

"Outside agencies" prepare protest for City Council sessions

Posted: Jan 11, 2010 09:48 PM

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The City of Tucson is dealing with 30-plus million dollar budget problem of it's own. The City Council will meet tomorrow to discuss their options. But before they do, groups are gathering supporters to make sure City officials know exactly where they stand on cuts.

9 On Your Side's Dan Spindle has the story.

The Pima County Interfaith Council isn't one organization but a network of churches, congregations and schools bound by a shared moral tradition.

Today they worked the phones....

"We're going to be talking to the city council about balancing the budget that we don't want any other jobs lost and we don't want any cuts in services."

But in order to influence public policy they need numbers ... People who are willing to speak out against cuts to the "outside agencies" targeted by Tucson City leaders. PCIC wants the City to look to their own ranks to eliminate enough spending to balance the budget.

"Everybody is sharing the burden. You're doing across the board cuts to every employee. So you're not laying anybody off. And you're able to still sustain your business," said Melanie Nelson with P.C.I.C.

Those cuts could come in the form of additional days off without pay and public safety may not be spared. Others voicing concern include EMERGE Center Against Domestic Abuse and Access Tucson to name a few; as well as those involved with employment programs to help youth.

"We are asking members of the council to consider the service that these outside agencies perform and to not zero them out. 60% when you're halfway through the year means no funding for the rest of the year," said Andrea Robson with P.C.I.C.

Just how much consideration depends on which groups show up and which simply wait for the ax to fall. The City has once again decided to move the Study Session and Regular Session to the Tucson Convention Center, this time at the Leo Rich Theater. The meetings begin at 2:00 p.m. Tuesday afternoon.