



GREENE COUNTY HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

2016 ANNUAL REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

For the first time in recent memory, no single theme or event dominated the activities of the Greene County Human Resources Department (HR) in 2016. While keeping abreast of revisions to the Affordable Care Act (ACA) employer reporting mandates and performing on-going maintenance of associated employee records remained tantamount, all the good prep work HR did in years past helped make our efforts in this area feel more relaxed and routine.

Aside from the ACA, HR administered many diverse and interesting tasks in the areas of **staffing and employment, compensation and benefits, labor and employee relations, and training and staff development**. Among the highlights was participating in development of and executing a plan of action in response to the U.S. Department of Labor's overtime exemption rules changes (which are currently on hold); converting to a new Dependent Tracking System re: the County's vision care plan; and drafting amendments related to expansion of the County's random drug testing protocol and following through to effectuate them. (Details to follow.)

Our momentum could have easily been disrupted by the fact that a very tenured and key HR player retired in January 2016. But it was not. As planned, a new staff member was assimilated into the agency right away, and an existing staff member transitioned into a different and more responsible role that she had long been preparing for. All staff participated in HR-related training throughout the year. Working together we were able to stay the course and accomplish our goals for the year, including bringing the Department's succession plan to a successful conclusion. Our HR team of three is extremely proud of what was able to be achieved and is pleased to present this summary of activities and accomplishments for FY2016.

HR MISSION STATEMENT: To provide the highest quality personnel services to our employees and customers, while promoting effective and efficient County government.

STAFFING AND EMPLOYMENT

Personnel Changes

HR continued to be busy with personnel changes in 2016, including new hires, rehires, retirements, resignations, terminations, and other job changes such as promotions, transfers, and modifications in status. HR worked closely with department heads and the Civil Service Department to post, advertise, and fill vacancies in accordance with NYS Civil Service Law, Greene County Civil Service Rules and Regulations, and applicable provisions of the union contracts and County policies and procedures.

In terms of filling vacancies, we are required to post within an agency or on a County-wide basis first, or to refer to an existing eligibles list generated by Civil Service examination. Job announcements are sent to the departments for posting in accordance with Civil Service Rules and applicable union contract language, and placed on the Greene County website. When, and if, the search for candidates requires external advertising, we utilize as many free or low-cost alternatives as possible, before consulting with a department head about more pricey options.

A **Recall List** in existence since 2011, expired in 2016. The original list included a total of 26 people laid-off across all employee groups. Fortunately, there have not been any economic layoffs in the last several years.

Reclassifications, Reallocations, Promotional Opportunities

HR participated in evaluating the reclassification requests of department heads for five individuals. Four of the applications were recommended for approval by the Reclassification/Reallocation Committee, simultaneous with the adoption of a new title and job description for each one by the Civil Service Commission. At year's end only one of the four was still awaiting approval by the County Administrator. The fifth application was denied by the Reclassification/Reallocation Committee. The Committee is comprised of the Commissioner of Civil Service, HR Director and a Department Head appointed by the County Administrator annually on a rotating basis.

The HR Director also worked with Department Heads and Civil Service on staffing planning. These efforts led to the creation of several new titles, some of which provided promotional opportunities for a number of staff. The HR Director evaluated all newly created bargaining unit titles and assigned grades accordingly. Promotion exams for some existing titles were ordered by a couple of department heads based upon the needs of those departments. In addition, promotion exams were ordered by the Civil Service Department at the request of department heads filling vacancies.

Pre-employment Screenings

Background checks, physicals and drug screens continued to be ordered on all prospective new hires receiving a conditional offer of employment. All background checks ordered by the HR Department are conducted by the Greene County Sheriff's Office.

Random Drug Screens

At the request of the County Administrator, the HR Director explored expansion of the County's random drug testing program to include managerial and confidential (M/C) staff. A substance abuse testing procedure was developed for the M/C group in collaboration with labor counsel and program administrator. The policy was later adopted by the Legislature and disseminated to all affected employees in advance of the January 1, 2017 program implementation date. The HR Director will be responsible for day-to-day administration of the program. Random testing of 10% of the M/C employees will occur twice annually.

Employment Eligibility Verification (I-9)

Completion of mandated I-9 Forms continued to be part of the new hire process used to document verification of the identity and employment authorization of each new hire to work in the United States. HR prepared to begin using a new version of the form I-9 beginning in January 2017, and priming themselves for an increased focus by the federal government on enforcement of employment verification laws.

Police and Peace Officer Oath Processing Procedure: Worked with the County Clerk's Office and Civil Service Department to develop an Oath of Office and DCJS-2241-A form processing procedure for Sheriff's Deputies, and a similar process for peace officers (i.e., Corrections Officers and Probation Officers). The same has proven invaluable in assuring the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services receives the information it needs to register new hires in these titles in a timely fashion.

License Event Notification Service (LENS)

HR continued to administer the LENS Program through the NYS DMV. LENS is a data service that gathers information daily from the DMV's driver's license file and reports any new information to us (e.g., suspensions, expirations, renewals, etc.). As a result, we are able to monitor the NYS license records of CDL holders and other employees that drive for the County in the course of their work. This service is free to government agencies and helps reduce the County's insurance rates.

New World Systems Logos Personnel/Payroll System (NWS)

One of HR's identified goals for 2016, involved providing training to our new hire on use of the personnel/payroll system and to bring her to a level of proficiency where she would be able to easily navigate the system, set-up new hire screens, manage employment changes, and generate reports, independently. Also, for all HR staff to continue to enhance their proficiency with and expand their utilization of the many features available on *New World*. HR staff demonstrated a constant progression re: accomplishing these goals over the course of the year. In light of the nuances of each individual employee in terms of their work history, hours, employment status and benefits changes, and so on, learning, practice and further exploration of program functions will be on-going.

HR Forms Update

Another defined goal achieved by the HR Department in 2016, was to review all HR forms and "freshen" or update them, as needed. HR staff worked earnestly on the task by examining the Department's entire collection of forms, and re-keying, reformatting, and/or revising those in need of attention. For example:

1. All policy "Acknowledgment of Receipt" signature sheets were updated to reflect the corresponding policy Resolution number and date of adoption by the Legislature.
2. New hire orientation handouts and/or forms were either reset, or originals were scanned and cleaned, as photocopies of photocopies had become faded and off-center. When possible, the originating department was contacted to obtain an original electronic file or hard copy document. Forms can now be printed directly from the electronic file, as well as by making photocopies from original documents. The goal was to give these documents a more professional look and to present a better first impression of Greene County to our new hires.
3. Combined the Direct Deposit form and related information, with the *Go Green in Greene* letter from the Information Technology Department, to create a Direct Deposit packet for use during onboarding.
4. Created separate and distinct COBRA notices for the Flexible Spending Account (FSA) and Life Insurance Plan for employees separating from service during the course of the year.

Employee Performance Appraisals

HR continued to send out quarterly reminders and to monitor the completion of employee performance appraisals by department managers and supervisors.

Exit interviews

HR continued to provide employees the opportunity to complete an Exit Interview upon retirement or voluntary separation from Greene County employment. The completed questionnaires are reviewed on an annual basis.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Study

HR participated in a study conducted by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics involving entrance requirements, physical and mental demands, and environmental conditions as related to eight specific occupations (job titles). The hope of the BLS is that the data collected from all participant organizations will be able to be used by the federal Social Security Administration in facilitating its disability claims processing.

Cost Allocation Plan and Annual Audit

HR compiled employment data needed by the consultant preparing the County's Annual Cost Allocation Plan. Also responded to requests for information from the County's auditors during their annual review.

Retirement System Audit

Assisted the Treasurer's Office with collection of data for a NYS Retirement System audit.

NYSAC Salary Survey

HR completed the annual salary survey administered by the NYS Association of Counties.

Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) Requests

HR collected data for the County Attorney in response to a number of Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) requests received during the year.

Administrative Manual

HR continued to be actively involved in contributing proposed updates to the Greene County Administrative Manual. In 2016, our proposals resulted in amendments to the drug testing, overtime/compensatory time, and retiree health insurance sections of the Manual.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Affordable Care Act (ACA)

As in the recent past, one of the foremost goals of the HR Department for 2016, was to keep on top of any amendments to the ACA and to remain compliant, paying particular attention to any clarifications or modifications made to the employer reporting requirements. Also, to make necessary adjustments to correct any and all reporting errors or omissions, and to keep records current by updating the County's personnel/payroll system as employment status and/or health insurance benefits and coverage changes occurred.

The following specific actions were among those taken in 2016:

- 1) Started 2016 by finalizing all Offer and Coverage coding entries and performing records clean-up in the *New World System* in preparation for the issuance of 1095-C forms by the Treasurer's Office for the 2015 reporting year.
- 2) Prepared a series of communications to employees explaining what IRS required forms they would be receiving and from whom. Since Greene County's health plans are fully insured, the

- County would be responsible for disseminating Offer and Coverage information via the 1095-C, while the insurance carrier would be responsible for detailing information on the 1095-B regarding who was covered by the County's insurance and for what months of the year.
- 3) Routinely entered new hire Benefits and Coverage information, as well as details re: any health insurance changes made by individual employees throughout 2016, in *New World*. By doing so, the system is able to provide specific Offer and Coverage information for each person for 1095-C reporting and to produce the data needed for the IRS. The reporting screens are continually updated by HR staff whenever employment status and/or health insurance coverage changes for individual employees.
 - 4) Continued to monitor the hours worked of all **on-going** part-time and per diem employees during the County's **Standard Measurement Period (SMP)** in order to evaluate their eligibility for health insurance during the Administrative Period, and to offer coverage (as appropriate) during the Stability Period. The SMP is a period of time used to determine if an on-going employee meets the ACA definition of a "fulltime" employee based on the average number of hours worked. The SMP in Greene County runs from March 1st – June 30th each year. An on-going employee is one that has been employed for at least one full SMP.
 - 5) Continued to monitor the hours worked of all **newly hired** variable hour part-time and per diem employees during their **Initial Measurement Period (IMP)** in order to evaluate their eligibility for health insurance during their Administrative Period, and to offer coverage (as appropriate) during their Stability Period. An IMP is an established timeframe used to determine whether a *NEW* variable-hour employee meets the ACA definition of a "fulltime" employee based on the average number of hours worked. The IMP for Greene County is a 6-month period beginning the first day of the month after employment begins.
 - 6) Continued to run IMP reports on a monthly basis, as applicable, to ascertain which variable hour employees worked an average of 30+ hours per week or 130+ hours per month during their IMP. Sent letters to each individual being monitored re: whether or not they were determined to be health insurance eligible,
 - 7) Conducted "Affordability" calculations for each of the health plans currently being offered by the County, as well as any new plans being considered. Entered the Lowest Cost Monthly Premium amounts in *New World* for each plan.
 - 8) In response to coding changes promulgated by the IRS for 2016, updated our Offer and Coverage coding options in *New World*.
 - 9) Regularly re-evaluated the codes being used to ensure our selections are appropriate for each individual's circumstances, in order that our end product would be as accurate as possible.
 - 10) Continued to be diligent about keeping current re: amendments to the ACA and the County's role in administering it.

All work with regard to ACA compliance, up to and including the present, has been managed internally, rather than by contracting with a third-party administrator. The Greene County HR Department has been the lead agency for getting the job done since the federal statute was enacted in March 2010.

Health Insurance

HR continued to administer the following health insurance plans on behalf of Greene County:

- 1) **Medicare Advantage Plan (MAP):** Covers health insurance eligible retirees age 65 and over, in addition to disabled retirees under 65, and their eligible dependents.
- 2) **Non-deductible PPO and EPO:** Cover benefit eligible active employees in the AFSCME, CSEA, and Corrections bargaining units, and their eligible dependents. These plans also currently cover insurance eligible retirees under the age of 65 that are not disabled, and their eligible dependents.

- 3) **Deductible PPO and EPO:** Cover benefit eligible active employees in the Deputies Association and UPSEU bargaining units, in addition to managerial and confidential staff, and elected officials, and their eligible dependents.

With the nurses transitioning to the deductible plan effective January 1, 2016, the Employee Benefits Coordinator made an extra effort to be available to help new plan participants understand the plan in order to maximize their benefits, as well as to address their questions and concerns.

In June, the County Administrator, HR Director and Insurance Broker met with the County's primary insurance carrier's Rx expert to review general trends in the marketplace, as well as to examine Greene County's specific experience re: prescription drugs. Prescriptions continue to be the County's primary cost driver across the board. An increase in prescription copays, in addition to mandatory mail order for maintenance medications, is all part of the deductible plans the County has been trying to get all the unions to transition to. The Insurance Broker is continually working to find alternative cost avoidance and cost savings measures to help the County Administrator achieve his desired outcomes. Research and review of options is on-going.

Dental and Vision Insurance

An important project for the HR Department in 2016, was to convert from the provider's existing vision plan management system to its **Dependent Tracking System**. This entailed auditing each enrollee's screen on the provider website and updating enrollee and dependent information, as needed. Our efforts enhanced the accuracy and accessibility of participant information by both the employer and benefits providers, and facilitated claims processing and billing.

HR also completely revamped its **Certification of Student Status** form, requiring parents to provide more detailed information about the fulltime enrollment of their dependent children over the age of 19 in an accredited college or university. Submission of the form, with supporting documentation from the educational institution, is required each semester in order for these dependents to retain their dental and/or vision coverage.

No change in dental or vision insurance carriers or plans were made in 2016. HR staff continued with routine administration of the plans throughout the year.

Open Enrollment

HR coordinated an Employee Benefits Fair during the annual Health Insurance Open Enrollment Period providing employees the opportunity to meet with representatives from the County's benefits providers. HR processed all enrollment changes made during Open Enrollment for a 1/1 start date.

Life Insurance

Following the institution of a life insurance plan for members of the Management/Confidential (M/C) group on January 1, 2016, HR issued life insurance certificates and continued to field questions about the plan. HR also prepared and issued COBRA packets to covered employees terminating employment during the year in order to help them convert from group to individual coverage, if they so desire.

Medicare Management

HR continued to monitor when retirees and their benefit eligible dependents become qualified for Medicare Part B in order to appropriately transfer them to the County's Medicare Advantage Plan.

Creditable Coverage Notices

HR sent annual compliance notices to all Medicare eligible actively working individuals and their dependents, Medicare eligible COBRA individuals and their dependents, Medicare eligible disabled individuals and their dependents, and retirees and dependents covered by the Greene County

Prescription Drug Plan, informing them that the Greene County plan is a creditable plan so they need not join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan. The HR Department also fulfilled the Online Disclosure to CMS (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services) requirement.

Data Match Survey

HR complied with the Data Match mandate in 2016 for the 2015 plan year, by researching its records and completing and transmitting the survey instrument in a timely fashion. The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1989 provides the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) with better information about Medicare beneficiaries' group health plan (GHP) coverage. The law requires the Internal Revenue Service, the Social Security Administration, and CMS to share information that each agency has about whether Medicare beneficiaries or their spouses are working. The process for sharing this information is called the IRS/SSA/CMS Data Match. The purpose of Data Match is to identify situations where another payer may be primary to Medicare. Employers are required to complete a questionnaire that requests group health plan information on identified workers who are either entitled to Medicare or married to a Medicare beneficiary. This information is used to identify the primary and secondary payers for medical services provided to a Medicare beneficiary. This process helps Medicare identify claims on an ongoing basis for which Medicare should not be the primary payer. CMS may assess a penalty against any employer that willfully or repeatedly fails to comply with CMS's request for information.

Health Insurance Buyout

HR continued to process applications and maintain records for the Health Insurance Buyout for employees providing proof of alternative health care coverage. Enrollment in the buyout generally hovers around 100 employees annually County-wide, although added interest in the buyout during the fall Open Enrollment period was expected to raise the participation level by 9% in 2017. HR staff had also noticed more new hires signing-up for the buyout than in the past.

Flexible Spending Plan (FSA)

HR also continued to administer the FSA in 2016, and participated in a review of quotes obtained by the County's Insurance Broker from a number of service providers. Enrollment in the plan remained steady at just over 100 participants in 2016, however, the County experienced a 13% increase in FSA registrations during the fall Open Enrollment period for the 2017 plan year. The County Administrator approved an increase in the annual medical FSA designation for 2017 from \$2000 to \$2550, and reconfirmed his decision not to participate in the rollover.

COBRA Administration

HR routinely extends health, dental and vision insurance coverage under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) to covered employees and their family members when there is a "qualifying event" that would result in a loss of coverage under an employer's plan (e.g., resignation, loss of dependent care status, divorce, death, etc.). The COBRA amount is equal to the full cost of the monthly insurance premiums. HR also created and is using separate and distinct COBRA notices for the Flexible Spending Account (FSA) and Life Insurance Plan.

Premium Assistance Program

HR updated and posted a mandated notice on the employee portal, and sent the same to all departments for posting, regarding potential employee eligibility for a program available through New York State that can help those struggling to pay their insurance premiums. NYS uses funds from its Medicaid or Children's Health Insurance Programs (CHIP) to help people who are eligible for employer-sponsored health coverage, but need assistance in covering the cost of their health premiums. This premium assistance program became effective for local government employees on September 1, 2010,

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

As co-ADA Coordinators, the HR Director and County Attorney processed seven (7) requests for accommodation in 2016, which was a 28% increase over the previous year.

Employee Assistance Program

In conjunction with expansion of the random drug screening program to M/C staff, the County Administrator gave the green light to making EAP services available to the entire workforce and members of their immediate family. HR facilitated set-up of and announced the availability of the EAP beginning 1/1/17, through payroll staffers and e-mail blasts. Marketing efforts will be on-going.

Medical Leave and Disability

HR processed a total of 41 new requests for leave under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) in 2016, which was a decrease of 28% from the previous year. A total of 40 applications were approved for FMLA leave. One was disqualified because the applicant did not meet the eligibility requirements (i.e., had not worked at least 1250 hours in the previous 12 months). The majority of employees used FMLA leave for their own serious health condition. The length of the leaves averaged 5 weeks, although several people were out for 12 weeks or more. HR processed the paperwork for 10 employees on approved medical leave who also filed for short-term disability (down 2% from 2015). Eighteen of the 40 leaves were granted on an intermittent basis which is a decline of 7% over 2015. There were no requests for FMLA Military Family Leave in 2016.

A **new worksheet** created by HR staff proved to be a valuable tool in helping employees calculate the maximum amount of benefit time they can use to supplement disability. This form was added to HR's Standard Medical Leave Packet.

Retirement: New York State Voluntary Defined Contribution Program

The HR Department continued to offer this alternative to membership in the NYS Employees Retirement System to all eligible new hires. (General eligibility: Non-union employees hired on or after 7/1/13 that make \$75,000 or more and are not already enrolled in the NYSERS.) Defined contribution plans are retirement savings vehicles that provide benefits "defined" by employer and employee contributions to the plan and the investment earnings on those contributions. Participants are responsible for managing the investments in their account. Their retirement benefits are based on the success of their investments. This is different from the NYSERS which is a defined benefit plan that provides a fixed and predictable lifetime monthly income at retirement.

FLSA Overtime Exemption

The federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) entitles employees to overtime payments, in certain circumstances, unless they are subject to an FLSA exemption. Earlier in the year, the regulations under the FLSA were amended, significantly increasing the minimum salary requirement for exempt employees as of December 1, 2016. In response, the HR Director met with other key players to examine the possible impact of the changes on Greene County management/confidential (M/C) staff. All of the M/C job descriptions and salaries were analyzed to determine which titles would convert to non-exempt status, thus, making them overtime eligible for hours worked in excess of 40 per week. HR worked with labor counsel to update the M/C overtime-comp. time policy to reflect the change in regulations. An individualized letter was sent to each M/C employee informing them about the FLSA amendment and how they would be impacted, if at all. Department heads were also supplied with a list of their M/C staff, detailing any planned changes to their exempt status. We were poised to enter the status changes in the *New World System* in advance of the County's designated date for effectuating them, when a federal judge in Texas put a hold on the U.S. Department of Labor's overtime rules changes. In light of the news, the County Administrator announced all M/C exempt status changes would be delayed until the matter is resolved at the federal level. A court decision on this was still pending at year's end.

Unemployment Claims

HR assisted in processing all claims for unemployment insurance benefits in 2016.

Workers' Compensation

HR continued to guide claimants and department representatives through the Workers' Compensation process, transmit paperwork to the County's third-party administrator, and follow-up as needed. In January 2016, HR completed the SH900 and SH900.1 forms for 2015, distributed them to County departments in compliance with posting mandates, and sent copies to the NYS Department of Labor. HR also maintained records of all existing and new work-related injuries and illnesses that occurred throughout the 2016 calendar year. In 2016, Greene County had the following experience:

- 0 deaths
- 5 cases of missed work (up 20% from 2015)
- 0 job transfer or restriction cases, and
- 19 other reportable cases (up 16.5% from 2015)

This was the result of 24 total incidents which represents a 17% increase as compared to 2015 and a 25% decrease from 2014.

Compliance Postings

HR conducted its annual audit of federal and state employment posting mandates and distributed new and updated postings to all departments.

Employee Wellness

HR continued to be an active participant on the County Wellness Committee, along with the County Administrator and representatives from Greene County Public Health, our insurance carrier, the Greene County Healthy Weight initiative, and the County's Insurance Broker. The ***Go Greene for Wellness Team*** continued to offer or support a variety of valuable wellness programs throughout the year, including a series of *Nutri-Savings* information sessions, an 8-week on-line stress management program, an ergonomics *Lunch and Learn* program, several worksite walking and weight loss/maintenance initiatives, and fitness classes available at no cost to insurance plan members and their dependents.

Blood Borne Pathogens

HR continued to have a presence on the Blood Borne Pathogens Committee and worked with the Public Health Department to coordinate training for County employees.

Blood Drive

HR coordinated an employee blood drive at the Catskill Office Building in July.

LABOR AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

Labor Contract Negotiations

The HR Director continued to be an active participant on the management team in union contract negotiations, including assisting with development of the County's proposals and analyzing the proposals of each union. Another primary task for HR involved the preparation of employee data sheets for each bargaining unit, including hire and longevity dates, leave time accrued and taken, health insurance enrollment information, and so on.

The County's need to gain control over health care costs by updating and modifying its health insurance program County-wide, remained a central focus of negotiations. A continued push for all eligible members of the Greene County workforce to get on board with the proposed deductible plan was a large

part of that. The \$400/\$800 deductible plan includes a \$1000/\$2000 out-of-pocket maximum, higher doctor visit and prescription co-pays, and a mandatory mail order component for maintenance medications. Deputies Association members and nurses covered by the UPSEU, agreed to switch to the deductible plan in a previous Contract. Employees enrolled in the Teamsters Health and Hospital Fund also agreed to a less costly option. This represents 50% of the existing unions, although a much lower percentage of the total unionized employees. Managerial and confidential staff, and elected officials also participate in the deductible plan.

AFSCME: As 2016 came to a close, there was still no negotiated Agreement between the County and its Highway workers for the term beginning January 1, 2015. While talks were initiated before the previous Contract expired, the parties ended 2014 at impasse and were in mediation by March 2015. Bargaining unit members made it clear they had no interest in adopting the County's proposed deductible insurance plan, and contract talks have remained at a standstill ever since. On a positive note, there seemed to be a renewed interest in going back to the table in the coming year.

Corrections Unit: Negotiations with the Corrections Unit began in November 2013 for the contract term commencing January 1, 2014, although talks were not productive. Discussions were later placed on hold pending the outcome of a Petition by the Corrections Officers to switch union representation. By spring 2016, a new union was in place, all member data was updated, and the management and union negotiating teams were meeting independently to update their proposals. By mid-summer, the parties had begun meeting together and the CO's were given an opportunity to visit with a representative from the County's insurance carrier to get answers to their questions about the proposed deductible plan. Sadly, the parties could not come to a meeting of the minds on a package deal, which resulted in the union declaring impasse in December.

CSEA General Unit: Negotiations activity that originated in May 2013 for the 2013-2015 Contract term, continued into 2015. Just prior to the start of the year, a Fact Finder's Report had been issued and the Chairman of the Greene County Legislature had delivered his recommendations on the Report to County Legislators. Early in 2015, the County and the Union discussed several alternative proposals, but continued to be unable to agree on a package. This led to the Legislature imposing a Contract for 2013 for wages only (0%). The negotiators went back to the table and, by October, had signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). Unfortunately, the proposed Contract was voted down by a large proportion of the membership. By December 2015, the County had declared impasse once again. Two mediation sessions were held in March and April 2016, resulting in a signed MOA, including the County's proposed health insurance changes. In June, this Contract was also voted down and we were on our way back to Fact Finding. In December, the CSEA leadership asked to place the Fact Finding on hold. The year ended with the execution of a third MOA, to be followed-up with a vote by the membership in January 2017.

Deputy Sheriff's Association and UPSEU (Nurses): Although both unions and the County were engaged individually in their own prep work, no negotiations sessions were held with either union in 2016 for the Contract term beginning January 1, 2017. It is expected meetings with both unions will begin soon after the first of the year.

Teamsters: The parties exchanged and clarified their proposals at a meeting in August 2016 for the Contract term commencing January 1, 2017. By the second meeting, they had settled on the terms and signed a Memorandum of Agreement, including 2% wage increases each year for 2017, 2018 and 2019. The Agreement was later ratified by the membership. The Teamsters represent employees of the Solid Waste Management Department.

Contract Grievances, Improper Practices, Labor-Management Agreements

The HR Director was present at most of the second step grievance meetings at the request of the County Administrator. A total of 11 on-going or new grievances were processed in 2016 with the following outcomes. This represents 10% more actions than in 2015.

- Step 1 decisions were upheld by the County Administrator and went no further – 3
- Referred to Labor-Management - 3
- Referred to union contract negotiations – 1
- Withdrawn by grievant prior to arbitration -1
- Arbitration resulted in favor of the County - 1
- Arbitration resulted in favor of the grievant - 1
- Stipulation of Settlement which provided back pay to employees – 1

A decision by a Judge that the subject of a 2013 Improper Practice (IP) charge was not arbitrable, was overturned. The County's Motion for Leave to the Court of Appeals was also later denied. In 2016, an arbitrator decided in favor of the union, and a petition was filed by the County to vacate the arbitrator's award.

An IP filed by a union on a separate matter was still awaiting a Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) hearing at year's end.

Labor-Management Meetings

The HR Director participated with the County Administrator and several department heads in labor-management meetings to discuss a number of department-specific policy development issues and grievance matters.

Disciplinary Actions

The HR Director assisted department heads in processing 17 new or continuing disciplinary actions in 2016 which had the following results. This represents an increase of 29% over 2015 when the County had experienced 25% fewer actions than in the previous year.

- Withdrew grievance prior to arbitration - 1
- Stipulation of Settlement - 1 day unpaid suspension – 1
- Stipulation of Settlement - 2 days unpaid suspension (1 held in abeyance) – 1
- Stipulation of Settlement - 3 days unpaid suspension – 4
- Stipulation of Settlement - 10 days unpaid suspension and Letter of Reprimand – 1
- Stipulation of Settlement - Loss of 3 vacation days and Last Chance Agreement -1
- Stipulation of Settlement - Letter of Reprimand – 3
- Stipulation of Settlement - Amended Letter of Reprimand – 1
- Termination - 2
- Resignation in lieu of discipline – 1
- 60-day suspension – 1

Workplace Investigations

Aside from the disciplinary matters, the HR Director participated in three other workplace investigations.

Management Team Support

The HR Director continued to be regularly engaged with department heads and supervisors in a consultation and support role regarding staffing and employee relations matters.

Employee Awards

HR produced the annual employee awards event on behalf of the Legislature in collaboration with the County Administrator's Office. Pins and certificates were conferred within the departments and a ceremony was held prior to a Legislature meeting to honor the Chairman's Award Winners and Employee of the Year.

STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

HR coordinated the following workshops in 2016, and continued to administer a database to track employee participation in County-sponsored compliance (i.e., Workplace Violence) and other training:

Supervisory Skills Training: In accordance with one of our stated 2016 departmental goals, HR continued to offer skills training opportunities for supervisory staff with the help of Columbia-Greene Community College (CGCC). *Decision Making and Leadership Training for Supervisors*, a customized 4-part series launched in 2015, was made available to another group of workplace leaders in early spring.

Computer Classes: HR also partnered with CGCC to provide basic and intermediate level computer training programs. The classes proved very popular with all levels of staff.

Workforce Development Grant funds were able to be used to cover the cost of all the training offered through CGCC, making it very cost effective for Greene County!

Blood Borne Pathogens: In collaboration with Greene County Public Health, provided training for all employees that may be at risk of accidental occupational exposure to blood borne pathogens or other potentially infectious materials in the course of their work.

Discrimination and Harassment Prevention in the Workplace: Worked with labor counsel to update the County's Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy and Complaint Procedure to ensure compliance with a new law prohibiting discrimination based on gender identity. Upon adoption by the Legislature, copies of the policy were distributed to the workforce and training was initiated.

Employee Leave Use and Abuse: A mandatory training for department heads addressing the rights and responsibilities of managers and employees in accordance with applicable Law and County policy.

Wellness Classes: HR continued to assist the Wellness Committee in scheduling and promoting a variety of health and fitness training opportunities for County employees and their dependent.

PLANS FOR THE NEAR FUTURE

In addition to continually improving our service to Greene County's employees, retirees and members of the public who seek our assistance, the Human Resources Department has set the following goals for 2017:

1. **ACA Amendments or Repeal, Replacement, and/or Repair Plans:** To stay well-informed about any ACA amendments, or repeal, replacement and/or repair plans implemented, and to respond accordingly. Continue to keep records current by updating the County's database as employment status and/or health insurance coverage changes occur.

2. **EEO Report Form Changes:** Examine the requirement for private companies to begin reporting pay data on EEO-1 Employer Information Report Forms slated to begin in 2018. Research whether or not EEO-4 State and Local Government Report Form filers will need to fulfill the same or similar reporting requirements, and when that will begin. (Note: Pay bands have always been a part of the EEO-4 report, so there may not be any changes for government employers.)
3. **Exempt OT Rules:** Continue to monitor legislated changes and follow through, as required.
4. **Workers' Compensation Reference Manual:** Develop and maintain a reference manual for the department re: the administration of Workers' Compensation claims.
5. **Computer Training:** To continue offering computer training until employee needs are satisfied.
6. **Employee Assistance Program (EAP):** Establish a baseline for utilization over the course of the EAP's first year to enable HR to evaluate and set goals for the program going forward.