Where to Call Higher Ed. Pay Delayed

Over 4,500 employes represented by OPEU in Oregon's higher education system are having their $55 salary-increase withheld until at least Oct. 1, eventhough all other OPEU-represented state employes received their increase on Sept. 1.

The State Board of Higher Education has reneged on their contractural agreement to provide the increase—retroactive to July 1—and have indicated that these employes may not receive their increase until Oct. 10.

Higher education officials contend that because their payroll center is on a different computer than the rest of the State payroll centers they are not able to get the retroactive increases processed any sooner.

However, Allen McKenzie, assistant vice chancellor for personnel administration and higher education's spokesperson at the negotiating table, has indicated that management's pay increase may be distributed by Sept. 10.

"Higher education management is always blaming their computers for foul-ups that effect their employes, but they have never been able to give us an adequate explanation for their delays," said OPEU executive director Thomas Gallagher. "When no other payroll center has these problems, you begin to wonder if they (higher education management) care about their employes."

OPEU is countering management's delay on two fronts—with litigation through the grievance procedure and through pressure by members.

The grievance filed by OPEU asks for the retroactive pay increase to be released immediately. Here again though, higher education officials are stalling.

A grievance can be settled quickly if both management and the union agree to drop hearings at the agency and Executive Department levels. This expedites the grievance by taking it straight to binding arbitration.

The main obstacle to expediting the grievance is a recommendation by McKenzie to all university and college presidents not to skip the agency level in this proceeding.

OPEU members in the higher education system are putting pressure on management by calling those who are responsible for the delay:

Allen McKenzie,
assistant vice chancellor for personnel administration
..... 686-4146

Donald Young,
director of fiscal operations
..... 754-3043

Roy Lieuallan,
chancellor 686-4153

President of each college or university

Jeff Schrader, OPEU spokesperson at the higher education coalition negotiating table said that these phone calls are meant to register complaints and "to put pressure on those people who are responsible for holding back employes' retroactive paychecks."

Local Settlements

Marion County Employes

After months of bargaining, members ratified a new contract calling for a 15.75 percent pay increase over the next two years. Employes will receive 4.75 percent retroactive to July 1, 1981; this will be followed by increase of 2 percent on Jan. 1, 1982; 3 percent on July 1, 1982; 3 percent on Nov. 1, 1982 and 3 percent on March 1, 1983.

Present health insurance benefits will be continued in the first year of the contract. The County will contribute an additional 18 percent toward health insurance in the second year of the contract.

Lincoln County Employes

Employes accepted a contract which calls for a 7 percent cost of living increase in the first year of the contract and 4 percent, plus one-half the percent increase in the Portland Consumer Price Index in the second year of the contract. In addition, dispatchers will receive a two-step pay raise and all other employes, whose salaries do not fall exactly on a pay step, will be advanced to the next pay step.

Lincoln County Sheriffs

Employes were awarded a 12 percent pay increase, effective July 1, 1981, after negotiations went to binding arbitration. Arbitrator Leroy Smith also awarded employes continuation of current insurance benefits.

The County gave unrepresented employes an 8 percent pay increase on July 1, 1981.

City of Beaverton Employes

In a six-month long wage reopener negotiation, the City agreed to move each employe to a step salary range at or above their current salary and to increase salaries by 7 percent effective July 1, 1981. Management also agreed to complete a classification series—which was begun over 18 months ago—by Sept. 30, 1981.

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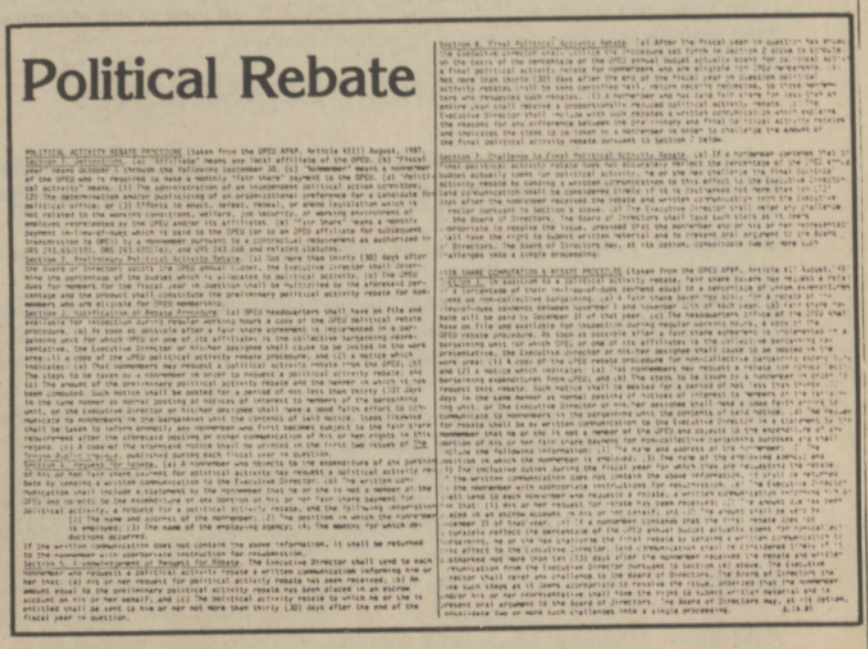

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