

GREENE COUNTY HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

2017 ANNUAL REPORT

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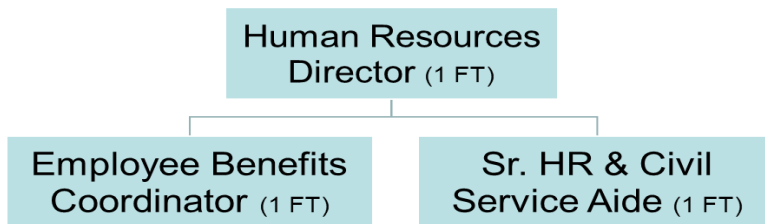
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HR MISSION STATEMENT: To provide the highest quality personnel services to our employees and customers, while promoting effective and efficient County government.

HR VISION: To support the work of the Greene County community toward achievement of its strategic goals.

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT



INTRODUCTION

Year after year, health insurance and other benefits-related topics, have dominated the work of the Human Resources (HR) Department. In 2017, while health insurance remained prominent, labor relations made even bigger news as five out of a possible six Collective Bargaining Agreements were successfully negotiated. (The seventh was not up for renewal.) In the process, the County made tremendous progress in moving more of its unionized workers to a deductible health insurance plan while, at the same time, several of the unions were able to secure pay increases for members who had been absent a raise for many years. The conversion of benefits and union contract settlements resulted in a flurry of activity for HR staff who set about implementing the new Contract provisions, updating information for each member in the personnel/payroll system, communicating changes, addressing health plan inquiries, and so on. This was in addition to other important work in the areas of workforce planning, staffing and employment, compensation, compliance, policy development and administration, compensation and benefits, labor and employee relations, and training and staff development.

All HR staff participated in professional development and training activities throughout the year, including classes on diversity in hiring, the NYS Retirement System’s new Retirement On-line program, and HR legal topics. Working together we were able to stay the course and accomplish our goals for the year, by developing a Workers’ Compensation Reference Manual; monitoring legislation and following up on developments in policy related to the Affordable Care Act, EEO reporting, and the Fair Labor Standards Act; establishing a utilization baseline for the County’s new Employee Assistance Program (EAP); and continuing to coordinate computer training for all employees. 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 FY2017.

STAFFING AND EMPLOYMENT

Personnel Changes

HR remained busy with personnel changes in 2017, including **61 new hires** (the exact same number that were processed in 2016) **and 4 retirees rehired**. There were also **30 resignations, 19 retirements, 10 terminations, and 2 deaths, in addition to 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.

In 2017, the number of vacancies posted internally, and the number of Civil Service exam lists canvassed, exceeded the number of advertised positions 3 to 1. Hiring from an exam list is usually preferable to hiring a candidate provisionally since there is a risk the incumbent may not pass the test or be “reachable” on the list. This outcome can be devastating to the employee, and a waste of time and money for the employer. Very often, the hiring authority waits until the exam results are out before filling the vacancy. **The busiest months for recruitment in 2017 were January, June and September.**

Reclassifications, Reallocations, Promotional Opportunities

HR participated in evaluating the reclassification requests of department heads for three individuals, and all three of the applications were recommended for approval 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

A random drug screening program for employees in the Managerial/Confidential (M/C) group was initiated in 2017, at the request of the County Administrator. Ten percent of the M/C pool was tested on two separate occasions during the year. **As a result of successful union contract negotiations in late 2017, the HR Department prepared to add members of the CSEA General Unit and the CSEA Probation and Dispatch Unit, to the testing program beginning in 2018.** Employees of the County's Highway and Solid Waste Management Department, and the Sheriff's Office/Jail, already participate in random drug testing.

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 began using a new version of the form I-9 beginning in January 2017,** and kept on the lookout for possible changes to employment verification laws promulgated by the federal government.

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.

EEO-4 Report

Per its 2017 goals list, HR followed through on researching whether the planned requirement of private companies to begin reporting W-2 wage data and hours worked on EEO-1 Employer Information Report Forms, will also be applied to the EEO-4 State and Local Government Report Forms filed by the County, and, if so, when the change might be effective. While that exact question was not answered, it was learned that the effective date of wage data reporting was postponed while the federal government ponders whether this strategy will be the most effective method for resolving pay equity issues.

In accordance with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) requires biennial reports in odd-numbered years from public employers which indicate the composition of their work forces by sex and by race/ethnic category. The reporting agencies provide information on their employment totals, and employee job category and salary by sex and race/ethnic group, as of June 30th of the survey year. **In 2017, HR generated the data necessary to complete the survey instrument on-line, then submitted it to the federal government electronically well in advance of the September 30th deadline.**

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 also 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.

HR Forms

In 2017, HR staff continued to develop and update its collection of useful forms, including

1. Creating a Benefit Time Election form for employees absent due to a work-related injury;
2. Posted a folder of fillable Workers' Compensation forms on the County Share Point;
3. Updated the Employee Counseling form;
4. Updated the Personnel Change form;
5. Updated form I-9;
6. Updated the COBRA Election and General Notices;
7. Updated the Probationary Period Evaluation Schedule form.

Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) - NEW!

The HR Department's mission is to provide the highest quality personnel services to our employees and customers, while promoting effective and efficient government. To accomplish this mission, HR must ensure its operations are performed proficiently with minimal disruption, especially during an emergency. At the request of, and using a template provided by, the Public Health and Emergency Services Departments, **HR developed a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)** in 2017 to ensure the department is capable of conducting its Mission Essential Functions (MEF) when its primary operating location is unusable. The plan will be reviewed and updated annually.

Administrative Manual

HR continued to be actively involved in contributing proposed updates to the Greene County Administrative Manual. In 2017, our suggestions resulted in amendments to the rehired retiree and probationary period sections of the Manual.

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.

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.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Affordable Care Act (ACA)

In addition to satisfying our long-standing goal of keeping all ACA reporting data current as enrollment status and/or health insurance coverage changes occur, HR closely monitored activity at the federal level in 2017 re: possible amendments or repeal, replacement, and/or repair plans. Beyond that, the Department persisted in managing the myriad of tasks needed to successfully achieve compliance with the ACA 's many mandates, including: (1) Monitoring the hours worked of all on-going part-time and per diem employees during the County's "Standard Measurement Period" in order to evaluate their eligibility for health insurance, (2) Monitoring the hours worked of all newly hired variable hour part-time and per diem employees during their "Initial Measurement Period" in order to evaluate their eligibility for health insurance, (3) Conducting "Affordability" calculations for each of the health plans offered by the County, and (4) Regularly re-evaluating the "Offer and Coverage" and "Safe Harbor" codes being used to ensure our selections are appropriate for each individual's circumstances, in order that our end product will be as precise as possible.

Health Insurance

In 2017, HR continued to administer the following health insurance plans on behalf of Greene County:

- 1) Medicare Advantage Plan
- 2) Non-deductible PPO and EPO
- 3) Deductible PPO and EPO

Note: The Teamsters Health and Hospital Fund Select Plan is managed by the Greene County Department of Highway and Solid Waste for Teamsters bargaining unit members.

The foremost change in terms of health insurance activity in 2017, related to successfully negotiating labor agreements transitioning more employees (approx. 350) from the non-deductible PPO and EPO plans to the deductible PPO and EPO plans. This has been a primary goal of the County Administrator for containing escalating health care costs, and is something the management negotiating teams have been trying to accomplish since 2014. By year's end, only one bargaining unit remained on the non-deductible plan. (See Labor and Employee Relations section for further details.)

With members of the Corrections union shifting to the deductible plan effective August 1, 2017, and both CSEA units converting to the plan in January and February 2018, HR became intensely focused on activities to facilitate the smooth transition of staff from one plan to the other. This began by carefully updating each employee's record in the personnel/payroll system to reflect changes in benefit codes, premium contributions, ACA Offer and Coverage codes, and so on. In addition, the Employee Benefits Coordinator, in collaboration with the County's Insurance Broker and representatives of the health insurance plan, made an extra effort to be available to plan participants to help them understand their new plan so they could maximize their benefits, as well as to address their questions and concerns.

By popular demand, a **Telemedicine** program was added as part of the County's health benefit for participants in both the non-deductible and deductible PPO and EPO plans. Telemedicine connects employees with board-certified physicians by video. These doctors can review symptoms and medications, perform an exam, and recommend a treatment plan. This benefit enhancement, effective January 1, 2018, is available to eligible Greene County employees with a **\$0 copay**.

Dental and Vision Insurance

No modifications in dental or vision insurance carriers or plans were made in 2017. 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

HR also continued to oversee the life insurance plan for members of the Management/Confidential (M/C) group, including generating COBRA notices for those terminating employment.

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.

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 increased by an unprecedented 17% during the 2017 Open Enrollment period for a January 1, 2018 start date.** This may have been related to the anticipated move by some union members to the deductible health insurance plan, although HR staff have also noticed more new hires signing-up for the buyout than in the past.

HR also prepared for implementation of a cap on the buyout negotiated for members of the CSEA Public Safety Unit (eff. 1/1/18) and the CSEA General Unit (eff. 2/1/18). Rather than being tied to health insurance premiums which continually rise, the caps are fixed dollar amounts which are more generous for those hired on or before December 31, 2017.

Flexible Spending Plan (FSA)

HR also continued to administer the FSA in 2017. **Enrollment in the plan surged by 16% for the 2017 plan year, then decreased by 4% during the fall Open Enrollment for the 2018 plan year.** Enrollees enjoyed an approved increase in the 2017 annual medical FSA designation to \$2550. The County Administrator upped the limit again at Open Enrollment time to \$2600 for the coming year, in addition to reconfirming 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 two (2) requests for accommodation in 2017, which was a decrease of more than 50% over the previous year.

Employee Assistance Program- NEW!

January 1st marked the kick-off of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for Greene County employees and their immediate family members. The EAP is a free, confidential service that provides a way to cope with issues such as work-related stress, as well as problems outside the workplace. A report of aggregate data received for the **2017 plan year revealed a 3.1% utilization rate** which is slightly above the national average and fairly respectable for our first year of operation. It is desirable to have employees maximizing use of this valuable resource for their own well-being, as well as to help reduce time and attendance issues, maintain performance, and minimize work-related injury/illness and health care costs. **In accordance with one of its stated goals for 2017,** the HR Department established a baseline using the aggregate data, and will be evaluating it and setting goals for the program in the coming year. Primary among those will be ramping up our marketing efforts.

Medical Leave, Disability, Paid Family Leave

In anticipation of a 2018 rate increase of almost \$1 per employee, per month by the County’s current provider, HR participated in a review of quotes obtained by our broker from a variety of carriers for the provision of NYS Statutory Disability benefits. By doing so, **the County was able to contract with a different carrier offering a 2-year guarantee at the rate the County was paying for 2016-2017.**

HR processed a total of 50 new requests for leave under the **Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)** in 2017, which was an **increase of 18%** from the previous year. A total of 43 applications were approved for FMLA leave. The others were disqualified because the applicants did not meet the eligibility requirements (i.e., had not worked for the County a minimum of 12 months and/or had not worked at least 1250 hours in the previous 12 months). However, all seven of these applicants were approved for non-FMLA medical leaves. The majority of employees used FMLA leave for their own serious health condition. The length of the leaves averaged 7-10 days for most individuals, although approximately

25% of the participants were out for 12 weeks or more. HR processed the paperwork for 19 employees on approved medical leave who also filed for short-term disability (**up 48% from 2016**). Twenty four of the 43 leaves were granted on an intermittent basis which is an **increase of 25% over 2016**. One request for FMLA Military Family Leave was also approved.

The County opted not to participate in the **New York Paid Family Leave** program slated to become effective on January 1, 2018. The program is optional for public employers in New York State. There is currently no collective bargaining obligation to provide the Paid Family Leave benefit to Greene County employees, however, leave benefits are extended to them under the FMLA and the union contracts covering County employees. The County provided advanced notice to the NYS Workers' Compensation Board and all employees that the County would not be "opting in" to the benefit at this time.

Retirement: New York State Voluntary Defined Contribution Program

The HR Department continued to offer this alternative to membership in the NYS and Local Retirement System (NYSLRS) 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 NYSLRS.) 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 NYSLRS which is a defined benefit plan that provides a fixed and predictable lifetime monthly income at retirement.

FLSA Overtime Exemption

Pursuant to an HR Department goal for 2017, the HR Director continued to monitor activity at the federal level related to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) overtime rules. The FLSA entitles employees to overtime payments, in certain circumstances, unless they are subject to an FLSA exemption. Early in 2016, the regulations under the FLSA were amended, significantly increasing the minimum salary requirement for exempt employees as of December 1st of that year. However, a temporary injunction placed on the U.S. Department of Labor's overtime rules changes, was later made permanent when a U.S. District Judge declared the FLSA amendment invalid (August 2017). The Department of Labor followed-up in October with an appeal and a motion to stay, while it began work on a new proposal. **Meanwhile, the existing exempt salary threshold (2004) of \$23,660 remained in effect.**

Unemployment Claims

HR assisted in processing all claims for unemployment insurance benefits in 2017.

Workers' Compensation

In keeping with one of HR's 2017 goals, the department developed a **Workers' Compensation Reference Manual** for internal use re: the administration of Workers' Compensation claims.

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 2017, HR completed the SH900 and SH900.1 forms for 2016, 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 2017 calendar year. In 2017, Greene County had the following experience:

- 1 death
- 12 cases of missed work (up 5.8% from 2016)
- 0 job transfer or restriction cases, and
- 22 other reportable cases (up 13.6% from 2016)

This was the result of 35 total incidents which represents a 31.4% increase as compared to 2016.

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 representatives from Greene County Public Health, our insurance carrier, the Greene County Healthy Weight initiative, the County Administrator, 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, healthy vending options, cancer services program education, a *Lunch and Learn* program, monthly wellness tips, 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 to be held in January 2018.

LABOR AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

Labor Contract Negotiations

The HR Director maintained an active role on the management team for union contract negotiations, including assisting with development of the County's proposals, as well as analyzing the proposals of each union. She is also responsible for preparation of the employee data sheets for each bargaining unit, including hire and longevity dates, leave time accrued and taken, health insurance enrollment information, and so on. Upon ratification of each contract, the HR Director assists in checking the final document for accuracy, works with the Payroll Department to establish the pay schedules, and implements new or amended terms of each Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), as required.

It was a banner year for union contract settlements in Greene County as five out of a possible six new CBA's were ratified. (The seventh was not up for renewal.) Negotiations were highly productive in 2017 as the County made tremendous progress in moving more of its unionized workers to the deductible health insurance plan while, at the same time, several of the unions were able to secure pay increases for members who had been absent a raise for many years. Agreement was facilitated by an unprecedented level of creativity demonstrated by some of the unions in developing their proposals, which resulted in some really good Contracts.

The County's need to gain control over spiraling health care costs by revamping its health insurance program County-wide, resulted in the adoption of a deductible plan that was initially implemented for managerial and confidential employees, and elected officials on January 1, 2014. 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. The plan was later negotiated for members of the Deputies Association (eff. 1/1/15) and for nurses covered by the UPSEU (eff. 1/1/16). Even employees enrolled in the Teamsters Health and Hospital Fund agreed to a less costly option at that time. Contracts settled in 2017 added members of the Corrections Unit (eff. 8/1/17), CSEA Public Safety Unit (eff. 1/1/18), and the CSEA General Unit (eff. 2/1/18) to the deductible plan. By the end of the year, the AFSCME bargaining unit, which represents employees of the County Highway Department, was the only union remaining on the non-deductible plan.

In addition to health insurance plan changes, the County was able to achieve some of its other primary goals, including placing a cap on the health insurance buyout in some contracts, expanding the random drug testing program, and eliminating summer hours.

AFSCME: As 2017 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, were in mediation by March 2015, and have failed to gain any traction since then. Despite having presentations and Q&A sessions with representatives from the insurance carrier, AFSCME members have reiterated they have no interest in adopting the County's deductible health insurance plan. Negotiations sessions reconvened in September 2017 with a team change on the labor side and an exchange of offers, however, there has been no activity since.

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 (COs) 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 COs were given an opportunity to visit with a representative from the County's insurance carrier to get answers to their questions about the then 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 by December. Several mediation sessions in early 2017 were not fruitful although, some time after mediation ended, the union asked the County to write-up its last offer in the form of a Memorandum of Agreement so they could take it to a vote. By June 2017 we had a Contract, including a lump sum payment of 2.5% not added to base (12/31/16); a 2.5% base rate adjustment, but no cash payout (1/1/17); and a 2% wage adjustment each year for 2017, 2018 and 2019. Health insurance changes for the Unit became effective on August 1, 2017.

CSEA General Unit: Negotiations with the CSEA General Unit had been on-going since May 2013 for the 2013-2015 Contract term. Despite exploring, what seemed like, every possible alternative, the parties were unable to reach an agreement that was acceptable to the membership. In fact, two proposed Contracts were voted down by the membership since the start of negotiations and, by January 2017, the parties found themselves back at the fact finding stage. At CSEA's request, fact finding was tabled while union members voted on a third Memorandum of Agreement, which also failed. Talks resumed in October as a newly reconfigured union negotiating team presented its package proposal to the County. Negotiators spent the better part of a day going back and forth over the terms of a tentative agreement. After this single meeting, a fourth MOA was signed and a Contract ratified before year's end, including member enrollment in the deductible plan and a cap on the health insurance buyout. Other outcomes of the deal included a lump sum payment not on base and \$1250 added to base effective in 2017, plus a 2% wage increase effective November 1st; a 2% wage adjustment each year in 2018 and 2019; and a new Step. If agreement had not been reached, fact finding would have resumed.

CSEA Public Safety (Dispatch & Probation): In the spring 2017, a request for certain titles in the Greene County Probation and Emergency Services Departments to split out of the CSEA General Unit, was acknowledged and agreed to by the County. The parties commenced negotiating in July and, despite a few bumps in the road, came to a meeting of the minds by October. In addition to moving to the deductible health insurance plan, this first-time Contract capped the health insurance buyout; modified the step and longevity schedules; added uniform and firearms stipends; and provided a 4% wage adjustment in 2017, and 2% each year in 2018 and 2019.

Deputy Sheriff's Association: A primary proposal presented by the union at the first negotiations session in March 2017, continued to be discussed and fine-tuned at subsequent meetings.

By December, the parties had reached an agreement for the Contract term January 1, 2017 – December 31, 2018. Deputy Sheriff Lieutenants were added to the bargaining unit midway through the year.

Teamsters: The current CBA is not due to expire until December 31, 2019. The Teamsters represent employees of the Solid Waste Management Department.

UPSEU (Nurses): Contract negotiations with UPSEU began early in 2017 and, by the third meeting, the parties had a tentative agreement for the Contract term January 1, 2017 – December 31, 2019. Among other things, the CBA provided a 2% wage adjustment each year in 2017 and 2018, plus a 2.5% wage adjustment in 2019.

Contract Grievances, Improper Practices (IP), 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 22 on-going or new grievances were processed in 2017 with the following outcomes. This is double the number of actions in 2016. A primary reason for this is that a couple of employees filed multiple grievances on the same topic, rather than one grievance encompassing them all.

- Withdrawn by union - 1
- Denied by Department Head at Step1 and went no further – 7
- Denied by County Administrator at Step 2 and went no further – 2
- Denied by County Administrator at Step 2 and awaiting union response - 1
- Resolved at Step 2 – 3
- Arbitration Pending - 5
- Stipulation of Settlement - 2
- Stipulation of Settlement in lieu of hearing re: a 2015 IP charge – 1

In addition, a petition filed by the County to vacate an arbitrator's award regarding a 2013 IP charge, was denied by the Supreme Court. Grievants were awarded back pay and the chance to return to their County positions.

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-related matters.

Disciplinary Actions

The HR Director assisted department heads in processing 21 new or continuing disciplinary actions in 2017 which had the following results. This represents an increase of 23.5% over the previous year.

- Letter of Reprimand - 2
- Stipulation of Settlement - Loss of 4 personal days - 1
- Stipulation of Settlement - 3 day unpaid suspension – 2
- Stipulation of Settlement - 4 day unpaid suspension (1 day held in abeyance) – 1
- Stipulation of Settlement - 5 day unpaid suspension (3 days held in abeyance) – 1
- Stipulation of Settlement – 1 day unpaid suspension, \$150 restitution, and Letter of Reprimand - 1
- Stipulation of Settlement – Shift change, 30-day unpaid suspension and Last Chance Agreement – 1
- Stipulation of Settlement - Loss of 16 vacation hours - 1
- Stipulation of Settlement - Letter of Reprimand and loss of 6 personal hours – 1
- Stipulation of Settlement - Letter of Reprimand and loss of 14 vacation hours - 1
- Stipulation of Settlement - Letter of Reprimand and loss of 48 vacation hours – 1

- Stipulation of Settlement – Letter of Reprimand and 10-day unpaid suspension – 1
- Stipulation of Settlement – 10-day unpaid suspension, loss of 5 vacation days, and limited reassignment – 1
- Termination – 1
- Terminated and awaiting arbitration - 2
- Resignation in lieu of termination – 3

Workplace Investigations

Aside from the disciplinary matters, the HR Director participated in a number of 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 announce the Employee of the Year and Chairman’s Award Winner.

STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

HR coordinated the following workshops in 2017, and continued to administer a database to track employee participation in County-sponsored compliance (i.e., Workplace Violence) and other training:

Computer Classes: Per one of our stated 2017 goals, HR continued to partner with Columbia Greene Community College (CGCC) to provide basic and intermediate level computer training programs (i.e., Excel and Word). The classes have been popular with all levels of staff. As in the past, 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.

Discrimination and Harassment Prevention in the Workplace: Classes were held for all levels of staff on this topic.

Performance Management for Supervisors: A training for new supervisors or any supervisor in need of training on employee performance appraisals and employee corrective action.

Benefits Information Sessions: Provided opportunities throughout the year for employees to learn more about their benefit options, via presentations, walk-in consultations, information tables, and mailings/emails. This included sessions on the deductible health insurance plan, Nutri-Savings program, and the NYS Deferred Compensation Plan.

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 2018:

1. **Exempt OT Rules:** Continue to monitor legislated changes to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Overtime Exemption and make sure employees are properly classified.
2. **ACA Amendments or Replacement Plans:** Continue to stay on top of what's happening with the Affordable Care Act 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.
3. **Outreach:** Partner with the Greene County Civil Service Department to pilot outreach opportunities for local high school students regarding employment and the examination process. It is expected this might be able to be accomplished via job fairs, information tables, and presentations.
4. **Employee Assistance Program (EAP):** Evaluate baseline utilization data from year-1, set short-term goals for 2018, and execute them, if feasible.
5. **Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Reporting:** Keep abreast of proposed EEO-1 reporting requirements re: W-2 wage data and hours worked in terms of whether the same will be required for EEO-4 reporting.
6. **Workers' Compensation:** Review and evaluate all 2017 Workers' Compensation claims to identify any trends and/or areas needing improvement. Follow-up with department heads, as needed, to develop a plan for reducing the number of incidents going forward.