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OSEA Board Calls for Medical-Hospital Pay

"A medical-hospital contribution is long overdue. It will be obtained only when and if employees make their insistence upon this benefit known to the executive and legislative branches of the government."

That statement is part of a policy adopted by OSEA's Board of Directors at its July 27 meeting.

The policy calls for a state medical - hospital insurance contribution for state employees. It outlines four major recommendations:

(1) A medical - hospital contribution should be given top priority, after an adequate salary improvement appropriation, in the 1969 session of the Legislature;

(2) The contribution should be in addition to, and not deducted from salary funds, if state compensation is to achieve comparability to private industry and other governmental units;

(3) The amount of contribution should be at least the average of the employer contribution of Oregon cities, counties and school districts;

(4) The employee's present choice of medical - hospital plans must be maintained, and contribution should not be contingent upon participation in an employer-selected plan.

In outlining the proposal, OSEA's Insurance Committee, headed by Floyd Baxter, said, "Research by OSEA indicates that most Oregon cities, counties and school districts pay from 50% to 100% of the employee's medical - hospital insurance premium."

The board urged state employees to write Gov. Tom McCall and their state senators and representatives, asking that such a contribution be included in the 1969-71 budget proposal and appropriations by the 1969 Legislature.

For full text of the policy, see page 3.

Reprisal Ruling Due August 23

Civil Service Director Melvin H. Cleveland told the NEWS his agency is conducting an investigation of OSEA's reprisal charge against the Oregon State Hospital.

He said a report of the investigation will be sent to commissioners prior to the August 23 meeting of the commission. They will rule on the charge at that time, he said.

OSEA filed the charge on behalf of Earnest W. Smith, a psychiatric aide, over his 1967 merit rating.

EARL WARZYNSKI
To Head Committee

Warzynski New Committee Head

Earl Warzynski was appointed chairman of OSEA's Employment Relations Committee by President Smith French during the Board of Directors meeting July 27.

He replaces Leroy E. Nelson, who resigned.

Warzynski has served as Director of OSEA's District Seven for the past year. He is an electrician at Columbia Park Hospital and Training Center in The Dalles.

The Employment Relations Committee is responsible for guiding the association in collective bargaining.

Nelson will continue to head OSEA's Law and Legislation Committee.

OSEA Criticizes Lag In Maintenance Pay

OSEA has criticized the Civil Service Commission for failing to recommend mid-biennium salary adjustments for the Highway Department's maintenance personnel.

Thomas C. Enright, OSEA's executive secretary, called the commission's action "short-sighted and discriminatory."

He made the comment after the Civil Service Commission approved a pay plan which included over 3,000 employees. Among them were 1,100 highway engineers and other personnel, but not maintenance men.

The Emergency Board, in approving the commission's recommendations, released an additional $1.3 million for the wage hikes July 25.

"Many highway maintenance employees have been uprooted in the department's recent organization. They now find themselves denied raises, apparently only because temporarily there is not a shortage in the maintenance work force," Enright said.

"State salaries now lag behind those paid by private industry and other governmental units by nearly ten per cent," he said.

Enright noted that highway maintenance personnel in the majority of the state's largest counties receive higher pay than state maintenance men doing the same type of work.

Enright said that OSEA will wage a campaign to attempt to persuade the Emergency Board at its August meeting to release an additional $400,000, which will be enough to give a one-step pay raise to maintenance men.

Board Hits 1½% Tax Lid

The OSEA Board of Directors has once again put the association on record as opposing the one and one-half per cent property tax limitation that will apparently be on on the November ballot.

The action took place at the board's July 27th meeting in Salem.

Delegates to OSEA's 1965 General Council opposed a similar tax limitation two and one-half years ago, but that measure was struck from the ballot by the Oregon Supreme Court.

Thomas C. Enright, OSEA executive secretary, quoted Floyd J. Gould, legislative fiscal officer, as saying the one and one-half per cent limitation would impose a major threat to all levels of local government.

The association has been operating under an existing policy resolution adopted by the 1965 General Council.

It states: "That the Oregon State Employees Association go on record as opposing the proposed one and one-half per cent property tax limit constitutional amendment, and that it participate in such a manner as the Board of Directors shall see fit, in a campaign to defeat this proposed constitutional amendment."

IDEAS EXCHANGED Ideas on how to improve Oregon's Civil Service System were exchanged among Rep. Morris Crothers (R-Salem), center, and two top OSEA officers—President Smith French, left, and Vice-President Jerry Liebertz. Action took place after Crothers addressed the Board of Directors July 27. Among other changes, Crothers wants the state to "project" salaries so they will be competitive at the time of implementation—something OSEA has advocated for years. For other details, see editorial on page 4.

Open Letter to OSEA Members

Dear Fellow Member:

"Employee group charges salary discrimination;" "OSEA opposes 1-1/2% property tax limitation;" "Association claims medical-hospital premium contribution long overdue." Most employees favor the position taken in these recent headlines, but some may ask who it was that decided what OSEA's stand on these matters would be.

Although the association's Board of Directors, committees and staff make the day-to-day decisions and issue the statements, hardly ever is one made except in contemplation of and conformity with a resolution adopted by OSEA's General Council of delegates. So it is you, the rank and file member, through your delegates, who is making these decisions.

Summaries of existing policy resolutions have been sent to all chapters. Each chapter should by now have a committee appointed to hear member proposals for resolutions, or should hold a meeting for this purpose. Deadline for submission to headquarters is Sept. 4.

You can be an OSEA decision-maker--you can improve your working conditions--by putting what you want into a resolution to be acted upon by your chapter and the General Council. Please do it now!

Very truly yours,
Smith French
President, OSEA