



CITY OF LONG BEACH

R-31

CIVIL SERVICE DEPARTMENT

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April 22, 2008

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS
City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Authorize the restoration of \$325,000 in funds to the Civil Service Department for Fiscal Year 2008.

DISCUSSION:

In September 2007, the City Council approved the Civil Service Department budget with a \$650,000 reduction (23% cut). It is respectfully requested that the City Council restore half of the reduction, or \$325,000, to the Civil Service Department's FY 2007-08 budget, effective April 1, 2008.

Increasing Efficiencies

After the budget was adopted, the Civil Service Department has made a conscientious effort to reduce costs and increase efficiencies while continuing to provide essential support to City departments in fulfilling their staffing needs, to provide employment opportunities to the public and to meet its City Charter mandated responsibilities. To date, the Civil Service Department has realized \$325,000 in cuts (see attached). These budget cuts included the elimination of the Police Recruit marketing budget, reduced outreach efforts, a reduction of examination administration costs, elimination of the use of hearing officers, and a reduction of 2.4 staff members.

In addition, on March 26, 2008, the Civil Service Commission adopted a comprehensive and strategic plan, entitled RELAY, to enhance efficiencies in the Civil Service Department. Among the plan's changes currently underway are the creation of the Civil Service Advisory Committee (CSAC) to increase communication, collaboration and planning with user departments; changes in department policies and procedures, including a goal to complete selection processes within 45 days; and collaboration with Human Resources and Technology Services to revise the City's website to enhance the City's marketing of jobs on the Internet.

But despite these efforts to improve operations and identify efficiencies, the department cannot realize the full \$650,000 cut without a major reduction in examination staff and recruitment activities. Failure to restore the requested funds will force the Civil Service

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Commission to lay off an additional 7.6 employees (33% of total staff) as well as force elimination of all recruitment outreach, curtailment of examination activity, elimination of all supervisory training by Civil Service Department managers and a drastic reduction of public counter staffing.

It is of grave concern to the Civil Service Commission that without the restoration of funds, the Civil Service Department's ability to adequately provide service to departments and the public and its ability to fulfill its core Charter mandated functions would be severely impaired.

Citywide Impact

The Civil Service Department's workload is a direct reflection of the staffing needs of City departments. Besides the staffing needs to fill public safety positions in Police and Fire, Enterprise Fund departments (Harbor, Water, Gas and Oil, Planning and Building and Public Works) have urgent staffing needs and provide essential revenue to the City. So, despite the reduction of General Fund department budgets citywide, Civil Service staff remains as busy now as it has ever been.

Currently the Civil Service Department is handling requests to fill over 100 vacancies in more than 60 different classifications. Considering the City's current financial situation, departments are only staffing their most critical positions. In other words, these current vacancies must be filled or the ability for City departments to provide service to our community will be impaired.

As noted in the Civil Service Commission's RELAY report and Management Partners' report presented to the City Council, the task of attracting highly qualified individuals to work for the City of Long Beach has become exponentially more difficult because the salaries the City offers are not competitive with the private sector and other public sector employers. This has led to longer processes to find qualified applicants, leaving vacancies unfilled for longer periods of time. As vacancies remain unfilled, ultimately the results are more overtime costs, project delays and reductions in service to our community.

Without restoration of funds, the Civil Service Department will be forced to reduce its staff including the elimination of 50% of the professional analyst staff who handle recruitment and testing and 66% of the support staff. This will mean increasing the workload on the remaining analysts 100% with little if any support staff. The impact of a higher workload will be major delays in completing eligible lists – most processes taking twice as long to complete – thus, taking even longer to fill critical vacant positions. All departments will be affected if vacancies cannot be filled in a timely manner.

In addition, without restoration of funds, the Civil Service Department will eliminate most of its recruitment activities, including outreach efforts for Police Recruit. Without these efforts, it will be difficult to meet the City Council's expectation of a diverse and highly skilled workforce. In an environment where the City must compete with other

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organizations for superior talent, and with salaries that impair the ability to be competitive, the reduction of any marketing to recruit talent makes a dire situation even worse.

Requesting City Council Help

The Civil Service Commission has directed the Civil Service Department staff to become more efficient and change the way it does business. The staff has responded by cutting \$325,000 and additional efficiencies are underway; however, in order to meet the full \$650,000 cut, it will require a reduction of Civil Service staff and activities so great that meeting the staffing needs of City departments will be an overwhelming challenge. Thus, critical vacant positions will be filled at a slower rate, which will have a negative impact on City services. The Commission believes that if funds were restored this bleak scenario could be prevented.

TIMING CONSIDERATIONS:

It is critical that the City Council take action to approve this request by April 1, 2008 to sustain the Civil Service Department's service delivery.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Three hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars (\$325,000) of the General Fund budget will be appropriated to the Civil Service Department.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Approve recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,

AHMED SAAFIR, PRESIDENT
Long Beach Civil Service Commission

By:



MARIO R. BEAS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CIVIL SERVICE

Attachment

**CIVIL SERVICE DEPARTMENT
CURRENT AND PROJECTED BUDGET REDUCTIONS**

Reduced Activity	Reduced Amount	Comments
Staff Reductions	\$248,543	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfilled Vacant Positions (1.4 FTE) (\$98,760) • Transfer of Staff to Harbor Department for six months (\$53,887) • Resignation of City Recruitment Officer effective 1/1/08 (\$95,896)
Outreach Recruitment	\$50,269	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminated Police Recruit marketing budget (\$35,769) • Eliminated print advertising; no longer printing marketing material; attending fewer job fairs (\$14,500)
Examinations	\$16,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced costs for Police Recruit with smaller testing sessions (\$13,000) • Streamlined Fire Captain process (\$3,000)
Employee Appeal Hearings	\$6,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminated use of hearing officers
Other Cost Savings	\$4,188	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminated Professional Training and Conference (\$1,688) • Eliminated Business Travel (\$2,500)
Reductions Year-to-Date	\$325,000	
Personnel Analysts	\$226,038	5.0 Positions
Clerk Typists	\$74,908	2.6 Positions
Non-Personal Costs	\$24,054	Cuts to Administration, Recruitment and Examination Activities
100% Reduction	\$650,000	