

OSEA Says Hwy. Maintenance Men Need Raises

(Editor's Note: The Civil Service Commission, on July 10, held a public hearing on the classifications recommended for pay raises from the additional mid-biennium adjustment money released by the Emergency Board. Approximately 3,150 employees, in some 256 classifications, will get pay raises on August 1. Because of the interest expressed by many members, OSEA's statement to the commission is printed below.)

"As requested by your staff in May, the Board of Directors of the Oregon State Employees Association recommended the mid-biennium salary adjustment fund be spent to give four groups of employees pay raises on July 1st.

Those four groups were: (1) All classifications being paid less than the new federal minimum wage of \$280 per month, (2) Institution Teachers, (3) Nurses, and (4) Highway Main-

tenance Men and related classes.

HMM's Given Nothing

Three of these groups, among others, were given salary increases. The Highway Maintenance Man series and some related classifications were given nothing.

In indicating that more money might be made available for additional salary adjustments, the Emergency Board, at its June 14 meeting, directed the Civil Service Commission to supplement its original mid-biennium pay recommendations.

Maintenance Pay Behind

In developing this supplemental salary adjustment proposal, your staff has not adhered to the strict criteria of "recruitment and retention" of personnel as they did in developing the original recommendation.

It is apparent in reviewing the proposal before you today that salary data and classifica-

tion relationships have been given as much weight by your staff, in the cases where they have recommended adjustments, as the state's ability to recruit and retain employees.

The highway maintenance classes meet the previously established criteria, and, in addition, are seriously behind maintenance men in other Oregon governmental employment.

One-Step Hike Asked

The proposal before you today will take nearly all of the additional general funds that may be released by the Emergency Board. OSEA would like to point out, for that reason, that what we propose will take only dedicated funds to implement.

OSEA recommends that one-step salary adjustments be given to Highway Maintenance Man series and related classifications. We do this for some specific and justifiable reasons.

Present Pay Lags

The Maintenance Division of the Highway Department is in the throes of a reorganization process. For that reason, and that reason only, it is not presently recruiting maintenance personnel.

When this reorganization is over and the Highway Department this fall needs additional maintenance employees, it will not be able to recruit them at the present salary level. Therefore, the 'recruiting argument' should not be used in denying salary adjustments for these classes.

Salaries for this group of employees are usually compared with county road departments across the state and maintenance salaries in our neighboring states. Present pay for these classes lag those in at least seven Oregon counties. Current city and county salary schedules, compiled by OSEA, are attached to this statement.

Some Comparisons

For instance, Multnomah County pays its Heavy Equipment Operators, which are equivalent to the state's Highway Maintenance Men 3's, in a range of \$628-\$688. The state pays \$460-\$550.

Coos County pays its Light Truck Drivers \$540 a month. The state pays a maximum of \$525 for this Highway Maintenance Man 2 job. We should also point out that this salary lag will soon become even

greater as Coos County is presently adopting new salaries. OSEA was told yesterday that the new rate will be at least \$565, making this Southern Oregon county \$40 ahead of the state.

Columbia County pays its equivalent Highway Maintenance Men 1's in a range of \$465-\$505. The state pays \$400-\$480.

State Pay Absurd

Highway maintenance employees in Jackson County, with the exception of the 1 level, are paid more than the state's highway personnel, and the county has not yet adopted its 1968 pay plan.

Our neighboring states of Washington and California both exceed Oregon in salaries paid to highway maintenance employees. This data, collected by your staff and published last December in your annual salary survey, is on file.

We want to point out that we are not comparing state highway personnel to those employed by private contractors. If we were to do this, the state's range of \$440-\$525 would compare with the contractor's salary scale of \$841.50 a month. Citing pay scales paid by private contractors only makes state pay look absurd.

Would Impair Morale

Your staff has recommended one-step adjustments for the Equipment Operator series and the Highway Maintenance Man 4 classifications. To increase these salaries without adjusting the pay of the remaining maintenance personnel will seriously impair the working relationship and morale in the State Highway Department.

Pay Raise Justified

The proposal before you today recommends one-step pay raises for other large groups of employees within the Highway Department, such as engineers, weighmasters, right-of-

way agents and landscape personnel. Current salary data, including that collected by your staff, shows that the highway maintenance classifications are just as far behind.

The Highway Maintenance Man 3 is as justified in receiving an adjustment as the Highway Engineer 3, according to all available salary data.

OSEA Urges Increase

Your staff has not improved the bleak salary picture of the highway maintenance employees by arbitrarily recommending adjustments to only the 37 employees at the four level. On the contrary, it will create a tremendous problem in terms of salary relationships and morale.

Should a Highway Maintenance Man 4 make the same salary as an Assistant Foreman?

In conclusion, OSEA recommends that the Civil Service Commission adopt one-step increases for all highway maintenance personnel. This would cost approximately \$450,000 and would come entirely from dedicated funds.

The increases are certainly justified, the money appears to be available, and we urge you to adopt them.

Board Approves Chapter Charter

A charter for a new OSEA academic chapter at Eastern Oregon College in La Grande was approved by the Board of Directors meeting in Salem July 27.

Dr. George Arscott, director of the Academic and Unclassified Services Committee, presented the board with a petition bearing the signatures of 20 members of the EOC faculty requesting the chapter.

It will be known as the "EOC Faculty Chapter." Its number has not yet been selected.

UO Electricians No Longer Want Union

A majority of the employees in a small collective bargaining unit at the University of Oregon no longer wish to be represented by an AFL-CIO union.

Six of the ten employees in the "University of Oregon

Electrical Shop" unit have signed a petition asking the Civil Service Commission to decertify Local 280, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, as their exclusive bargaining representative.

The IBEW was elected bargaining representative in June, 1966. OSEA did not contest the election.

The Civil Service Commission will conduct a decertification election in the latter part of August. The exact date could not be learned before this issue of the NEWS went to press.

All employees in the unit will be informed of the election date and procedures by the commission.

This is the first request for a decertification election since collective bargaining began in state government two and one-half years ago.

Civil Service rules provide that a decertification election may be authorized after: (1) the certified representative has served one year, and (2) at least 30 per cent of the employees in the unit request the representative be decertified.

And Not Healthy Exercise, Either

OSEA and state agencies are in the process of drawing up salary recommendations for the Civil Service Commission's 1969 compensation plan.

Everett B. Stiles, OSEA's wage and salary analyst, asked the agencies to send copies of their recommendations to the association.

Stiles received a letter from one agency outlining its recommended salaries. On the bottom of the letter this comment was added:

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