



Make plans to attend Legislative Conference March 5-6 in Nashville

Make plans now to attend the Tennessee Municipal League's Annual Legislative Conference, slated for March 5-6 at the DoubleTree Hotel Downtown Nashville.

The two-day conference provides an excellent forum for city officials to interact with their legislators and to be updated on the many legislative issues currently being addressed by the 107th Tennessee General Assembly.

City officials are also encouraged to use their time in Nashville to attend Monday evening floor sessions and to schedule time to

visit with their legislators.

The voice of Tennessee's municipal governments must be heard in the legislative process, and the Legislative Conference is a key opportunity to communicate that message.

To register on line, go to TML's website at www.TML1.org. Contact the TML offices at 615-255-6416 for more information.

To reserve a hotel room, contact the DoubleTree at 615-244-8200. To receive the special group rate, reservations must be made by Feb. 8.

U.S. Supreme Court to hear Arizona immigration case

BY CAROLYN COLEMAN
Nation's Cities Weekly

As Congress continues to find itself mired in partisan politics and an inability to resolve disagreements, the U.S. Supreme Court is on track to have one of its most historically significant terms settling disputes on a wide range of controversial issues.

Last month, the Supreme Court decided to weigh in on the constitutionality of states' rights to limit the way undocumented immigrants live in the United States. At the center of that controversy is Arizona's immigration law (also known as S.B. 1070) that addresses state law enforcement related to illegal immigration.

Specifically the Arizona law: (1) requires police to determine if an individual has a legal right to be in the U.S. if the officer has reasonable suspicion of illegality upon making an arrest or a stop; (2) makes it a crime under state law to fail to obtain and carry immigration papers as required by the Immigration Naturalization Act (INA); (3) makes it a misdemeanor for a undocumented immigrant to apply for a job or work in Arizona; and (4) allows police to arrest a person the officer has probable cause to believe has committed a crime that would make the person subject to deportation.

Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer signed S.B. 1070 into law in April 2010. However, before it went into effect, the U.S. Department of Justice sought a temporary injunction to prevent the law from taking effect until it received a full review from the courts.

The injunction was granted in an opinion holding that immigration matters were the exclusive domain of the federal government and that the four provisions of S.B. 1070 were unconstitutional because

they intruded upon this domain.

Arizona appealed the grant of the injunction to the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, where it was ultimately upheld by a three-judge panel. After this decision, the state asked the Supreme Court to weigh in.

The court will hear arguments in the case — Arizona v. United States, No. 11-182 — later this spring with a final ruling expected by June just as the 2012 presidential and congressional campaigns head into full swing. Justice Elena Kagan will recuse herself, most likely because she had previously worked on the case as the solicitor general.

While the court's eventual ruling will settle the questions presented by the Arizona law, it won't answer the larger federalism question of the right of states to make their own laws in policy areas in which the federal government has failed to act.

The court's ruling also won't fix the real problem: a broken immigration system. NLC has called for Congress and the Administration to leave the divisive rhetoric behind and work together to enact comprehensive immigration reform.

According to legal experts, a potential 4-4 split would block the aforementioned four provisions from taking effect, but not resolve the larger constitutional issues for Arizona or any other state with similar laws currently being challenged (i.e., Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, Utah).

In a released statement, Gov. Brewer expressed relief that the highest court in the land would ultimately resolve the matter.

"Decades of federal inaction and misguided policy have created a dangerous and unacceptable situation and states deserve clarity from the court in terms of what role they have in fighting illegal immigration," she said.

MTAS conducts administrative hearing officer training session

During the months of November and December, 27 participants attended the first UT Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) administrative hearing officer training program for those who will be designated by their cities as administrative hearing officers.

This training program was the result of T.C.A. code 6-54-1001. Pursuant to this law, a city can, via ordinance, create an administrative hearing office with jurisdiction to hear violations of certain locally-adopted codes, including building code and property maintenance ordinances. The law also allows a city, through its administrative hearing officer, to levy fines for such violations in excess of \$50.

Training participants included city managers and administrators, municipal judges, municipal attorneys, building inspectors, a fire

chief, a storm water program manager and codes and planning officials. The attendees received 12 hours of instruction in the mechanics of the bill, housing and property maintenance codes, the administrative hearing process and the rules of open records and open meetings.

Facilitators were from the legal team of MTAS, the Director of Codes and Building Safety for Metropolitan Davidson County, Administrative Law Judges from the Administrative Procedures Division of the Tennessee Secretary of State's office and the Open Records Counsel of the Tennessee Comptroller's office.

After their appointment as Administrative Hearing Officers, successful completion of this training authorizes participants to serve as Municipal Administrative Hearing Officers.

107th General Assembly up and running

BY CAROLE GRAVES
TML Communications Director

Lawmakers of the 107th Tennessee General Assembly have hit the ground running as the second session was officially gavelled in Jan. 10.

First up is tackling redistricting plans, an undertaking that only comes about every 10 years following the U.S. Census count. With Republicans in the clear majority, this is the first time in the state's history that the GOP has been in charge of the process of drawing district territories for state legislators and Tennessee's Congressional seats.

Republican leaders have said they hope to approve the redistricting plans early in the session so that they can focus on other key issues facing the state such as jobs, education, and lowering taxes.

In the area of tax reforms, a variety of tax cuts are being proposed. Gov. Bill Haslam and House Speaker Beth Harwell have both proposed plans for reducing the estate tax, while Lt. Gov. Ron Ramsey has said the Senate wants to lower the Hall income tax, particularly for senior citizens.

The governor's plan for the state inheritance tax would raise the exemption from \$1 million to \$1.25 million with a goal of eventually raising the state exemption to the federal level of \$5 million. Haslam says his plan would affect about 200 taxpayers and cost the state \$14 million in lost revenue.

He is also proposing a small reduction on the sales tax on groceries. The proposal would lower the state sales tax on food from 5.5 percent to 5.3 percent. Under Haslam's tax cut, a family of four spending \$884 a month on groceries would save about \$21 a year. It would cost the state about \$18 million in lost revenues.

Earlier this summer, the House Democratic Caucus filed a bill to allocate any surplus state revenues to cutting sales taxes on food, and therefore, would most likely be in favor of such a plan.

Ramsey had previously stated in



See Pages 8&9 for opening day coverage.

the press that he was not in favor of lowering the sales tax on food because most people would not notice the reduction; and by lowering the food tax, the state might end up starving the government of necessary revenues. He, instead, wants to push for cuts to the Hall tax, which currently taxes income from interest and stock dividends at 6 percent.

During last year's session, the General Assembly approved Ramsey's legislation that increased the amount of income exempted from the Hall, raising the exemption for senior citizens from \$16,200 to \$26,200 for single filers, and from \$27,000 to \$37,000 for joint filers.

The legislation is estimated to decrease local government revenue by \$654,400 in Fiscal Year 2012-13 and thereafter.

The Hall Income Tax is one of nine tax revenues that the state shares with local governments.

Some lawmakers are cautioning, however, that although revenues are improving, the economy is

still fragile and therefore, may not be the year to lower all three taxes. Haslam is scheduled to present his budget plan for the FY 2012-13 before a joint session of the legislature on Jan. 30.

Other tax cuts could come in the form of limiting local government's authority by capping property taxes. Sen. Brian Kelsey has filed legislation (SB 2150) that would require approval by the citizenry if a local government proposes a property increase of more than 1 percent.

During the 2012 session, lawmakers will also consider legislation banning synthetic drugs, tightening standards for unemployment benefits, reducing the size of lottery scholarships, and revisiting such issues as the sale of wine in grocery stores, the new voter ID act, and loosening requirements on gun laws, among others.

With an eye on adjourning early, both speakers are pledging to conduct their business efficiently with plans to wrap things up by May.

New economic development plan sets Bristol on the road to economic vibrancy

BY VICTORIA SOUTH
TML Communications Coordinator

Arriving in untamed territory with little more than a horse-drawn wagon and the clothes on their backs, teamwork was crucial to Tennessee's earliest settlers, who labored together and gleaned natural resources not only to survive, but to flourish. That pioneer spirit has resurfaced in the 21st century, as the state's municipal leaders grapple for creative solutions to today's financial challenges while working toward a brighter economic future for their communities.

In the face of plummeting revenues and high unemployment, Bristol successfully weathered the storm during the two-year 2007 recessionary period, retaining its staff, programs and services through reduced spending. Yet, like most cities, "its tax receipts still aren't where they should or need to be," according to City Manager Jeff Broughton. "We realized maybe the city and its direct economic development partners, needed to rethink their old way of doing business, move more partners into the fold to drive the success of our economic growth outside of city hall," Broughton said in a conversation with TT&C.

As a result, Bristol's top brass decided to seize the opportunity to launch a broad-based planning initiative to further enhance and strengthen the city's economic future through local public-private partnerships. City officials, during a four-month period, met with a select 10-member blue ribbon committee, all local leaders considered experts in their fields, to develop the guide: *Strategic Partnerships for Economic Growth and Sustainability*. The plan features design strategies for 14 community partnerships with public-private and



The city of Bristol, plus a 10-member blue ribbon committee from various business sectors of the city, hope to boost the local economy through a new broad-based economic development plan featuring 14 strategic public-private partnerships within the community.

non-profit entities ranging from tourism and healthcare to education, retail and business procurement.

The partnerships center around six strategic goals:

- Increase tourism and tourism-related activities;
- Enhance and strengthen the vibrancy of downtown Bristol;
- Strengthen, expand and attract businesses;
- Enhance the growth of Bristol Regional Medical Center and expand and attract other health care-related businesses;
- Make Bristol a center of educational excellence; and
- Build community capacity for economic development while ensuring the fiscal health of the city.

While some of the projects have been identified as short term, others are 3-5 year strategies.

In the planning process, two special economic development opportunities were identified as par-

ticularly promising for the future of the city: the *Border Region Retail Tourism Development District Act* and a Cultural Heritage Center, to be developed in partnership with the Birthplace of Country Music Alliance (BCMA), which is expected to attract more than 75,000 visitors a year and provide a country music icon in downtown Bristol.

Approved in 2011 by the Tennessee General Assembly, the *Border Region Retail Tourism Development District Act*, authorizes the city to incentivize the local development of an "extraordinary retail or tourism facility" in a designated Border Region Retail Tourism Development District. In Bristol's case, Exit 74 on Interstate 81 would qualify because of its location and the city's proximity to the state line. According to Broughton, the city has submitted an application to the department of revenue to certify the district. The Act See **BRISTOL** on Page 10

NEWS ACROSS TENNESSEE



BY TML STAFF REPORTS

ALCOA

Alcoa Inc. said that it plans to close an aluminum smelter in Tennessee and some operations at a Texas facility to cut costs in the face of weak prices. The moves, plus others to come, will reduce Alcoa's global smelting capacity by about 12 percent. Aluminum prices have fallen by about one-fourth since April because of factors such as weak demand in construction, slower growth in China and uncertainty about the direction of Europe's economy. Meanwhile, Alcoa has faced higher energy and raw-material costs. The company said that it would permanently close the smelter in Alcoa, Tenn., idled in 2009. There are still about 1,000 workers at the complex.

BARTLETT

Launch Medical is set to expand in Bartlett. The company will invest \$4.8 million to fit out an existing building on Wolf Lake Road, creating 40 jobs during a five-year period to manufacture medical device prototypes. Launch Medical is a medical device product development firm focused on assisting surgeon inventors to develop their ideas into marketable products. Founded in 2007, the company began as a medical device incubator, offering unique opportunities for surgeon inventors to develop new ideas for medical devices. In 2010, Launch Medical shifted from product development to the manufacturing market and partnered with Elite Medical to move forward as a strategic alliance to manufacture and distribute medical implants and instrumentation.

BROWNSVILLE

Precision Coils announced plans to expand and relocate its existing Somerville facility to Brownsville. Increasing demand for the Precision Coils product line has made the move to a larger facility with expansion capability necessary. The expansion represents an investment of \$3.7 million and the creation of 26 new jobs. A business of Unison™ Comfort Technologies, Precision Coils specializes in manufacturing precision-engineered replacement and OEM coils. The company has secured a lease for an existing 60,000 square foot facility in the Brownsville Industrial Park and has immediate plans to add an additional 20,000 square feet to the facility. The addition is slated for completion in the spring of 2012. The company plans to be fully operational in July.

CHATTANOOGA

The biggest solar energy farm at an airport in Tennessee went on line recently, according to Chattanooga Metropolitan Airport officials. The facility will sell to EPB and the Tennessee Valley Authority about \$100,000 worth of electricity annually. There could be as many as two other phases to the airport's solar farm, depending on grant funding. The \$4.3 million project will produce 1.1 megawatts of electricity, enough to power as many as 90 homes. Chattanooga was only the second airport nationally to receive a Federal Aviation Administration grant that targets areas which have air quality problems. The FAA grant funded about 95 percent of the project cost. According to airport officials, the payback to the airport will take only

about two years in view of its local share of the project's cost. The site at the airport for the solar farm is on the west side of the main runway on property that wasn't considered usable for aviation purposes. Also, the solar panels are not a hazard for pilots, as they absorb up to 92 percent of light.

CHATTANOOGA

Already the size of 17 football fields, Amazon's Chattanooga distribution center is about to get bigger. Fresh off a successful holiday season in which the site became one of Amazon's busiest in terms of volume of items handled, company officials said plans are to expand operations inside the massive Enterprise South industrial park facility. Work will start this month on an expansion that will add onto an existing second-level mezzanine and boost floor space to about 28 football fields. The space is expected to be ready by midsummer. Eventually, the expansion will translate to hundreds more jobs.

CHATTANOOGA

Motorists in the Chattanooga area now have more options available to help them get around in the Scenic City. State and local officials officially opened Chattanooga's new Transportation Management Center (TMC), which will use cutting edge technology to monitor traffic trouble spots and keep drivers up to date on the latest roadway conditions. From the TMC in Enterprise South Industrial park, TDOT personnel can monitor 71 SmartWay traffic cameras located along the area's most heavily-traveled corridors. In addition, they have access to 16 Dynamic Message Signs, 175 speed/congestion monitoring stations to spot traffic flow interruptions and a city-wide highway advisory radio station broadcasting on AM 1620. The system is specifically designed to keep Chattanooga motorists informed about road conditions by providing up-to-the-minute traffic information to help drivers avoid problems on the road. The new system also helps TDOT officials monitor traffic flow and respond quickly to problems on the road.

CLINTON

Eagle Bend Manufacturing, Inc. has announced a \$64 million expansion at their Clinton facility that will bring 188 new jobs to the area. The company, a division of Magna International, Inc., is a Tier 1 automotive parts supplier for original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) of cars worldwide. The expansion will add more than 100,000 square feet to its current 334,000 square foot plant occurring in phases over the next five years with the first phase commencing in the first quarter of 2012.

EAST RIDGE

Since implementing a new recycling program on September 9, the city has saved \$3,124.26 in taxpayer dollars. By collecting and transferring 86.47 tons of recyclable material to Rock Tenn., East Ridge not only received \$2,596.20 for the material, but has helped preserve the environment and extend the life span of the county landfill. Additionally, the city has saved \$2,723.81 in tipping fees. There are no additional employee costs to incorporate the recycling program into the weekly sanitation schedule, while running the routes has cost only \$2,195.75 in

extra fuel.

FARRAGUT

Farragut, for the second time, has been named the Most Business-Friendly City in Tennessee by the Beacon Center of Tennessee in the free market think tank's annual ranking of the state's 50 most populous cities. Farragut is the first city to receive the top ranking twice, having first been awarded the title in the Center's inaugural rankings in 2006. The study, titled, "How Business-Friendly are Tennessee's Cities?" scores each city in three categories that reflect a commitment to encouraging business success and fostering an entrepreneurial spirit. Those categories are Economic Vitality, Business Tax Burden, and Community Allure. Farragut has consistently ranked toward the top, finishing first in 2006 and second in last year's rankings. In 2011, its job performance and low tax burden give it the state's most business-friendly climate.

FULTON/SOUTH FULTON

Fulton and South Fulton's "Let's Paint the Town" revitalization effort is featured in a national television documentary "Let's Paint the Town, Twin Cities!" by award-winning film production company Marvo Entertainment Group LLC. The film is the first in a series of 30-minute documentaries chronicling the astounding success of "Let's Paint the Town," a grassroots community revitalization campaign that originated in Princeton, Ky., and is spreading across America. Communities which join the program use local donations of volunteer hours, paint, supplies and funds to transform their decaying downtowns into attractive and viable business districts. In May 2010 in Fulton, nearly 200 people attended a community-wide town hall meeting to hear about the program. That night, almost \$4,000 was raised in community donations, and as the program became successful, thousands more followed.

JACKSON

Jackson Die Casting, LLC representatives recently announced the company's decision to expand its Jackson manufacturing facility. The expansion of the high-pressure aluminum die casting company represents an investment of almost \$4.5 million and will create 58 new jobs in the area over the next three years. Jackson Die Casting is owned by Dallas-based Key 3 Casting, LLC, which was formed in 2009 and also has operations in Minneapolis and Hibbing, Minn. The company produces metal castings for industrial, aerospace, public infrastructure and automotive applications at its location in the Madison West Industrial Park.

KINGSPORT

A tentative agreement has been reached that would allow the Scott County Public Service Authority to establish an interconnection for water service with the city. The connection would be used mainly for emergency situations, with only a minimal amount of water purchased from Kingsport for daily use, but that amount could grow as future water demands increase. Scott County will initially be able to purchase up to 250,000 gallons of water per day from Kingsport.

KINGSTON

A network of public walking trails is being built into an upscale residential community on the shores of Watts Bar Lake after city officials amended a hefty federal grant awarded more



La Vergne Police Chief Mike Walker administers the oath of office to La Vergne's newest police officers (l-r) Daniel Bean, Stephen Hale, Matt Fracker, and Travis Wilson.

than a decade ago. The Ladd Landing Greenways system, more than 2.3 miles of 10-foot-wide asphalt walking trails, was officially launched with a groundbreaking. The three trails will connect to points of interest, from the 10-acre, city-owned Ladd Park to a planned new development in Ladd Landing, the high-end gated community. Kingston in the late 1990s received a series of federal grants for Rose Crossing, a proposed two-lane road from Highway 70 to Ladd Boulevard in Ladd Landing, according to City Manager James Pinkerton. The grants, totaling more than \$4 million, were for different segments of the project, including a proposed bridge over Interstate 40. That development plan unraveled after a new owner of a sizable chunk of land involved nixed the proposal, prompting the city to regroup and seek a new use for the funds. The city in a series of meetings with state officials several years ago obtained the go-ahead for the revised use of the grant money. The amended grant totals of more than \$3 million covering costs for three greenways, and the city is seeking a grant for a fourth paved path. The Ladd Landing developer donated right of way for the greenways.

MCKENZIE

Tower Support Services, LLC announced a decision to locate a manufacturing facility in McKenzie. The newly-formed company invested approximately \$650,000 in a leased facility and expects to create 15 jobs over a three-year period. Tower Support Services, LLC is a manufacturer of large anchor bolts and anchor bolt assemblies. The company services the producers of large steel structures in the electrical transmission and substation market. These assemblies are used to secure these structures to concrete foundations. The McKenzie facility is the company's first facility and will serve as the company's headquarters. The facility is located at 25045 Hwy 22 in the McKenzie Industrial Park and began operations in mid-December.

LA VERGNE

Four new police officers became members of the La Vergne Police Department at a swearing-in ceremony recently. The officers were hired from funds put in place as part of the five-year plan city leaders adopted in early 2010. The new patrol officers include Daniel Bean, 23, a former U.S. Marine; Stephen Hale, 35, a former U.S. Marine and current member of the Army National Guard with experience from both the Murfreesboro and Metro Nashville police departments; Travis Wilson, 28; and Matt Fracker, 32. Both Wilson and Fracker served as re-

serve officers prior to joining the force full-time. "More boots on the street are a general deterrent for crime, along with aggressive patrols," said Police Chief Mike Walker.

NASHVILLE

Hundreds of new jobs are on their way to downtown. State and metro officials announced an expansion of ServiceSource, which helps tech companies manage renewing contracts. ServiceSource currently employs almost 500 people in Nashville and occupies approximately 85,000 square feet of office space in the SunTrust Building located on the northwest corner of the intersection of Fourth Avenue North and Church Street. ServiceSource is a service revenue management company that works to increase recurring revenue for hardware, software, health care and life sciences companies. The expansion will bring additional square footage to the existing space, while the newly created positions will include those in accounting, finance, information technology and sales.

OAK RIDGE

State and local officials from the Oak Ridge area recently attended the U.S. Department of Energy's Intergovernmental conference in New Orleans, LA. Participants met with federal, state, and local leaders from DOE sites across the nation, including newly appointed leadership in DOE's Environmental Management Program. The conference was sponsored by DOE's Office of Public and Intergovernmental Accountability, which supports DOE's EM program through liaison, communications, coordination and interaction with state, tribal, city, and county governments.

TRI-CITIES

The Tri-Cities Airport Commission approved a resolution to submit an airport authority charter to the TN Secretary of State's Office. The airport's six owners are Sullivan and Washington counties, Bristol, Va.; Bristol, Tenn.; Johnson City; and Kingsport. The new entity will be called the Tri-Cities Airport Authority. The airport currently functions like a partnership, as owners appoint members to the airport commission, but still have control. The individual county commissions and city councils must approve grants and other matters even after the airport commission approves them. The airport will function like a corporation with the individual owners turning over their rights to run the airport to the authority board. The transfer reduces the legal and financial liabilities of the owners and gives the governing body more authority and flexibility.

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TACIR executive director Harry Green retires

BY GAEL STAHL

BY TML STAFF REPORTS

Dennis Dycus, director of the Comptroller's Division of Municipal Audit, will receive the highest honor given by the American Society



Dycus

for Public Administration's Tennessee chapter, The Hoy Stephenson Lifetime Achievement Award. The award recognizes "retired Tennessee administrators who, during their lifetimes, have made contributions of profound impact to public administration."

Bob Raines, who was most recently serving as interim executive director of the Tennessee Film Entertainment and Music Commission (TFEMC), is now the executive director. Music industry veteran Hank Adam Locklin will fill the newly created role of director of music and business development.

Max Carroll, former Cleveland commissioner and Board of Education member, has passed away. Carroll, 80, was recently feted when the city school board named Cleveland High School's new science wing in his honor.



Carroll

Allen Borden, former Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (ECD) Northeast Tennessee regional director, has been promoted to statewide director and will oversee the jobs base camps. Borden will be located in Nashville and will be the point-of-contact for all nine regional directors and ECD's sister agencies throughout state government.



Borden



McMahan

Deanna Lambert has been appointed new Community Relations Officer for the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Region Three area, based in Nashville. Lambert officially started December 12, taking over the position previously held by B.J. Doughty, who now serves as TDOT's Director of Community Relations and Communications.



Lambert

Tom Beehan has been elected to the 2012 Executive Board of Directors for the Energy Communities Alliance (ECA). Beehan has served as ECA Vice-Chairman for the past two years. As ECA Chair, Beehan will be responsible for general supervision of ECA affairs and representing the organization before the Department of Energy (DOE), Congress and the Administration.



Beehan

Kingston Springs City Commissioner Jim Schippers passed away on Jan. 3 from heart failure. Schippers served on the commission since 2008. Schippers had also served on the Cheatham County Planning Commission.



Schippers

Twenty-four years ago, Tennessee Town and City profiled Harry Green five years after he became Tennessee's first intergovernmental expert. The former far-flung homeboy would go on to help Tennessee plan how to deal with future complex problems. For three decades, since its founding, he has been executive director of the state's major intergovernmental agency, TACIR, the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, which brings together representatives of the state Senate and House and the state's cities and counties to study and guide the state through a fast-moving stream of state, county, and municipal challenges.



Dr. Harry Green

Since 1981, he and his staff have dealt with statewide problems regarding intergovernmental financing, city-county growth, planning, and development, and challenges that the state's educational systems faced, and a wide variety of financial challenges. A major TACIR fiscal capacity study, an infrastructure project, and other accomplishments are summed up in its monumental 25 Year Report.

Green was born in Lebanon, TN. After graduating high school he went to nearby Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) but interrupted his studies to serve a two-year hitch in the military in South Carolina in 1952-53. During that time he married and finished his schooling with a broad major in economics along with courses in social sciences, government, public finance, sociology, and English literature, his minor.

He earned his master's degree at Florida State University (FSU) and his doctorate at the University of Colorado, then taught three years at MTSU and two at FSU before joining the Florida governor's office where he worked in the Division of Economic Opportunity before going to Washington to work in the Model Cities program administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. He was also an adjunct professor at George Washington University.

He turned down offers to work in Egypt and Malaysia in order to spend two years helping create an urban life program by coordinating several disciplines at Georgia State University. When the University of Pittsburgh offered to send him to Zaria, Nigeria, he and his wife Carolyn bundled up their son and daughter and headed for that ancient city state near the Sahara Desert. He taught and did consultant work in urban economic development at Amadu Bello University for four years then went to the University of Ife in southern Nigeria for three years. In 1977 when the children

neared high school age, the family of nomads moved back to Nashville where Green worked in the state Comptroller's Office until 1981.

That's when the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations was funded. From a pool of 150 candidates for the job of leading TACIR, Harry Green was chosen its first executive director. In the 30 years since, it's accomplished much.

TACIR, like many other state advisory commissions on intergovernmental relations was based on Eisenhower's national Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR) that Ike created to study and deal with federalism problems after years of governmental changes during the FDR and Truman administrations. Tennessee's and other state intergovernmental commissions that came along later did not see their most important role as getting legislation passed or even recommended. Their role is to provide an independent forum to discuss controversial issues in a nonpartisan, objective manner and respond to them in ways that would be best for Tennessee. Green has said that the value of this cannot be overstated because it provided major players with public policy responsibilities a venue in which to talk about complex things in provocative and objective terms. This is not provided anywhere else in the state.

The beauty of it is that once things are thrashed out to the satisfaction of commission members, the horses that can move their work through the legislative process are already in place. Legislative TACIR members typically sign on and move the group's recommendations. For example, an early major victory for local governments was getting TVA to agree to a fundamental change in the calculation of tax equivalency

payments by public electric utilities to cities and counties. The issue was studied by TACIR for four years. After TACIR worked out an agreement with TVA, the implementing legislation passed 99-0 in the House.

TACIR members are highly placed in their areas and include ex-officio members such as the comptroller of the Treasury, and the chairmen of the House and Senate Finance, Ways and Means Committees - three of the top financial officials in state government. Over the years, members have also included the commissioner of Finance and Administration and the president of the Tennessee Development Districts Association.

Besides House and Senate members, four members are nominated by the Tennessee Municipal League to represent cities and four by the County Services Association and one by the County Officials Association. General Assembly members typically appointed by the House and Senate speakers are the House chair of the State and Local Committee and financially oriented House and Senate members. The governor appoints private citizen experts. There are 25 altogether.

Whenever the state faces an intractable problem, TACIR is the obvious place to take it. The Tennessee Municipal League has worked closely with Green and his staff for decades. After he retires later this month, Lynnisse Roehrich-Patrick, the current deputy director, will become the new TACIR executive director.

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STATE BRIEFS



BY TML STAFF REPORTS

ECD study targets regulation

A regulatory reform report suggests that state agencies in Tennessee need to do a better job of assessing the impact of new rules and dealing with the businesses they regulate. The 54-page study prepared by the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development recommends the creation of a "one stop" website for residents to easily find regulatory information. The report also suggests the state implement an assessment process for all regulations prior to their adoption. The study was based upon more than 150 interviews and surveys with businesses and nonprofit groups across Tennessee. The report suggests the state develop customer service training to improve the way state employees interact with the public and that agencies implement new personnel policies to better worker performance. "State employees [who] do not properly conduct themselves or fulfill their duties should be easily disciplined or dismissed by their supervisors," the report concludes. Gov. Bill Haslam said the review is part of his Jobs4TN economic development plan to identify obstacles to business investment.

Unemployment rate drops

Tennessee's unemployment rate in November dropped 0.4 percent to 9.1 percent, the lowest since January 2009. State officials said about 10,000 jobs were created since October with job growth in the service sector such as retail trade and temporary jobs. In retail trade, 8,900 jobs were added. Professional and business services grew by 7,100 positions. Jobs losing positions were arts, entertainment and recreation, down by 1,800; wholesale trade, 1,400; and durable goods manufacturing, 400. The January 2009 figure was 9 percent.

TN STEM caucus first of its kind

A political caucus focusing specifically on science, technology, engineering and mathematics in education has formed in Tennessee, giving new weight to a prominent workforce preparation initiative. The STEM Education Caucus formed during the 2011 recess of the Ten-

nessee General Assembly and is the first of its kind. Proponents of STEM say it promotes coursework related to industry and workforce development; the initiative is just one of numerous theories and initiatives competing within the educational system. The most recent 10-year employment projections by the U.S. Labor Department show that of the 20 fastest growing occupations projected for 2014, 15 of them require significant mathematics or science preparation to successfully compete for a job.

Traffic fatalities declining

Tennessee traffic fatalities declined sharply this year, reaching their lowest figure in 49 years. So far in 2011, 926 people have died in wrecks in the state. It's the fewest since 811 in 1962. Col. Tracy Trott of the Tennessee Highway Patrol credits drunken driving enforcement, increased seat belt use, educational safety programs in schools and other factors. Until last year, such figures had been declining. There were 1,211 in 2007, 1,043 in 2008 and 989 in 2009, then a spike to 1,030 in 2010. The deadliest year was 1,444 in 1973. This year, May was the deadliest month on state highways with 97 fatalities. January was the safest with 51.

January Radon Action Month

Gov. Haslam has proclaimed January "Radon Action Month" to help educate Tennesseans about the dangers of radon exposure and encourage actions to identify and address radon problems in the home. In conjunction, the Department of Environment and Conservation has joined forces with the American Lung Association, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and various local and county health departments for an outreach program to raise awareness about this health risk and the importance of testing. Radon is a naturally occurring gas that can seep into homes through cracks and openings in the foundation. It cannot be seen, tasted or smelled, but in concentrated levels radon can pose a threat to human health. The EPA estimates that approximately 70 percent of Tennessee's population lives in high risk or moderate risk radon areas. The best time to test is during consistently cold weather, usually from

October to March. To order a radon test kit or to learn more about the dangers of radon exposure, visit TDEC's website at www.tn.gov/environment/ea/radon or contact the Tennessee Radon Program at 1-800-232-1139 or TDEC.Radon@tn.gov.

TSLA archives war project

The Tennessee State Library and Archives (TSLA) launched a pair of projects aimed at preserving the history of Tennesseans who served in the Korean and Vietnam wars. TSLA is asking veterans of Korea and Vietnam and their families to contribute items for an archival collection called "Tennessee Remembers: Vietnam and Korea Veterans," to include books, photographs, negatives, slides, films, audiotapes, letters, artifacts and maps. Professional archivists will arrange, organize and preserve the materials so that they can be made available to the public for research. A separate but related project will distribute a survey that gives veterans a chance to share their stories from the wars. The survey is available online at www.tn.gov/tsla/VetsProject/vietnamwar/index.html or www.tn.gov/tsla/VetsProject/koreanwar/index.html.

New judicial ethics rules enforced

The Tennessee Supreme Court will impose new judicial ethics rules outlining new recusal procedures for judges and limiting their political activities. The changes, which will take effect July 1, represent the first major overhaul to the rules that govern judges' conduct in 20 years and are based on 2007 American Bar Association recommendations that nearly two-dozen states have adopted. The new rules came in response to a request from the Tennessee Bar Association to revamp the state's ethical guidelines. In July, judges will have to better explain if they deny requests to remove themselves from cases, called a recusal. Judges will have to provide a written explanation in such cases and attorneys will have a faster process to appeal a denial. Another change is in judges' political activities. No longer will they be allowed to make contributions to political campaigns or political organizations. The courts will allow judges to continue to buy tickets to attend campaign events.

ECD releases nine regional plans to target job creation

The Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development has released nine regional strategic plans outlining how ECD's field staff will lead new economic development efforts in their regions, support existing networks of local organizations and serve as an effective conduit between the department and regional stakeholders.

The plans can be viewed at <http://tn.gov/ecd/>.

Gov. Bill Haslam's Jobs4TN economic development plan, announced last year, decentralized ECD and established nine jobs base camps throughout the state. Jobs base camp regional directors and their staffs created the strategic plans through a variety of outreach efforts, stakeholder meetings and consensus building activities.

"Jobs4TN was designed to take a more regional approach to job creation so we can better understand and serve the needs of each region," Haslam said. "The strategic

plans will be a guide for economic development growth as we continue working to become the No. 1 location in the Southeast for high-quality jobs."

"With assets varying greatly throughout Tennessee, it is important that we address each region's strengths and challenges individually, and the strategic plans help us do just that," Hagerty said. "Working with our local partners, we were able to develop plans specifically tailored to the needs of our nine regions."

Each strategic plan is unique to its region yet common themes emerged, including enhancing communication amongst economic development partners, sharing best practices, reaching out to existing businesses and partnering with area stakeholders.

According to ECD, the plans will continue to be reviewed and revisited with local partners on a regular basis.

E-verify law goes into effect

Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development announced new requirements of all employers in Tennessee to demonstrate that they are hiring and maintaining a legal workforce.

"This online verification process is designed to be convenient for employers and only takes a few minutes to complete. The department can provide assistance to employers who don't have Internet access," said Commissioner Karla Davis.

Signed into law by Gov. Bill Haslam on June 7, 2011, the Tennessee Lawful Employment Act requires verifying the employment eligibility of all newly hired employees through the online E-Verify program (www.uscis.gov/everify), or requesting all newly hired employees to provide one of the following identity and employment authorization documents as required:

- A valid Tennessee driver's license or photo identification
- A valid driver's license or photo identification from another state where the license requirements are at least as strict as those in Tennessee
- A birth certificate issued by a U.S. state, jurisdiction or territory
- A U.S. government issued certified birth certificate
- A valid, unexpired U.S. passport
- A U.S. certificate of birth abroad
- A report of birth abroad or a citizen of the U.S.
- A certificate of citizenship
- A certificate of naturalization
- A U.S. citizen identification card
- A lawful permanent resident card

The law also requires employers to obtain and maintain a copy of one of the above listed identity/employment authorization documents for all non-employees as well. A "non-employee" is defined as any individual, other than an employee, paid directly by the employer in exchange for the individual's labor or services.

The employment verification provisions referenced above will be phased in as follows:

- All state and local government agencies must enroll and participate in E-Verify or request and maintain an identity/employment authorization document from a newly hired



employee or non-employee no later than Jan. 1, 2012

- All private employers with 500 or more employees must enroll and participate in E-Verify or request and maintain an identity/employment authorization document from a newly hired employee or non-employee no later than Jan. 1, 2012
- All private employers with 200 to 499 employees must enroll and participate in E-Verify or request and maintain an identity/employment authorization document from a newly hired employee or non-employee no later than July 1, 2012
- All private employers with six to 199 employees must register and utilize E-Verify or request and maintain an identity/employment authorization document from a newly hired employee or non-employee no later than July 1, 2013

The Tennessee Department of Labor does have the authority to impose penalties for non-compliance. For a first violation, \$500 for each employee or non-employee not verified, for a second violation, \$1,000 for each employee or non-employee not verified, and \$2,500 for a third violation.

The private employer must submit evidence of compliance within 60 days of the final order. If the employer fails to submit such documentation, then the commissioner has the authority to suspend the private employer's license until the employer remedies the violation.

Any lawful resident of Tennessee or any employee of a federal agency may file a complaint alleging a violation of the employment verification provisions of the Act. If there is satisfactory evidence of a violation, the Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development will conduct an investigation.

For more information on the Tennessee Lawful Employment Act visit <http://www.tn.gov/labor-wfd/everify/> or contact the Labor Standards Division toll-free at 1-855-TNEBILL (1-855-863-2455).

Haslam unveils comprehensive public safety strategy

Gov. Bill Haslam has announced a comprehensive, multi-year action plan designed to improve public safety statewide. The Governor's Public Safety Subcabinet Working Group, which includes commissioners and representatives from 11 state agencies, submitted the plan after months of meetings with more than 300 public safety professionals and stakeholders across the state.

The three goals of the public safety action plan are to significantly reduce drug abuse and drug trafficking; curb violent crime; and lower the rate of repeat offenders. There are 11 objectives and 40 action steps outlined in the plan, all specifically linked to those goals.

While it is a multi-year strategy, the subcabinet working group expects to launch approximately 20 of

the steps in 2012. Several of these steps include:

- Making improvements to the current prescription drug data base to make it easier to identify abusers;
- Developing regional alliances with other states to tackle prescription drug abuse;
- Placing non-violent drug addicts into drug court treatment programs;
- Imposing tougher sentences for certain types of gang-related crimes;
- Enacting tougher sentences for gun possession by those with prior violent felony convictions;
- Realigning under the Department of Correction the supervision of adult felony offenders to include probation, parole and commu-

nity corrections; and

- Mandating incarceration time for repeat domestic violence offenders.

Eight of the identified action steps are already underway. Some of those steps include:

- Development of a real-time database to track the purchases of pseudoephedrine products (commonly used to make meth);
- A statewide meth lab clean-up system;
- Development of a new anti-meth communications campaign;
- In-depth training of all state road troopers on drug interdiction; and
- A pilot effort in Shelby County to create a one-stop shop for assistance and services to inmates returning to the community.

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Cumberland Region Tomorrow (CRT) was recently awarded the 2011 Tennessee American Planners Association Award for Regional Significance for its quality growth work with local communities in Middle Tennessee. CRT bases their work on a Quality Growth Toolbox, released in 2007. In addition to training, CRT offers technical assistance and consulting for local communities in the ten-county Middle Tennessee region. Pictured are: Joe Horne, Williamson County director of Community Development, Bridgett Jones, CRT executive director and Marion Fowlkes, CRT co-chair.

State's Public TV stations to offer coverage of the 107th Tennessee General Assembly

Tennessee's six public television stations, have begun broadcasting live coverage of legislative sessions of the 107th Tennessee General Assembly. The sessions will generally air Monday through Thursday while the State Legislature is in session. (Check local listings for channel number and schedule information)

The coverage, which is in partnership with the Tennessee General Assembly, will offer citizens a chance to witness Senate and House sessions live. Selected committee meetings will also air. The schedule for each week's broadcasts will be decided by the Tennessee Senate and House on the previous Thurs-

days. Schedule updates will be available each week at www.wkno.org.

This project is funded under an agreement with the Tennessee General Assembly and with additional support from AT&T and BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee and by the following members of the Tennessee Credit Union League: Appalachian Community Federal Credit Union; Ascend Federal Credit Union; Bowater Employees Credit Union; City of Memphis Credit Union; First South Financial Credit Union; Kimberly Clark Credit Union; Leaders Credit Union; Tennessee Valley Federal Credit Union; US Community Credit Union; and UT Federal Credit Union.

Nashville Public Library Foundation wins competition to create digital learning lab

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation announced Nashville Public Libraries as one of only 12 U.S. organizations to receive funding to create a learning lab for middle and high school students. The Nashville Public Library learning lab will be designed to improve digital literacy and to engage young people in hands-on learning. The labs will help youth gain the 21st Century skills and knowledge they need to succeed in school, careers, and life today.

The Nashville Public Library Foundation received \$100,000 in funding from IMLS and the MacArthur Foundation to plan and design the learning lab.

"We need to move youth beyond exposure and initial engagement with media, information, and technologies to activities of production, learning, and expertise-building," said Tari Hughes, execu-

tive director of the Nashville Public Library Foundation. "Planning for the Learning Lab(s) at NPL will help support Nashville's city-wide focus on youth.

Nashville Public Library's Learning Lab planning team will be joined by teen constituents and volunteers, teen T.O.T.A.L. (Totally Outstanding Teen Advocates For The Library) staff, and professionals from Nashville's creative community.

The Learning Lab Project will be administered by the Urban Libraries Council (ULC) and the Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC), which bring critical expertise and professional networks to the effort, and will help amplify each grantees' experiences more broadly to libraries and museums nationwide.

Applications materials for a second round of the grant competition will be available in Spring, 2012 at www.imls.gov.

Knoxville Elected Officials Academy Level I - JAN. 27-28

Schedule of Sessions

Jan. 27- Foundations and Structure of Tennessee Municipal Government: 4:30-6:30 pm
 Jan. 27- Meal at the Conference Center: 6:30-7 pm
 Jan. 27- Charter, Code and Open Records Law: 7-9 pm
 Jan. 28- Ethics And Open Meetings: 8-10 am
 Jan. 28- Municipal Financial Overview: 10 am-Noon
 Jan. 28- Meal at Conference Center: Noon-12:30 pm
 Jan. 28 -Council at Work: 12:30-2:30 pm

Training Facilities

The University of Tennessee Conference Center Building

MTAS is changing to a new training registration and tracking system to better meet the needs of our customers. With these improvements, MTAS has changed to an online registration system effective Jan. 1, 2012, and will accept registration and payment by credit card through your Solution Point account. You must register for each session individually. Online registration for any MTAS course is avail-

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able at: www.solutionpoint.tennessee.edu/TPOnline/TPOnline.dll/MTASHome.

For assistance with registration or payment, call 865- 974-0411. For hotel information, go to <http://downtownknoxville.org/visitors/lodging>.

FOUNDATIONS AND STRUCTURE OF MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT will explore the differences and similarities between private business and government. The four forms of government will be explained from a historical formation perspective, as well as examine the differences between policy and administration in relation to being a member of the board.

INTRODUCTION TO CHARTER, CODE AND OPEN RECORDS LAW will examine the three different charter types. The basic principles of Dillon's Rule will be explored and understood in relation to what gives municipalities their governing powers. The Open Records law will be covered and discussed in depth.

ETHICS AND OPEN MEETINGS covers the requirements as stated in the Comprehensive Ethics Reform Act of 2006. Discussion will be centered on the Tennessee Ethics Commission, financial disclosure form requirements, local codes of ethics and the MTAS Model Code of Ethics.

MUNICIPAL FINANCE OVERVIEW will explore the purposes and components of the municipal budget process. They will learn what needs to be accomplished and when. Tennessee cities are required to have their books audited annually by an independent auditor. The importance and purpose of this audit will be emphasized in relation to using it as a tool in monitoring internal controls and other management practices.

COUNCIL AT WORK will provide participants with a variety of techniques designed to increase their effectiveness as a member of a governing body. Participants will discuss and identify internal effectiveness tools that will help them evaluate their board effectiveness and improve board discussion. They will also discuss tools to link the governing body with both the community and the municipal staff



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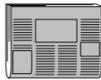
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CHIEF BUILDING OFFICIAL

JOHNSON CITY. The city is looking for an innovative and committed professional with proven technical and leadership skills to serve as its Chief Building Official. As Chief Building Official (CBO) you'll plan, direct, and lead the City's Code Enforcement division activities and programs, within the Development Services department, while actively and visibly supporting the City's vision. The CBO will lead a staff of 12 team members to provide efficient administration of all provisions of the municipal building codes, property maintenance codes and zoning ordinances. The CBO will administer the activities of the Board of Building Codes and Board of Dwelling Standards and Review. Candidates must have: strong computer, interpersonal and communication skills (both verbal and written); demonstrated leadership and management ability; building related certifications; at a minimum, a bachelor's degree; and ten (10) years previous experience in any combination of code enforcement; design, construction or inspection of building structures; or structural engineering or architecture. Deadline for applying is Friday, February 3, 2012. Salary range: \$49,227 to \$64,620 depending on experience. An application must be completed and are available at our website: www.johnsoncitytn.org. Apply to: Department of Human Resources, City of Johnson City, 601 East Main Street, P.O. Box 2150, Johnson City, TN 37605. EEO/AA.

FINANCE DIRECTOR

FAIRVIEW. The city is accepting applications for a Finance Director. The Finance Director has general supervision over general financial affairs of the City. A complete job description and list of qualifications are available at Fairview City Hall or at www.fairview-tn.org Applicants should submit their resume to 7100 City Center Way, Fairview TN 37062 or to cityhall@fairview-tn.org. The position is open until filled. EOE.

FINANCIAL & ACCOUNTING CONSULTANTS

University of Tennessee. The Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) with the University of Tennessee has opportunities available for Financial and Accounting professionals to serve as consultants. MTAS consultants provide training, technical assistance and research, and are exceptional resources for the cities and towns of Tennessee. Extensive travel is required of all consultants. Applicants interested in

being based in or serving from a specific location of the state should indicate so in the cover letter. Positions serve state-wide from district offices and openings are available until filled: MTAS offices in west Tennessee are located in Jackson and Martin, but applicants interested in living in the Memphis area are encouraged to apply. A request for office alternatives in the Memphis area may be considered. MTAS offices in central Tennessee are located in Nashville. MTAS offices in east Tennessee are located in Johnson City and Knoxville, but applicants interested in living or serving in the Chattanooga area are encouraged to apply. A request for office alternatives in the Chattanooga area may be considered. Successful applicants will have a BA or BS in Business Administration, Accounting or Finance or related field, and a related Master's degree is preferred. The position requires at least five years employment in a finance related position in or in support of state or local government with three years as a finance director, manager, auditor or equivalent. Requires at least one the following three certifications, or the ability to obtain one of the certifications within 12 months of employment: Certified Public Accountant (preferred); or Certified Public Finance Officer (CPFO) by the Government Finance Officer's Association; or Certified Government Finance Manager by the Association of Government Accountants. Salary is based on a combination of professional experience and qualifications. Cover letter, resume and references should be submitted by e-mail to Ms. Tess Davis, Municipal Technical Advisory Service at tess.davis@tennessee.edu. Position is open until filled. The University of Tennessee is an EEO/AA/Title VI/Title IX/Section 504/ADA/ADEA institution in the provision of its education and employment programs and services. All qualified applicants will receive equal consideration for employment without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, physical or mental disability, or covered veteran status.

POLICE OFFICER

SPRING CITY. The town will be accepting applications for the position of Certified Police Officer - Patrolman through Jan. 27, 2012. Applicants must have attended and completed a P.O.S.T. approved law enforcement training academy, have a high school diploma or GED, and a valid TN driver's license. A criminal background check and drug test will be performed prior to employment. Applicants will be considered on the basis of qualification and suitability regardless of race, color, religion, sex or national origin. Applications may be obtained at the front window of City Hall or online at www.townofspringcitytn.org. No phone calls please.

Lawrenceburg completes flood prevention project

Lawrenceburg is nearing completion of a multi-phase flood prevention project that was undertaken following a disastrous event in 1998.

On July 13, 1998, a disastrous flood severely damaged the city's water and sewer plants and infrastructure, as well as ravaged the street and sanitation departments, all located on Ezell Drive near the entrance David Crockett State Park. Two people died, and hundreds of homes were flooded when the city received more than 19 inches of rain in 36 hours.

Now, after ten years of work, Lawrenceburg is putting the final touches on the "Shoal Creek Interceptor," the 2.2 mile channel that serves as the city's main storm water drainage artery.

"There's still a little more work to do, but it's open for business," said project director Joe Baxter, who serves as the local Emergency Management Director.

Work began 12 years ago with a flood-damage reduction study the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The city contracted with Ensaf to take the USACE study data and design a flood control system that would withstand a 100-year storm event. Former Ensaf engineer Garland Stone was the lead designer on the project, which was accomplished in three phases.

The old interceptor was a "hodge-podge" of varying sizes of collapsed and rotting metal pipe with bottlenecks that "ten times too small" to handle a 100-year storm event," said Baxter.

Before work could even start, the city had to complete property acquisition and relocation assistance needed for the project. The city was assisted by TEMA to obtain millions in FEMA and HUD grant funds to pay for property acquisition, demolition, and engineering. The city also purchased flood-damaged properties along Shoal Creek to eliminate another threat, leaving behind several scenic nature areas for the public to enjoy.

The first phase project was to construct two retention basins with



After ten years of work, Lawrenceburg is putting the final touches on the "Shoal Creek Interceptor," the 2.2 mile channel that serves as the city's main storm water drainage artery.



The city used their own workers and equipment to build the phase II project, a seven acre detention pond.

a pumping station to capture runoff from a large industrial area, which also contributed to the "overload" of the interceptor. Lawrenceburg contracted with DASCO, Inc. to build the retention basins in 2002 and they were partially operational in May, 2003 when another flood occurred.

The city used their own workers and equipment to build the phase II project, a seven acre detention pond just west of North Locust Avenue, which further reduced the pressure on the old interceptor.

Lawrenceburg started at the south end of the interceptor in 2005, and reached the head in August, 2011. A grant from the EPA helped fund the final 2,100 feet of underground box culvert for the project, but the work was done with city workers and equipment.

Storm water now flows freely through the interceptor, but one bottleneck remains, an old 8 foot culvert on U.S. 64 that will be upgraded to a 20-footer by TDOT in 2012.

ECD awards cities energy block grants

The Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (ECD) announced that 12 additional Tennessee cities and counties were awarded approximately \$1.1 million in Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants (EECBG).

These communities join 134 other Tennessee cities and counties who were awarded \$13 million in EECBG grants in 2010. The grants will enable communities to implement cost-effective strategies which reduce total energy expenses and save taxpayer money through improved energy efficiency in buildings and transportation systems, creating an estimated 10 new jobs in the process.

The grants will fund a variety of energy efficiency and conservation programs in local communities across the state, including retrofits of the lighting, HVAC, window and insulation of many existing government buildings. Other communities will install remote read water meters and renewable energy systems, in-

cluding a geothermal heating and cooling system.

The third round of the EECBG program is expected to produce nearly 2.5 million kilowatt-hours (kWh) of energy savings annually, resulting in a cost-savings of approximately \$225 thousand per year for Tennessee communities. The grants will also allow installers and retrofitters to gain valuable training and experience which will serve private sector companies as they expand their energy efficiency programs. The 12 recipients were chosen from a pool of 38 applications. Applications were scored on the local government's overall conservation strategy, project feasibility, readiness to proceed, community impact, partnerships and the ability to extend funding impact beyond a one-time use.

The EECBG grants were funded out of the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. For more information visit <http://tn.gov/ecd/recovery/eeecbg.html>.

Municipalities that received

grants:

- Bethel Springs - \$ 100,000
Remote read water meters, data reading system, computer systems, and training
- Collegedale - \$ 100,000
HVAC units and lighting at 3 city buildings
- Decherd - \$ 39,400
HVAC units and lighting at 5 city buildings
- Elkton - \$ 25,664
HVAC units, lighting, windows, and insulation at city hall
- Huntsville - \$ 100,000
HVAC units, lighting, windows, doors, insulation, and fire doors at 2 city buildings
- Munford - \$ 100,000
HVAC units and lighting at 2 city buildings and LED traffic lights
- Somerville - \$ 100,000
Lighting at 5 city buildings, HVAC units at city hall, and windows and doors at Fire Dept.
- Troy - \$ 79,500
Geothermal system at Fire Station

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Emerging Issues: Doing less with less, and beyond

BY BILL BARNES
Nation's Cities Weekly

Most local leaders have worked through the optimistic "doing more with less" phase. Now, many are figuring out how to do less with less.

They are lighting out into new territory where the terrain is neither familiar nor welcoming.

Almost all cities will handle the financial stress. Budgets will be balanced. But, as one former mayor used to say: even if you balance your checkbook, that doesn't mean you're putting food on the table for the kids. Beyond the budgets, it's the people and the place that matter.

Short-term, it's not. Five to 10 years seems to be the conventional wisdom as to how long the Great Recession and its aftermaths will focus our attentions.

There's no way to know where we'll be when this round of travails ends. It's just not credible to think that the "business cycle" will go fully 'round and take us back to 2006. You can't step in the same river twice, and the second dip may be more treacherous than the first.

Looking Forward

No time like the present, then, to imagine what may be in store, to stress test local and regional systems for capacity to weather probable scenarios. Such sidebar efforts, running parallel to immediate agendas, require a different kind of thinking and leadership.

So long as local leaders were in airbag situations — saved from devastation but temporarily stuck in place and unable to see ahead — they dealt with the immediate and urgent.

Now, it seems, that situation

has changed: the money crunch is, in many places, more harsh, but the vision and maneuverability have returned.

At the recent NLC Congress of Cities, public talk at workshops and private chats in the hallways included comparing notes about shared services, the effects of personnel reductions, consolidations and regional approaches. "Participatory budgeting" — serious mechanisms for engaging citizens around budget questions and longer-term priorities — got lots of attention. And the question of whether temporary cuts are really permanent was debated.

Kalamazoo, Mich., and its neighbors, for instance, started looking ahead early. Beginning in 2009, conversations among leaders in the two main cities and the county helped create what the initiator, Vice Mayor Hannah McKinney, describes as "an environment of awareness." Inter-jurisdictional structures are now in place so that, as contracts expire, purchasing is consolidated.

Larger agendas in the Kalamazoo area are in the talking stage as huge deficits loom. "Shared sacrifice," McKinney says, "is a great concept but in every case, some jurisdiction is making a bigger sacrifice for no apparent short run or medium run reward." Nonetheless, the multi-jurisdictional conversations continue for a long-haul effort.

Looking Backward and Deeper

"New normal" is not the way to think about this situation. NLC's Director of the Center for Research and Innovation, Christopher Hoene, says that the phrase ignores history. He's looked at the data over the past 30-40 years and determined that the "reality is that we're returning to an

old normal."

The unusually rapid economic growth of the decade from the late 1990s onward was "a blip on the curve." It allowed us to ignore "a lot of underlying challenges in our system of public finance," challenges that the Great Recession "violently unmasked."

Eleven years ago, NLC set up its own sidebar discussion to take a "longer, deeper" view of public finance nationally.

A brief report highlighted some of those "underlying challenges," items that by now are not new but, importantly, are also still not adequately addressed. (It also set in motion a new agenda of NLC research, advocacy and assistance that is still productive.)

The 2000 report, written amidst the temporary economic boom and bubble, warned ominously that "big and unnoticed changes beneath the surface will become increasingly dangerous when the rising tide starts to ebb."

Well, the tide went out in 2007-08, and we can see clearly, for example, that the system for raising public revenue has not kept up with the changing U.S. economy; that changing municipal roles put new burdens on local budgets; that infrastructure and other investments lag badly; that great inequalities have accumulated and harm societal functions; and that our dysfunctional intergovernmental system isn't resilient to great shocks.

Shocks from these and who knows what other surprising challenges, good and bad, may be slouching toward us even now.

Unconventional thinking, scenario planning and wondering what short-term actions will mean for the longer term seem in order.

NATIONAL BRIEFS

BY TML STAFF REPORTS

A burst of hiring in December pushed the unemployment rate to its lowest level in nearly three years, giving the economy a boost at the end of 2011. The Labor Department said that employers added a net 200,000 jobs last month and the unemployment rate fell to 8.5 percent, the lowest since February 2009. The rate has dropped for four straight months. The hiring gains cap a six-month stretch in which the economy generated 100,000 jobs or more in each month. That hasn't happened since April 2006. For all of 2011, the economy added 1.6 million jobs, better than the 940,000 added in 2010. The unemployment rate averaged 8.9 percent last year, down from 9.6 percent the previous year. Economists forecast that the job gains will top 2.1 million this year. Average hourly pay rose, providing consumers with more income to spend. The average work week lengthened, a sign that business is picking up and companies may soon need more workers. And

approval from the agency's regulator. Closing processing facilities would lower delivery standards for first-class mail, shifting delivery, in most cases, to two to three days instead of one. For example, in Tennessee, the Jackson facility is on the potential closure list which would mean that mail would be processed in Memphis.

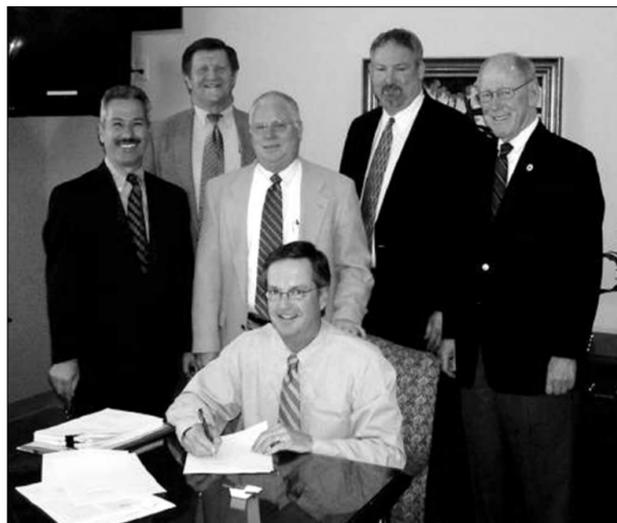
The U.S. Postal Service, which earlier announced plans to close more than half of its 461 mail-processing plants, now says it won't move forward on the closings until next May. The Postal Service will continue its review process, including public input meetings but said it hopes the delay will provide time to get comprehensive postal legislation passed. The Postal Service needs congressional approval to defer retiree benefits payments and to end Saturday delivery. Closing postal facilities also requires

approval from the agency's regulator. Closing processing facilities would lower delivery standards for first-class mail, shifting delivery, in most cases, to two to three days instead of one. For example, in Tennessee, the Jackson facility is on the potential closure list which would mean that mail would be processed in Memphis.

A federal provision that provides more than \$1 billion in tax breaks to Tennesseans each year is in danger of disappearing. State taxpayers who itemize their federal taxes will no longer be able to deduct the state and local sales tax they pay if Congress doesn't renew the benefit, which expired Dec. 31. It has been available since 2004 and is mostly used by residents in Tennessee and six other states that don't tax wages but do charge a state sales tax. Tennessee has the nation's highest average sales-tax rate, at 9.43 percent, according to the Tax Foundation. The sales-tax deduction saved Tennessee taxpayers \$1.1 billion in 2009, the latest year IRS data is available.

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The city of Murfreesboro closes a \$103 million loan, the largest in TMBF history.



The Town of Cumberland Gap closed a \$5,000 Highway Safety Grant Anticipation Note.

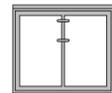


Feb. 2-5: Townsend Winter Heritage Festival
 A celebration of the history, natural beauty, and cultural traditions of Townsend, Cades Cove, and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park with hikes, tours, heritage music, storytelling, workshops, exhibits and presentations. Free admission. For more information, call 865-448-6134 or visit www.smoky-mountains.org/winter-heritage.html

Feb. 17-19: Knoxville Dogwood Arts House and Garden Show

Held at Knoxville Convention Center, 701 Henley Street. More than 200 commercial exhibits featuring home and garden products, visit with indoor/outdoor design professionals. See 10,000 square feet of landscapes constructed by the region's top designers, artists will create artwork on the show room floor. For more information, visit www.dogwoodhouseandgarden.com.

COMING UP

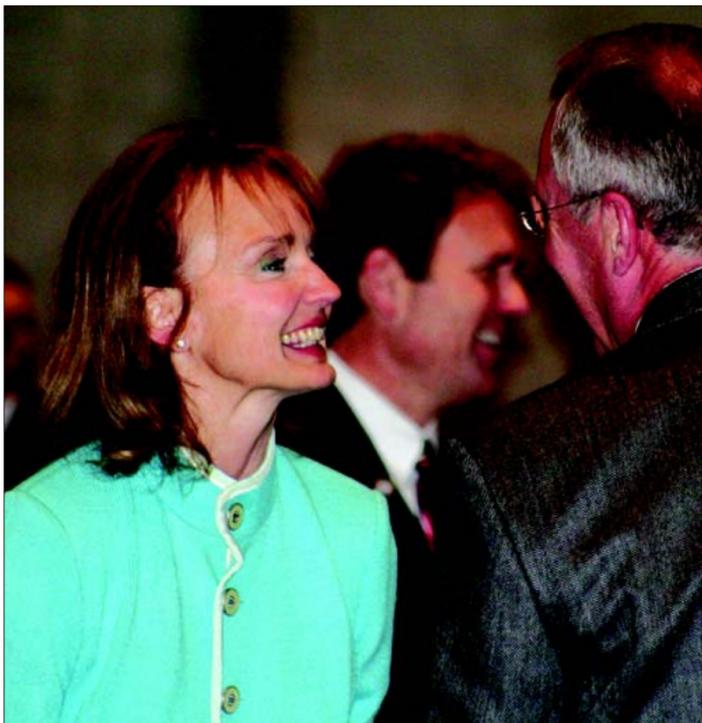


Feb. 21-22: Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence Conference held at the Franklin Marriott Cool Springs, 700 Cool Springs Boulevard from 8 am to 5 pm on both days. More than 300 leaders from Tennessee and the Southeast are expected to attend the two-day event presented by TNCPPE, the state's premier Baldrige-based performance improvement organization. For more information on the conference and banquet, or to register, visit www.tncpe.org/Excellence2012.

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The 107th Tennessee General Assembly reconvenes



House Speaker Beth Harwell



Lt. Gov. Ron Ramsey and Special Assistant Jordan Young



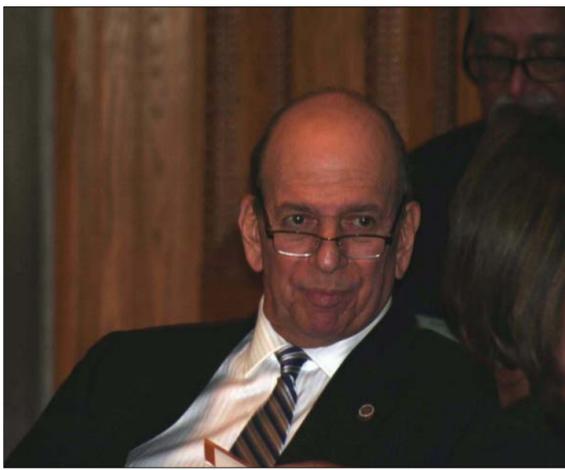
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Rep. Phillip Johnson and Rep. Bill Dunn



Rep. Vince Dean



Speaker Emeritus Jimmy Naifeh



Sen. Randy McNally



Sen. Joe Haynes



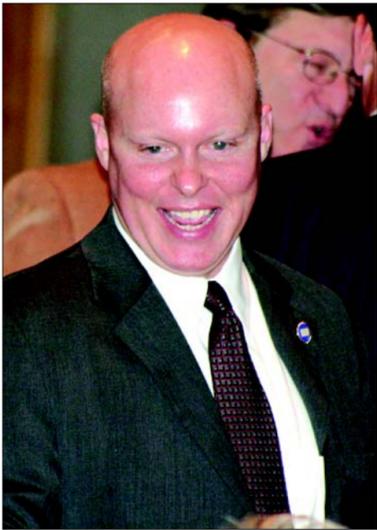
Sen. Roy Herron



Rep. Brenda Gilmore

**Photos By
Victoria South**

New year, new issues as 107th General Assembly reconvenes



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Rep. Debra Maggart



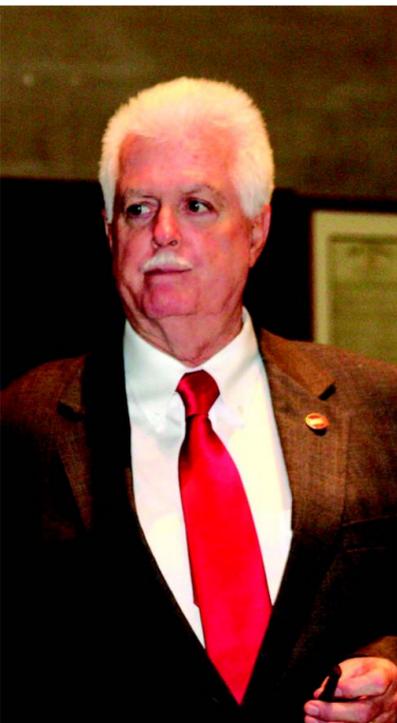
Sen. Bo Watson



Rep. Gerald McCormick



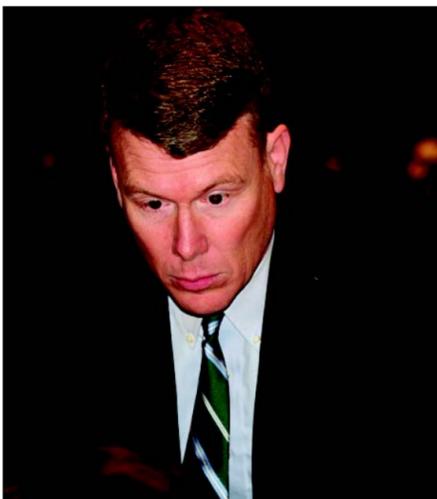
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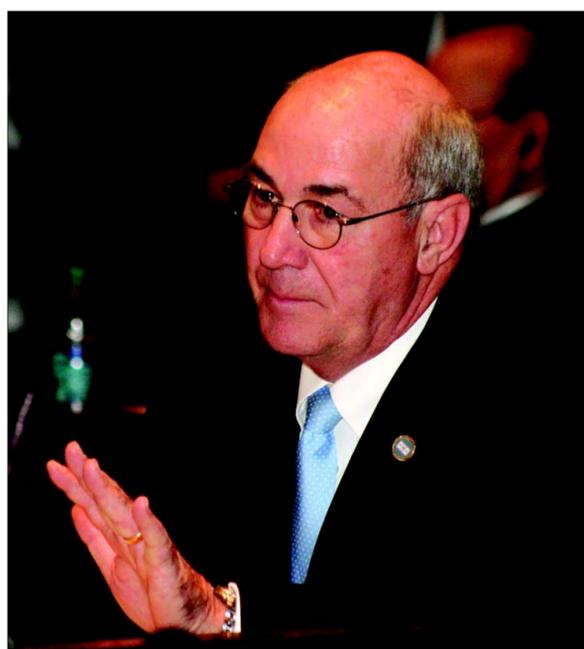
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Photos By Victoria South

Tennessee's cities: forging toward economic vibrancy

BRISTOL from Page 1

creates an opportunity for Bristol, which straddles the border with Bristol, VA, to promote more retail and tourism-related businesses, reversing a long standing trend; a lack of development fostered by the two cities' differing tax structures.

Widely recognized as the home of the legendary Bristol Motor Speedway (BMS), which draws nearly 200,000 tourists two weekends a year, Bristol is not as widely renowned as the birthplace of country music, a title bestowed upon the city in 1998 by the United States Congress. As the place where the fledgling recording industry first captured the raw mountain music of the region, dubbed the "Bristol Sessions" of 1920, it is a distinction city leaders would like to capitalize upon with the proposed cultural heritage center. A former downtown auto dealership is being redesigned to house the project, projected to open in 2014. A longstanding relationship between BCMA and the Smithsonian Institute will make the center eligible for technical support and participation with the Smithsonian's traveling exhibits.

"This is the first time the city has developed a strategic plan that specifically details how to create numerous partnerships throughout the city to help ensure the community's economic viability," Broughton said when city leaders unveiled the plan to the general public.

TT&C: The city has emphasized, even in times of economic uncertainty, no cuts to staff or city services. Why is this so important?



An artist rendering depicts the completed Cultural Heritage Center in downtown Bristol.

tant?

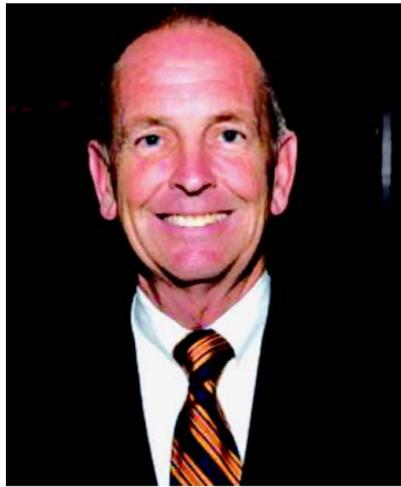
JB: That's what we're here for. We have a sole purpose, to provide municipal services. On top of that, to improve the quality of life with the resources we have. It's our fundamental reason for being and with the size of our staff and resources, we weren't in a position to reduce our staff because it would in turn, reduce services. We operate with minimal levels in all areas and put a lot of work on people to get a high level of work done. Scaling back wasn't an option, as it would result in a delineation of services, something we didn't want to happen and don't think our community would have appreciated.

TT&C: What do you consider as the strongest tourism-related project in this plan and why?

JB: Probably the single most important project is the construction of the cultural heritage center downtown. We need something that will place us on a growth trend and differentiate ourselves so our economy won't rise and fall like the general economy. Hospitality and tourism is probably one of the key areas where we can brand ourselves in a way that's very different than the rest of the region and the state. Capitalizing on our country music heritage, the birthplace of country music, is a really important differentiator for us, right along with BMS.

TT&C: Is the financing for the heritage center, which was partially achieved through grant funds from the Virginia Tobacco Commission, nearly complete?

JB: The funding effort is very close to being 100 percent realized. The single most sought after piece is the New Market tax credit, which will infuse the project with up to \$2.5 million, and will throw the project over the top as far as its capitol needs. There's a great chance that will happen and then there's also some less significant dollar efforts underway, but I think it's fair to say we are about 10 percent away from our target goal to move the



Jeff Broughton

project from plans to construction.

TT&C: How were the target growth areas for the new economic development plan determined?

JB: We did everything in house. Part of the philosophy to maximize your resources is don't spend where you don't have to. We decided we had the resources internally through our community partners where we wouldn't have to bring a consultant on board, particularly a paid one. We pulled this project off with very little cost. It would have been a six figure project if we had hired someone.

TT&C: What was the criteria to be on the planning committee and how were the community partnerships selected?

JB: What we didn't want was any governmental types on the committee. The city asked the community to tell us what they saw and how they thought we could grow. That was the fundamental element of this whole project. The 10 members of the steering committee are all successful business people that have been in town for a long time and have a knowledge base and experience because of their various backgrounds. It's a group that we were hoping to learn from and let them lend their insights to help drive a development plan and validate the areas of growth that we all intuitively thought were the areas to focus on. We needed to validate that in a way that hadn't been done before in our community. We also have other natural partners outside the process, Sullivan County, the state of Tennessee, the TN Valley Authority, but except for a slight few, we are pulling from our private sector and our non-profits to help drive our economy and help accomplish success in our growth areas.

TT&C: What will the new Border Region Retail Tourism Development District Act actually mean for border cities such as Bristol?

JB: This new legislation, signed into law for the first time, identifies and allocates state sales tax to communities like Bristol that have to compete on the border with neighboring states. The legislation's pretty broad. It allows for major retailer tourism projects to be eligible to receive an allocation of state sales tax. In terms of Bristol, being able to move forward under that authority, will bring new tax revenues to the state that are now in Virginia because of the tax differential. That is our problem. Our retail base is so small because right across the street is a venue with a much lower sales tax rate. That's the grand slam and we believe the genesis for a lot of retail activity in Tennessee, which means tax revenues for

us and the state.

TT&C: One of your key partners is King College. How would you rate the local education system in preparing Bristol's future workforce for jobs in the area? Do you ever envision a project as large as Kingsport's downtown regional education center?

JB: We're trying to create jobs and to grow our tax base to the extent that we can find an opportunity for students who either grow up or go to school here to stay in the area. One of our key partners is not only King college, but our school system, so we can better prepare our students to be workforce ready. King College is a major player in our community and we hope to partner with them to establish a new school for performing and visual arts downtown. I have no doubt we will have a higher education center in downtown Bristol, not like the city of Kingsport's, but similar in the sense that college courses will be taught downtown.

TT&C: Another partner, Wellmont-Bristol Regional Medical Center, also plans to partner with King College to help provide educational opportunities and facilitate expansion of the health-care related industry. So healthcare is targeted as a growing industry in Bristol?

JB: There are actually a number of objectives with the college that are a little unusual but it's because they have melded nicely with a number of interests that we have. Our largest employer is the regional medical center, they're about 1,600 employees right now, so healthcare is growing. We have a number of initiatives in the plan in ways we can facilitate their growth, which is our growth. What was so great about this process is we had experts talk about their particular area of expertise, which brought new insights to the steering committee and staff, helping us identify some areas that traditionally we wouldn't have. By going back to each partner and saying here's what we think makes sense, we had to buy into the support of that entity.

TT&C: Often times, executives decide to locate industry to a city based upon the vibrancy of its downtown area. What ordinances or projects has the city initiated to facilitate this sense of downtown vibrancy?

JB: Our downtown area is very vibrant and its continuing to build upon its own momentum. We focused a lot of our discretionary capital money to enhance the image and look of our downtown. We have already gone in over the years with streetscape improvements and



things that have made downtown a much more attractive and viable place. We have established fairly simple design guidelines for new construction as well, so that no one will put in a building that is completely out of character, and the private sector has followed. Private investment is the key to building momentum. If a private investor sees opportunity and as they're successful —others follow.

TT&C: What types of infrastructure and businesses are needed to support tourism in Bristol?

JB: One of the biggest challenges is drawing hotels. Part of the plan is placing a boutique hotel downtown. On our side of town, the number of rooms we have are modest, Virginia a little better because of the interstate. We have a lot of bus tours that already go through town. We are trying to attract hotels at the Interstate exit for those types of motor coach stops, which will drive more people toward our hospitality and tourism activities and the cultural heritage center. We already have a lot of people who like to visit because of the natural areas, hiking, mountain streams, skiing, what we don't have is the business infrastructure to support them when they come.

Nich manufacturing has always been an important part of our community. We've validated healthcare, hospitality and tourism and now we've got focus on growing that part of our economy. We've got our marching orders, now it's just a matter of execution.

Bristol's economic plan is set for review with the city council and the steering committee after the first six months and then annually for the following two years.

Citizen support crucial to public-private partnerships

BY JOSH JONES
MTAS Legal Consultant

Public-private partnerships can be valuable tools in local government economic development strategies. Essentially, a public-private partnership is nothing more than an agreement between a governmental agency and a private entity to perform services for the use of the general public. In practice, however, the relationship can be much more complicated.

The primary conflict in a partnership is the diametrically-opposed nature of the two entities. A local government exists to provide services to its constituents and is limited in its expenditure of public funds. The private business partner, however, exists to generate wealth for its stockholders. Inherently, difficulties arise in attempting to coalesce these dual natures and reach a common goal.

A common issue with public-private partnerships is the private entity's lack of duty to the community. When a citizen has concerns about a public service, he can take it up with an elected official who, in theory, is incentivized to respond. When lodging a complaint with a private entity, however, it is unlikely that the company representative

feels the same duty.

This is why citizen support is so crucial to a successful public-private partnership. If the community believes, rightly or wrongly, that the underlying reason for the partnership is private profit, it will leave a stain on the entire endeavor. On the other hand, if the community believes the partnership is truly for their benefit, all will prosper. The private entity will incur revenue, the public will benefit from the service and possibly the savings, and the governmental entity can focus its limited resources on other areas.

Any successful partnership is based on a sound agreement preceded by adequate research, planning and analysis. Such preparation must take into account short and long-term projections. The diversity of public partnerships is staggering and, as such, so are the forms of arrangement. And while no one stands out as the ideal, successful agreements are well-researched and comprehensive, addressing risk assumption, revenue distribution, current and future ownership, performance measurements and on and on.

Reviewing the new Bristol partnership plan, it appears that many of these have been considered, thus paving the way for a myriad of successes.

Bristol's plan for Strategic Economic Growth and Sustainability

The projects within the 14 partnerships comprising Bristol's *Strategic Partnerships for Economic Growth and Sustainability* plan are diverse. The plan's partners include: Believe in Bristol; Birthplace of Country Music Alliance; Bristol Motor Speedway; Bristol TN School District; Bristol TN Essential Services; Bristol Chamber of Commerce; Bristol Convention and Visitors Bureau; Bristol TN Housing and Redevelopment Authority; Bristol Industrial Development Board; King College; Networks Sullivan Partnership; Paramount Center for the Arts; Private Developers and Wellmont Health System/Bristol Regional Medical Center. Samples of the plan's objectives include:

- A downtown business recruitment plan with the non-profit group **Believe in Bristol** to help identify and define the optimal type and mix of downtown busi-

nesses and enhance tourism-related activities;

- Develop a new zoning district for use around the **Bristol Motor Speedway (BMS)** to encourage tourism-related development and extensively market BMS;
- Initiate more STEM opportunities and programs through **Bristol City Schools** along with science/technology classes through **Oak Ridge National Laboratory**;
- Initiate Phase II expansion of the Bristol Business Park through **Bristol Tennessee Essential Services**;
- Complete a rail feasibility study from Bristol to Chattanooga through the **Bristol Chamber of Commerce** in cooperation with the Tennessee Department of Transportation;
- Identify opportunities to expand motor coach tours to the city while upgrading and implementing a digital communication strategy featuring real-time availability through the **Bristol Convention and Visitor's Bureau**;

- Establish a Manufacturer's Business Council through the **Industrial Development Board**;
- Monitor air quality standards and pursue regulatory relief to maintain local compliance through **Networks Sullivan Partnership**;
- Maximize the use of the city's **Paramount Theater** as a major downtown cultural attraction through **Paramount Center for the Arts**.

To view the plan in its entirety, please visit the city's website www.bristoltn.org, click the Organization link, and then Economic Development.

RESOURCES

The 6th annual Tennessee Basic Economic Development Course will be held April 30 through May 3, 2012, in Nashville at the downtown Homewood Suites by Hilton. This three and a half-day course is sponsored by the

University of Tennessee Center for Industrial Services and is accredited by the International Economic Development Council and the American Planning Association.

Attendees will learn best practices in economic and community development, new methods and programs to promote job growth and investment, emerging trends and factors that shape local and regional economics and develop a network of economic development professionals. Course topics included: trends in economic development; marketing and business attraction; business retention and expansion; workforce development and strategic planning. Participants can register at www.ips.tennessee.edu/tbedc.

For additional information, contact Dr. Andre Temple, TBEDC course director, at andre.temple@tennessee.edu or phone 731-425-4740.