

**City Manager to Recommend
Pulling the Plug on BCTV**
Special to BC Free
October 5, 2010

Boulder City City Manager Vicki Mayes will recommend to the City Council Oct. 12 that BCTV, the community television station, be shut down and all programming be discontinued as a cost-cutting move to balance the General Fund budget, according to sources within City Hall.

For weeks, Mayes has been talking about a “Phase 2 budget reduction” of “non-essential services” due to the loss of budgeted payments -- \$800,000 and \$1.6 million -- from solar energy company SolBio that the city manager built into the budget. Until now, “non-essential services” had never been defined or clarified.

So, it now appears the city manager, because of a failure to properly administer the signed contract with SolBio by not demanding timely action by the company, has determined BCTV is a non-essential service.

Other anticipated cuts include discontinuing the Public Information Office, a move that would see the dismissal of longtime employee Rose Ann Miele who does both the BCTV and PIO jobs, as well as severe cutbacks in available hours and days at the city pool and possible elimination of most, if not all, operations at the Art and Youth Centers in ABC Park.

Other scale-backs, cutbacks and elimination of services and programs also are possible.

As for when the changes might occur, that information is expected to be made public at next Tuesday’s meeting also.

Earlier this year, when closure of the Art and Youth Centers appeared imminent for the same budgetary reasons, the City Council bowed to public pressure to keep the Parks and Recreation Department facilities open.

Apparently, the budget situation has gotten so much worse that nothing can save the “non-essential services” that residents have found to be essential.

Reportedly, funds for police and fire equipment repairs are also in short supply, a condition that jeopardizes the safety of the community.

The whole problem of a loss of anticipated revenue stems from SolBio payments that were counted on as being paid on time, but the city manager for months led the City Council down “a primrose path” of highly optimistic information that has resulted in the current cuts.

The council, by not being able to stay on top of the situation because they relied on the city manager’s empty promises that the money would be there, could have averted the current budgetary problem early on by amending and submitting a Final Budget to the state Department of Taxation in May without the SolBio revenue.