

Resolution prioritizes living wage, local jobs in contracts

The Clackamas County board of commissioners unanimously passed a resolution Jan. 12 pledging to prioritize the use of local source hiring of workers, materials, and expertise that provide family wage jobs whenever it puts out for bid public construction projects and/or personal and professional service contracts.

The resolution, submitted by County Chair Charlotte Lehan, says the county “will place as a priority the selection of projects that result in jobs that pay living wages to skilled and educated workers with high productivity, provide health care benefits, encourage the longevity of workers in their positions, promote safety, advance the certifications of workers, and provide the opportunity for a pension.”

The resolution further states that “using local sources for workers, materials, and expertise is recognized as the method producing the most immediate economic benefit to the workers and businesses of Clackamas County”



Clackamas County Chair Charlotte Lehan (center) signs a resolution that calls on the county to prioritize local source hiring and family wage jobs when letting contracts. With her at the Jan. 12 signing ceremony at Machinists District W 24 in Gladstone are Commissioners Jim Bernard (left), Jamie Damon, and local union officials.

and that commissioners will “observe at all times the requirements for bidding on public improvement contracts and the prevailing wage law that provides a living wage for workers” as set out in state regulations.

A few hours after the 5-0 vote, a signing ceremony was held at the Machinists District W 24 hall in Gladstone with labor officials from construction unions, Machinists and Woodworkers locals, Teamsters, AFSCME and the Northwest Oregon Labor Council, Lehan and Clackamas County Commissioners Jim Bernard and Jamie Damon.

“Local hire is the most important part of this resolution,” Bernard said. “We want local businesses to get the business.”

“This proclamation solidifies our commitment to living wage jobs,” Damon added.

Lehan said the unanimous vote “makes this proclamation a much more powerful statement.”

Troutdale City Council gets earful from IBEW Local 48 members

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 48 and allies in East Multnomah County protested before the Troutdale City Council Jan. 10 the awarding of a contract to an out-of-state, nonunion electrical contractor on a new police station currently under construction.

Local 48 and its training center are located a few miles west of Troutdale and many of the union’s members live

in Troutdale. Last year voters approved a \$7.5 million bond to build the police station. Local 48 endorsed the bond measure and most of its members living in Troutdale voted for it.

P & C Construction was awarded the general contract, and it in turn awarded the electrical portion of the job to nonunion Prairie Electric of Vancouver, Washington.

Local 48 Business Manager Clif

Davis told the Labor Press that Prairie Electric was up against three nonunion and one union contractor for the job. Davis said the initial union bid by Heil Electric wasn’t the lowest, but it was \$20,000 lower than Prairie’s bid.

“The construction manager cited ‘non-responsive bidder’ issues as the reason for the decision, but has failed to show us the basis for this claim,” Davis said. “They will be profiting from a project paid for in part by our members due to the fact that the construction manager chose to exclude the union bid for reasons that have not been explained.”

Davis told city councilors the decision to use an out of state contractor could cost the city millions in lost revenue. “Governments always talk about the ripple effect of public works projects where a million dollars turns into as much as four million dollars to the local community due to wages, taxes and other spending related to the jobs created. So Troutdale is choosing to send millions across the river.”

Additionally, several members of Local 48 who live in Troutdale pointed out to city councilors the donated work, supplies, and money they and their union have contributed to the community. Those donations include, in part, the installation of electrical services, outlets and modifications of the street lamps that are along the Historic Columbia River Highway in downtown Troutdale, and a scoreboard for the local high school.

“This was at zero cost to the City of Troutdale. The City requested this of us and we willingly donated it to them,” Davis told the Labor Press. “Yet the project was awarded to a company with

absolutely no community ties or any history of community involvement.”

Troutdale Mayor Jim Kight directed the city staff to prepare a response to

the issues brought up by the electricians. “We will take your comments to heart and see what we can do for the future,” he said.

...Shropshire takes helm at #290

(From Page 3)

Waits representing Plumbers; Randal Nelson Jr. and Ramon Ramon outpolled three other candidates to represent Pipefitters; and Eric Fanning and Erv Garrison topped two other candidates to represent ACR.

Local 290 represents 4,200 members working in all branches of the piping industry in construction, industrial, and at shipyards in Oregon, Southwest Washington, and four counties in Northern California.

Shropshire, 58, is a 37-year member of the union. He started his career as a pipefitter in 1973 working in ship repair at the Portland shipyards. In 1979 he passed the pipefitters exam for building trades construction and subsequently worked on commercial and industrial jobs.

Shropshire comes from a pipe trades family. His grandfather, father, brother, wife, and two sons are all union pipefitters — the latter three are members of Local 290.

Shropshire was hired as a business agent for the union in 1993 by the late



AL SHROPSHIRE

business manager Matt Walters. In more than 15 years in that job he covered pipeline and gas distribution; members in east Portland through the Columbia Gorge to Morrow County and Southwest Washington; and for a short time the Portland shipyard.

He has served on Local 290’s joint apprenticeship training committee and he’s been a journeyman instructor at the training center.

“My favorite part of working as a business agent was enforcing our master labor agreement, fighting for our jurisdiction, and most of all standing up for members on the job,” he said.

In 2008, Shropshire ran unsuccessfully for business manager. He returned to work in the field in early 2009, and retired in November that same year. He was drawing a pension check when he decided to run again for the union’s top post.

Shropshire and all other officers were installed Jan. 20. All terms are for three years.

Local Motion

December 2011

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	
12/2	Parry Center for Children (Portland) SEIU Local 503 DECERT	56	40	👍
12/20	Pacific Coast Camera and Crewing (Boring) IATSE	51	9	👍
12/28	Comcast SportsNet Northwest (Portland) IATSE	11	15	👎

Unionizing by majority sign-up

Date	Workplace (Location) Union	Number of workers in unit
12/21	Metro seasonal parks and environmental workers (Portland) Laborers Local 483	5

Requesting a union election

Workplace (Location) Union	Number of workers in unit
Ochoco Manufacturing water truck maker (Prineville) Iron Workers Local 516 DECERT	5

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.