

JOBS

Portland Parks and Recreation is hiring

Portland Parks & Recreation is hiring again, thanks in part to union-backed ballot measure that Portland voters approved by 64% last November. A property tax levy to pay operating costs is expected to raise an estimated \$48 million a year for five years. That's the first stable dedicated source of operating funding Portland Parks & Recreation has had, and it will allow the bureau to restore programs while decreasing reliance on user fees.

The new jobs are union-represented under a contract with Laborers Local 483, and includes park maintenance workers, rec center customer service staff, exercise instructors, camp counselors, and aquatic staff like lifeguards and swimming and water fitness instructors.

The levy revenue won't come in until property taxes are due in November, but Portland City

Council voted unanimously in February to tap other funds in anticipation of that revenue in order to start hiring now.

Owing to continued uncertainty about the pandemic, it's not clear how soon and how much programming Portland Parks & Recreation will be able to schedule for the summer, but for now the bureau expects to offer outdoor fitness programs, outdoor summer camps, and aquatic programs at outdoor pools.

The bureau is hiring for the season that starts June 20. After summer 2021, when public health guidance allows, it will fully reopen community centers and pools to the public.

UNION JOBS. APPLY ONLINE.
portland.gov/parks/employment

Nabisco extends union contracts but closes plants

Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco and Grain Millers (BCTGM) union agreed on Feb. 26 to a proposal by Mondelēz-Nabisco to extend a nationwide set of collective bargaining agreements by three months, to the end of May, and to raise wages across the board by 2.25%. The raise brings the typical wage to \$29.40 an hour.

The contracts cover about 2,000 workers at five U.S. bakeries, plus distribution centers in Colorado, Illinois, and Georgia, but the company is about to close two of those bakeries. Last November Mondelēz-Nabisco told employees it was considering closing its plants in Fair Lawn, New Jersey, and Atlanta, Georgia, and on Feb. 4, the closure was announced as official: The plants will close this summer, eliminating about 1,000 jobs total. The remaining plants are in Portland, Chicago, and Richmond, Virginia.

BCTGM has objected for years about the company shifting production to a new plant near Monterrey, Mexico—and shipping Mexican-made Oreos and other Nabisco snacks to the United States. In its statement

announcing the closures, Mondelēz-Nabisco said no U.S. jobs will go to Mexico related to the closures.

"U.S. biscuit production levels will be maintained," the statement said. "Production from Atlanta and Fair Lawn will shift to other Mondelēz owned-and-operated bakeries in the U.S. and U.S.-based external manufacturing."

"External manufacturing" would appear to be code for the non-union companies that for decades have baked some Nabisco products under contract with the company, such as Hearthside Foods in McComb, Ohio. BCTGM has campaigned on and off over the years to unionize the McComb bakery, but workers there have rejected the union, most recently by 412 to 313 in a Dec. 3, 2020 vote.

BCTGM Local 364 Business Representative Cameron Taylor, who represents 211 workers at the Portland Nabisco plant, says he opposed the contract extension at first, but came around on the grounds that it would result in increased severance for the members who will be laid off in the two plants.

Workers Helping Workers

ORGANIZED LABOR DISTRIBUTES FOOD BOXES TO MEMBERS IMPACTED BY COVID-19.

An organization created by unions—Workers Helping Workers—held its fourth food box distribution March 14. One thousand boxes of food were distributed to workers who have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Union members in need registered online to pick up food at the Laborers Local 737 hall in Northeast Portland. Food boxes contained spaghetti and sauce, canned goods, tuna fish, crackers, cereal, oatmeal, rice, apples, onions, potatoes, carrots, and candy, all purchased at union Safeway and



Albertsons stores. Franz Bakery donated bread. Additionally, 202 food boxes were delivered to the Marion-Polk County Central Labor Chapter in Salem for distribution there; 128 boxes to the farmworkers union PCUN in Woodburn; 100 boxes each to the Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA) and IATSE locals; and Labor's Community Services Agency found homes for 32 boxes of food. About 50

volunteers from various unions volunteered over four days to unload, separate, box, and load the food. AJ Banuelos Bolanos of Laborers Local 737 handled the logistics. All told, Workers Helping Workers has distributed 4,000 boxes of food since the pandemic hit. More than 30 unions and labor councils have contributed financially and with volunteers to the program.



UNION DEMOCRACY

IAFF Local 1805 merges into 452

Two fire fighter union locals in Southwest Washington have merged. International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) Local 1805, which represented 77 employees of Clark County Fire District 6 and paramedics at North Country Emergency Medical Service in Yacolt, joined with IAFF Local 452, which represents 176 employees of the Vancouver Fire Department.

The merged 253-member local is staffed part time by rank-and-file officers at its union hall at 2807 Fruit Valley Road in Vancouver.

Local 452 President Judson McCauley said the two locals had been talking about a merger for a

decade; it became official at the start of 2021. When IAFF locals merge, the practice is to take the name of the lower numbered local, so the merged local continues as Local 452. McCauley said the merger has coincided with an uptick in involvement by members. Local 452 is also an active affiliate of the Southwest Washington Central Labor Council, and members take part in charitable campaigns like the annual Fill the Boot fundraiser for Muscular Dystrophy Association. —DM



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