

...NLRB strikes down union at Providence over smudged ballot

From Page 1

and refused to negotiate until its appeal was decided.

One of the ballots that had been counted as “yes” wasn’t perfect. Beneath the instruction “Mark an ‘x’ in the square of your choice,” the ballot contained an “X” in the “Yes” square and a diagonal line in the “No” square that had been smudged as if by an eraser.

For decades, NLRB rules said to declare “dual-marked” ballots void and not count them — UNLESS the voter’s intent can “be ascertained from other markings on the ballot (such as an attempt to erase or obliterate one mark).” When a federal administrative law judge and the NLRB’s regional director looked at this ballot, both saw the smudged line and felt it was pretty clear what the voter intended.

But in its May 13, 2020, ruling, the three Trump NLRB appointees in Washington, D.C., decided it was time to change the rules. Going forward, they ruled, all dual-marked ballots will be declared void — because determining voter intent from smudges is too speculative and subjective: “It is not an efficient use of agency re-

sources to engage in a potentially labor-intensive inquiry into whether, for example, a smudge or blur on a ballot was an attempt at erasure or an inadvertent marking caused by a sweaty hand or the manner in which a voter folded a ballot.”

“They went out of their way to find a reason to overturn the vote,” says Felisa Hagins, political director for SEIU Local 49. “All the rules at the NLRB are changing to be more and more detrimental for workers.”

Hagins also faulted Providence Health — which she called a billion dollar corporation masquerading as a nonprofit — for using the anti-union moment at the NLRB to undermine its own workers.

“These workers did a lot of work under very difficult circumstances to build their union,” Hagins said.

For hundreds of CNAs, housekeepers, cooks, phlebotomists and other support workers at the Providence hospital at Northeast 48th and Glisan, the ruling means no union recognition for now. They must wait until at least May 2021 before they can vote again on whether to unionize.

Union-community coalition asks City Council to break impasse over labor standards for Broadway Corridor

Centered on the 12-block former U.S. Postal Service mail processing plant in Northwest Portland, what’s known as the Broadway Corridor Project is Portland’s biggest central city redevelopment opportunity in three decades. But negotiations over how minority and working Portlanders will benefit from the redevelopment have broken down. On June 24, a coalition of environmental justice, community and labor organizations that has been bargaining with the city’s development agency Prosper Portland asked Portland City Council to intervene.

“We will not support the Broadway Corridor project until we are sure we are getting a just and ironclad agreement for our

communities,” wrote Vivian Satterfield on behalf of the Healthy Communities Coalition.

The goal of the talks is a legally-binding Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) for the Broadway Corridor, and the Healthy Communities Coalition has been negotiating with Prosper Portland and the master developer it chose for the project — Continuum Partners of Denver — for 10 months.

“While I had hoped to provide a more optimistic update after such a dedicated and intense period of negotiations, I am writing to convey HCC’s concern that we may be unable to reach a final agreement. We are angry and frustrated.”

At this juncture, the sticking

points have to do with how to oversee and enforce the agreement, and about standards for construction workers. Continuum Partners does not agree that the construction workers on the project should have full family healthcare benefits, which is a standard benefit for union construction workers.

City Council responded, and an online meeting to see if the impasse can be broken is set for July 20. At the table will be Mayor Ted Wheeler, Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty, Prosper Portland executive director Kimberly Branam, and representatives from Continuum Partners, along with Satterfield and Kelly Haines of the Metropolitan Alliance for Workforce Equity.

University of Oregon and Oregon AFL-CIO host free talks for union members

This summer, the Oregon AFL-CIO is teaming up with the Labor Education and Research Center of the University of Oregon to bring national experts and labor leaders to Oregon union members via Zoom calls. Here are the upcoming talks:

- **July 29: The labor movement’s role in the fight for racial justice**
Presenters are Bill Fletcher, former

national AFL-CIO education director; and Donna Hammond, IBEW Local 48 business agent.

- **August 5: The state of Oregon’s unions** Presented by Oregon AFL-CIO President Graham Trainor.

- **August 12: Education in the time of COVID** Presenters are Diane Ravitch, former U.S. Assistant Secretary of Education; and Oregon Education Association President John Larson..

- **August 26: The state of Oregon’s budget and Oregon workers** Presented by Oregon AFL-CIO political

director Jess Giannettino Villatoro; and an Oregon legislative leader.

All talks are free and open to all Oregon union members. Talks will start at 5 p.m. and go for one hour, with time for questions and comments from audience members. Register at <https://bit.ly/38Srn8m> for one or more of the talks, and you’ll be sent a link to the Zoom call shortly before the event.

Northwest Oregon Labor Council

endorses



Loretta
SMITH
FOR PORTLAND CITY COUNCIL

Congratulations to our 2020 Endorsed Candidates for the August 4 Primary



Carolyn Long
for Congress,
3rd Congressional Dist.



Matt Little
for Clark County
Council, District 4



Monica Stonier
for State Rep., 49th
Legislative District



Sharon Wylie
for State Rep., 49th
Legislative District



Daniel Smith
for State Senate, 17th
Legislative District



Tanisha Harris
for State Rep., 17th
Legislative District



Donna Sinclair
for State Rep.,
18th Legislative
District