

Wage Increase Approved

As predicted in an earlier special committee report, a wage increase for employees of the State Highway Department was recommended by the State Highway Engineer and approved by the State Highway Commission, effective April 1, 1944. This raise consisted of a general increase of \$10.00 per month to all monthly rate employees receiving salaries below \$400.00 per month and a general increase of three cents per hour to all hourly rate employees. The approval authorized a lim-

ited number of minor variations either above or below the rates approved so as to eliminate inequalities.

This wage raise and adjustment has resulted in a wage schedule for the Highway Department concerning which there has been a notable lack of complaint of inequalities such as were heard last year. The State Highway Engineer and the Highway Commission merits the appreciation of all employees of the Department for this present adjustment.

The Three Merit Systems Consolidated

A single merit system council to direct personnel administration for the State Unemployment Compensation Commission, The State Public Welfare Commission and the State Board of Health was appointed by the Governor and the names of the new council announced on May 29th. Members of the new council are: Dr. Victor P. Morris, Dean of the School of Administration, University of Oregon, Mrs. William Kletzer of Portland and Mr. C. W. Pecore of Portland.

The three agencies while partially supported by federal aid funds are required by federal laws to operate under a merit system and each agency has maintained an individual merit system for several years. The plan for joint administration for personnel has been proposed for some time to secure greater efficiency and economy. The Interim Committee of the Legislature, appointed to study and investigate the merit system, recommended to the Governor last fall that the consolidation be made if possible and at the earliest possible moment. The Gover-

nor through able negotiation with the three commissions involved, secured their acquiescence to the plan. Each of the three commissions proposed names from which one member of the new council of three was selected.

The joint council will eliminate the maintenance of triple merit system organizations and will affect material savings and assure greater efficiency. Preliminary organizational meetings are being held we understand, and it is anticipated that the unified system will become operative as of July 1, 1944. Candidates for competitive positions under the new plan will be required to submit to one examination instead of three and all three agencies will draw their employees from one eligibility list.

Oregon will no longer be the only state in the nation with three individual merit system organizations to administer the personnel of the three federal aid agencies involved, and the Governor, The Interim Committee, and all persons involved are to be commended on the accomplishment of this consolidation which will result in great benefit to the State of Oregon.