



STATE PARKS FEELING THE RECESSION TOO

The Pheonix Parks and Recreation Board is facing some unwelcoming prospects as they look to avoid making cuts in their annual budget. Some of the methods by which they hope to alleviate some of the cuts include:

- Trimming the Public Safety Department budget. Police and Fire fighters are already facing a 7.5 percent cuts on their operating budgets. The board proposes to reduce that by an additional 1 percent.

- Creating a sales tax on groceries.

- Encouraging philanthropy with the help of community leaders. There are currently 14 meetings scheduled to allow the community a chance to express their opinions and concerns about the potential budget cuts. Board Chairwoman Diana Brooks says that the meetings will give members a chance to plead their case in an effort to reduce the proposed cuts. In an attempt to balance the city's \$1.2 billion general fund, leaders in Pheonix are proposing more than \$250 million in budget cuts over a 16-month period. The parks stand to lose \$28 million and may experience lay offs of up to 490 positions. Places that would feel the heat would be city pools, some of which would be closed. It would mean an end to some after-school programs, as well as a drawback on park maintenance. Chairwoman Brooks said "The board was not happy with the cuts. We came to the conclusion that what we'd really like to try and do is reduce the cuts." A budget is scheduled to be approved by the mayor and City Council by Feb 3. That budget would take effect March 2. Stay informed at Employment Crossroads.

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