

## **Human Resources**

*Bonnie Bonham, Director*

The Human Resources Department's three dedicated staff and Safety Coordinator provide personnel services to all Mishawaka Civil City and Utility departments. Services offered include talent management, staff development, benefits management and education, policy development and safety education and training.



*Human Resources Department (l to r): Bonnie Bonham, MS, Director; Josh Callander, Safety Department Coordinator; Vickie Dowsett, Office Manager; Susan Wallace, Assistant Director.*

The major change for the employees was with our health and wellness benefits coverage and delivery. Due to the increasing costs (36% over 4 years) through the City's membership in the IACT Medical Trust, the City withdrew its participation in the Trust and returned to self-insured status. This change is estimated to save the City up to 27% in 2014. At the same time, we chose new providers for dental, vision and supplementary term life. Because of all the changes, 98% of the employee population attended a one-on-one meeting with an enrollment specialist. We are pleased that our

employees' interest in preventive health continues to increase. We are also continuing our discussions to provide an employee worksite health clinic to offer a more cost effective alternative for non-life threatening medical care. We are hopeful for a 2014 opening.

The 2013 Health and Wellness Event resulted in 186 employees and spouses receiving free flu shots. Also, an additional 30 employees and spouses went directly to the pharmacy to receive their shot. This is an increase of 8% from 2012.

### **Workforce**

In 2013, Human Resources received 524 applications for employment and hired 18, including three Fire Department and two Police Department employees bringing the total workforce to 496. Seasonal employment increased the total by 130 for the summer and winter seasons in our Park and Central Services departments. The workforce was reduced by 17 separations including eight retirees (who average 30 years of service each) translating to a total loss of 242 years of service to the City. The additional nine resignations totaled 42 years of service. We thank them for their dedication to the citizens of Mishawaka in each of their very important roles.

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## Safety Department

A safe working environment free of recognizable hazards is maintained through continued awareness and education. This is evident by the injury frequency which has been on a downward trend since 2008. In fact, there was a 19% decrease in claims cost from 2012. Training of all Departments and inspection of jobsites have been effective tools for minimizing work place injuries. The Utilities Business Office and Water Division have each exceeded 2,000 days without a lost-time work injury. The Wastewater Division and City Hall have each exceeded 1,500 days. The Park Department passed the 1,000 day mark, and the Electric Division passed the 500 day mark. These are impressive numbers for work environments that are known to be prone to work place hazards. Training within each department and job site evaluations have been a constant focal point within the safety field. Job specific training, such as CPR and First Aid, work zone safety, forklift safety, electrical safety, distracted driving, confined space, fire protection and the new OSHA hazard communication standard have been introduced or repeated per mandated safety standards.

A new Hearing Conservation Program was introduced and 107 employees took part to establish a baseline for annual monitoring. Several departments introduced a more aggressive Respiratory Protection Program. The City Safety Committee, with Department representatives, met bi-monthly to discuss City safety enhancement.

*Four Departments have each exceeded 1,500 days without a lost-time work injury*

The Human Resources Department will continue its goal of showing appreciation to all City and Utility employees as well as provide them with the service and resources to encourage and maintain a healthy work-life balance.