

Human Resources and Communication
Mike Zelenak, Human Resources Director

The Human Resources Department coordinates the recruitment of applicants and the filling of position vacancies. The department is also responsible for employee relations, collective bargaining, compensation, job classification, employee development, training and the administration of safety and employee benefit programs. The department consists of a Human Resource Director and the Public Information Coordinator. The Public Information Coordinator is responsive to the public, City Council and staff members in all their communication needs and ensures that all printed and televised communications regarding the City and its activities reflect the community's values and are consistent, professional, informative, accurate, and timely.

Human Resources

This past year was again very busy with personnel changes and contract negotiations. The city was able to successfully re-negotiate three (3) contracts and negotiated one first time agreement with E-911 dispatchers. The annual wage increase for each year was 2%; the Police contract was settled for three years, but contained a wage re-opener clause.

The city continued to experience higher than expected turnover in 2006. The greatest turnover was again caused the retirements of six individuals. The city will continue to experience higher than expected turnover over the next 2-3 years do to the aging work force

	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>
New Hires	14	16
Separations	14	15
Promotions and Transfers	10	11

This past year was spent on supervisor and department head training. Each month we worked on communication skills and trying to bring the group together to show that even though we are separate departments with separate functions, we all work for the City of Albert Lea and have the same goals.

We continue to see the cost of health care rise. The city has taken a proactive approach to deal with this problem. This past year a Health and Wellness Committee was formed in order to promote healthy life styles and help reduce the double-digit increase in health insurance premiums.

Projects identified for 2007 include a complete overhaul of the city's pay structure and compensation system. The current plan was last updated in 1987. This will be a very large undertaking and will require employee involvement to rewrite job descriptions, conduct salary surveys and match jobs according to the State of Minnesota's pay equity program. We also plan to implement an employee performance system to include written evaluations and goals. This program will be implemented in stages one department at a time.

Personnel policies and procedures is another area that has been identified for 2007. The current policies have not been updated since 2003 and many departments have there own policies and procedures which the Human Resource department would like to standardize.

Safety

The safety committee made great strides this year to show employees that we are committed to their safety and that their concerns would be addressed. We conducted safety audits of the city garage, ice arena, swimming pool and two floors of the City Center this year, along with conducting required OSHA training each month. The number of accidents for 2006 was down from 2005; we would like to think that the safety committees efforts played a large role in that reduction.

Accidents	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>
	41	47	31

Public Information

The City installed phase two of the video equipment for the Government Channel this year. This consisted of four robotic cameras which were mounted on the ceiling in the Council Chambers. The upgrade also included a sound board and character generator. The City Council and Shell Rock River Watershed Board of Managers meetings are regularly monthly meetings being taped at this time.

Since 2006 was an election year, a number of candidate forums were conducted and aired on the Government channel. The Albert Lea/ Freeborn County Chamber of Commerce sponsored a mayoral forum in September which was aired live on ALTV before the primary election. The Chamber again sponsored a city council, county commissioner, sheriff forum before the November elections which was aired live on ALTV. The Benda/Brown Minnesota House of Representative forum which was held at the Albert Lea Civic Theater also aired on ALTV.

The public information coordinator was heavily involved in the City's Sesquicentennial Celebration in 2006, serving on the Executive Committee and as the Co-chair of the Marketing Committee. The Sesquicentennial was a year-long event with each month having events centered on a certain theme. The committee received many positive comments from the community. From this, a committee has been formed to continue the public street dance during the annual Eddie Cochran Festival.

Information was sent out to the public via the City's bi-monthly newsletter, monthly articles in the Chamber of Commerce's Business Monthly, press releases to local news outlets, the city's website and the Government Access Channel. Several departments are now taking advantage of having this department design brochures, advertisements, posters, power point presentations, certificates, informational packets, etc.

The public information coordinator continues to meet with marketing representatives from the Albert Lea/Freeborn County Chamber of Commerce, Convention and Visitor's Bureau, Albert Lea Economic Development Agency and Freeborn County to look at ways the group can work together when marketing the community, rather than separately. Projects discussed in 2006 included billboards, kiosks and putting together a marketing packet for interested developers, visitors, etc.

Plans for 2007 include expanding ALTV programming to include short programs from city departments and continued cooperation with the school district. Work continues on individual department web pages, as well as the development of an employee intranet site.