A member of the Association of Governmental Employees (AGE), which includes over 500,000 public employees

the OSEA news

The monthly publication of the Oregon State Employes Association

Volume XV, Number 1 — OSEA, 1127 25th Street SE, Salem, Oregon 97301 — January, 1973

Crammed to Capacity

Oregon's House of Representatives was crammed to capacity last week as Gov. Tom McCall opened the 1973 Legislative Assembly. OSEA is putting the finishing touches on some 20 bills it will introduce to implement the Association's Program for Progress. OSEA's two registered lobbyists, Thomas C. Enright and Everett B. Stiles, will work with a legislature that is different in two respects from those in the recent past: it is controlled by the Democrats and 27 of its 90 members are first-term legislators. For OSEA's guide to the 1973 session, see the special section in this issue entitled, "Oregon's Lawmakers."

Legislature Convenes; OSEA Bills Near Final Form

Twenty bills implementing OSEA's Program for Progress are being put into final form for introduction in the Senate and House of Representatives of the 1973 Legislative Assembly which convened last week in Salem.

OSEA also will support or oppose probably about 100 bills on employment-related and consumer subjects introduced by individual legislators or at the request of state agencies or other organizations.

The Association will have two registered lobbyists at the Capitol throughout the 1973 session. Executive Secretary Thomas C. Enright will devote full time to lobbying activities. Assistant Executive Secretary Everett B. Stiles will split his time between lobbying and heading up OSEA's representation and collective bargaining operations.

The main thrust of the Association's legislative program is centered on the following subjects:

- Pay and fringe benefit bills to be sponsored jointly by OSEA and the Executive Department.
- Improvements in the retirement system sponsored by OSEA and other organizations in the Public Employes' Retirement Conference.
- Legislation giving public employes the right to return to their jobs after campaigning for or serving in public offices.
- Constitutional admendment to allow public employes the right to serve in the Legislative Assembly.
- State income tax credit for contributions to candidate-support organizations.
- Broadening of the medical-hospital group insurance plans offered through the State Employes' Benefit Board.
- Lengthening of the contract period of state employe group medical-hospital insurance programs.
- Requiring the Personnel Division to review and change classifications, tests or qualification requirements that are contrary to merit principles or discriminatory on the grounds of race or sex.
- Listing of unfair labor practices in the collective bargaining law and strengthening the powers of the Public Employe Relations Board.
- Clarification of PERB's power to reverse agency decisions on dismissals, demotions and suspensions.
- Guaranteeing higher education employes a hearing and court review under the Administrative Procedures Act.
- Granting academic employes the right of access to their own personnel records and performance evaluations.
- Giving employes PERS benefit credit for accumulated sick leave on service or disability retirement.
- Creation of a statutory office of ombudsman.
- Providing medical-hospital insurance for retired state employes.
- Repeal of retirement pay deduction from unemployment insurance benefits.
- Legalize public employe strikes when the public health and safety is not involved.
- Allow a service fee for representation of nonmembers in collective bargaining units.

Salary Negotiations Clear Major Stumbling Block

A major stumbling block in negotiations between OSEA and the Executive Department to adopt a state employe pay and benefits package for submission to the 1973 legislature was removed when the two parties reached tentative agreement on a salary administration plan.

The agreement, reached just before this issue of The OSEA News went to press, abolishes the state's present salary administration program on July 1, including the present 85-75 per cent limitation on merit pay raises. It sets forth the following new plan:

- Beginning July 1, employe performance pay raises will be based on a new performance evaluation system uniformly applied in the classified service.
- An employe shall be granted an annual performance pay raise on his eligibility date provided he is not at the top of his salary range, and provided his performance is satisfactory as reflected in his performance appraisal form.
- Performance shall be deemed satisfactory when an employe meets or exceeds all major requirements (i.e., Category A, "makes superior contribution in nearly all areas," and Category B, "meets requirements for all areas, perhaps exceeding some.").
- An employe rated in Category C ("meets most requirements, but does need improvement") shall receive an increase unless the needed improvements are major in nature when related to a work plan and position description.

In addition, the new salary administration plan sets forth the following criteria for measuring employe performance:

(1) Classification specifications developed by the Personnel Division for each job classification in state service.

(2) Individual position descriptions, reduced to writing, which delineate specific duties within the classification specification peculiar to an individual employe's job.

(3) A written work plan, based upon the position description and developed by mutual agreement between an employe and his supervisor. Each work plan shall delineate job requirements, job expectations, anticipated goals, set objectives and productivity expectations. Day to day work will be appraised according to what is contained in the job description.

(4) A periodic review of the written work plan made by the employe and his supervisor. Changes in the work plan shall be by mutual agreement, shall be reduced to writing and a copy provided the employe. When a periodic review indicates an employe is not meeting the expectations of his work plan, a notice to that effect will be reduced to writing and a copy provided the employe.

The agreement says the above criteria shall be the only factors upon which an employe's performance is judged and upon which annual pay increases are determined. "Salary denial based upon any factor other than those listed above, except those based upon a statutorily defined disciplinary action, shall be invalid," it states.

The document says trial service employes who gain regular status will be granted an automatic pay raise. It gives regular employes who are denied an annual pay raise the right to appeal through their agency grievance procedure to the Public Employe Relations Board.

"There shall be no predetermined limitation imposed upon the number of annual performance pay increases to be granted or denied," according to the agreement, "or any predetermined limitation upon the number of performance evaluations allocated to any given category."

The Public Employe Relations Board has been mediating negotiations between OSEA and the Executive Department since an impasse was declared over failure to reach agreement on the salary administration plan nearly two months ago.

Mediation between the two parties will continue until agreement or a total impasse is reached on the entire pay and benefits package.