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COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

DCTU reaches tentative agreement

The deal with the City of Portland delivers long-overdue raises and more gender parity.

Two weeks after members voted to authorize a strike, District Council of Trade Unions (DCTU) reached tentative agreement with the City of Portland Nov. 3 on a new three-year contract covering nearly 1,100 City employees.

AFSCME Local 189 President Rob Martineau, a member of the union bargaining team, said it's one of the best contracts he's seen at the City, but he added that it wasn't until after DCTU members got engaged, mobilized, and vocal that the City moved to compromise.

The agreement includes an immediate 3.85 percent raise retroactive to the July 1, 2017 expiration of the previous union contract. (It's a 1.65 percent across-the-board raise plus a 2.2 percent cost-of-living increase.) The agreement then delivers two more annual cost-of-living increases indexed to inflation.

Workers in a number of job classifications will also get separate raises of up to 10 percent — in cases where both the City

and the unions agreed that they were underpaid compared to their counterparts at other public employers. Some of those underpaid classifications were in jobs traditionally held by women, like the City's parking code enforcement officers; both sides agreed there was a historic gendered pay discrepancy, which a 9.65 percent raise will remedy. And for about 100 police records specialists, the gender-parity raises will even be retroactive, a \$1.95 an hour increase going back more than two years. That stems from a legal case the DCTU won in which the City labor relations director was accused of failing to bargain in good faith.

One key sticking point that delayed agreement was resolved with a compromise. The City proposed to double the employee share of insurance premiums (to 10 percent) for any employees who failed to get a medical checkup at least once every two years. DCTU negotiators objected on the grounds of medical confidentiality, but in the end, the two sides crafted contract language assuring that managers won't have access to

the medical screening results.

Several management proposals also were dropped for the sake of the deal. City negotiators said it can be hard to recruit new employees in some job classifications, and proposed to give managers the discretion to bring new hires in half-way up the salary scale and with more paid vacation than the union contract otherwise entitles them to. DCTU argued that was unfair to existing employees and said if the City had trouble recruiting, they should raise the starting wage for all, not give managers discretion to grant favors.

Martineau said. The deal now goes out for ratification among members of the six unions that make up the DCTU coalition: AFSCME Local 189, IBEW Local 48, Machinists Lodge 63, Painters District Council 5, Plumbers and Fitters Local 290, and Operating Engineers Local 701.

NOTE: As this issue went to press Nov. 14, the two sides became aware they were not in total agreement on what they agreed on, which could delay taking it to a vote. See nwlaborpress.org for updates.

Legacy Emanuel settles with SEIU

Strike averted, hospital support workers ratify a new contract

Members of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 49 at Legacy Emanuel Hospital, Randall Children's Hospital, and Unity Behavioral Health Center voted 238-31 on Nov. 6 to ratify a new three-year union contract. The agreement was reached Nov. 1 as workers prepared to walk off the job for a two-day strike that was slated for Nov. 8 and 9.

The contract provides raises totaling 7.75 percent over three years for the 750-member unit, which consists of certified nursing assistants, emergency techs, housekeepers, cafeteria workers and other support workers. It also gives the most senior workers an additional \$1.10 an hour.

Legacy also agreed to a system of personalized financial assistance for members who are unable to pay their medical bills. That comes as Legacy was embarrassed in a Nov. 1 *Willamette Week* story about a Local 49 member at Legacy Emanuel who was sent to collections for lymphoma treatment — at Legacy.

The deal also comes as Legacy faces a record-busting fine of \$276,680 from the Oregon Bureau and Labor and Industries for 4,439 instances in which surgical and housekeeping employees at Legacy Emanuel failed to be given legally mandated meal breaks.

The new contract runs through June 30, 2020, three years after the previous contract expired.

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