

## **Policy on Use of Public Funds for Community Events, Employee Morale, and Purchase of Meals**

(version 11)

Whereas, there are occasions when the Council is asked to provide public funds to community events or public causes, and

Whereas there are occasions when public dollars are expended on activities to promote employee morale, and

Whereas there are occasions when public dollars are expended to purchase meals of persons who have a business or professional relationship with the City and its employees, and

Whereas, it is important to recognize that when such expenditures are in conformance with this policy, it is the belief of this Council that such expenditures are expenditures of public funds for public purpose under law and this Council so FINDS, and

Whereas, this policy is intended to comply with Auditor recommendations on detailing the public purpose of certain expenditures and to guide the requests for reimbursement of such expenditures, when the public purpose cannot be easily quantified.

NOW THEREFORE THE FOLLOWING POLICY IS ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BETTENDORF TO REGULATE THE EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS AND VERIFY THE PUBLIC PURPOSE OF SUCH EXPENDITURES

### Use of City Funds for charitable endeavors or invited events

1. The City shall not as a normal activity donate public funds to charitable endeavors. While the City supports the many activities that provide for the betterment of our residents, the finances of the City, being limited, do not allow for support of all charitable endeavors.

2. The City may contribute to non-profit organizations when:

The requesting entity is a non-profit or governmental organization and the Council Finds that the contribution serves a public purpose. Under this policy, when the Council agrees to make a donation, the resolution shall include any restrictions on the use of the money and detail the public purpose associated with the donation.

3. Employees having budgetary authority are likewise bound by this policy. That is, no use of city employee time or city property may be expended on behalf of a non-profit organization unless the City or Park Board (or Library Board) sponsors or affiliates with such organization, the non-profit has as its mission the support of a City Department or function, or the Department Head approves the activity.

If the Department Head approves a volunteer activity, and the activity occurs during normal working hours, the employee shall remain on paid status, and any injury to the employee while engaged in the volunteer activity shall be considered a work related injury. The Department Head may determine what city equipment may be used in the volunteer activity. In deciding whether to approve an activity, the Department Head should remember that the City does not have the resource to support all charitable endeavors. Accordingly, efforts should be made to minimize the amount of on duty time allocated to the volunteer effort by giving the employee flex time or allowing use of vacation time when possible. Volunteer activities which further departmental missions (volunteering to assist police explorers in a fund raising activity) shall be given preference in consideration.

Nothing in this section shall be deemed a restriction on the employee's ability to assist any charitable endeavor on the employee's personal time.

4. The use of public funds for community activities is to be distinguished from the payment of dues to organizations that the Council believes is in the interest of the public for the City to join. Likewise, this policy does not restrict the ability of employees with budgetary authority to use city funds to join professional organizations or to participate as a member or official of such organizations when such activities are budgeted.

5. In the course of duties or because of the office held, elected officials, appointed officials and city employees may be invited to attend meetings or meals. So long as the expenditures for attendance are within budgeted amounts, attendance at these functions is approved. This policy shall not restrict the ability of the official to secure reimbursement for expenses incurred outside the Quad City region pursuant the City's travel policy.

Use of city funds for employee morale

1. The council shall, by approving the budget with such expenditures included, allow expenditures of public funds for events the purpose of which is to increase employee morale. It is the expectation of the Council that such expenditures will translate into a happier, more productive workplace. Any expenditure within this category must be budgeted, and must be approved by the City Administrator. Annually and as part of the budget materials, the Administrator shall report on how the expenditure of such funds has increased morale or productivity of city employees.

2. Examples of such expenditures shall include but not be limited to:

- a. City logo attire, regardless of whether department specific.
- b. City wide or department specific picnics.
- c. Employee recognition awards for superior performance, or for years of service, and upon retirement.
- d. Council/Board dinners for recognition of service or discussion of joint goals and objectives.
- e. Employee involvement in community activities. For example, this might include paying to allow employees to have a float in the Fourth of July Parade.
- f. Purchase of flowers in memoriam of public service.
- g. Purchase of coffee, pop, or bottled water for consumption during the workday. Also purchase of meals for employees engaged in extended hours of duty --- for instance pizza for employees of snow removal crews upon completion of their 12 hour shift.

Use of City Funds to purchase meals for vendors or professional associates

1. Department Heads and the Administrator are authorized to purchase the meal of vendors or professional associates under the following circumstances:

a. The payment of the meal shall be under the terms of the City's travel policy. For example, no alcohol may be purchased using public funds.

b. Any payment made shall come from the appropriate Mayor and Council or Department line item. That is, all expenditures under this section must be from funds already budgeted by the Council; no budget amendment will be made to accommodate any expenditure under this policy.

c. That the meal shall be in conjunction with some event or activity as opposed to a purely social gathering. That is, the Administrator may not simply call an associate and say, "Let's go to dinner." This section is intended to allow purchase of meals at conferences or regular meetings (such as the Mayors' and Administrators' monthly meeting) attended by Department Heads, the Administrator, or Elected Officials.

d. Mindful of the gift law, restricted donors who dine with a city employee or elected official under this section must still comply with the mandates of that law. For instance, the restricted donor may not offer to split all or a portion of the meal expenses unless the amount paid complies with Chapter 68B of state law.

Purchase of Meals for work sessions of Council, Boards, Volunteers or Staff

Consistent with budgeted amounts, meals may be purchased for the Council, Staff, Volunteers or Board members who have a meeting which extends over a normal meal period (for instance, a noon lunch meeting), or for work sessions which extend through normal meal periods (council budget sessions extending all day).