

300-member AFSCME #3580 reaches tentative deal at Metro

AFSCME Local 3580 and Metro reached tentative agreement July 17 on a new three-year contract covering over 300 Metro employees. Union members will vote Aug. 11-15 on whether to ratify the agreement.

If approved, it will provide immediate cost-of-living raises of 2.82 percent as of ratification, plus increases July 1, 2015 and 2016 equal to the increase in the Consumer Price Index, with a minimum of 1.5 percent and a maximum of 3.25 percent.

Metro also agreed to reset the step pay scale, at a cost of about \$140,000 the first year. The step scale's logic is that new hires start at the bottom and receive annual increases of 5 percent until they reach the top of the scale in seven years, but those proportions were

compressed when previous cost-of-living increases were incorrectly applied.

The union bargaining team made one significant concession: increasing the employee share of the health insurance premium. Currently workers pay 6 percent. Metro proposed they pay 10 percent, but settled for 8 percent. Premiums vary depending on family size and which plan members choose.

Separately from contract bargaining, Local 3580 and Metro agreed to terminate PacificSource as a health insurance option effective Jan. 1, because of unsustainable premium increases. It's being replaced with a Kaiser Permanente's "Added Choice" plan, which is like a preferred provider insurance plan. Members of the bargaining unit can also enroll in the Kaiser Perma-

nente health maintenance organization.

Other improvements in the tentative contract include a fairer policy on sick leave abuse, an increased clothing allowance for some workers, and a bank of paid time to partially compensate union member volunteers for their service on the union bargaining team.

The agreement commits Metro to notify the union when new employees are hired, and give the new hires 30 minutes of paid time to attend a union orientation. It also contains an "ever-green" clause that would allow one-year extensions of the contract, with the same cost-of-living raises, if neither side wants to open the contract for renegotiation in 2017.

Local 3580 President Matt Tracy, a principal planner in Metro's solid waste

division, called it a good agreement in today's climate. Tracy said union-management relations have improved since last November, when at the union's initiation, union Executive Board members began meeting with senior managers informally every two to three months, the first two times with the help

of a professional facilitator. Tracy said the meetings help eliminate rumors and mistrust, and have contributed to a less adversarial relationship.

Negotiations continue between Metro and Laborers Local 483 over a new contract for 500 employees of the Oregon Zoo and regional parks.

...Union pension funds help create jobs

(From Page 1)

tor for the Pacific Northwest Regional Council of Carpenters, added that "Nothing quite demonstrates our commitment to the City of Portland like this does — when we put our pension funds out there, those are dollars that hard-working Carpenter have earned on the jobsites.

"We're ecstatic with the team that's been assembled for this project. We know this is a winning group of folks. We've seen it again and again."

Pearl West is being developed by BPM Real Estate Group. Howard S. Wright (HSW) Constructors is the general contractor. Design-build partners with HSW are McKinstry Mechanical,

Dynalectric and Viking Sprinkler.

HSW announced at the groundbreaking that it will relocate its headquarters to the fourth floor of Pearl West after the project is completed. HSW has 150 employees.

Pearl West is slated for completion in early 2016.

(Editor's Note: LEED — or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design — is a green building certification program. Phil Beyl of GBD architects said there is a "strong passion" to get Pearl West to the LEED Gold level.

He also announced at the groundbreaking that he is in discussions with program leaders in New York to have

Pearl West be a pilot project for a new national certification process called the Well Building Standard.

The Well Building Standard focuses on human wellness within a building's environment. It identifies specific conditions, that when holistically integrated into building architecture and design, enhances the health and well-being of the occupants. "It works in careful alignment with LEED — it builds on LEED," Beyl said.

If talks are successful, Pearl West would be the first building in Oregon — and possibly the first office building in the U.S., to implement the Well Building Standard.)



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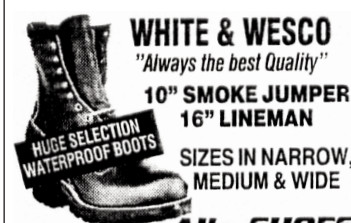
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