

## Why Cities Matter



No one likes paying taxes, but everyone depends on their city to deliver the basic quality of life services such as fire and police protection, clean water, garbage pickup, and neighborhood parks.

But beyond public safety and meeting basic infrastructure needs, cities serve as the centers for job creation and are engines of economic growth in the state. Cities are the heart of a community. Most Americans either reside or work in cities, and the policies, programs, and services of those places touch people's lives directly. Whether cities succeed or fail significantly impact the state's and the nation's economic recovery and long-term prosperity.

## 108th Tennessee General Assembly resumes work

*Legislature to tackle several key issues during 2014 session*

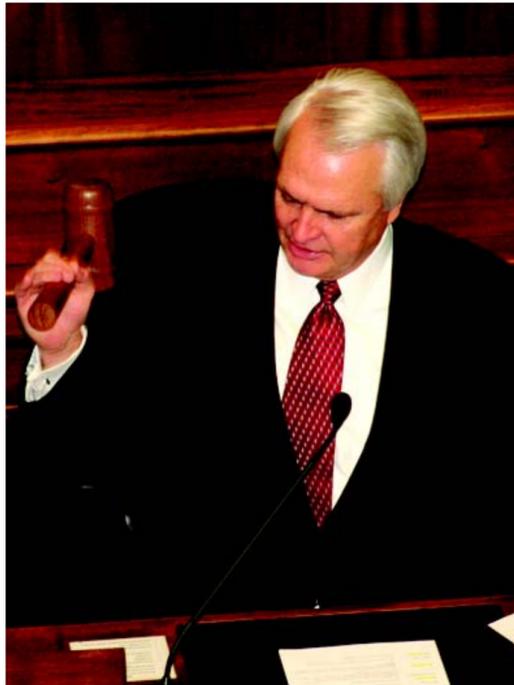
BY CAROLE GRAVES  
TML Communications Director

The final session of the 108th Tennessee General Assembly is officially underway. Over the next several months, lawmakers will take up a multitude of issues, including wine sales in grocery stores, a school voucher program backed by the Governor, and possible changes to the states' current meth laws that would make pseudoephedrine products sold by prescription only.

But perhaps one of the biggest issues facing Gov. Bill Haslam and state legislators is whether to expand TennCare, the state's Medicaid program, while at the same time balancing a \$30 billion budget amid sluggish revenue collections. The most recent revenue reports show year-to-date collections are \$171.1 million less than the budgeted estimate.

Democrats, who are in the minority in both chambers, have said that they will push to expand TennCare, as well as support a state's minimum wage over and above the federal minimum of \$7.25 an hour.

Issues of importance to local governments, includes legislation relating to Public Chapter 1101 and an imposed moratorium on



Lt. Gov Ron Ramsey



House Speaker Beth Harwell

annexation by ordinance of any land used primarily for residential or agricultural purposes.

The Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, who was required by legislation enacted last year to study the issue, approved its final report in December. TACIR voted unanimously to recommend to the General Assembly that the current moratorium be extended until a new law is enacted and to give more time to fully analyze a number of issues identified during its review of the

current law.

### Changes in the Business Tax

The Tennessee Department of Revenue introduced legislation last year that changes the filing dates for business taxes. The change is being made at the request of tax practitioners to simplify filings for businesses and practitioners. Previously, the filing date was determined by the taxpayer's class. Under the new procedure, effective Jan. 1, 2014, all businesses file business tax returns on or before the 15th day of the fourth month after its fiscal year

ends. The tax rate remains unaffected and an individual business' rate is still determined by its class. Similarly, the licensing and communication with the state through the portal remains unchanged -- the only difference is the date on which the current processes occur.

The 2014 legislation session is believed to be another fast, short session. All 99 House members and 17 of the 33 Senate seats are up for re-election. With an eye on April, lawmakers are eager to get in and get out quickly to allow time to campaign.

## Feds to exempt volunteer firefighters from Obamacare

BY CHRIS KARDISH  
Governing Magazine

Federal regulators have announced they'll soon issue final rules on the so-called employer mandate of President Barack Obama's health care law to exempt volunteer firefighters and emergency personnel, alleviating a key concern for thousands of cities and counties across the country that rely on volunteer personnel.

The problem was a clash between tax policy and the provision of the health-care overhaul that requires employers with more than 50 workers to provide health insurance, though that part of the law was delayed until 2015. The Internal Revenue Service has traditionally counted volunteer firefighters as employees for tax purposes because they often receive small stipends or other benefits to offset out-of-pocket costs. Fire lobbying groups asked the IRS and the Treasury Department in December to consider exempting volunteer fire and emergency personnel from the rule, arguing most volunteers have full-time work elsewhere and existing access to health coverage. The National Volunteer Fire Council argued requiring departments and the private nonprofits who run fire service in some places to pay for health care

could mean reduced hours, scheduling constraints, closures in a worst-case scenario and other hindrances to public safety.

While they waited for federal regulators to act, they also pressed Congress, which now has two separate bills with wide bipartisan support in both chambers. Those bills would essentially accomplish the exemption that the Treasury Department just announced, said Dave Finger, the Volunteer Fire Council's director of government relations.

"Basically what they did is take the language in the bill that was introduced and said, 'We're going to do this administratively,' which is what we asked them to do back in December," he said. "We feel pretty strongly that they're going to issue the final rule and it will look right, and this issue has basically been addressed."

Volunteers account for nearly 70 percent of the 1,129,250 total firefighters in the U.S., according to the Volunteer Fire Council. About 26,000 of the 30,000 total departments are either all or mostly volunteer-based. Some fire departments are part of a municipal or county government, but many are private nonprofits.

Treasury and the IRS reviewed the tax code and labor laws applying See **FIREFIGHTER** on Page 4

## Court clerk entitled to fees in delinquent tax lawsuits

BY MELISSA ASHBURN  
MTAS Legal Consultant

Whether relying on the county trustee to collect delinquent property taxes or pursuing tax collection without the county, cities are plaintiffs in delinquent tax suits in which properties are sold under court order to satisfy tax liens.

In a recent opinion, the Tennessee Attorney General explains the fees which court clerks may claim in such lawsuits. Delinquent tax suits are typically filed in chancery court, in which the court clerk has the title "Clerk & Master." The Attorney General reviewed state law, specifically the provisions of T.C.A. §§ 8-

21-401 and 67-5-2421, and opined the Clerk & Master is entitled to the following fees and commission:

1. Filing fee of \$44 for each parcel included in the suit;
2. Fee of \$100 for each parcel ordered sold by the court; and
3. Commission of 5 percent of all property taxes received by the clerk and paid over to the taxing authority, including penalties and interest.

The Clerk & Master is not entitled to receive 5 percent of all amounts paid into court, only 5 percent of the delinquent taxes received in the suit and paid to the city. Funds received to pay liens other than tax liens are not subject to this 5 percent

fee. The Attorney General explains: "The commission applies to the amount of property taxes actually received and paid over and not to the total sale proceeds in cases where the sale price exceeds the taxpayer's obligation to pay taxes, court costs, and attorney's fees." Tenn. Op. Att'y Gen. No. 13-96 (Nov. 27, 2013).

If the city does not bid in the amount of taxes owed at the tax sale and a parcel of property remains unsold, the clerk may only claim the \$44 filing fee and the \$100 fee for conducting the sale for that parcel. The clerk is always entitled to reimbursement for expenses incurred in the suit, such as title examination fees, survey fees and other costs.

## Knoxville declares war on homelessness

BY VICTORIA SOUTH  
TML Communications Coordinator

Some spy the weathered face and tattered blanket and drop change in the paper cup. Others pick up their pace with averted eyes. People's reactions to homelessness are as varied as the situation itself. But, a new plan to address homelessness in Knoxville seeks to create unity among the city's public/private agencies and stakeholders.

Heavy on collaboration and accountability, the 30-page plan, in its 45-day public review period, will be managed through the city's Office on Homelessness, with detailed goals and strategies calling upon all members of the community to be accountable to one another, as the city takes action to end, and possibly prevent homelessness.

Headed by project manager Michael Dunthorn, the office, under city council oversight, will issue quarterly and annual reports to neighborhood, business and civic organizations and generate more participation with the city's faith-based communities.

The collaborative effort will also strive to prevent duplication of services across the city.

"This plan is not about what city government is going to do. It's about what all of us in the community are going to do," said Knoxville Mayor Madeline Rogero.



The city of Knoxville has unveiled a new action plan to address homelessness that is centered on accountability and collaboration among the city's public/private agencies and stakeholders dealing with area homelessness. The plan, in its 45-day public review period, will be discussed in both a public meeting and city council workshop next month before a vote is taken by the city council for adoption. Unlike the city's former Ten Year Plan to Address Chronic Homelessness, the plan addresses a wider spectrum of the homeless population, including families and military veterans.

Dunthorn estimates private agencies spend a combined \$25 million to serve Knoxville's homeless, according to Internal Revenue Service information from the agencies.

Both the mayor and Dunthorn have said the majority of the effort's cost is heavily dependent on private donations to local service agencies.

See **KNOX PLAN** on Page 3



## TML Legislative Conference March 17 -18 in Nashville

Make plans now to attend the Tennessee Municipal League's Annual Legislative Conference, slated for March 17 - 18 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 being addressed by the 108th 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 TML Legislative Conference is a key opportunity to communicate that message.

To register on line, go to [www.TML1.org](http://www.TML1.org). Contact the TML offices at 615-255- 6416 for more information. Deadline for hotel registration is Feb. 19. To reserve a room and to receive the group rate of \$129, contact the DoubleTree at (800) 222-8733.



**BRISTOL**

A new hotel called “The Sessions” will be coming in spring 2015. It’s a \$19 million project that will create 60-70 full-time jobs. The hotel will be located on the corner of State Street, Commonwealth Avenue, and Goode Street.

**CHATTANOOGA**

The city’s credit rating for its existing general obligation bonds was upgraded from a AA+ credit rating to AAA, the highest possible rating assigned to bonds. The Standard & Poor’s Ratings Services upgraded the Scenic City’s credit rating, which means the city will get lower interest rates on their loans. In addition, Standard & Poor’s raised its long-term rating on Chattanooga’s appropriation debt from AA to a AA+ credit rate. In their summary, Standard & Poor’s cited Chattanooga’s strong economy and that the fiscal 2014 budget is balanced.

**CLINTON**

One of Anderson County’s biggest industries is about to expand again with a \$53.8 million investment in more machinery for making auto parts at its Clinton/Interstate 75 Industrial Park facility. Aisin Automotive Casting Tennessee Inc.’s plans will include 81 new jobs over the next two years along with some 25 positions added last year. Aisin now has 595 employees in its sprawling, 524,000-square-foot facility, where water pumps, oil pumps and pistons are made for installation in autos produced by the company’s customers throughout North America, including General Motors, Nissan and Toyota.

**DICKSON**

Zinc Oxide, LLC, a new zinc oxide manufacturer based in Houston, Texas, will open a new 150,000-square-foot facility at the former Wabash Alloys building bringing 55 new jobs. Zinc oxide grades will be produced designed for rubber, tire, chemical, pharmaceutical, cosmetic, oil additives, ceramics, electronics, glass, plastics, latex, paint and coatings, tape and adhesives, fertilizer markets and more.

**DUNLAP**

A locally owned steel fabricating plant is poised to move to a new building and potentially double its workforce. As an incentive, Benton Steel Fabricating Company will receive a 10-year break on city and Sequatchie County property taxes in its new 40,000-square-foot facility. The company specializes in components for industrial equipment and cabinets and racks for electrical backup power products.

**FRANKLIN**

Rating agencies Standard & Poor’s and Moody’s have affirmed the city’s triple-A bond rating. Standard and Poor’s noted the city’s very strong economy and budget flexibility along with budgetary performance, as well as strong management and institutional framework. Moody’s Investors Service said the triple-A rating reflects the city’s strong financial position marked by solid reserve levels, stable and affluent tax base and manageable debt profile. The triple-A rating is the top rating possible and holding this rating from two rating agencies places Franklin in the top ranks of cities across the country. Financial ratings are an indicator of both the organization’s financial well-being and the community’s economic health. Having this top rating allows the city to receive the most favorable interest rates when borrowing money for projects or refinancing existing debt to save money.

**FRANKLIN**

Noranda Aluminum Holding plans to cut up to 190 employees and contract workers, as part of a three-year, \$225 million cost-cutting plan. About 75 people in the company’s primary aluminum business will lose their jobs while up to 40 employees each will go from its alumina, bauxite and flat-rolled products businesses. Another 10 workers will be laid off from the company’s headquarters in Cool Springs. The cuts amount to more than 7 percent of Noranda’s workforce, which totals roughly 2,500. They are expected to generate annual savings of about \$15 million and account for a fifth of the \$225 million Noranda President and CEO Kip Smith and his team

plan to save by the end of 2016.

**GALLATIN**

Construction on the first of three Gallatin sidewalk projects has begun, which officials say will help improve pedestrian safety in some of the city’s most heavily traveled areas. The new sidewalks, funded through \$50,000 in this year’s budget, will be installed along Albert Gallatin Avenue from the Civic Center to East Broadway, Maple Street from Nashville Pike to Tulip Poplar Drive, and Smith Street from South Water Avenue to Foster Avenue. The projects will total more than a half-mile of new sidewalk infrastructure once complete. In May, Mayor Jo Ann Graves organized a group, which included City Engineer Nick Tuttle, Public Works Superintendent Ronnie Stiles and representatives from the codes and planning department, among others, to focus on where new sidewalks should be added, such as schools, hospitals, shopping centers and other high pedestrian traffic areas. Once complete, the longest of the three planned projects will allow pedestrians to walk from North Water Avenue to East Broadway.

**GERMANTOWN**

For the second consecutive year, the city has earned the Achievement Award in the annual Excellence in Tennessee recognition program administered by the Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence (TNCPE). TNCPE is the only statewide quality program and is patterned on the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program, the national standard for recognizing organizational excellence. Germantown will accept the award at the 21st annual Excellence in Tennessee Awards Banquet on Feb. 19.

**HARRIMAN**

ArcelorMittal, one of the world’s biggest steel and mining companies, will reopen its facility which closed in 2011, due to poor market conditions. The steel manufacturer expects to resume production by April hiring 61 new employees over the next two years. The company will ship billets from its sister facility in LaPlace, La., to the Harriman facility where they will be reheated and rolled into light structural shapes and merchant bars for the construction market.

**KINGSPORT**

The city plans to spend \$15 million to update its raw water intake system, which dates back to the 1920’s. The system is how the city gets roughly 15 million gallons of water a day from the Holston River. Water flows from the river into a giant pipe and is then pumped over the cliff to the nearby water treatment plant. The equipment is pushing 35 to 40 years old and needs to be upgraded, modernized and replaced along with the foundational piece that delivers the water consistently. Improvements were last made in the 1940s and 1970s. An eight-foot-wide flooded tunnel will be drilled underneath the river level, to the water plant. Four caisson holes will be drilled at the water plant, tapping into the tunnel and then the water will be pumped into the facility for treatment. The city anticipates project work starting in the fall with construction taking up to 18 months to complete.

**MEMPHIS**

A little more than two years after breaking ground on its 750,000-square foot, \$266 million Memphis manufacturing facility, Electrolux held a grand opening unveiling the finished plant where it will manufacture wall ovens, drop in/slide-in ranges and freestanding ranges. While the company received city, county and state benefits, it also invested more than \$100 million in the project, 76 percent of which was used with local contractors, and 30 percent that was invested with women-owned and minority-owned businesses

**MILAN**

Esterline Defense Technologies will close in June eliminating 103 jobs. The Milan chamber said operations for the company, which makes flares, will consolidate with operations in Camden, Ark.

**NASHVILLE**

The city’s new crime lab is predicted to create a safer community by help-

ing remove criminals from the streets in record time. For years, Nashville has sent DNA evidence to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation’s overburdened crime lab for analysis. TBI serves 95 counties. While that DNA evidence sent to the TBI is typically processed in four to five months, leaders say they now have the ability to process that same evidence in just 30 days. In addition, Metro-Nashville will test its own ballistics, test-fire weapons and will have a better ability to process the 100 sets of fingerprints collected every day. DNA evidence on small-time crimes like auto thefts and burglaries will now be checked for DNA links to burglars and armed robbers and those suspected of more violent crimes. The fingerprint database will also allow police to hook up newly arrested people with old, unsolved crimes.

**NEWPORT**

Nashville-based Popcorn Sutton Distilling LLC has announced plans for a new craft distillery on Highway 25 that will create 36 new jobs over the next five years. Tennessee whiskey legend Marvin “Popcorn” Sutton, who died in 2009, was a third-generation moonshiner who lived and distilled his white whiskey in Cocke County. Building the new 46,000-square-foot facility represents a homecoming for Popcorn Sutton’s Tennessee White Whiskey and Sutton’s family. The distilling company, founded by Sutton’s apprentice Jamey Grosser, is expected to open early this year and be one of the largest craft distilleries in the country.

**OAK RIDGE**

A dedication and ribbon-cutting ceremony was held for the city’s first dog park located in West Oak Ridge. The new PetSafe Dog Park at Big Turtle Park was built with a \$100,000 donation through Knoxville-based Radio Systems Corp., a manufacturer of pet products and maker of the PetSafe brand. The new park includes separate fenced areas for small dogs and large dogs, benches, water fountains and shaded areas.

**SELMER**

General Electric announced the acquisition of a 120,000-square-foot facility that will be used for warehouse space for Monogram Refrigeration. The company introduced the first new GE Monogram brand refrigerator product platform since 2001. The announcement is part of a \$20 million investment. Monogram Refrigeration produces between 10,000 and 11,000 units each year. The new facility will replace the company’s 40,000 square-foot warehouse and current employees will man the current facility.

**SIGNAL MOUNTAIN**

The city tops the list of the top 10 places in Tennessee to live, according to Movoto Real Estate, which ranked cities with at least 5,000 residents. With a population of just more than 7,700, the community is one of the three smallest places on the list; but is lauded for its low crime rate—just 708 per 100,000 residents and came in at the top of its class in education, with a high school diploma attainment rate of 96 percent. While having some of the highest rent in Tennessee, an average price of \$1,240 per month, the designation indicates that people are willing to pay top dollar to live in this great location, *Movoto* said. Also, just three percent of the population are unemployed. Coming in second place is Brentwood, Bartlett as number three, then Germantown, Farragut, Lakeland, Nolensville, Spring Hill, Oakland, and Collierville. For the complete list, visit *Movoto.com*.

**TRI-CITIES**

Mountain States Health Alliance, one of the Tri-Cities’ largest employers, announced plans to eliminate 161 occupied and vacant positions, pointing to decreasing revenues attributed to recent federal health care reform efforts. Citing significant reimbursement cuts and volume declines, Mountain States officials announced the organization is implementing a series of new initiatives that will include reduction of some fixed overhead costs and an evaluation of costs in non-patient-care areas. Direct patient care areas will not be part of this cost reduction initiative. It is expected that 116 currently filled positions out of approximately 9,000 positions will be directly affected, and another 45 currently vacant positions will be eliminated.

**LaVergne purchases fire department, names chief**



One of two remaining privately held fire companies in the state, La Vergne’s Board of Mayor and Aldermen approved the purchase of the city’s privately owned and contracted Fire Department on Dec. 17. Pictured are: New Fire Chief Rick McCormick, City Administrator Bruce Richardson, Mayor Senna Mosley, Chief James Gafford, and Assistant Fire Chief Robert Kimbrough.

La Vergne’s Board of Mayor and Aldermen approved the purchase of the city’s privately owned and contracted LaVergne Fire Department, Inc. on Dec. 17. The city was only one of two in the state with privately held fire companies, leaving only Rural-Metro Fire Department in Heiskell, just outside Knoxville.

The total purchase price of \$4 million will be paid in two installments, and includes Fire Station numbers 1,2, and 3; vacant land on Old Nashville Highway for a new station; two ladder trucks; a tower truck and a pump truck; a fire engine and a rescue vehicle.

The purchase terminates a 10-year contract signed in 2010 between the city and the fire department increasing the amount paid to the privately held company every year by approximately \$400,000.

“Although we are paying what seems to be significant funds up front, we anticipate that we will save millions of dollars over the next several years,” said City Administrator Bruce Richardson. “We will be able to control costs better and be in a position to hire more firefighters to provide better service to our citizens.”

Mayor Senna Mosley said the number of firefighters supporting the city will be one of the key factors in determining the ISO rating, “We

have strived to bring retail to La Vergne. Hiring more firefighters and upgrading our infrastructure by replacing the two-inch water lines will put us well on the way to lowering our ISO rating. The lower the rating, the less homeowners and businesses should pay for insurance premiums. This also means we will be more attractive to commercial development.”

All fire personnel are being offered full-time positions with the city and resignations are expected to be minimal. The city will hire additional firefighters within the next year in order to change to a three-shift operation of 24 hours on, 48 hours off. Currently firefighters have a two-shift schedule consisting of 48 hours on, 48 hours off.

Rick McCormick was named as the new fire chief. He has served as the city’s Emergency Services coordinator for the past 12 years and was previously the city fire marshal. In addition, McCormick has been with the La Vergne Fire Department, Inc. for 27 years, including service as a firefighter, lieutenant, engineer, captain, and – most recently – assistant fire chief for the past eight years.

The La Vergne Fire Department, Inc. has been in operation since 1965 when it was founded by A.C. Wintermeyer and James Gafford.

**Murfreesboro CityTV wins national awards**



Murfreesboro CityTV received three national awards during the 28th annual Government Television Programming Awards presented by the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA). Pictured left to right are: Communications Specialist Marcus Delaney, Communications Director Alan Bozeman, Communications Specialist Michael Nevills, Communications Specialist John Padgett and Communications Specialist Steve Burris.

Murfreesboro’s Communications Department, home to Murfreesboro CityTV, received three national awards during the 28th annual Government Television Programming Awards presented by the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA).

The city’s television programming can be viewed on Comcast cable channel 3, AT&T’s U-Verse channel 99, YouTube, and the city website. The winners were announced during a gala event on Sept. 19 in Orlando. Murfreesboro CityTV brought home a second place award for “Excellence in Local Government Television Pro-

gramming” which was judged on the agency’s variety of programming quality throughout the year.

Honorable mentions were received for Mayor Bragg’s State of the City and a public service announcement about CityTV on YouTube.

For the 67 award categories, NATOA received more than 670 entries from local governments across the country and Canada.

A national trade association based in Alexandria, VA, NATOA represents local government jurisdictions and consortiums, including elected and appointed officials and staff, who oversee communications and cable television franchising.

**TML requests E-mail addresses**

The quickest way to keep city officials apprised of legislative happenings is through e-mail or fax. With so many recent municipal elections, please make sure TML has any changes to your city contact information. Send your updates to Mona Lawrence, by fax at 615-255-4752, by e-mail to [mlawrence@TML1.org](mailto:mlawrence@TML1.org), or call 615-255-6416.

# Knoxville declares war on homelessness

**KNOX PLAN** from Page 1  
 “We want to have a look at the entire picture, how everything fits together, so we’ll see where there are weaknesses or gaps. It will also help donors who contribute to the non-profits and churches; to help them realize where the needs are, so they can invest their philanthropic dollars wisely,” Rogero said.

The agencies reportedly served an average of 4,462 people per month in 2012, as recorded by the Knoxville Homeless Management System (KnoxHMIS) administered by the UT College of Social Work. “We don’t exist in a circumstance where all the money comes through one source,” said Dunthorn. “Much of the resources are provided from people in this situation comes from private donors and federal resources.”

Former strategies to move Knoxville’s chronically homeless people off the streets into permanent housing, the city’s Ten Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness, was suspended in 2011 by former Mayor Daniel Brown and Knox County Mayor Tim Burchett, after contentious debates broke out about the development of large scale permanent housing projects. But the older plan ultimately paved the way for

ment, the group plans to meet at least quarterly with executive decision makers at the table. We’re all accountable to one another and there’s a sense of coming together with peers and political leadership with the city to pursue the strategies we’ve agreed upon.”

**Housing**

“Every individual and family that we can prevent from going into homelessness, not only does that family not go through that awful experience, ultimately it’s going to save the community money,” said Rogero.

According to Knoxville’s plan, there are currently a very limited number of affordable housing units available in the community to serve the homeless population. One of the plan’s goals is to maintain the existing stock of affordable housing, while raising the quality standards of these buildings.

One strategy that will be implemented comes from IBM Smarter Cities, recommendations to increase energy efficiency in affordable housing.

“So much of the housing stock is older and the utility bills are outrageous,” said Dunthorn. “There are people who are homeless and a key

Flenniken have a 90 percent retention rate, according to Dunthorn.

“People who couldn’t succeed in a more traditional system were able to get into the housing and use their stability to address whatever their underlying issues were. Both developments were rehabilitated from dilapidated eyesores into nice developments and any fears people had about unruly behavior in the neighborhood as the result of the program has not come to fruition,” he said. “It’s about creating stable places for people to live and the buildings have become assets to the community.”

The city also plans to work with local landlord associations and affordable rental housing networks to communicate the benefits of receiving case-managed tenants, while lobbying THDA to increase the set-aside in the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program for permanent support housing.

“It’s a challenge now,” said Rogero. “A lot of the federal funding DOE housing has been cut back. The home dollars and CDGB dollars have been decreasing in recent years. There’s still dollars that the private sector can leverage with private development.”

The city is also looking at how to end homelessness altogether for its military veteran community.

“We’re looking at everything we can to prioritize the veteran population—those who have stepped up to do their duty and have taken care of us,” said Dunthorn.

**KARM**

*Give to a person once, you get appreciation, twice, anticipation, three times, expectation, four times, entitlement and five times, it leads to dependency—Robert Lupton author of Toxic Charity*

One of the primary strategies of Knoxville’s plan is to reach out to help those in need, while raising expectations that people will also make their own best efforts to help themselves. Some of the area agencies are already adhering to these guidelines. Currently sheltering 400 people a night, The Knoxville Area Rescue Ministries (KARM), provides emergency help for those in need, then provides workshops and other tools to help homeless individuals map out a life strategy, re-connecting with themselves and the community. The three-tiered program: Recovery, Crossroads and Launch Point, offers everything from job training to spiritual services.

“Through our Crossroads Welcome Center, we help anyone who is homeless, regardless of what contributed to it,” said Burt Rosen KARM CEO.

The ministry recently added a men’s transitional housing component and is currently revamping the men’s residential recovery, Abundant Life Kitchen and Clean Start programs.

“We are getting people entered into the KnoxHMIS system, gathering basic data assessment and trying to determine what their needs are and make a referral to the best possible source of help for that individual,” said Rosen. “Once we make that referral, we continue to monitor the process. Depending on what that person’s unique needs are, we may refer them to our own program or to



Women and women with children have continued to be one of the fastest rising segments of the homeless nationwide, and an increasing demographic seeking emergency aid at the Knoxville Area Rescue Ministries.

any other program in the city or in the state or even out of state, according to their level of addiction or other things in their history that may require more than we know we are able to provide in a year.”

The center’s Launch Point program is a 30-day classroom experience, where the transient population in need of long-term in-bed substance abuse recovery, attend classes during the day and workshops in the afternoon. The end result, according to Rosen, is time spent on an actionable plan supported by a mentor that focuses on housing, regaining a place in the community, spiritual services and all things that may have contributed to a person being disenfranchised and alienated. The person works out a plan that they would like to pursue for their future. The plan always

ing some of the other things that made them homeless to begin with is not going to work out well. People getting into housing are going to be back out on the streets before long because it wasn’t just a housing or a job issue. It’s addressing both the emotional and spiritual aspects of one’s life.”

A public meeting about Knoxville’s Homeless draft plan is scheduled for Feb. 11 and ends with a city council workshop Feb. 27, with a possible vote by the council to adopt the plan.

“We hope once we get a final document, it will be the blueprint for how we address homelessness in the city,” Rogero said. “It’s no quick fix. It doesn’t come with a billion dollar budget. And the report is not about all the new things the city’s going to do. It’s all about working



A graduating class of the Launchpoint program at the Knoxville Area Rescue Ministries, where individuals are preparing to move forward from homelessness with a life plan they designed themselves. KARM leaders are part of the Mayor’s Roundtable on Homelessness.

better reflection among the community at large to review concerns and suggestions of what to do about homelessness, then documented in a report, *Compassion Knoxville*.

The information from *Compassion Knoxville* helped lay the groundwork for the new plan along with continued networking with the Mayor’s Roundtable on Homelessness and the Knoxville-Knox County Homeless Coalition. The roundtable of local agency and ministry leaders and stakeholders formed by Rogero in 2013, actually sat down at the table with the mayor’s staff to help develop the plan’s initiatives, which are divided into five broad community goals .

- Provide leadership, collaboration and civic engagement;
- Improve the crises response system;
- Create and maintain access to a variety of decent, appropriate, affordable permanent housing;
- Increase economic opportunities; and
- Improve health and stability.

“The critical component is political will, and that comes in the form of Mayor Rogero,” Dunthorn said. “With the mayor’s involve-

barrier preventing them from getting housing is a back utility bill. We’re paying around six million a year in utility bills. The question is how to move dollars around to make the housing energy efficient.”

The city has spent about \$277,000 this fiscal year to support two large-scale permanent housing facilities for the chronically homeless, Minvilla Manor and Flenniken Landing, along with four high-rises for the elderly and disabled operated by Knoxville’s Community Development Corp. Both Minvilla and Flenniken offer case management services for residents.

“It’s been a very effective program. It’s much more efficient to keep somebody in housing then to serve them through emergency services and try to figure out how to get them back in a home,” said Rogero. “The housing projects work closely with people who want to get off the street but might have a chronic problem such as mental illness. They help the person get stabilized and take their medicines properly. We have excellent service providers in our city, but the demand is greater than the resources.”

The units at Minvilla and

### Three Types of Homelessness

National research on homelessness indicates there are three types of homelessness:

- **Episodic:** Having recurrent problems with housing. Often these individuals have seasonal/minimum wage income or sporadic domestic situations that affect stable housing.
- **Situational:** Facing some sort of housing, health care, financial, or job loss crisis. When homeless services are provided, these individuals usually are able to locate and obtain another stable housing situation.
- **Chronic:** A person who has a disabling condition and have been continuously homeless for a year or more or have had at least four episodes of homelessness in the last three years.

includes a housing goal, and almost always a reconnection to family and a location.

“Housing itself is extremely important,” said Rosen. “But getting a person into a house without address-

together more efficiently and try to apply resources to where they will make the biggest difference.”

To review the draft of Knoxville’s plan to address homelessness, visit the city’s website at [www.cityofknoxville.org](http://www.cityofknoxville.org)

# MEMBER FOCUSED

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## PEOPLE IN THE NEWS



State House Democratic Caucus Chairman **Mike Turner** has reversed course on previously announced plans to quit his leadership post and will remain Caucus Chair through the 2014 election.



Turner

**Holly M. Kirby** of Memphis has been appointed to the Tennessee Supreme Court. Kirby, 56, will succeed Janice M. Holder, who announced her retirement from the bench on June 28, upon expiration of her term. Kirby, a lifelong Tennessean, has served as a member of the Tennessee Court of Appeals, Western Section, since 1995. She was the first woman to serve on that court and has authored more than 1,000 opinions on appeals from trial courts across the state.



Kirby

After seven years as Kingsport's City Manager, **John Campbell** has announced his intent to retire effective July 2014. Campbell, who turns 65 in April, said he will become a grandfather for the first time in March, something that also played a role in his decision to retire. He has spent 33 years in city government positions.



Campbell

**George Dalton**, assistant director of loss control for the Tennessee Municipal League Risk Management Pool, recently received the Tennessee Public Risk Management Association's (TNPRIMA) highest honor, the Abbie Hudgens Distinguished Service Award, at the 2013 TNPRIMA Annual Conference in Nashville. Dalton currently serves as vice president - Middle for TNPrima.



Dalton

After seven years on the job, Austin Peay State University President **Tim Hall** announced he will be leaving for Mercy College in New York. During his tenure, the university has undergone much growth and has risen to national prominence. The Tennessee Board of Regents, the governing body of the state's universities, will form a search committee and a new president is expected to be named by July 1.



Hall

Shelby County Commissioner **Chris Thomas** is now the new city manager of Lakeland. Thomas, who replaces former City Manager Bob Wherry, represents District 4 on the county commission, and said he plans to serve until the end of his term in August 2014.

**Mike Williams** has been named as East Ridge's new fire chief. He replaces Public Safety Director Eddie Phillips, the city's former fire and police chief, who has retired. Williams has more than 26 years of firefighting experience with the city. He began his career in 1993 as driver/operator and has been shift commander since 1995. Williams is a three-time recipient of Firefighter of the Year.



Williams

**Ed Haley**, longtime Arlington town superintendent, is resigning at the end of the month to become the new city manager in Millington. He will begin his new duties Feb. 1. Haley, 75, has served as Arlington's day-to-day manager since 2000.

In a joint announcement, Chattanooga Police Chief **Bobby Dodd**, after 29 years on the force, retired Dec. 31, along with the bulk of his command staff: **Deputy Chief Tommy Kennedy**, **Assistant Chief Kirk Eidson** and **Capt. Jeannie Snyder**. A more than 35-year veteran, **Deputy Chief Stan Maffett**, is currently serving as interim chief. The Hamilton County Election Commission confirms Dodd picked up qualifying papers to run for Hamilton County Sheriff.

**Emma "Gene" Clement Peery**, 88 of Nashville, died Dec. 18. The longtime Dickson resident is the sister of Frank Goad Clement, former governor of Tennessee, and AnnaBelle Clement O'Brien, first female Tennessee senator.



Clement-Peery

Former Portland Mayor and City Council member **Robert "Bobby" Wilkinson**, passed away Dec. 28 at the age of 81. Wilkinson served as mayor from 1989 until 1997 and for eight years as a member of the city council. During his tenure as mayor, Wilkinson oversaw the completion of a drainage channel that helped relieve flooding in several parts of the city.



Wilkinson

Franklin Police Deputy Chief **Bruce Bateman** has retired after a 28-year career. In the late 60's Bateman played professional baseball with the New York Yankees and served in the United States Army and U.S. Army Reserve. Bateman also served four years as a Memphis police officer.



Bateman

**J. David Bishop** has been named Cleveland's new police chief. Bishop has been serving as interim police chief since Wes Snyder announced his retirement in December. Bishop is a 30-year veteran of the department and also served as an officer at the Albany Police Department in Georgia and the Knoxville Police Department.

Goodlettsville Officer **Daniel Knalls** was selected as the recipient of the Governor's Highway Safety Office Middle Tennessee Officer of the Year Award for outstanding performance in traffic enforcement. During 2013, Knalls conducted 706 traffic stops: half for moving violations, along with eight DUI arrests.

## Bailey appointed to succeed state Rep. Charles Curtiss

Republican businessman and farmer Paul Bailey has been appointed by the White County Commission to succeed state Rep. Charles Curtiss in the General Assembly. Bailey, also a county commissioner, said that he plans to serve out the remainder of Curtiss' term, but will continue to run for the state Senate seat being vacated by Sen. Charlotte Burks this fall. His appointment to the District 43 seat representing all of White and Grundy counties and part of Warren County gives Republicans control of 71 seats in the 99-member chamber.



Bailey

Curtiss, first elected in 1994, resigned Jan. 1 to become executive director of the Tennessee County Commissioners Association, an organization that lobbies lawmakers on behalf of counties.

Bailey's state Senate bid will be covered by the state fundraising ban for sitting lawmakers during the legislative session. He runs a trucking company and raises American quarter horses and cattle on a farm in rural White County.

## Shelbyville Police Dept. earns state accreditation



Photo by Brian Mosely

Following three years of hard work, Shelbyville's police department has earned state accreditation. Accreditation means the department has policies and procedures in place for situations such as high speed pursuits, arrests and record keeping. Benefits of the status also include a \$100 reduction per officer annually in law enforcement liability premiums and fewer resources spent on legal defense costs. The process required an in-depth review of every aspect of the department's organization, management, operations and administration. According to the Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police, accreditation increases a department's ability "to prevent and control crime through more effective and efficient delivery of law enforcement services to the community it serves. Pictured to the right: Murfreesboro police chief Glen Chrisman, presents the accreditation to the department. Accepting the honor, from left, officer David Curlee, Deputy Chief Mike Rogers, Amy Davis, City Manager Jay Johnson, Police Chief Austin Swing and Mayor Wallace Cartwright.

## NATIONAL BRIEFS



**U.S. employers, according to a Labor Department report, added just 74,000 jobs in December, although the economy has been adding nearly three times as many for four straight months.** So what happened? A wave of Americans stopped looking for work. The proportion of people either working or looking for work fell to 62.8 percent, matching a nearly 36-year low. Their exodus cut the unemployment rate from 7 percent to 6.7 percent — its lowest point in more than five years. Cold weather affected the report in several ways. Construction companies, which stop work during bad weather, cut 16,000 jobs, the most in 20 months. And the average work-week dipped as more people worked part time. An unusually large number of people missed work in December because of the weather. Wells Fargo noted that several industries reported unusually steep job losses. Accounting and bookkeeping services lost 24,700 jobs, the most in nearly 11 years. And performing arts and spectator sports cut 11,600, the most in 2½ years. The movie industry also shed 13,700 jobs. For all the fluctuations in monthly job growth, hiring has been strikingly stable for three years: Employers added 2.2 million jobs in 2013 and 2012, up slightly from 2.1 million in 2011. One bright spot was manufacturing. Factories added 9,000 positions, the fifth straight gain. Still, that's down from 31,000 in November. Retailers added 55,000 jobs. Low-wage industries produced the biggest job gain last year, one reason wage growth has been weak. Employment in the temporary help industry rose nearly 10 percent — the biggest percentage increase for any major industry. Ho-

tels, restaurants and entertainment firms reported the second-biggest increase, followed by retailers. Hiring also improved last year in higher-paying professional services such as architects, and engineers.

**U.S. home prices rose in August from a year earlier at the fastest pace since February 2006.** But the price gains slowed in many cities from July, a sign that the spike in prices over the past year may have peaked. The Standard & Poor's/Case-Shiller 20-city home price index rose 12.8 percent over the 12 months ending in August. That's up from 12.4 percent in July from a year earlier. All 20 cities showed year-over-year gains. However, a measure of month-over-month prices for the 20 cities rose just 1.3 percent in August. That's down from a 1.8 percent month-over-month gain in July. And 16 of the 20 cities reported more modest price increases in August than in July. Greater demand and a tighter supply of homes for sale have helped drive prices higher over the past year. But over the summer, mortgage rates jumped from their record lows. And weaker job growth is also discouraging potential home buyers. Many of the cities are seeing their gains slow. Ellen Haberle, an economist with the national real estate brokerage Redfin, said that prices have been driven higher by a limited supply of houses on the market. She expects home sales to fall in September and October partly because the federal government shutdown likely scared off potential home buyers. Housing inventory was only 83 percent of normal levels. Supply is expected to increase as rising prices encourage home owners to put their houses on the market.

## Volunteer firefighters except from Obamacare mandate

**FIREFIGHTER** from Page 1  
to volunteer fire personnel and issued a statement saying "the forthcoming final regulations relating to (the employer mandate) generally will not require volunteer hours of bona fide volunteer firefighters and volunteer emergency medical personnel at governmental or tax-exempt organizations to be counted."

Finger said he took the term "generally" to mean the vast major-

ity of volunteer firefighters won't be counted, but the IRS has to account for instances in which a "bad actor or two" tries to abuse the system or for other unforeseen circumstances.

"For everybody who's a volunteer, getting small amounts of compensation expected to make them whole for their out-of-pocket costs, those folks are not going to be impacted, and that was our goal the whole time," he said.

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## STATE BRIEFS

### TN is 2013 State of the Year

Tennessee is the "2013 State of the Year," according to Business Facilities magazine, a national economic development publication. Tennessee's top five economic development projects created a total of 6,900 jobs, \$3.2 billion in capital investment and included seven expansions and three new recruitments. The magazine picked the state after evaluating the top five projects for the number of jobs created and amount of capital invested from Oct. 1, 2012 through Oct. 31, 2013.

### State HR Dept. receives Baldrige Excellence Award

The Tennessee Department of Human Resources has earned the Commitment Award in the annual Excellence in Tennessee recognition program administered by the Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence (TNCPE). TNCPE is the only statewide quality program and is patterned on the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program, the national standard for recognizing organizational excellence. The Tennessee Department of Human Resources will accept the award at the 21st annual Excellence in Tennessee Awards Banquet on Feb. 19.

### State acquires land bordering South Cumberland State Park

The Tennessee Department of Agriculture Division of Forestry announced it has acquired a conservation easement on 3,282 acres bordering South Cumberland State Park in Grundy County, a development that will allow the land to remain privately owned and managed as a working forest. The land is near the 17-mile Fiery Gizzard Trail.

### TDOT long-range transportation plan includes "Book-A-Planner"

New updates to its 25-Year Long Range Transportation Plan will serve as TDOT's road map for future statewide transportation investments. The initiative also includes "Book-A-Planner," which builds off the summits held in all four TDOT regions in the state as a way to inform the public on transportation issues. "Book-A-Planner" is an interactive outreach program and presentation that brings people with knowledge of the situation in a region to become a part of local decisions. For more information and to take part in the survey, visit <http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/transportationplan>.

### State to be slow in job creation

Tennessee will be among the slowest when it comes to job creation this year. *Stateline.org* is predicting that the state will be 44th in overall job creation with a growth rate of 1.23 percent in jobs, adding only about 34,000 new jobs in 2014. The pill is even harder to swallow when compared with the state's neighbors in the south, which are predicted to have some of the best job creation numbers in the nation. Mississippi placed 20th on *Stateline's* list while Arkansas placed 24th and Kentucky 22nd. Overall, *Stateline* predicts that the U.S. economy will generate 2.6 million jobs in 2014, up from 2.2 million in 2013. The new jobs are expected to be mostly in the health care, energy and high-tech sectors.

### EPA audit recommends state repay \$2 M federal grant

An audit report from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Inspector General has recommended requiring the state to pay back most of a \$2 million federal grant. The report charges that the state overestimated the benefits of the electrification project at truck stops and didn't comply with a requirement to use only materials made in the United States. The funding was used to put electric heating and cooling units in at four truck stops to dissuade truckers from leaving their engines idling and generating pollution. State officials said in a written response that the Department of Transportation was "surprised and deeply disappointed at the arbitrary and capricious nature of the OIG recommendations." The letter called the proposed penalty "harsh and unjust."

### State's population growth up

Tennessee's population has grown at the national average, 2.4 percent, since the 2010 census, while the rest of the South and West continues to be the fastest-growing regions across the country, according to data by the federal government. Population estimates are eagerly watched by some state officials because they

determine the flow of money into many federal programs and the size of a state's delegation in Congress.

### TN focuses on veteran cemeteries

The state is on track to locate new cemeteries closer to the tens of thousands of veterans who don't live in Tennessee's cities. Three older, federally-run burial grounds are so full they can only accept cremated remains. But with acres left to fill in both Nashville and Memphis, plus two smaller cemeteries in Knoxville, the issue now is making sure distance doesn't pose a hardship to families. A committee of local citizens is honing in on possible cemetery sites for the area around McMinnville or Crossville. Last March, a similar panel identified land not far from Jackson. The federal government will pay for developing the cemeteries, much as it pays for veteran burials. The only thing not included is the cost of the land. The state is asking groups like the VFW and American Legion to pitch in and help pay.

### Traffic fatalities down in TN

Preliminary figures showing Tennessee traffic deaths last year fell 2.7 percent, dropping from 1,015 in 2012 to 988 in 2013. The figure represents just the fourth time in 50 years that vehicular fatalities have dropped below 1,000. In 2012, deaths increased over 2011. At 937 traffic-related deaths, 2011 represented the lowest number in traffic-related fatalities since 1963. The 2013 improvement came after officials publicly voiced concerns earlier this year as the number of deaths on state roads and highways began running neck and neck with 2012.

### TN receives award to track 2-year degrees

Every year, about 1,300 Tennesseans complete 60 credits for an associate degree but don't get the diploma because the paper trail is lost when they transfer from a two-year school to a four-year, a significant lapse for a state starved for degrees. This summer, the state will test soft-

ware that alerts students when they reach the milestone, then flags the community colleges where they started their college career so the degree can be awarded. The process, called "reverse transfer," rolled out in a handful of states last year when philanthropists, including Lumina Foundation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, awarded grants to help them trace student work in four-year colleges back to two-year schools where they started. With \$400,000 from Lumina's "Credit When It's Due" program, Tennessee is in the game with a project to test at three universities and nearby community colleges this summer. By 2015, all 13 state community colleges will be in the loop, plus 18 private and public colleges and universities.

### Official 2014 Transportation Map available

The official 2014 Tennessee Transportation Map is now available for travelers. This year's map contains new information to assist motorists, including the recently completed State Route 385 in Shelby County. The map is free and is also available at welcome centers and rest areas across the state. The 2014 state map can also be downloaded from the TDOT web site at [www.tn.gov/tdot/maps.htm](http://www.tn.gov/tdot/maps.htm). Pre-printed maps may be ordered from TDOT online at [www.tn.gov/tdot/MapOrder/maporder.htm](http://www.tn.gov/tdot/MapOrder/maporder.htm) or by mailing a request to: TDOT, 505 Deaderick Street, James K. Polk Bldg, Ste 900, Nashville, TN 37243-0345. Individuals may request up to five free maps. The Official 2014 Tennessee Transportation Map is a joint effort between TDOT and the TN Department of Tourist Development.

### Documentary released on State Capitol

The Tennessee State Library and Archives has released a video documentary on the history of the Tennessee State Capitol tracing the building's history from the start of construction through the present. The video, which runs slightly less than a half hour, is filled with interesting facts, and is available for viewing from the web site at <http://tnsos.net/capitol/index.php>.

## 2014 Nominations for Governors Stewardship Awards now accepted

The Tennessee Governor's Environmental Stewardship Awards are the most prestigious environmental and conservation awards in the state. For 28 years, the awards have been presented to individuals and organizations making significant contributions to the protection and improvement of our natural resources and wildlife.

The awards are designed to bring about a greater knowledge and

awareness of effective practices and projects and to give proper recognition to those persons and organizations that make outstanding contributions to the natural resources of their community and the state.

Nominations for the 2014 Awards now being accepted. Deadline for applications is March 31.

More information is available at <http://www.tn.gov/environment/gov-awards.shtml>.

## 2013-2014 Tennessee Blue Book to honor Pat Summitt

In her 38 years coaching the University of Tennessee Lady Volunteers basketball team, Pat Summitt received hundreds of honors. Her teams won more than 1,000 games, 32 Southeastern Conference championships and eight national championships. Her players who completed their playing eligibility at UT had a 100 percent graduation rate. And since being diagnosed with early onset dementia a little over two years ago, she has led a foundation that has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to fund Alzheimer's research.

For all of those reasons and more, the next edition of the *Tennessee Blue Book* is being dedicated to Coach Summitt.

"Coach Summitt has been an inspiration to countless Tennesseans first as a basketball coach and more recently as a strong advocate for Alzheimer's research," Secretary of State Tre Hargett said. "I am

pleased that the next edition of the *Tennessee Blue Book* will pay tribute to her legacy."

"As a proud Tennessean, I am honored to be recognized in the Tennessee Blue Book," Coach Summitt said. "I'm grateful for the support I have always felt throughout the state of Tennessee and now for The Pat Summitt Foundation. I'm proud to call Tennessee my home!"

The *Tennessee Blue Book*, published every two years, is the definitive manual on Tennessee state government, with detailed information about all three branches of government, including biographies of all members of the Tennessee General Assembly.

It also contains information on the federal government, Tennessee history, election statistics and much more. The *Tennessee Blue Book* is published by Secretary of State's office and will be available for distribution soon.

## December state tax revenues collections below projections

Year-to-date collections \$171.1 million less than budgeted

Tennessee revenue collections for December fell below collections for the same month the year before. Finance and Administration Commissioner Larry Martin reported today that state revenue collections for December were \$966.6 million, which is 1.59 percent below December 2012. December sales tax collections represent consumer spending that occurred in November.

"Total revenue for December was lower than expected, primarily due to under collections in sales and corporate taxes, even though December revenues include 'Black Friday' and after-Thanksgiving sales," Martin said. "We believe having six less days of shopping after Thanksgiving 2013 compared to the previous year accounts for the under collection, but January's report will give us a more complete picture of Christmas retail activity."

"Because of an anticipated revenue shortfall this year, we will closely monitor our collections and spending for the remainder of the current fiscal year, and work closely with the Legislature in the adoption of a balanced and responsible budget for the 2014-15 fiscal year."

On an accrual basis, December is the fifth month in the 2013-2014 fiscal year.

December collections were \$47.9 million less than the budgeted estimate. The general fund was under collected by \$57.2 million and the four other funds were over collected by \$9.3 million.

Sales tax collections were \$3.0 million less than the estimate for December. The December growth rate was 2.53 percent. For five months revenues are under collected by \$24.3 million, and the year-to-date growth rate is 3.33 percent.

Franchise and excise taxes combined were \$54.5 below the budgeted estimate of \$254.0 million. For five months revenues are under collected by \$158.3 million.

Gasoline and motor fuel collections for December increased by 18.55% and they were \$10.7 million above the budgeted estimate of \$63.7 million. For five months revenues are over collected by \$4.3 million.

Tobacco tax collections were \$0.9 million below the budgeted estimate of \$22.8 million, and for five months they are \$5.4 million below the budgeted estimate.

Privilege tax collections were \$2.8 million less than the budgeted estimate of \$20.6 million. Year-to-date collections for five months are \$1.4 million below the budgeted estimate.

Inheritance and estate taxes were over collected by \$3.7 million for the month. For five months collections are \$15.0 million above the budgeted estimate.

All other taxes were under collected by a net of \$1.1 million.

Year-to-date collections for five months were \$171.1 million less than the budgeted estimate. The general fund was under collected by \$175.8 million and the four other funds were over collected by \$4.7 million.

The budgeted revenue estimates for 2013-2014 are based on the State Funding Board's consensus recommendation of Dec. 19, 2012 and adopted by the first session of the 108th General Assembly in April 2013. They are available on the state's website at <http://www.tn.gov/finance/bud/Revenues.shtml>.

The Funding Board met on Dec. 10, 2013, to hear updated revenue projections from the state's various economists, and on Dec. 17 adopted revised revenue ranges for 2013-2014. The revised ranges assume an under collection from the July 2013 budgeted estimate in the amount of \$111.2 million to \$134.5 million in total taxes and in the amount of \$126.1 million to \$145.6 million in general fund taxes for the current fiscal year.

## TDOT launches Yellow DOT Program to assist seniors

The Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) launched the Yellow DOT Program, which is designed to assist first responders in identifying vital medical information for senior drivers. The program features yellow stickers that are placed in the bottom left side of the rear window of vehicles and yellow envelopes containing a photo, medical history and prescription drug information for glove compartments.

The program will allow emergency personnel to make the most of what's known as the "golden hour," the first hour after an injury or medical emergency during which medical treatment can dramatically increase a patient's chances for survival. Once a Yellow DOT sticker is identified on a vehicle, first responders will know to check the glove compartment for the Yellow DOT information packet.

"This program will help police and other first responders by giving them quick access to potentially life-saving medical information within minutes of a car crash," said TDOT Commissioner John Schroer. "It can also help in efforts to identify victims and personalize their treatment."

The Tennessee General Assembly unanimously passed a bill supporting a Tennessee Yellow DOT Program in 2012. The sponsors of the Senate and House bills, Sen. Jim Tracy and Rep. Curtis Halford joined Commissioner Schroer at the launch event in Nashville.



"There are more than a million and a half licensed drivers in Tennessee who are over the age of 55 and that number will continue to grow," said Sen. Tracy. "This program provides a great opportunity for older drivers to update their medical information and have a voice in their emergency treatment."

Rep. Halford added, "The Yellow DOT program doesn't just save time at the scene of a crash, it can also improve communication between field personnel and hospital emergency staff. I urge senior drivers to take advantage of this free service."

While the program is geared towards senior drivers, it can be beneficial for anyone with medical issues. There is no cost associated with signing up for the program. For more information about the program, please visit <http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/yellowdot/>. A listing of Yellow DOT sign-up locations can be found at <http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/yellowdot/docs/YDP-EnrollmentSites.pdf>.

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### CERTIFIED BUILDING & CODES INSPECTOR

**PLEASANT VIEW.** The town is seeking qualified applicants to fill the full-time position of a Certified Building and Codes Inspector. The position carries out guidelines of the planning commission and is responsible for technical work in the enforcement of building and zoning codes, city ordinances, inspection and maintenance of municipal playground equipment, ADA inspections, and other duties as assigned. Qualifications include a valid Tennessee driver's license, high school graduation or equivalent, and current certification as Building Inspector by the State of Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance State Fire Marshal's Office. Playground Maintenance and Safety Inspector certificates must be obtained within 12 months of hire date. Applications and job description may be obtained at City Hall, 1008 Civic Court, Pleasant View, TN 37146, phone 615-746-0600. Job open until filled. EOE. The town of Pleasant View does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability or veteran status in employment opportunities and benefits.

### CONTRACT SPECIALIST

**COLLIERVILLE.** The town is seeking qualified applicants for the position of Contract Specialist for the Dept. of General Services. This position coordinates documentation covering contractual obligations between the Town and various vendors, contractors, and service providers. Actions covered include, but are not limited to: payments, delivery schedules and milestones, renewals, discontinuations or close-

outs, construction agreements, professional services agreements and development agreements. Requires an associates degree with major coursework in Business Administration, Public Administration or a closely related field; supplemented by two years of job related experience; or any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities for this job. Requires working knowledge of terms and conditions relative to legal documents as applied to construction, services, materials and development agreements. Salary range is \$31,389.00 - \$52,753.00 (DOQ) annually with excellent benefits package. Valid Motor Vehicle Operator's License at the time of hire. Candidate must be able to pass a work related physical and drug test. Selection process may include: examinations, interviews, assessment centers, practical skills, etc. Drug testing may be required. Job opened until filled. Apply at Human Resources Office, 500 Poplar View Parkway, Collierville, TN. 38017. Job number: JN13-72GS - Class code: 0255. Please submit a new application each time you apply for a town job. Pursuant to Tennessee open records law, applications and resumes are subject to disclosure. We regret we are unable to answer all inquires. Only candidate selected for testing or interviews will be notified. The town of Collierville is EOE. and does not discriminate in hiring. Minorities, women and disabled are encouraged to apply. If you have a disability and require special accommodations during the selection process, please notify the Human Resources Office at 901-457-2290. The town of Collierville is a drug free work place.

### GIS MANAGER

**MORRISTOWN.** The city is now accepting applications for the position of GIS Manager. The position will develop and maintain a regional GIS system under the regular supervision of the City Administrator.

Essential duties and responsibilities to include the following: conducts research and oversees implementation of the GIS system used by the city and related governmental entities related to 911 addressing, using GIS elements that include hardware, software, database format and other related peripherals; coordinates GIS applications and projects with other departments, offices, users, utilities; maintains computer generated maps, reports, and data in a well organized format and assists others with the use of the information; collects and field verifies data; coordinates database and application development functions related to enterprise data base management and billing. Candidates will perform difficult technical work performing a variety of engineering assistance tasks; does related work as required. A full job description can be obtained from the City's website. This is a full-time position with benefits. Salary from \$50 - 75,000 DOQ. Applications may be obtained from the Human Resources Department on the second floor of City Center, or on the city's website at [www.mymorristown.com](http://www.mymorristown.com). Send completed applications to: City of Morristown, Attn: Human Resources - GIS Manager, P.O. Box 1499, Morristown, TN 37816-1499.

### PLANNING DIRECTOR

**SEVIERVILLE.** The city is seeking qualified applicants for the position of Planning Director. The essential functions of the position include leading the City's Planning Department, working with City administrators and officials in developing long-range plans and objectives, working with staff and developers on proposed and ongoing projects, keeping informed of current trends and theories in planning, drafting and implementing comprehensive plans and documents, coordinating and staffing the Planning Commission, representing the City on various boards and committees, etc. This position requires imaginative insight, a Master's degree in urban, community, and/or regional planning or closely related field, and at least five years of related experience. Salary is \$50,852 to \$89,004 annually. Please submit application and/or resume in an envelope marked "Planning Director" to: City of Sevierville, Attn: Human Resources, P. O. Box 5500, Sevierville, TN 37864-5500. The closing date for applications is Friday, January 31, 2014. The City of Sevierville is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of sex or handicap in its programs or activities pursuant to Public Law 93-112 or 101-336. The City of Sevierville does not discriminate based on race, color or national origin in federal or state sponsored programs, pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d.)

### PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

**SOMERVILLE.** The town is seeking a Public Works Director. The position reports to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen through the city administrator. The position will have direct responsibility for 17 full-time employees and the water, sewer, natural gas, streets, and cemetery operations and oversight of the solid waste contractor. The full job description can be viewed on the city's web site: [www.somerville.tn.org](http://www.somerville.tn.org). Starting salary is \$60,000. Resumes may be sent to City Administrator, Austin Edmondson, via e-mail [cityadmsom@bellsouth.net](mailto:cityadmsom@bellsouth.net) or by mail to P. O. Box 909, Somerville TN, 38068. The Town of Somerville is an EOE employer. The position is open until filled and resumes will be reviewed as received.

### WATER/SEWER MAINTENANCE WORKER

**PIPERTON.** The city is seeking qualified applicants for the full-time position of Water and Sewer Maintenance Worker. Position is responsible for water distribution, sewer collection, service line installation, and repair and other maintenance tasks: maintains and repairs water distribution and wastewater collection systems, including main breaks; locates water lines for outside entities; handles meter reading duties; coordinates water needs; maintains and repairs water mains, pump houses, valves, storage tanks and hydrants; coordinates new service taps in distribution system; maintains, cleans, and repairs sewer lines, lift stations, sewer laterals, and force mains, inspects and test sewers and manholes; assists in repairing asphalt, concrete, and landscape after repairs are completed; operates construction and maintenance equipment, in addition to coordinating with construction/contractors as needed; and coordinates sampling and flushing program within the distribution and collection system. Qualifications include: high school diploma or equivalent with additional training in Public Works Construction or related field; one year related work experience; possess or be able to obtain water and sewer license and CDL; have the ability to work long, irregular hours; able to lift 60lbs or more on a regular basis; kneel, crawl, and work in small confined spaces/ unfavorable environmental conditions; prolonged exposure to extreme heat and cold; able to operate light to heavy equipment, tools and communications equipment. Applicants e-mail [TPARKER@PIPERTON.TN.COM](mailto:TPARKER@PIPERTON.TN.COM). Only serious applicants need apply.

### SENIOR CENTER DIRECTOR

**MURFREESBORO.** The city is seeking qualified applicants for Senior Center Director. The position is responsible for the development of the center's overall work plan and supervision of day-to-day operation. The employee will plan, administer, organize and supervise the day-to-day operation of the Senior Center and coordinate staff to implement services and activities promoting a positive atmosphere that encourages a sense of belonging. Consistently manages the many facets of the program to achieve the stated mission in accordance with local, state and federal guidelines. Job functions include tasks associated with securing funding, financial management and budgeting in a fiscally responsible manner, personnel management and development of staff to provide a variety of appropriate programs and services in accordance with mandated policies and procedures, reviewing and reporting on the program, operation, facility and equipment, maintaining the facility as a clean, safe environment, and involving older individuals in the operation and program. This is an upper level management position requiring an individual who is capable of exercising independent judgment and who possesses superior organizational skills. The director is under the administrative direction of the city manager. This employee is classified as exempt for the purposes of the Fair Labor Standards Act. As Safety Sensitive, the employee is subject to pre-employment, reasonable suspicion, post-accident (incident), random, promotion and transfer, return-to-duty and follow-up drug and alcohol testing. Salary is \$4,190.33 - \$4,698.37 monthly DOQ&E. For more information, or to apply, visit the city of Murfreesboro website at <http://www.murfreesborotn.gov/index.aspx?NID=397>. Job closing date is Fri. 1/10/14 at 4pm CT.



**Feb. 20-21: Tenn. Municipal Attorney's Association's (TMAA) Winter Seminar** held at Brentwood Library. Topics of Discussion: Sovereign Citizen by the Southern Poverty Law Center, Open Records, Bond Financing and Judeo-Christian Ethical Principles.

**Mar. 6-7: ICMA Southeast Regional Summit**, held at the Colonial Williamsburg Lodge, 310 South England Street, Williamsburg, VA. For tentative agenda, visit [http://icma.org/en/icma/events/CalendarEvent/100558/2014\\_ICMA\\_Southeast\\_Regional\\_Summit](http://icma.org/en/icma/events/CalendarEvent/100558/2014_ICMA_Southeast_Regional_Summit). For more information, contact Donna-Renee Arrington via email at [darrington@icma.org](mailto:darrington@icma.org) or call 202-962-3691.

**Mar. 8 -12: NLC Congressional City Conference**; Marriott Wardman Park, Washington, D.C.

**Mar. 17-18: TML Legislative Conference** held at the Nashville DoubleTree Hotel. Opens Mon. at 12:00 pm and ends Tues. at 10 am.

**Mar. 21: TN Government Finance Officers Association Spring Institute** held in Jackson, from 7 am to 5 pm.

**Mar. 25 - 26: Tennessee Environmental Conference "Improving Our Environment and Public Health through Smart Choices"** held in Kingsport at the MeadowView Marriott Conference Resort & Convention Center. More than 60 presenters addressing the latest trends, practices and policies aimed at preserving resources, balancing growth, improving human health and protecting the environment. For conference information and registration, visit <http://www.tnenvironment.com/> or contact Mark Braswell, TN Environmental Conference Executive Planning Committee at 423-854-5459 or e-mail [mark.braswell@tn.gov](mailto:mark.braswell@tn.gov)

**Jan 28-30:** The 2014 grant cycle for the Local Parks and Recreation Fund, the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Recreational Trails Program workshops hosted by TDEC.

**East TN**—Jan. 28 at TDEC's Knoxville Environmental Field Office, 3711 Middlebrook Pike. At 10 am, Local Parks and Recreation Fund, Land and Water Conservation Fund and at 11:45 am, Recreational Trails Program.

**Middle TN**—Jan. 29 at the William R. Snodgrass Tennessee Tower, 312 Rosa L. Parks Ave., Nashville, 3rd Floor, Conference Room D. At 10 am, Local Parks and Recreation Fund, Land and Water Conservation Fund and at 11:45 am, Recreational Trails Program.

**West TN**—Jan. 30 at TDEC's Jackson Environmental Field Office, 1625 Hollywood Drive At 10 am, Local Parks and Recreation Fund, Land and Water Conservation Fund and at 11:45 am, Recreational Trails Program. To register for a class, contact Carol Thompson at 615-532-0208 or e-mail [carol.h.thompson@tn.gov](mailto:carol.h.thompson@tn.gov). For more information about the grants, visit [http://www.tn.gov/environment/recreation/recreation\\_grants.shtml](http://www.tn.gov/environment/recreation/recreation_grants.shtml).

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**SPOTLIGHT: TML ASSOCIATE**

**Fessenden Consulting Group offers Employee Benefit Funding plan for cities**



Fessenden Consulting Group, Inc., in conjunction with actuaries, lenders, bond counsel, and insurance companies, offers the Financed Insurance Trust (FIT) plan for Cities as an option to fund at least a portion of employee benefit costs. FIT does not replace any existing benefit plans. Rather, FIT provides a way to FUND them.

The benefits of the FIT plan for Cities include:

- Provides future funding for employee benefits such as health insurance premiums.
- Reduces the need to increase taxes to fund employee or retiree benefits.
- Is cost effective so budget is NOT negatively impacted.
- Has potentially less risk relative to other funding options.

In these times of reduced revenue and increased employee benefit and retiree costs, many Cities are seeking revenue alternatives in lieu of raising taxes or reducing benefits

to cut costs. The FIT plan may be a solution... offering the opportunity to accumulate greater funds and increase cash flow with less risk versus other options.

To determine if your City qualifies for the FIT Plan, an initial informal meeting with FCG is suggested. An initial proposal for your City can be provided which provides information needed to make an informed decision regarding the financial benefits for the City. It is recommended that the City Finance Director and Attorney be included early in the due diligence process. The FIT plan conforms to all applicable Tennessee laws and is in full compliance.

The Fessenden Consulting Group (FCG) is a second generation, family-owned employee benefit consulting firm. FCG values their clients and measure success by gauging client satisfaction and longevity and has cultivated many long-term client relationships which average 25 years.

FCG staff consists of seasoned

consultants with combined experience of total of 176 years. Their professional affiliations include attorneys, actuary, accounting firm, and financial consultant. Their approach to business is characterized by a reputation of independence and uncompromising integrity in the marketplace.

FCG is a proud member of Tennessee Municipal League. FCG's role with the Tennessee Municipal League is to offer value-added products and services to Cities, their employees and taxpayers.

**Contact information**

- David Fessenden, Chairman  
david\_fessenden@fessendengc.com  
615-308-7926
- Mark Bolt, Financial Consultant  
mark\_bolt@fessendengc.com  
615-308-8658

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**FREE Prescription Assistance for ALL Tennesseans!**



Learn how you can provide **FREE** prescription benefits to residents of **YOUR** city.

As the new year rolls in and your health insurance deductible renews, TML would like to remind you about one of our endorsed programs, the Tennessee Drug Card. This program can save you and your city or town money on prescriptions and health insurance benefits costs.

The Tennessee Drug Card is a Free prescription assistance program that is available to all residents of the state of Tennessee. It has no enrollment fees, no income requirements or age restrictions of any kind. On average this card helps save people about 25 - 35 percent but the savings may be as high as 85 percent.

The program includes discounts on brand and generic medications and accepted at over 56,000 pharmacies around the country in-

cluding most major chains.

In addition, the card may be used to achieve significant savings on diabetic supplies, prescription eyeglasses, hearing aids as well as Lasik eye surgery and teeth whitening procedures.

Below is a list of ways your city or town can use this card to help your citizens, family members, friends, or your employees and at no cost to them or your city.

**Ways to Save**

- 1 Any resident who does not have insurance can use this card.
- 2 Citizens who have started a new job and are in the waiting period for benefits to kick in, they can use this card to help them save on their prescription drugs until their benefits kick in.
- 3 If a resident or employee has a

high deductible policy, people are able to use this card until their deductible is met.

4 For any part time employees who do not qualify for benefits this program is ideal, because this card still offers them a way to save on prescriptions.

5 For any drug not covered by insurance, the Tennessee Drug Card can be used to help save.

Whether you're from Memphis or Mountain City, Union City or East Ridge, this program is for you as the Tennessee Drug Card may be used in hundreds of retail and drug stores throughout the state.

For more information on this program and how to use the program in your city or town, visit the TML website [www.tml1.org](http://www.tml1.org), or contact TML offices at 615-255-6416.



**TENNESSEE FESTIVALS**

**Jan. 23: Kingston**

Author and Civil War Historian Gerald Augustus appears from 6-8 pm at the Kingston Public Library. Author of "The Civil War in Tennessee," he is a retired teacher and principal from Lenoir City Schools and an avid collector of civil war memorabilia. He also co-wrote and edited "Loudon County and Its People 1870-1999", and has been published in magazines and the Heartland Series.

**Jan. 31-Feb. 2: Tiptonville**

*Annual Reelfoot Lake Eagle Festival.* Family friendly weekend of children's activities, vendors, Bird of Prey shows, art and photography contests and photography tours. Reelfoot Lake State Park Visitor Center, 2575 State Route 21. For more information, call 731-253-2007.

**Feb. 8: Clarksville**

*Chocolate Affair.* Presented by the city of Clarksville and Planters Bank, local and national businesses team up at the Wilma Rudolph Event Center. The event features sweet and savory treats from local businesses and national brands like Dove, Lindt, Sams, and Velata. Entertainment also provided. Attendees may vote for the "Best Chocolate Offering" - "Best Decorated Booth" - and "Most Creative Use of Chocolate." Prizes awarded to winners of each category. Tickets \$15 and designated as "after lunch," "from 2 to 4 pm" or "after dinner," from 6-8 pm. Tickets available online at [www.cityofclarksville.com/chocolateaffair](http://www.cityofclarksville.com/chocolateaffair) and at the Clarksville Parks and Recreation office. For more information, call 931-645-7476 or visit [www.cityofclarksville.com/chocolateaffair](http://www.cityofclarksville.com/chocolateaffair).

**Feb. 15 Oak Ridge**

*International Festival.* Children's Museum of Oak Ridge, 461 West Outer Drive. Showcases the world's cultures through international performances, food, crafts, children's activities and more than two dozen booths highlighting countries and regions of the world. The event takes place from 10am-4pm. For more information, call 865-482-1074 or visit [www.childrensmuseumofoakridge.org](http://www.childrensmuseumofoakridge.org).

**Mar. 15 : Franklin**

*Main Street Brew Fest.* Downtown Franklin features samples of 70 craft beers at 30 tasting sites, as well as Celtic performers and other Irish-themed attractions. Beer tasting from 6 to 9 pm rain or shine. Tickets are \$40 and available at <http://downtownfranklintn.com/events/brewfest/> or at the check-in station at Fourth and Main the day of the event. An I.D. is required to check in, which is available beginning at 5 pm the day of the event.

**No loan is too large or too small**



The city of Morristown closed a \$20 million loan for sewer system upgrades.



The city of Ripley closed a \$1 million loan for a new fire hall and equipment.

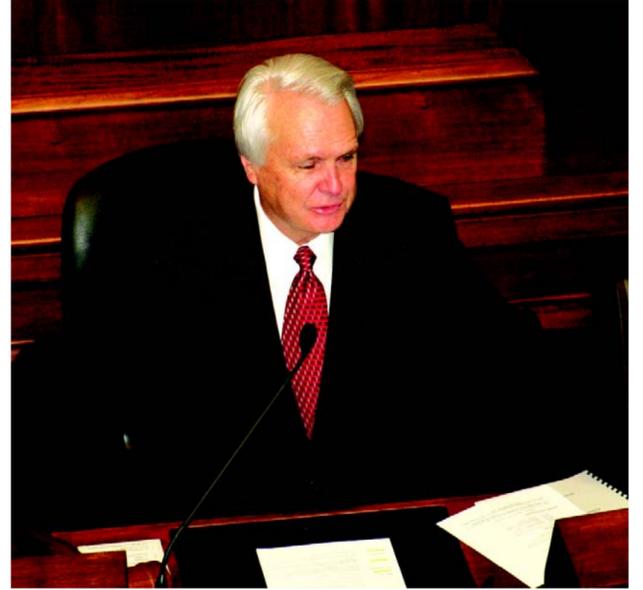


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# Senate reconvenes for 2014 Legislative Session



Lt. Gov. Ramsey, Sen. Bo Watson and Sen. Mark Norris confer before the opening session.



Lt. Gov Ron Ramsey presides over opening session.



Sen. Randy McNally and Sen. Mark Green



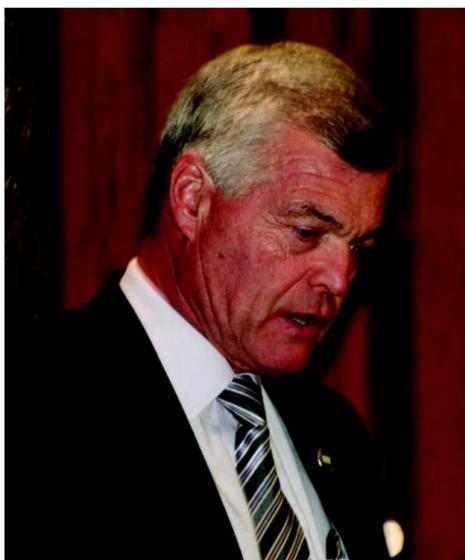
Sen. Mark Norris



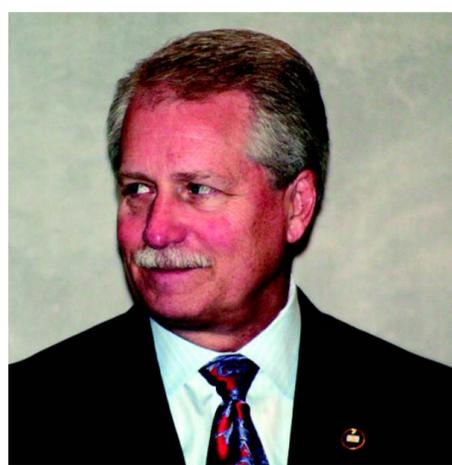
Secretary of State Tre Hargett and Sen. Bo Watson



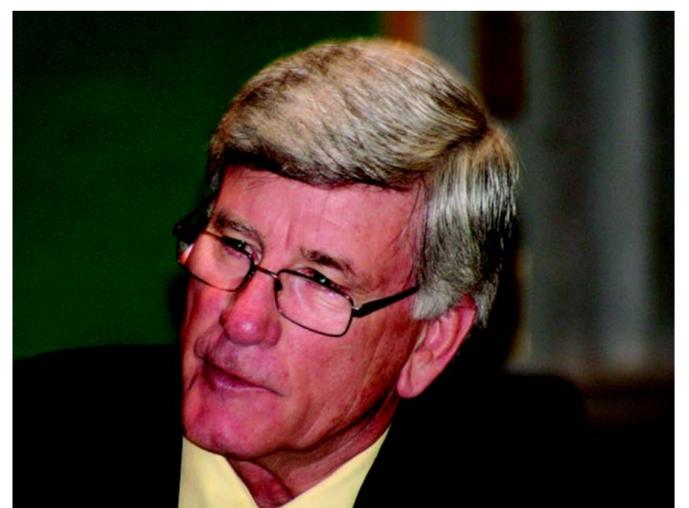
Sen. Jack Johnson



Sen. Jim Tracy



Sen. Bill Ketrion



Sen. Todd Gardenshire



Sen. Ferrell Haile



Sen. Janice Bowling



Sen. Delores Grisham

Photos by Victoria South

# House reconvenes for 2014 Legislative Session



Rep. Curtis Johnson



Rep. Charles Sargent and Speaker Beth Harwell



Rep. Bob Ramsey



Reps. Cameron Sexton and Kevin Brooks



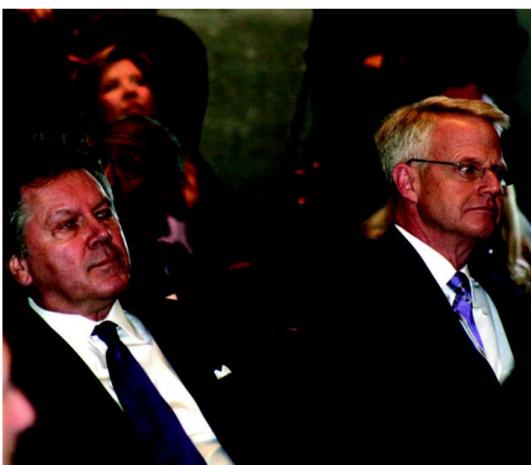
Rep. Bo Mitchell



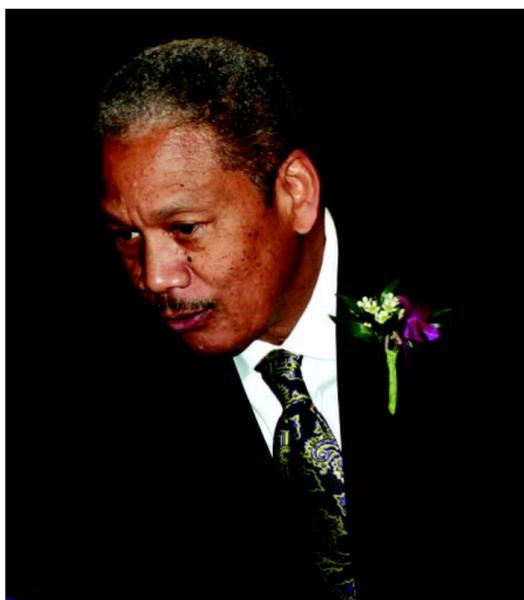
Rep. Craig Fitzhugh



Above: Speaker Harwell and Rep. Gerald McCormick  
Below: Rep. JoAnne Favors



Above: Reps. Steve McManus and John Lundberg  
At Right: Rep. Larry Miller



Photos by Carole Graves

# Earth sheltered building cultivating partnerships in Athens

BY MARK PENLAND  
AND VAUGHN CASSIDY  
TDEC-Office of Sustainable  
Practices

In Southeast Tennessee, three organizations are continually working together to demonstrate that the best solutions address multiple problems simultaneously and even go beyond to highlight new benefits.

Keep McMinn Beautiful, McMinn County, and the city of Athens are frequent partners on community and environmental projects. One recent project, however, really highlights the power of collaboration.

In the fall of 2013, Athens unveiled a new earthen-sheltered building—the first of its kind in the United States. The project, led by Shawn Lindsey, Athens public works director, resulted in a building which exemplifies sustainability.

The hobbit-style structure not only serves as a resource center to provide educational opportunities for the public regarding environmental and recycling topics, it is also available to host community events, as well as to house the Keep McMinn Beautiful affiliate office.

Earth-sheltered means that the structure is strategically covered in 18-24 inches of dirt which moderates temperature extremes, allowing for approximately 60 percent less energy usage than a conventional house. The dirt covers fiber reinforced polymer panels. The panels are made of recycled-content polyethylene terephthalate (PET) which are 100 percent waterproof with zero toxicity, and are chemically inert.

Well-placed windows, light paint, and high ceilings contribute to surprisingly bright and open feeling interior. By coupling the energy efficient structure with a 5 kW photo voltaic array located behind the office allows the structure to be “off the grid.” The only utility cost the city incurs is for water.

The project was a great benefit for both the affiliate and the community being assisted. Lindsey serves on the Keep McMinn Beautiful Board of Directors and was therefore aware the organization was facing severe funding shortages which threatened the continued service for the area. Lindsey was able to alleviate rental costs for the Keep McMinn Beautiful affiliate by locating the new office next to the Athens Recycling Center following demolition of an existing on site structure that had fallen into disrepair.

The new earth sheltered office of Keep McMinn Beautiful may look a bit different than most Keep America Beautiful affiliate offices, but having educated the county's citizens about the benefits of environmental stewardship since 1990, the new office space is fitting for their mission.

Keep McMinn Beautiful is a certified affiliate of Keep America Beautiful. In July, Melissa Marshall became the executive director for Keep Tennessee Beautiful taking on responsibility for the oversight and leadership of 25 Keep America Beautiful/Keep Tennessee Beautiful affiliates across the state with two more chapters currently in the pre-certification process. The mission of Keep Tennessee Beautiful is to rally and educate Tennesseans to take greater responsibility for their community's environment through litter prevention, litter pick-up, and recycling. The affiliates are working toward making Tennessee a greener, cleaner and healthier place to live, work and visit.

Marshall said of the recent project, “Keep McMinn County Beautiful and their accomplishment of obtaining the grant and building the first earth sheltered building is an excellent example of how Tennesseans can work together to accomplish the mission of Keep Tennessee Beautiful and Keep America Beautiful. Taking public spaces and transitioning into greener places!”

Keep McMinn Beautiful Director Jessica Proffitt loves her new office and noted that the entire project was built by the city of Athens public works employees. Proffitt recognized the challenges city employees faced as they traditionally build and maintain roads and sidewalks working with the U.S. measurements instead of erecting buildings requiring the use of the metric

system. Lindsey said, “Although it normally takes only four to six weeks to complete construction of such a structure, my crew worked over a period of approximately three months to finish construction of the structure and the solar panels as time from their primary responsibilities became available.”

Construction of the new office space was made possible by a \$250,000 matching grant from the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC). Clean Tennessee Energy Grants support renewable energy, energy efficiency, and hazardous air pollutant reduction projects across Tennessee.

Lindsey developed the idea of the earth sheltered building as a way of being unique among a myriad of other competitive projects. He was aware that solar panels would be a popular request among applicants but hoped the Athens project would be funded to allow the city \$60,000 of projected savings and income for the next 30 years. The city plans to develop future energy and pollution reduction projects with the additional funds.

Kathy Glapa, manager for the Clean Tennessee Energy Grant program said, “The Athens grant is a



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The project, led by Shawn Lindsey, Athens public works director, was built by Athens Public Works employees.



great example of what the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation is trying to accomplish through this program. The state helps kick start a renewable energy project that not only generates power and income but also lowers energy consumption due to greater efficiency and removes an entire structure from the grid. The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation and the state are pleased to provide funding through these Clean Tennessee Energy Grants to help local governments make innovative investments in their infrastructure.”

Above, solar panels are located behind the office. By coupling the energy efficient structure with a 5 kW photo voltaic array the structure operates “off the grid.” The only utility cost the city incurs is for water.

Above right, Melissa Marshall, executive director for Keep Tennessee Beautiful.

At right, the office interior is surprisingly bright and has an open feel due to well-placed windows, light paint, and high ceilings.

