Los Al council expected to put its pay cut into effect

City Council is opting for a smaller stipend to help with city budget issues.

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LOS ALAMITOS – In an effort to cut costs, the City Council on Monday will consider finalizing a pay cut to their salaries.

The council decided in February to cut their monthly pay from $450 to $400, an 11 percent reduction, as a step to reduce the council's budget. The pay reduction was approved on a 4 to 1 vote, with Councilwoman Gerri Mejia dissenting.

Now, the council will have to approve a city ordinance to put the pay cut into effect. If approved, the reduction will be applied in 30 days.

Earlier this year council members also opted to forgo their cell phones and laptops as a way to limit their spending.

The reductions were among about $560,000 in mid-year cuts to the 2008-09 budget as the state's economic crisis trickles down to the city level.

Mid-year budget adjustments also included reducing part-time hours for some city positions and some department operating costs, among other changes.

The council in June passed an $11.8 million budget for 2008-09.

City expenditures were reduced to about $11.3 million for the rest of the fiscal year, which ends June 30.

The city originally projected about $11.7 million in revenue this year. However, a decline in sales tax, licensing and permit fees and other revenue has forced the city to reduce its expected revenue to about $11.1 million.

The city holds about $2.3 million in its reserves, which is to be used for emergencies, city officials said.
The council meets at 7 p.m. at City Hall, 3191 Katella Ave. Council agendas can be downloaded online at www.ci.los-alamitos.ca.us.

The council on Monday will also consider:

**Economic stimulus**

The City Council will consider hiring a consultant to prepare plans for the rehabilitation of Katella Avenue between Siboney and Walker streets.

The federal government recently OK’d about $130 million for the Orange County Transportation Authority to use for street and highway projects as part of the economic stimulus program.

OCTA will distribute the money to various Orange County projects including city street rehabilitation. Cities are expected to work with Caltrans to expedite the work.

The city originally requested $5.1 million for various projects. The city then requested $2.1 million for two city projects after officials learned the OCTA program had been reduced.

OCTA further limited Los Alamitos’ funding, saying allocation would be based on city population, with each city expected to receive at least $500,000.

The city now expects to receive enough money for one project and it is required that it be on an arterial street.

City staff proposed to hire the Aslan Group Inc. for $30,000 to help with preparation of plans and estimates. These costs are not be covered by the stimulus program.

The city has about four months to get their paperwork to Caltrans in order to receive stimulus money for the project.

**Cleaning house**

The council will consider getting rid of about $9,000 worth of equipment that is considered surplus. Office furniture, printers, fax machines and three vehicles are among the items to be disposed of. The items will be auctioned off and the money will come back to the city.

**Race review**

The council is to receive a report on the Race on the Base, held at the Los Alamitos Joint Forces Training Base on Feb. 21. The race drew more than 3,011 participants, a significant increase from the 1,907 who participated in 2008.
Home Box Office donated $25,000 to include the name Run4Chance in the race title. HBO waived the entrance fees for various military personnel and donated the money to the Fisher House Foundation and the Marine Semper Fi Fund.

The Race on the Base was the kickoff event for HBO's effort to sponsor military personnel across the country to raise money in honor of Lance Cpl. Chance Phelps, who was killed outside Baghdad on April 9, 2004.

HBO is the race's largest sponsor in the history of Race on the Base.

The event this year pulled $49,950 in cash donations and another $48,275 in in-kind donations. The 2008 race saw $15,800 in cash donations and $24,580 in in-kind donations.

The net profit of the race was about $78,600. The money could be used for improvements at the Los Alamitos Joint Forces Training Base pool such as a new deck for the facility.