

# Employee Picnic Survey



## QUESTION

*I know this has been asked before, and I'm sorry for asking again, but some of our employees were grumbling about our picnic this year and given recent events with our former city manager, I'm very sensitive to use of city funds for ANYTHING like that.*

*So my question is, does your city have an employee picnic each summer? If so, from where does the money come for the event? Do you have games and prizes? How much of the food does your city provide?*

*Thank you for any input you can provide (you guys are the best)!*

*Emily Gagner, City of Dallas, Oregon, 8/8/12  
[emily.gagner@dallasor.gov](mailto:emily.gagner@dallasor.gov), 503-831-3502*

*P.S. And FYI, our former city manager gave us an annual budget of \$700 for our picnic. The city bought drinks, meat (us. pre-cooked pulled pork from Cash & Carry), and some macaroni/potato salad, as well as small prizes for games and then the employees brought desserts & other sides. I'm sure that will change when we get a permanent city manager...*

## RESPONSES

Tigard	<p>Tigard recently did this as an employee-initiated, end of fiscal year, beginning of summer picnic. We used NO city money. Here's how we did it:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) We have an employee incentive program that awards staff when they are "caught" living our values. Each department has their own form of award, (kudos, high-fives, rave reviews, etc.). Because you are taxed on your "award" many employees don't ever redeem them, so there were a lot of \$5 gift cards unclaimed. Many employees donated them to pay for the barbecue meat, cheese, buns and pop.</li><li>2) Our executive staff donated over \$200 of their own money to help buy food and paper goods.</li><li>3) I was in charge of the "side show" which meant organizing the pot luck side dishes. Our city manager made baked beans!</li><li>4) We even had a salsa competition. (The kind you eat with chips.)</li><li>5) We held it on city property from 11-2 p.m. to cover most people's lunch hours. Those that were off on Friday grumbled about the date but we decided we couldn't please everybody.</li><li>6) Public works delivered their BBQ's and extra trashcans. Facilities helped by setting up tables and chairs and one canopy.</li><li>7) For entertainment we had a cakewalk, using a police PA system and all the cakes and brownies, etc. were made or donated by employees. It was a hit!</li><li>8) We also had games involving hula hoops and potato sack races. We had other games in mind but didn't really need them.</li><li>9) Everyone who came had a great time and it was a good multi-department bonding experience, especially after our recent budget cuts and employee departures.</li></ol>
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Reedsport	<p>We designate \$500 for “Employee Recognition” each year. We normally use it to have an employee BBQ at the beginning of summer. It is just a lunch type for employees only and then we have an employee lunch at Christmas time where we bring food in and have a white elephant gift exchange and recognize milestone years or special awards but that is all.</p>
Baker City	<p>We used to have a picnic-the City supplied the meat-usually hamburgers and hotdogs and the rest was potluck. At first the city chipped in for some raffle prizes-\$5 gift cards at local businesses like the movie theater and book store. We were lucky enough to even get some prizes donated by businesses (you know that \$5 doesn't buy much so of course you would spend out of your own pocket). The last couple years the raffle prizes were donated by employees, the City still brought the meat, buns and condiments and the rest was potluck. The unions actually brought catered food so their folks didn't have to bring anything.</p> <p>Well this year our budget was cut to the bone, we have not replaced the last several folks who retired and have had layoffs. Pretty hard to justify more perks for those fortunate enough to still have a job.</p> <p>SO, we are joining forces with the County, having a county vs city softball game and using some of our wellness money to buy water and some wellness-oriented prizes for the games. Some people are donating baskets to be raffled off to help a local child with a rare dreaded disease so someone generously offered to donate hamburgers and even cook them. There will be other games and will be geared toward families (on a Wednesday evening). The county, who doesn't seem to be in the public crosshairs as much as we are, are paying for some stuff. The county has spearheaded this and I think it is a great idea. We are a small community and know most of the other's employees-some are even married (city employee &amp; county employee). So the only money the city will spend is some of the wellness grant (from CIS) funds. I haven't heard about a lot of people coming, but I am hopeful.</p> <p>Good luck to everyone trying to create an atmosphere of employee/community fellowship. I know how trying this is.</p>
Newberg	<p>We have an employee appreciation lunch in February only. The City does pay for the meal and we usually get some kind of City of Newberg memento. Last year it was the reusable cups. The City closes for the lunch hour so all employees can attend. The lunch is also held on at our Fire Station and isn't as visible to the public as a picnic in the park. Door prizes are donated by each department and are gift baskets the employees contribute to.</p>
Cottage Grove	<p>We have an annual event where we recognize employees for years of service in five year increments. In the past we have had a bowling party where the City pays for the bowling and the employee and their family pay a minimal fee for hamburgers, etc. This year we are having a BBQ/Picnic (today in fact) and we are having it at our golf course, Middlefield Golf Course, after work from 5-7pm. The City is providing the hamburgers, hotdogs, condiments and drinks and the employees are all bringing the rest. We are going to have games, bocce ball, golfing and putting contests and volleyball and softball. We also will be recognizing employees with a certificate for their years of service. Due to the IRS taxing gift certificates, this year instead of giving out gift certificates to use at various businesses in town, the employee gets to pick their gift from a store in town and we will buy it for them. We have about 100 employees and their families attending today]</p>

Central Point	<p>We do wellness events throughout the year that we do have a small budget for (\$500). But off property events like a raft trip or golf tournament are paid for by participants only.</p> <p>We have an awards ceremony in January which is usually a breakfast paid by the city for city staff only (and council).</p>
St. Helens	St. Helens has a \$500 budget for a summer BBQ and we also have a \$3,000 Employee Recognition budget which some of those funds go towards an annual employee recognition banquet around the holidays.
Keizer	Keizer does not have any city paid events for employees. We tried it a long time ago and were criticized for using tax money for employee entertainment.... So, in order to extend some appreciation to employees, at Christmas we have an employee potluck with the Department Heads pitching in to buy the main course and do a white elephant exchange. In the summer, we do a bbq, again DH buying the main course and all others bringing sides/desserts. For both events, families are welcome to attend and it is held during lunch hour. It usually costs each DH about \$20. Seems to work well for us and everyone appreciates the get together.
Myrtle Creek	Our City provides the meat and we ask the employees to potluck the side dishes and desserts. This seems to work out well. We usually spend around \$100.00 for a City that has around 70 participants.
North Bend	<p>We do not have a city employee picnic.</p> <p>We do celebrate National Night Out in the Park, but that is for the whole community, and donations are gathered for that event.</p>
Philomath	Philomath does not have any kind of summer employee gathering. We did once, several years ago, but that was because there were leftover hamburgers & hotdogs from the Police Department's Night Out and they needed to be used. So we just threw together a BBQ the next day and invited everyone to have lunch at the park behind the PD.
Milwaukie	The City of Milwaukie holds a picnic that is part employee picnic and part employee recognition celebrating 5, 10, 15, 20 years of service etc. The City provides the food and the employees bring desserts and we have a dessert contest and most years a horseshoe tournament although we didn't get a volunteer to plan it this year so there won't be one. It is on a Friday after work starting at 5pm and a City park. The attendance has fallen because there used to be games for kids, a clown or magician but not anymore due to budget. Ours is actually tomorrow night.
Cornelius	We do an annual employee lunch, the city provides a platter of materials to make sandwiches and the rest is pot luck drinks, desserts and sides. We do have a couple drawings for prizes, but these are items donated by local businesses and employees. So the overall cost for the city is about \$100 for 50 employees. Our Council is invited and supports this minimal cost.

Wilsonville	<p>Wilsonville has a line item in the HR budget for employee recognition and this pays for all of the following: (These events are for employees only.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· We have a summer all staff bbq and an annual holiday luncheon. The meals are catered but staff brings in the desserts.</li> <li>· We acknowledge years of service 5, 10, 15, 20, 25. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5 years is a certificate signed by the city manager</li> <li>10 is a pen</li> <li>15 is a desk clock</li> <li>20 is a large clock or a watch</li> <li>25 is usually something that reflects a hobby of the person, we've given fishing poles, golf bags, camping equipment in the past</li> </ul> </li> <li>· We have a 'rock' program that is an employee to employee recognition program for going above and beyond to help another employee, customer, citizen or solve a problem. An employee is allowed to give their rock away once each year. The employee giving the rock must state publicly why they are giving their rock to the other employee. This is done at either the summer bbq or holiday luncheon. The person receiving the rock gets a \$50.00 check too.</li> <li>· Usually there are volley ball games, tennis, or basketball games.</li> <li>· There is a dessert judging contest in three categories, best chocolate, non-chocolate, and other. Staff volunteers to be the tasting judges and the winner gets a ribbon.</li> <li>· We have a skeleton staff at city hall since everyone is down at the park from about 11:30-1:30.</li> <li>· There is an Employee Recognition Committee made up of a staff member from each department/division and HR to plan and produce these events.</li> </ul>
Yachats	<p>The staff tries to get together for lunch throughout the year – we are trying for once a month now – and it is a potluck. Paper plates and cups from the \$1 store for 9 employees don't cost much and are usually supplied by one of the employees.</p>
Newport	<p>In Newport, we have an annual employee barbecue. The city purchases hot dogs, burgers, buns, and drinks, and the department heads bring side dishes. It's pretty successful, and I think that most folks enjoy it. It's an opportunity for the department heads to thank their employees for their work.</p>
Silverton	<p>This year will be my first employee picnic (August), but our Health &amp; Wellness Recognition Committee hosts the event along with other activities and potlucks throughout the year. My understanding is the money comes from a grant (although I am not sure if it is provided by the state or our insurance company) therefore, funds are not used from the City's money. Our picnic encourages healthy eating with the main course bought by the Committee and then sides/desserts are supplied by employees. Some recognition awards are days off instead of money for the employee. There are also games and prizes for the kids.</p>