

## Details on Mesa's finances to be revealed Thursday

by **Gary Nelson** - Feb. 23, 2010 01:34 PM  
*The Arizona Republic*

The Mesa [City Council](#) will get its first detailed look Thursday at whether last year's sweeping reorganization of City Hall was enough to prevent further budget cuts for the coming [fiscal year](#).

The meeting at 7:30 a.m. in council chambers, 57 E. First St., will be televised live on Mesa cable Channel 11.

It will feature updated data on Mesa's revenue, including sales [taxes](#), which have been battered by the recession for more than two years.

Department heads already have braced for bad news.

City Manager Chris Brady asked them to prepare plans to reduce spending by 10 percent. But Brady told *The Mesa Republic* those plans are only contingencies, and cuts, if any, may not go that deep.

"It's a proposal. We have never taken the entire amount. It gives us some options of things to consider as far as what it takes to balance for the next year," Brady said.

[Budget](#) Director Chuck Odom gave the council a pessimistic interim briefing in December, but said it was too soon to tell whether spending would have to be sliced further.

Mesa already has endured three major budget crises in less than four years.

In May 2006, after Mesa voters rejected a primary [property tax](#), Brady imposed a long list of program cuts to slice \$11 million in spending.

In March 2008, several months after the recession kicked in, city officials rushed to

implement a \$21 million budget reduction for the rest of that fiscal year.

Early last year, the council reorganized several departments and sliced about 350 positions to save an estimated \$61 million between then and this coming June 30, the end of the current fiscal year.

Brady and Odom have said that reorganization actually saved more money than anticipated, and it prevented the city from needing to repeatedly adjust its budget downward over the past year as some other cities have had to do.

After Thursday's briefing the council will spend the next several months listening to department presentations and fine-tuning the 2010-11 budget, which must be adopted in June.

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