



# City of Bend Employees Association

Integrity ♦ Professionalism ♦ Equality

*Security For Our Future*

# November 2016 Newsletter

## Meet your Candidates for President & Treasurer:

### Nominee for President -



My name is Brice Blackwelder and I have been a full time employee in the Utility Department for 13years.

In the time I have been with the City, I have spent the majority of my time working with the water distribution system. My work details have included but have not been limited to scheduled and emergency repairs, data collection and operations, general maintenance of the system appurtenances, customer service and most recently water metering.

I have now been actively involved in COBEA about four years at this point and have found it to be rewarding and challenging. I believe it to be a very important part of my life due to the fact that the reason I initially wanted to be a City "water guy" was for the stability, benefits and the opportunity to work with something that is vital to a community and to life in general. I have found it to be a very rewarding choice and I like the fact that I have an impact on the city I live in. Sometimes the impact may be small it may make a huge difference to an individual or a family.

I am running for President of our Association because I believe that as an association we are on the right track to make lasting positive changes for the majority of the membership, their families lives and the members of our community we serve. I started out as a Steward and then was elected to be a member of our bargaining committee, in this most recent cycle. During the bargaining process a vacancy came about in the Vice President role. I was asked by the E-board if I would want to take on that responsibility. I accepted the appointment and now here I am running for president.

## Voting Starts Tuesday, Nov 1st

Voting for President and Treasurer (2016-18 Term) will start on Tuesday, November 1st in your work places. Please see your Steward or designated Elections Committee Person to get your ballot.

You will also have the opportunity to vote on increasing COBEA dues, which have not been increased in 23 years.

While all commodities have increase such as attorney costs, gas, housing and even our wages have doubled and even tripped

Dues have not been raised since 1993 (23 years)

Back then:

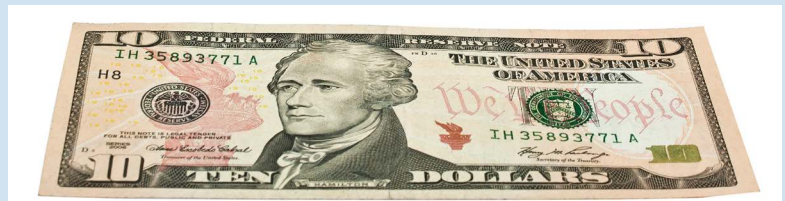
Attorney Fees: \$75 to \$125 p/h  
Gas: \$1.25 p/g  
COB Starting Wages: \$9.20 p/h  
(Ex. Utility/Streets Utility 1)

Now:

Attorney Fees: \$200 to \$250 p/h  
Gas: \$2.49 and up p/g  
COB Starting Wage: \$18.87 & \$19.81  
(Ex. Utility/Streets Utility 1)  
Arbitrations: \$6,000 to \$10,000 p/case

(in some cases), our dues hav remaind at \$10. Please take a minute and read information provided by Mike Edwards, COBEA Treasurer, regarding the future of our finances.

Best wishes,  
Julie Price  
COBEA President



## ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF COBEA DUES INCREASE

Over the past two years I have served as the Treasurer for the City of Bend Employees Association (COBEA). When I campaigned for this position I promised the Association Members I would always be transparent, open and honest about the financial health of the Association. This is the same Association that has so diligently bargained for, and provided me with the wages, and benefits I receive as an employee for the City of Bend since 1990.

Overall, the Associations financial health has barely been able to sustain the needs of our membership over the past two years. For the most part, we don't even take in enough monies to sustain the month to month needs of our membership, and this is concerning to me. As promised, I guaranteed all of you that I would be honest and transparent about this subject, and here is my historic perspective, followed by my recommendation.

## Historical Background:

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In 1992 / 1993 the COBEA dues were \$5.00 dollars per month. An Attorney cost \$75.00 to \$125.00 dollars per hour, Starting Wages were \$9.20 per hour for a Street / Water Utility Worker, A gallon of gasoline was \$1.25 per gallon, a house payment averaged between \$600 to \$700 dollars per month. During this time I was serving as the COBEA President. Because of a single minor event with a member it became very apparent we could be facing financial trouble ahead. The COBEA Members recognize that if we had one major contract dispute, or disciplinary action with Management we would not be able to adequately represent our members. Through many conversations and assessments it was determined that we were financially beyond vulnerable. Therefore, the majority of our membership decided that based on the knowledge that COBEA had provided all of us with the ability to bargain for fair wages and benefits, and provided us with an avenue to grieve our differences with Management in place of just being terminated, we would raise our dues, and we doubled them to a monthly fee of \$10.00 dollars per month. Furthermore, we decided to build our funds up to around \$200,000 thousand dollars to ensure we would be able to represent our members sufficiently from this time forward. At one time our membership had met this goal, and we decided it would be a good idea to give back to our community, and we did. This generosity of our membership continued right up to about three years ago, and placed our reserves down below \$90,000 thousand dollars. At this time there was an outcry to STOP all unnecessary spending by the majority of our members. Your elected board, and officers heard your angst, and abided by the majority and greatly reduced spending. Mike Edwards COBEA Treasurer for 2015 / 2016. However, in between this reduction there were many legal events that continued to cost the Association money. One single event cost us around \$17, 000 thousand dollars, another was over \$10,000 dollars. Neither of these events even went to arbitration, which could have cost up to an additional \$8,000 to \$12,000 thousand dollars. Needless to say, this drained our funds even more, and since then we have gone through two bargaining sessions to finally place us at just over \$66,000 thousand in savings, and \$10,400 in checking.

## Recommendation:

Considering that today an Attorney is costing \$200 to 250 dollars per hour, starting wages for a Utility and street worker are around \$18.00 dollars per hour, a gallon of gasoline costs around \$2.40 per gallon, and a house payment now averages \$1,400 to \$1,700 dollars per month, it is obvious costs for goods and services have increased dramatically. Furthermore, considering COBEA has continued to provide a solid contract, greatly increased wages and benefits, and enhanced representation and avenues to grieve differences in a safe environment, I hereby recommend dues increase a minimum of \$10.00 dollars for a total of \$20.00 dollars per month. Our membership needs this increase to sustain ourselves, and be fairly and adequately represented.

Respectfully yours,  
Mike Edwards,  
COBEA Treasurer (2014-16)

## Nominees for Treasurer



**Corey Mastrud**  
**Water System Operator**  
**Utility Department**  
**Water Filtration Facility**

Corey Mastrud was recently hired as a Water System Operator and might be a new face to most of you but he has worked for the City of Bend for over thirteen years. He was originally hired in in the mid-nineties as a Utility Worker for the water department. Corey took a break from the city to pursue the opportunity to own and operate Little Shop of Dreams with his dad, a small custom auto body restoration shop.

Corey grew up in Central Oregon and graduated from Bend Senior High and attended C.O.C.C. for a short time. After graduation he married his high school girlfriend Amy and now have two teenage children Kurestin and KC. When Corey's not working he tries to spend as much time with his kids as he can before they graduate. They enjoy family time together camping and traveling or pretty much any time you can get with busy teenagers. After the kids graduate Corey hopes to find his way back out to his shop to build some personal cars that have been put on hold.



**Darcy Todd**  
**Permit Technician I**  
**CDD**  
**City Hall**

Darcy's Bio will be available on the COBEA website soon.