

JUNE LAGMAY  
CITY CLERK

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CALIFORNIA



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April 23, 2012

Honorable Members of the Budget and Finance Committee  
c/o Erika Pulst, Office of the City Clerk  
Room 395, City Hall  
Los Angeles, California 90012

**SUBJECT: OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK - PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2012-13  
BUDGET ALLOCATION**

Honorable Members:

In accordance with the Budget and Finance Committee Chair's requests of March 27 and April 19, 2012, the Office of the City Clerk is providing impact statements regarding the Department's proposed budget allocation as presented in the Mayor's Proposed Fiscal Year 2012-13 Budget. For simplicity, this memo will focus on the impact of the reductions.

**SUMMARY**

The majority of City Clerk operations are mandatory functions required by the City Charter and the Los Angeles City Election, Municipal and Administrative Codes. The Mayor's Proposed Budget provides funding for the continuation of these services.

The Budget acknowledges the Municipal Elections to be held in March and May of 2013. The appropriation of \$16.9 million for this purpose should provide sufficient funding for the City's primary and runoff elections, and elections for the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) and Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD), although the margin for contingencies will be much tighter than in previous years. It is anticipated that LAUSD and LACCD will reimburse approximately 40 percent of these costs.

Also included in the Mayor's proposed budget is the deletion of three positions: Two Senior Clerk Typists and one Office Engineering Technician II. One Senior Clerk Typist position is vacant; therefore, two net layoffs are anticipated. Layoffs may be avoided by staff retirements. The proposed FY 2012-13 Budget for the Office of the City Clerk also includes a one-time salary reduction of \$254,384 due to the City's financial constraints.

The City Clerk's Office understands the fiscal challenges the City faces and our responsibility to share in the sacrifice and thus we are not requesting additional resources at this time.

We would ask, as has been the regular practice for all previous City election cycles, that an unfreeze and exemption from the Managed Hiring Committee (MHC) process for all Election and System related positions (regular and as-needed) be authorized for the conduct of the 2013 Municipal Elections, due to the extremely tight deadlines inherent in administering those elections.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Elections Division**

The Proposed Budget includes \$16,989,803 for the administration of the 2013 Municipal Elections. This represents a \$1 million reduction from our initial request of \$17,989,803. The 2013 Municipal Elections are anticipated to be the most involved and labor-intensive in recent memory. Not since 2001 have the elections included open (non-incumbent) seats for all three Citywide offices, plus nine Council seats of which six are open seats. In addition, the recent City Council and LAUSD redistricting will both increase the possibility of voter confusion and delay the beginning of our preparation process, as drawing new voting precincts to conform to the new district boundaries is Elections' first task. Two new Federally-mandated languages are being added to the list of languages for which all our voting materials must be translated. The original election budget of \$17.9 million was built to enable the Division to fully administer this challenging election and have the flexibility to address many inevitable, if currently unknown, contingencies such as a large number of ballot measures or on-the-spot emergencies. The City Clerk worked closely with the Mayor's Office and the City Administrative Officer (CAO) to develop a reduction that would not compromise our ability to run an effective election and the Election Division is in the process of redeveloping its budget to meet the reduced amount. We believe that we will achieve this by taking steps that will have minimal impact on voters, such as reducing the number of precincts and the number of City employees in the City Employees' Pollworker Program. Should unforeseen emergencies develop as we proceed forward with planning and administering these elections that require higher level spending, we will report back to the Council and Mayor with the reasons for any cost overruns and additional funding requests.

### **Administrative Services Division**

The Proposed Budget includes a deletion of one Office Engineering Technician II (OET) which is primarily funded by the 9-1-1 Tax that is scheduled to end at the close of next fiscal year. The OET position slated for removal works in the Administrative Services Division and in addition to 9-1-1 tax-related responsibilities is responsible for conducting approximately 40% of the research on properties and businesses for the City's Business Improvement District (BID) Program. The City's BIDs constitute annual transactions of more than \$43 million annually collected via assessments that are expended through the individual BIDs and provide cleaning, security and job creation in the individual BID areas. The research responsibilities required by the OET position is valuable to ensure that accurate parcel information is provided for the public hearing notices required by State law and submission of the data for the property tax rolls within the timeline prescribed by the County of Los Angeles. If the County's deadline is missed, then the City Clerk, with less success in acquiring payment from stakeholders, is required to hand-bill each property owner. Without the careful research of the affected businesses, real property information and property ownership records, the City Clerk cannot ensure correct data is used for the accurate billing of the combined 38 Merchant-based and Property-based BIDs. Diligent research provides accurate data and lessens the City's exposure to litigation due to inaccurate information. Removing one OET position means all the work must be absorbed by one OET assigned to spot-check the 29,500 parcel data submissions from the 38 BIDs, and greatly increases the City's exposure to liability for placing inaccurate assessments on the County's property tax rolls. Due to the current staff shortages, the workload assigned to this OET position cannot be absorbed by another employee or classification.

Please note that as there is currently a proposal before the Council to create a new Economic Development organization in the City, it may be prudent to retain this position at least via resolution authority, pending consideration and approval of this new organization, at which time necessary positions to be included in the organization can be considered.

### **Council and Public Services Division**

The Proposed Budget includes deletion of two Senior Clerk Typists. One position is vacant and can be cut without impact. The loss of the other filled Senior Clerk Typist position in the Council and Public Services (CPS) Division, Index Unit, will create delays in processing items for Council and its Committees. The Index Unit is the starting point for all Council items. Index researches the enormous volume of information contained in the Clerk's Council File Management System (CFMS) for existing and/or related files to determine the Council file numbers for every document that is delivered to CPS. It is responsible for summarizing and inputting information from hundreds of received documents into the CFMS and scanning documents for availability on the Internet for public access. Index assists the public, CPS staff and other City departments at the public counter and over the phone regarding the status of Council files, contracts, and inquiries related to the City Charter, Administrative Code, and Municipal Code. Index is also responsible for attesting to City contracts as well as scanning contracts for availability on the Internet.

Currently, for the Index Unit, there is an average of 400 Council files opened per month, an average of 800 contracts processed per month, an average of 90 phone calls/walk-ups per month and an average of 100 hours of scanning per month. While plans to automate some of the Council File entry systems are in progress, it will likely be two to three years prior to full implementation. The remaining Senior Clerk Typists in the Index Unit will have to absorb the workload; this will likely result in 48-72 hours of delay in the upload of documents into the CFMS and thus will reduce the ability of elected officials, departments, and the public to access timely and accurate information.

### **CONCLUSION**

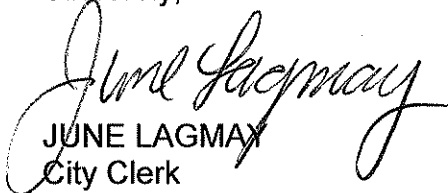
While the 36% overall decrease in City Clerk staff over the past three fiscal years has clearly impacted the services provided by the City Clerk, we remain committed to providing the best service for the dollar for our core missions. I would like to personally thank the Mayor's Office, the Budget and Finance Committee Chair, Council Offices, CAO and the Chief Legislative Analyst for working with us through this process.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Council:

1. Authorize exemption from the MHC process and unfreeze all Election and System related (as-needed and regular) positions for the conduct of the 2013 Municipal Elections, through June 31, 2013.
2. Consider restoration of the Office Engineering Technician II position through resolution authority until such time as a decision is made whether to consolidate the Clerk's BID positions into the proposed new Economic Development organization.
3. To allow time for employees to retire, request the CAO to allow Sub-Authorities to avoid layoffs for the Senior Clerk Typist and Office Engineering Technician II.

Sincerely,

  
JUNE LAGMAY  
City Clerk