

LONG BEACH CITY HALL FACING LAYOFFS OF 130 OR MORE



California's Long Beach City Hall is facing losing more than 130 full-time jobs, following the "last hired, first fired" rule. Mario Beas, Civil Services Executive Director, says, "Our job is to determine who has the least seniority and who would be affected," but how much of the list he is creating will be put to use is unknown.

Pat West, City Manager, cites the budget deficit of Long Beach as the culprit, and has two plans for the layoffs. The first would result in saving \$7.2 million and would include slashing 35 firefighter and police force positions combined. Services such as libraries and parks would be downsized as well. If that proves to not be enough, another \$11.3 million will be saved in West's second plan which would cut an additional 49 police officers and lay off other workers from various city services across the board.

That second round of layoffs may not be quite as eminent, however, as they are equivalent to the contractual pay raises for the city. If the union elects to relinquish those raises, West's second plan most likely will not come to fruition. Last year, Long Beach's deficit was even higher and, instead of choosing the layoffs, pay raises were postponed. This year, though, employees are markedly less agreeable to forgo what's written in their contracts. October 1st is the beginning of the new fiscal year and Long Beach has until then to balance their budget one way or another.

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