

Will Budget Crunch Affect City Employees?

■ At press time, Council is deciding how to fix a \$155 million deficit.

COUNCIL — Will the current City budget crisis affect you? Has it already?

At *Alive!* press time, the City Council is deciding how to solve a big – and growing – problem: a City budget deficit estimated at \$155 million.

The City budget is vulnerable to a number of economic factors, including the real estate crunch, the just-ended Hollywood writer's strike, and the general softness of the economy.

At the end of January, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa held a press conference to ask the City Council to reduce the City budget by suspending most hiring, asking some workers to take unpaid furloughs, and selling vacant fire stations.

"My priority has got to be public safety," Villaraigosa was quoted as saying at a City Hall news conference. "Keeping the City safe is the

answer to how we support revenues."

The Council began its hard work trimming the budget in early February, in some instances looking for ways to increase revenue. But at that session, the Council froze new hires in most departments and delayed the opening of two police stations by several months. And two potential cuts – halting the purchasing of new books by the Library Dept., and cutting funds for graffiti removal – were delayed.

More controversial proposals, including selling surplus property and sharply restricting the program that allows some City employees to use City vehicles and take them home, were also delayed.

The City Council must vote on the first round of budget cuts, a vote that had not taken place by press time in February.

How is the budget crisis affecting you? Write to *Alive!* and tell us your thoughts!

talkback@cityemployeesclub.com

Phone Tax Passes; Service Crisis Averted

■ City voters approve amendments to telephone tax that could have made City budget even more difficult.



Fire Chief Douglas Barry

CITY HALL — For weeks, Police Chief William Bratton and Fire Chief Douglas Barry were on TV, warning of the dire consequences if Proposition S didn't pass. And, in good news for City Employees, they were plenty convincing.

In a nearly two to one landslide in the election Feb. 5, City voters approved Proposition S, a measure that, while reducing the tax from ten to nine percent, also guaranteed that the tax would be secured in place, and that it would be applied consistently across a wide variety of devices.

The measure was estimated to be worth nearly \$250 million in annual revenue for the City. That revenue, as Chiefs Bratton and Barry voiced in commercials, is critical to keep the LAPD and LAFD strong. Without it, they said, services could be cut. With the passage of Proposition S, that is longer the case, at least as far as phone taxes are concerned.



Police Chief William Bratton

Proposition S technically reduced the tax on telephone usage from ten percent to nine percent, but it also broadened the tax to cover all calls regardless of the technology used. Measures are advancing through the courts that could challenge the ways taxes can be applied to telephone technology, but the passage of Proposition S supersedes those court challenges.

Newsbrief

HARBOR IS 'CLIMATE ACTION LEADER':

Announced on Jan. 30, the Port of Los Angeles has earned the designation "Climate Action Leader" from the California Climate Action Registry, becoming the first port in the state with this distinction. The Leader status was granted the Port of Los Angeles upon acceptance of its 2006 baseline greenhouse gas (GHG) emission inventory by the California Climate Action Registry, a nonprofit public/private partnership that serves as a voluntary greenhouse gas registry to protect, encourage and promote early actions to reduce GHG emissions.



"This is just one more step to show the region, state and country how serious we are about greening and growing the Port of Los Angeles," said Geraldine Knatz, Ph.D., Port of Los Angeles

Executive Director. "The Port of Los Angeles voluntarily tracked greenhouse gas emissions and created a baseline from which we are able to gauge changes in the gases going forward. We are proud to be the first port in California to be included in the Registry and to hold the 'Climate Action Leader' designation."

The Port has taken a proactive position to recognize and reduce the impacts of greenhouse gases in the Port area. The Port included the impacts of greenhouse gases in its recently-approved Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for its Tra Pac Terminal Project – the first Port in the country to include GHG emissions in an EIR document. The Port's 2006 GHG emission inventory may be viewed at www.climateregistry.org/CAR-ROI/public/reports.aspx.

The Port has embarked upon an unprecedented array of environmental initiatives aimed at reducing the effects of Port operations on the environment. Chief among these is the Clean Air Action Plan (CAAP), created in concert with its neighbor, the Port of Long Beach. This comprehensive Plan addresses emissions created by the trucks, oceangoing vessels, trains, terminal equipment and harbor craft that serve the Port and outline measures that will decrease those emissions by nearly 50 percent by 2011.

For more information about the California Climate Registry, please see its Website at www.climateregistry.org.

LAFD & LAPD

PROUDLY PRESENT

St. Baldrick's

Foundation

Shaving the Way to Conquer Kids' Cancer

PROVIDENCE
Blood Donor Center

Child
Watch

NATIONAL
MARROW
DONOR
PROGRAM

We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give.

— Sir Winston Churchill

Who: LAFD, LAPD, LA City Employees, family and friends. ALL ARE WELCOME!

What: St. Baldrick's Fundraiser, Blood Drive, Bone Marrow and Childwatch Registration.

When: Saturday, March 15, 2008 from 9am to 3pm. Free Pancake Breakfast starts at 9am!

Where: LAFD Fire Station #9, 7063 Laurel Canyon Boulevard, North Hollywood, CA 91605

Why: To Fight Kids' Cancer, Donate Blood, Register with NMDP and Childwatch.

How: Sign Up or Donate at www.stbaldricks.org. Or just show up and support us!

For additional information please contact:
 LAPD Lieutenant Greg Doyle @ 818-634-6127 or LAFD Firefighter Danny Wu @ 626-590-6240