover the final years of the contract. The school district will conduct a classification study in early 2009 that will be considered in negotiating wages and benefits for 2009-

2011.

"The participation of our members and supporters — marching on informational picket lines in the freezing rain and howling wind — made a huge impression on the school board," Smith said. "It made me feel just sheer pride in being a part of PFTCE."

With ratification, Portland Public Schools has contracts in place with all bargaining units except the teachers. The contract with the Portland Association of Teachers, which represents close to 3,000 teachers, counselors, school psychologists, and librarians, expires June 30.

PAT is an affiliate of the Oregon Education Association.

AFSCME Local 88 endorses three for Multnomah County Commission

The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 88, which represents nearly 2,800 employees working for Multnomah County, has endorsed three candidates for open seats on the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners.

The local endorsed Deborah Kafoury in District 1, Rob Milesnick in District 3, and Carla Piluso in District 4.

Kafoury is a former House Democratic leader who served in the Legislature from 1999 to 2004; Milesnick handles government affairs for ODS Health Plans and formerly worked for the Oregon Judicial Department and Multnomah County DUII program; and Piluso is currently serving as police chief for the City of Gresham, Oregon's fourth largest city.

Trent Tidwell
For Clackamas County Commissioner

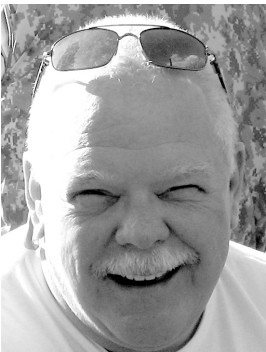
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Trent Tidwell

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Position 5*

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