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Municipal League elects Farragut Mayor Ron Williams as President

The Tennessee Municipal League elected its 2023-2024 board of directors during its general business meeting recently held in conjunction with the TML Annual Conference in Nashville. Farragut Mayor Ron Williams was elected president.

As president of the League, Williams will lead the organization as it advocates for the interests of 345 cities and towns across the state of Tennessee, and the citizens they serve.

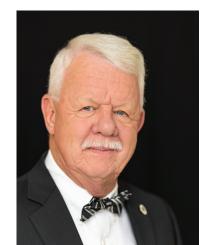
"I am truly honored to be selected to serve as the Tennessee Municipal League's next president and I will work hard to advance the interests of Tennessee's municipalities – both large and small, urban and rural," said Mayor Williams. "Local leadership is so very important. When our cities and towns stand together with one voice, the results benefit all of our citizens "

Other board elections include two vice presidents: 1st Vice President and Gallatin Mayor Paige Brown, and TML 2nd Vice President and Bolivar Mayor Julian McTizic. TML vice presidents are traditionally in line to serve as president. Henderson Mayor Bobby King will remain on the board as immediate past president.

The TML board also includes mayors of Tennessee's four largest cities, four at-large directors, and eight district directors.

The four urban mayors are: Chattanooga Mayor Tim Kelly, Knoxville Mayor Indya Kincannon, Memphis Mayor Jim Strickland, and Metro Nashville Mayor John Cooper.

The four at-large directors were nominated by a six-member nominating committee composed of municipal officials statewide. They were then elected for a oneyear term by a majority vote from



Ron Williams Farragut Mayor TML President

members in attendance at the business meeting. Those directors are: Kevin Brooks, Cleveland Mayor; Roland "Trey" Dykes, Newport Mayor; Johnny Dodd, Jackson City Council; and Kirk Bednar, Brentwood City Manager.

The eight district directors, representing their section of the state, were nominated and elected during district caucuses. They are: District 1: Darrell Duncan, Kingsport Alderman; District 2: Gary Chesney, Morristown Mayor; District 3: Stefanie Dalton, Red Bank Vice Mayor; District 4: Keith Morrison, Algood City Administrator; District 5: Ann Schneider Williams, Springfield Mayor; District 6: Blake Lay, Lawrenceburg Mayor; District 7: Blake Walley, Savannah Assistant City Manager Alderman; and District 8: Bethany Huffman, Millington Alderwoman.

Kay Senter, Morristown Councilmember and Chairman of the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund also sits on the board. And Kim Foster, Paris city manager and president of the Tennessee City Management Association is also voting board member,

Memphis Mayor Jim Strickland honored with TML Municipal Champion Award

The Tennessee Municipal League is pleased to announce Memphis Mayor Jim Strickland as the recipient of the 2023 Municipal Champi-

The award was created to recognize individuals that have worked tirelessly to advance municipal interests and the citizens they serve. Strickland was presented with the award at the 83rd Annual Tennessee Municipal League Conference in Nashville.

Strickland has served the city of Memphis as an elected official since 2007 and has spent the past seven years as the city's mayor. Known for his genial nature, enthusiasm, and commitment, Memphians know Strickland for both

being quick with a smile and welcoming a good laugh as well as his unwavering compassion and ability to lift, affirm, and comfort in times of need.

As mayor, Strickland has prioritized government transparency and launched several initiatives in Memphis to more effectively communicate and engage residents in a direct, honest manner about the issues, challenges, and opportunities the city faces. He also works to ensure the people's government reflects the diversity of Memphis' citizenry.

Strickland has focused on strengthening core city services like public safety challenges, investing in parks and neighborhoods, improving infrastructure and transit, and pursuing smart growth and fiscal health. Additionally, he focuses on investing in individuals by supporting initiatives and opening avenues to reliable employment, giving citizens a sense of independence and self-



 $TML\,Executive\,Director\,Anthony\,Haynes, Memphis\,Mayor\,Jim\,Strickland, and$ TML Immediate Past President and Henderson Mayor Bobby King present Strickland with the TML 2023 Municipal Champion Award at the TML 83rd Annual Conference in Nashville.

Beyond the Memphis city limits, Strickland has helped foster a new level of cooperation and collaboration among his fellow Shelby County mayors and often ventures into surrounding counties to meet with local leaders to emphasis collaboration, consensus, and encourage participate in the Tennessee Municipal League.

Outside of city hall, Strickland meets with state leaders and has traveled across the state to meet with individual legislators in their home districts to extol the virtues of preserving local authority and promote the restoration of the historic state-shared sales tax relationship. Strickland has cultivated vital relationships advocating not just for the best interests of Memphis or the state's largest cities but all municipalities in Tennessee.

Known for his ability to speak plainly and voice disagreement without being disagreeable, Strickland has earned the demonstrated

respect and cooperation of Tennessee's political leadership. He freely invests his own time and energy to build relationships that he then shares to the benefit of other municipalities.

A strong, compassionate municipal leader who is dedicated to the citizens he serves, Strickland has elevated his city and reflected well on municipal government and public service as a whole. By actively working to foster greater cooperation, consensus, and unity in the Memphis region and beyond, he has also forged relationships and nurtured alliances that have positioned him to educate others about shared municipal issues that has benefited not only TML but all municipalities in Tennessee.

The inaugural winners of the TML Municipal Champion award in 2022 were Tennessee State Sen. Richard Briggs (R-Knoxville) and Tennessee State Rep. Dale Carr (R-Sevierville).

Executive Director Hayes gives annual report to membership

As part of the General Business Meeting held in conjunction with Annual Conference, TML Executive Director Anthony Haynes delivered the following remarks.

Board and TML members, it is an honor to lead the operations of this organization, to explore ways to make our League stronger and better positioned for the future, and to advocate on your

In brief, I'd like to discuss a few key accomplishments since last year's annual meeting in Gatlinburg, and provide a preview of some of our future endeavors and

Legislative Engagement

There is arguably no greater undertaking of the League as far as resources and importance, than legislative advocacy. I'm very proud of our government relations team. This team identified 251 bills that could impact municipalities and had the potential to move this session, of which 100 had fiscal notes totaling more than \$208 million. Through their engagement, 66 bills failed to move forward. Of the 33 that did, there was a cost avoidance or hold harmless of almost \$218 million, or 204 to 1 ROI (return on investment) for what our members pay in dues.

Member Benefits

In recent weeks, we softlaunched our Member Benefits Program. Our initial partners include Everywhere.care, Wilson County Motors - Buick, Chevy, GMC, Hyundai, and Nashville Superspeedway. We are in discussions with Kubota. These and other future program companies provide the officials and employees of TML member cities significant discounts on their products and events. We have big plans for this area, so stay tuned.

Financial Position, Efficiencies

Our financial position is strong. We continue to make reductions in our spending, not only to maintain a balanced budget but to make key expenditures that benefit our members. Since our time



Anthony Haynes TML Executive Director

together last year in Gatlinburg, we have made additional reductions in our spending of \$189,000, bringing a three-year total to \$335,000 or just over 10% of our total budget. Our sponsorships have grown in number by 25% in the last year. **Going Forward**

Our goals are simple. One, to be better at what we do and work more efficiently. Two, constantly add value to being a member of TML. And three, strengthen our voice and visibility. Not only within the halls of state government, but with opinion leaders and citizens all across Tennessee. A stronger TML, means stronger cities. And that's good for Tennessee.

Providing Leadership Finally, our most important goal – for all of us – is providing leadership. Recently, the Comptroller put out flyer "Tennessee on the Rise." Our state's population has topped 7 million, bumping Massachusetts as the 15th largest in the nation. With that comes growth challenges, diverse expectations and finding support for getting things done. Our expertise - our cities and partners – is needed now more than any other time in our state's history.

We must ensure the people that live in our cities, that manage our cities, and are elected and entrusted with the well-being of our cities, are listened to by our government on matters impacting our cities.

Expert panelists discuss future of electric power in Tennessee



Electric industry experts discuss the future of the utility at the Tennessee Municipal League's 83rd Annual Conference in Nashville. From left to right: TVA Regional Vice President Justin Mairehofer, Tennessee Electric Cooperative CEO Mike Knotts, Tennessee Municipal Power Association CEO Brian Solsbee, TML President and Farragut Mayor Ron Williams, and TML Executive Director Anthony Haynes.

BY KATE COIL

TML Communications Specialist

As electric vehicles become more prominent, technology changes, and consumer demand increases, the ways in which electric power and energy are both generated and utilized are changing

Industry leaders Tennessee Municipal Power Association CEO Brian Solsbee, Tennessee Electric Cooperative CEO Mike Knotts, and TVA Regional Vice President Justin Mairehofer discussed the challenges being faced and how municipalities can be part of the solution at the TML 83rd Annual Conference in Nashville.

Mairehofer said TVA is charged by the federal government with meeting certain standards.

"As far as reliability and generation, it helps when your

mission is written in Congressional statute," Mairehofer said. "It makes it easy because you know what it is you're supposed to be doing. That mission is what we call the three E's. Those are providing affordable, reliable electricity; supporting environmental stewardship; and promoting economic development. The way I like to think about it is we keep the lights glowing, the river flowing, and the valley growing."

Since the pandemic, TVA has been feeling the region's population growth.

"That growth in the southeast is tremendous," Mairehofer said. "A lot of people across the country are moving to the southeast. With industry and residential customers – we're seeing an explosion of growth, and with that growth comes an enormous amount of demand on our system. We had a

decade of flat load growth, but in 2020 things started to change a little bit. We have increased our load by 1,000 megawatts since 2020. That's about 500,000 homes that we deliver electricity to. We are expecting that load growth to continue for the next three to five years. So, we have to build generation."

As TVA moves forward, Mairehofer said the agency is looking into sources of power.

"If we could figure a way to make electrons out of humidity, we'd probably do it," he said with a laugh. "We like nuclear. We like gas. We still have coal running. We love hydro. Hydro power is the cheapest fuel because rain is free. Getting 10-15% from hydropower every year is powerful, and it's a cheap source of generation for

Knotts said electric cooper-See ELECTRIC on Page 4

NEWS ACROSS TENNESSEE



BRISTOL

Seaman Corporation officials announced the company will invest \$30 million and bring 58 new jobs by building a new 350,000-square-foot facility in Bristol. Located at Select Tennessee Certified Site Partnership Park II, the facility will be the company's fourth location in Bristol. The expansion will allow Seaman Corp to better meet its customer demands for roofing, architectural, military and industrial coated fabrics while also adding new hot melt coating equipment. Upon completion of the project, the number of employees at Seaman Corp in Bristol will total at 170. Seaman Corporation has been in the industrial coated fabric and textiles industry for nearly 75 years. Today, the family-owned company has multiple facilities across the U.S. that manufacture and distribute Seaman Corp's products globally.

CLEVELAND

Amaero International Limited will invest \$54.9 million and create 105 new jobs by establishing its first U.S. facility in Cleveland. Through the project, the titanium alloy manufacturer will locate its flagship advanced manufacturing, research and development (R&D) and global headquarters. Once complete, the 130,000-square-foot facility at Spring Branch Industrial Park will serve as Amaero's corporate hub for its titanium alloy powder production, advanced manufacturing and R&D sector. Amaero's customers include aerospace and defense prime contractors, as well as medical and industrial companies. Amaero International Limited was founded in 2013, in Victoria, Australia, and has closely collaborated with premier institutions, including Monash University, Monash Centre Additive Manufacturing (MCAM) and Australia's national science agency, CSIRO. The company's commercialization efforts have focused on metal 3D printing of complex components for the aerospace and defense, space, medical and other industrial businesses.

KNOXVILLE

More than 4,100 South Knoxville homes and business have been connected to new fiber internet services after the Knoxville Utilities Board most recent expansion. Officials including Mayor Indya Kincannon, Knoxville City Councilmember Tommy Smith, and KUB President and CEO Gabriel J. Bolas II celebrated the new connection, which provides access to many citizens who were previously not able to access the faster speeds provided by fiber. This expansion is part of a more

than \$700 million project expected to take seven years for KUB to complete. The first phase of the expansion project is expected to be complete in the fall of 2023.

LAWRENCEBURG and STANTON

Magna will construct the first two supplier facilities at Blue Oval City in Stanton as well as a stamping and assembly facility in Lawrenceburg, investing more than \$790 million and creating approximately 1,300 new jobs in the state. Ford's on-site supplier park will allow for vertical integration that helps ensure efficient production at Blue Oval City, which will be capable of producing 500,000 electric trucks a year at full production. Magna will supply Ford's Blue Oval City with battery enclosures, truck frames and seats for the automaker's second-generation electric truck. Magna's two facilities at Blue Oval City supplier park include a new 800,000-square-foot frame and battery enclosures facility and a 140,000-square-foot seating facility. The battery enclosures facility will join one of Magna's sister plants in Ontario, Canada, which is currently producing battery enclosures for the Ford F-150 Lightning. The seating facility will produce polyurethane foam and assemble and sequence "just-in-time" (JIT) complete seats. Magna will employ approximately 750 employees at its battery enclosures facility and 300 employees at its new seating plant. In addition, Magna will construct a new 400,000-squarefoot stamping and assembly plant at the Team Lawrence Commerce Park - West, a Select Tennessee Certified Site in Lawrenceburg, Tennessee, that will produce truck frames. Magna will employ roughly 250 employees at this location. Production at all three plants is scheduled to begin in 2025.

LEBANON

The Lebanon City Council has approved more than \$75,000 to turn a former fire department station into an activity center for local military veterans. The city has been working with local veterans' groups since last year to turn the former Lebanon Fire Department station at 112 Hartmann drive into a facility that will meet their needs. Of the \$75,420 set aside for the project, \$55,000 will go to improvements while the rest will be used for maintenance, contractual services, and stormwater fees. Officials with local veterans group said they hope the new facility will get younger veterans both involved with services and programs they need as well as connect them to older veterans in the area.

Kingsport dedicates boardroom in honor of former mayor, vice mayor



Named for Mayor Ruth C. Montgomery and Vice Mayor Richard Watterson, families attended an unveiling celebration at Kingsport City Hall to rename the boardroom to the Montgomery-Watterson Boardroom. A plaque hangs in the boardroom detailing their dedicated public service endeavors. In addition to serving as Kingsport's mayor, Montgomery served as a state representative, assistant House minority leader, state senator, and Sullivan County Commissioner. Watterson was the first African American elected to the Kingsport Board of Mayor and Aldermen and served on the board from 1973 until 1997.

Greeneville purchases new fire truck



The town of Greeneville has welcomed a 2023 Sutphen rescue pumper truck to the Greeneville Fire Department's inventory. Used by the Ohio-based emergency services manufacturer as a demonstration vehicle, the new engine was made available to the Greeneville Fire Department at a 2021 price, saving the department an estimated \$157,000. The town was able to use a nearly \$650,000 Assistance to Firefighters Grants Program (AFG) grant to secure the truck. With the average build time for a new fire engine is roughly two to three years, Greeneville fire officials said they were glad to get a new truck sooner than expected. The truck will be housed at the recently opened Greeneville Fire Station No. 2 and will replace a 1985 Pierce engine with years of service to the department. The new engine has a 1,500 gallon-per-minute pump capacity. It holds 1,000 gallons of water and 30 gallons of foam.

LOUDON

Hanon Systems will establish a new manufacturing presence in Loudon, investing \$170 million and creating 600 jobs at the Huntingdon Park. The Hanon Systems operation in Loudon will supply thermal solutions for electrified mobility to automakers serving the North America market. Headquartered in South Korea for more than three decades, Hanon Systems is a leading supplier of thermal and energy management solutions for the automotive industry. Its offering

includes heating ventilation and air conditioning; powertrain cooling; compressor; fluid transport; and electronics and fluid pressure. Today, Hanon Systems employs more than 22,000 people across 21 countries.

MEMPHIS

RedDOT Corporation officials announced the company will invest \$18 million to expand its manufacturing and distribution operations in Memphis, creating 50 new jobs. The company will add approximately 175,000 square feet

of space to its existing facility to help meet increased customer demand and market growth in the Southeastern U.S. Originally founded in Seattle, Wash., in 1965, RedDOT Corporation manufactures premium mobile HVAC units and components for heavy-duty commercial and military vehicles. The company currently has facilities in North America, Europe and Asia. With the additional 50 new jobs in Memphis, RedDOT Corporation will employ nearly 100 Tennesseans.

Violent Crime Intervention grants awarded to 179 Tennessee cities

Nearly 180 municipal police departments will share in more than \$93.5 million in Violent Crime Intervention grants being distributed to law enforcement agencies across Tennessee.

VCIP grants are administered through the state's Office of Criminal Justice Programs (OJCP), which utilizes grant monies to support innovative projects statewide in efforts to reduce criminal activity, provide services for victims of crime and promote overall enhancement of the criminal justice system in Tennessee. OJCP services include technical assistance, training, strategic planning, interagency coordination, research, assessments, and program facilitation, development, and administration.

A total of 21 municipal police departments will share in the \$50,214,610 in competitive VCIP grants, including the Bartlett Police Department, Bristol Police Department, Cleveland Police Department, Cookeville Police Department, Covington Police Department, Dickson Police Department, Dyersburg Police Department, Elizabethton Police Department, Gatlinburg Police Department, Hendersonville Police Department, Jackson Police Department, Jefferson City Police Department, Knoxville Police Department, McMinnville Police Department, Mosheim Police Department, Oak Ridge Police Department, Savannah Police Department, Sharon Police Department, Soddy-Daisy Police Department, Sweetwater Police Department, and Tazewell Police Department.

Additionally, 179 municipal police departments will share in the \$43,389,356 in formula grants awarded as part of the fiscal year 2023 VCIF

Departments awarded in East Tennessee include Alcoa, Athens, Atoka, Bean Station, Blaine, Bristol, Calhoun, Caryville, Chattanooga, Cleveland, Clinton, Collegedale, Dandridge, Dayton, Dunlap, East Ridge, Elizabethton, Englewood, Etowah, Gatlinburg, Graysville, Greeneville, Jacksboro, Jamestown, Jasper, Jefferson City, Johnson City, Jonesborough, Kimball, Kingsport, Kingston, Kingston Springs, Knoxville, LaFollette, Lenoir City, Lookout

Mountain, Loudon, Madisonville, Maryville, McMinnville, Morristown, Mosheim, Mountain City, New Market, New Tazewell, Newport, Norris, Oak Ridge, Oliver Springs, Pigeon Forge, Red Bank, Rockwood, Rocky Top, Rutledge, Sevierville, Soddy-Daisy, South Pittsburg, Spring City, Sweetwater, Tazewell, Tellico Plains, Townsend, Tusculum, Unicoi, Vonore, Wartburg, White Pine, and

Awards granted to police departments in Middle Tennessee include Alexandria, Algood, Ashland City, Baxter, Belle Meade, Berry Hill, Brentwood, Carthage, Centerville, Chapel Hill, Clarksville, Clifton, Cookeville, Cowan, Crossville, Cumberland City, Decherd, Dickson, Eagleville, Erin, Estill Springs,

Fairview, Fayetteville, Franklin, Gainesboro, Gallatin, Goodletsville, Gordonsville, Greenbrier, Hendersonville, Huntland, La Vergne, Lafayette, Lawrenceburg, Lebanon, Lewisburg, Manchester, Memphis, Milan, Millersville, Mt. Juliet, Mt. Pleasant, Nashville, Nolensville, Portland, Red Boiling Springs, Shelbyville, Smithville, Smyrna, Sparta, Spring Hill, Springfield, Tracy City, Tullahoma, Wartrace, Watertown, Waverly, Waynesboro, White Bluff, and Winchester.

For West Tennessee, departments receiving grants include Adamsville, Alamo, Bartlett, Bells, Bolivar, Brighton, Brownsville, Bruceton, Collierville, Covington, Dresden, Dyer, Dyersburg, Gadsden, Gallaway, Germantown, Gleason, Greenfield, Halls, Henderson, Henry, Hollow Rock, Humboldt, Huntingdon, Jackson, Kenton, Lexington, Martin, Mason, McKenzie, Munford, New Johnsonville, Newbern, Paris, Parsons, Powell's Crossroads, Ridgley, Ripley, Rossville, Rutherford, Savannah, Scotts Hill, Selmer, Sharon, South Fulton, Tiptonville, Toone, Trenton, Trimble, and Whiteville.

For a complete list of award recipients and funding amounts, visit here.

WAUFORD

J. R. Wauford & Company, Consulting Engineers, Inc.

Franklin's Stuckey receives top city manager award from TCMA

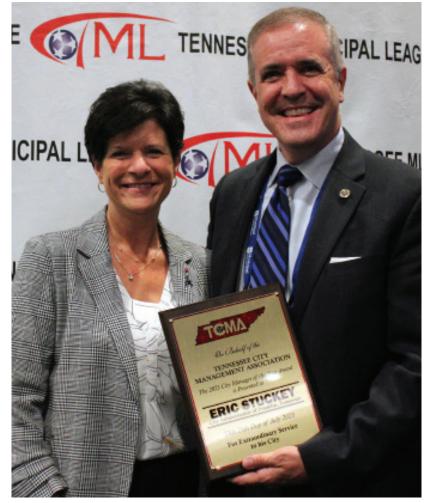
With leadership that goes beyond the municipality in which he serves, Franklin City Administrator Eric Stuckey works not only for the improvement of his city but also for the improvement of the city management profession, dedicating his time and efforts to serving his current colleagues and encouraging the city managers of

It is for this reason that the Tennessee City Management Association (TCMA) has recognized Eric Stuckey as its City Manager of the Year for 2023. Stuckey was presented the award Tuesday, July 25, at the 83rd Annual Conference of the Tennessee Municipal League (TML) held at the Renaissance Convention Center in Nashville.

During his more than 30 years of public service - including nearly 15 as Franklin's city administrator Stuckey has held numerous roles including as assistant county administration for Hamilton County, Ohio; assistant city manager and budget director for Elgin, Ill.; and in the office of management and budget for Dayton, Ohio.

Franklin Mayor Ken Moore lauded Stuckey for his dedication to bettering Franklin.

"I have had the honor to work with Eric for almost 15 years," Mayor Ken Moore said. "For over 12 of those years I have served as mayor and been his direct report. Eric's public service career spans over 30 years. His service in local government management has encompassed many remarkable opportunities in varying roles.



TCMA President and Paris City Manager Kim Foster, left, presents Franklin City Administrator Eric Stuckey, right, with the 2023 TCMA City Manager of the Year Award

Having served on both the city and county side has given him a unique perspective in his leadership style and accomplishments."

In Franklin, Stuckey oversees nearly 800 employees and works with the city's Board of Mayor and Alderman to see that Franklin prospers and grows.

helped develop a ten-year financial plan for capital investments and operations, worked with the BOMA to develop a series of financial policies for the city's longterm strategic plan, developed a regional partnership for a public safety radio system, developed and implemented a 30-year integrated water plan. He also delivered on important community investment programs including a new police headquarters, two new fire stations, and an upgraded and expanded water treatment plant.

For these and other achievements, Franklinhas been recognized both statewide and nationally. Under Stuckey's leadership, Franklin has received numerous accolades including being named the National Civic League's All-American City, Business Week's Top 50 Cities for Small Business Start-Ups, an LEED Silver City Designation, and has been named ten times as one of Money magazine's Best Small Places to Live. Franklin has also received numerous awards from TML, TCMA, and five awards for top results from the National City

In addition to his contributions to Franklin, in his private life he has served as a leader in organizations such as the United Way, Williamson County Convention and Visitors Bureau, and at his church, Christ United Methodist Church in Franklin.

Beyond Franklin, Stuckey also works to better the city management profession as a whole. He has served in leadership positions with TML and is involved with TCMA, where he served as president from 2019-2020 and on a number of committees. Stuckey

has also served leadership roles with ICMA, including as one of its Southeast Region Vice President.

Stuckey has also taken time to help encourage tomorrow's municipal professionals. He has worked to establish an annual management fellowship program in the city of Franklin that recruits new talent to both the profession and Tennessee.

One of Stuckey's colleagues and current president of TCMA, Paris City Manager Kim Foster said Stuckey takes time to mentor both his colleagues and those interested in city management.

"Since the day I joined TCMA Eric has encouraged me and served as a mentor," Foster said. "I could tell early in my association with Eric that he was a city manager held to the highest of standards, was fair and objective, extremely intelligent and, most of all, was willing to help in any way he could. Eric is always pleasant and willing to offer his guidance."

Of course, Stuckey's most important role is a husband and father. Stuckey has been married to Sunset Middle School literacy coach Lisa for 33 years and the couple have two children. His daughter Beth is an occupational therapist in Alexandria, Va., and his son Scott will start his residency in emergency medicine at Ohio State University.

Outside of work, he enjoys sports, exercise, reading, and travel, including summiting Mount Kilimanjaro with his brothers and claiming the mirror ball trophy in the Nashville Dancing with the Stars competition.

Red Bank's Ledford presented 2023 Murphy Snoderly Award

By LISA HOOD SKINNER Tennessee Public Works

A city of Red Bank heavy equipment operator with more than three decades of Public Works service and a "never quit" attitude, Johnny Ledford is the winner of this year's TCAPWA Murphy Snoderly Award.

Greg Tate, Red Bank Public Works Director calls Ledford a "Jack of All Trades" who is a true asset to the city and "the type of employee you wish you had an army of."

"Ledford began his municipal service with Red Bank as a parttime laborer installing sewer lines. After approximately one year of part-time service, he was hired as a regular employee of the city. With his 31 years of municipal service with the city, he has progressed from a laborer to a heavy-equipment operator," Tate said.

"What truly sets him apart is his ability to complete any task presented to him," he said. "Whether it is carpentry, masonry, welding, operating a bucket truck from heights to driving commercial vehicles, he has a drive to succeed."

In fact, Tate said that Ledford "has become a utility player over the years and is often used to fill in for critical positions such as a solid waste driver operating garbage trucks and brush trucks in others' absence. He is TDEC Level 1 certified in Storm Water Management and he can perform the duties of any other job that is needed and critical for the city's daily operations."

"He is well respected by his peers as well as his supervisor To this end, Stuckey has

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Red Bank's Johnny Ledford was the recipient of the 2023 Murphy Snoderly Award given by the TCAPWA at TML's 83rd Annual Conference in Nashville. Ledford has been with the city of Red Bank for more than 30 years. From left to right, TNPWA Chapter Administrator and Pigeon Forge Director of Public Works Mark Miller, Chattanooga Public Works Constituent Services Coordinator and TNPWA Vice President Kimberly Strong, Red Bank Heavy Equipment Operator Johnny Ledford, Red Bank Public Works Director Greg Tate, and Red Bank Vice Mayor Stefanie Dalton.

and myself. He is a great benefit for municipal operations and one person who is able to get the job done," Tate said.

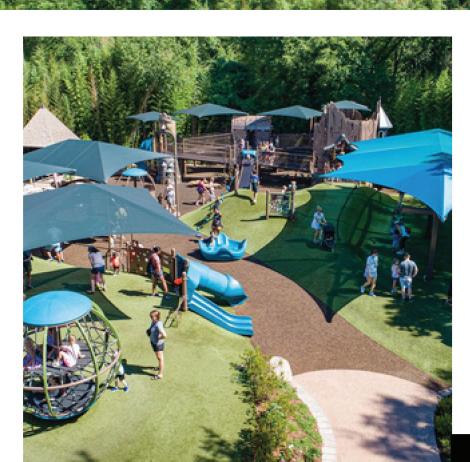
Each year the Tennessee Chapter presents the Murphy Snoderly Award to a deserving Public Works employee within the state. The recipient of this award must be an operation level or "working person" employee. Murphy Snoderly, for whom the award is named, was a long-time engineering and Public Works consultant for the state Municipal Technical Advisory

Snoderly felt the working person, the man or woman who day

in and day out picks up garbage or patches streets or performs dozens of other chores at a relatively low pay scale, should be recognized for dedication and service to the community.

The award is presented annually at the Tennessee Municipal League (TML) Conference, held

this year in Nashville at the Renaissance Downtown Nashville Hotel. It was presented July 25 to Ledford by Kimberly Strong, TCAPWA Vice President and Awards Chair, and Mark Miller, TCAPWA Chapter Administrator at the TML Awards Breakfast.







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Electric industry leaders discuss EVs, future of utility at TML Conference

ELECTRIC from Page 1

atives are also seeing changes brought by expanding populations. At present, he said all of TVA's power plants operating at full capacity at once would generate about 32,000 megawatts of power.

"This is a different world in the electric power industry," Knotts said. "You've not really had to think that much about what we do on a daily basis, and we take a lot of pride in that. When you flip the switch, the lights come on, and you don't think for a second that there was an army of people and machinery and — what many people have said is the greatest invention of all time — central station electric service. That may be changing over time."

Solsbee said investments are already being made to counteract the rapid growth the region is experiencing.

"No one in here was happy when we had to talk about blackouts," he said. "We are working to make sure we understand what it takes to keep the lights on. We have 3,000 megawatts under construction that will be coming on line so we don't fall short of the growth. It's very hard and challenging as we've had a flat load growth and you don't want to overbuild. There is a lot of cost and expenses there. Now the growth is starting to take off again."

With multiple major automakers switching primarily to EV models within the next decade, the electric industry is also considering this impact to the grid. Knotts said that even those who are adamant about keeping their gas vehicles have to recognize how the EV revolution is going to change things.

"The electric vehicle transition is real, and it's not something to fear," Knotts said. "This is coming from a guy who is a car enthusiast... I'm an eternal combustion enthusiast, and I'm an electric vehicle enthusiast. I think for the considerable future we're going to have a world of both. Here's some statistics for you: Last year 6% of new vehicles sold in America were electric vehicles. For a guy who likes EVs, likes how they drive, and sells electricity, that's a good thing. The flip side of that is 94% of the vehicles sold in this country were internal combustion engine vehicles that will be on the road for the next 20 to 30 years. This transition might be slower than those trying to stoke the fears of partisan politics may tell you, but it's also very real. Next year, that 6% may go to 8% then 10% the year after."

Knotts said the two main questions he gets about EVs are where vehicles will be charged and how much it will cost to charge them. He said there are already 62 million charging locations across the U.S. alone – the average family home. While there will be charging opportunities while traveling, Knotts said the majority of EV drivers will do their charging at home.

"For the time being, we hope you do that charging at night because literally at night there is more capacity on the electric grid," he said. "The potential for EV growth is fueling this local growth and demand we are looking at. A lot of it has to do with timing. Electricity is the one thing you purchase where when you consume that product makes a big difference in the cost of producing that project. Until we can change things technologically, we have to produce the electricity that turns the lights on at a power plant right then and transmitting it there instantaneously."

Because the power is instant, Knotts said there could be challenges in capacity. Having vehicles charging at night when most people are not using other sources of power like their lights or appliances will help reduce strain on the grid. He said the two things that will change are habits in how we drive our vehicles and the cost. Instead, charging overnight will allow people to have a full fuel tank every morning when they wake up. Fueling vehicles at home will also cost a third of what gasoline does.

Solsbee said some areas of the country will adopt electric vehicles faster than others. With major economic investments coming from Tennessee automakers, he said EVs may have other economic impacts closer to home for municipalities

"As city officials, you are happiest when your folks are right there in town and don't drive out of town to go to work or dine out," Solsbee said. "If you stop and think about how many people drive more than 60 miles to work each way, that's a long way. The thought is let's get every household owing and driving one EV and then over the next 10 to 15 years, technology will be better."

As charging technology improves, Solsbee said the time to charge at convenience stores and other public places will reduce. At present, a fast charger can generate as much power as three fast-food restaurants, but Solsbee said how that power is used is differently.

"A McDonald's generates about 50 kilowatt hours and your average fast charger generates about 175 kilowatt hours," he said. "When I provide the transformer for McDonald's, they always have the air on, the cooker going, and the load factor is much better situation to the consumer. The fast charger sits there idle until someone charges for 10 to 15 minutes then the load factor goes back to zero."

Mairehofer said, from a power supply perspective, EVs are not going to be major disruptors of providing power.

"Today, there are 40,000 electric vehicles on Tennessee Valley Roadways,"



Justin Mairehofer Regional Vice President, TVA

"With industry and residential customers — we're seeing an explosion of growth, and with that growth comes an enormous amount of demand on our system. We expect that load growth to continue for the next three to five years. So, we have to build generation."

Mairehofer said. "If we go to 500,000 electric vehicles, it's going to increase TVA's load by a whopping 1%. TVA is ready to support 250,000 electric vehicles on the road by 2028-2029."

During the December blackouts in 2023, Mairehofer said TVA's load was about 32,000 megawatts. A typical night for TVA, even during the summer with peak temperatures, is between 12,000-18,000 megawatts, which is half of what they see during the day.

"Now, at 5 p.m. on a 98-degree day when everyone rolls home, crank up their air conditioners and run their dishwashers is a different story," he said. "With all your other household electric appliances like your water heater, cell phone, and others is when our load is at a minimum."

With the development of the TN Fast Charge Network, Mairehofer said fast-charging stations will be every 50 miles. At present, there are 150,000 gas stations in the U.S. and 125,000 electric vehicle charging stations. While Mairehofer said there is work to do on adding more fast-charge locations, he believes more homes being built with electric charging ability and as communities add charging options, there will be more confidence in electric vehicles.

One of the biggest challenges for the electric industry is meeting the demand for electricity and changing technology will simultaneously following obligatory mandates and regulations. Solsbee said many electric utilities are switching to smarter networks known as "self-healing" power grids, which can do real-time troubleshooting of problems, even during events unforeseen by humans.

"Obviously, being short of power is never an option," he said. "We should never have to worry about blackouts or lack of power. The system is robust, and local utilities spend a lot of money to maintain that system, whether it's new technology like smart meters and smart grids or just being out there doing tree trimming. Those things are always going to be there. It's a lot easier to keep the lights on when you have technology employed."

With many companies – especially those headquartered overseas in places like Europe – wanting to meet certain green energy standards, Solsbee and Mairehofer both said communities that have solar farms and other types of alternative energy generation can utilize how they get their energy as a form of corporate recruitment.

Knotts said there has never been so much pressure for change in how the electric grid works, but supply must always meet the demand of the public.

"There has never been more pressure for change, but the brutal truth we have to deal with is politics can never trump physics," Knotts said. "No matter what a Congress or a local city council may say thou shalt do, there are physics involved here. Electrons move in a path based on physics, not on politics. We are in a place as an industry right now where politics is driving into and attempting to change physics, which is just not possible. We are trying to adapt our business to meet those political goals, many of which are laudable. I'm not insulting those political goals in any way, shape or form, but the way we get to those political goals is unknown at some point. They depend on technologies that do not exist or only exist in small-scale, pilot-type applications."

While he doesn't expect coal-fired plants to ever be built again, Knotts said he does expect options like new nuclear, solar, wind power, and natural gas to bridge the gap between what technology is available now and the future technology that will meet the energy goals of the future.

Mairehofer said energy needs to be seen as a regional issue rather than a political issue

"When the lights are out, customers are typically not calling in and asking if we use coal or gas or nuclear," he said. "They are



Brian Solsbee CEO, TN Municipal Power Assoc

"Obviously, being short of power is never an option. We should never have to worry about blackouts or lack of power. The system is robust, and local utilities spend a lot of money to maintain that system, whether it's new technology like smart meters and smart grids. It's a lot easier to keep the lights on when you have technology employed."



Mike Knotts, CEO TN Electric Coop

"There has never been more pressure for change, but the brutal truth we have to deal with is politics can never trump physics. No matter what a Congress or a local city council may say thou shalt do, there are physics involved here. Electrons move in a path based on physics, not on politics"



Hydroelectric power, such as that generated here at Center Hill Dam, is one of the many ways that electricity is created for use by households across Tennessee. Because of its low carbon footprint, hydroelectricity makes Tennessee an attractive place to locate for many companies who are looking to meet green standards of operation.

asking when are you going to turn my lights back on. When it comes to new technologies, TVA is looking at anything and everything. We think small, modular nuclear reactors can potentially play a role in our nation's energy future, but it has to be of benefit to the country. We also have the only site in the country – the Clinch River Site by Oak Ridge – that is primed and ready to go for some advanced nuclear reactions... Browns Ferry, Sequoyah, and Watts Barr nuclear plants run 24/7, 365. Nuclear is huge, carbon-free, and clean. It's a great resource for us."

TVA is also looking to generate 10,000 megawatts of solar power by 2035 with a goal of 5,000 megawatts of carbon-free energy including solar already being bid out. Mairehofer said there is also great potential for the hydroelectricity generated by Chattanooga's Raccoon Mountain Pumped-Storage Plant, which can generate 16,000 megawatts and has been dubbed the world's biggest battery. "We have to build generation, and we have to put steel on the ground," he said. "Gas is hugely important to TVA, but there is a lot of opposition. I often reference the BANANA crowd: Build absolutely nothing anywhere near anything. We have to face that and go through the process as a federal

agency because there are things we have to do legally. We are growing in the Tennessee Valley, so the sooner we can build generation the better."

Knotts encouraged city leaders to develop one-on-one relations with their local power utility before it becomes time to start making major decisions. He said most cooperatives in Tennessee are on a first-name basis with their local leaders and encouraged cultivating those relationships. Mairehofer said local control is a central tenet of public control and encouraged city leaders to defer to their local utilities and cooperatives for guidance.

Solsbee said he advises municipal officials to not delay in preparing for the EV changeover.

"If you don't build it today, you'll have to build it tomorrow," he said. "The cost jumps over the years, so if you wait 10 years, it will cost you more. Each and every one of you has the opportunity right now with all the grant opportunities out there from the federal government. I suggest you look at those as an opportunity to have a city-owned charger. If you build that, you retain those credits and can use those for economic development and recruiting."



TVA's Watts Barr Nuclear Plant near Spring City is capable of providing 1,150 megawatts of electricity from its two reactors. TVA officials believe nuclear power is one method of generating electricity that will be explored further in the future, especially as new technology makes nuclear operations smaller and safer.



PEOPLE

Liam Collins has been hired as the communications manager in the office of Chattanooga Mayor Tim Kelly. Collins pre-



Liam Collins

viously served as a senior reporter for Chattanooga Local News 3 and prior to that worked as a bureau chief and multimedia journalist with WITN News in Jacksonville, N.C. Collins a bachelor's degree in journalism and political science from Elon University in North Carolina where he served at the university's news network as multimedia journalist, morning news anchor, and reporter. Collins also served as a communications intern in the office of U.S. Rep. Mark Waller.

Tony Day has been appointed to the Lafayette City Council to fill a term vacated by former councilman Jeff Hudson, who had to re-



Tony Day

sign his position after moving out of the city limits. Day was voted unanimously into the vacant seat. Day operated a business in Lafayette for 27 years before selling it.

Lexi Dearborn has been selected as the new marketing coordinator for the city of Columbia's Tourism and Marketing Department.



Lexi Dearborn

The newly created position will focus on executing marketing strategies for Visit Columbia as well as promote the city and its departments to better communicate with and to serve citizens. The position is being funded through ARP dollars provided by the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development over a five-year period. Dearborn holds a bachelor's degree with a focus in marketing from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville. She brings agency experience in digital marketing that includes social media, graphic design, email communications, blogging, and online community engagement.

Ervin Dinsmore, retired public safety official with the city of Chattanooga, died July 14, at the age of 83. Dinsmore worked for



Ervin Dinsmore

the city of Chattanooga from 1965 until 1999. He worked his way up through the ranks to be named police chief in 1989 and then was elected fire and police commissioner for the city. A graduate of Chattanooga's Central High School in 1958, Dinsmore studied at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and

was a graduate of the FBI National Academy. He was active in the Forgotten Child Fund created by Chattanooga's fire and police departments to provide gifts for needy children.

Mark Foulks has been named the new chief of the Mt. Juliet Fire Department and will serve as the third chief in the depart-



Mark Foulks

ment's history. Foulks brings 30 years of experience to the role, including serving as Murfreesboro Fire Rescue from 2015 to 2022 as well as chief of the Greeneville Fire Department, and assistant fire chief for the Knoxville Fire Department. He began his career as a firefighter in Knoxville in 1990. Foulks will take over the role in Mt. Juliet following the retirement of Chief Jamie Luffman in March.

Lt. Jeffrey Norman, a 20-year veteran of the Memphis Fire Department, died from injuries sustained while responding to a fire in the



Jeffrey Norman

early morning hours of July 18. Three other Memphis firefighters were also injured during the incident where the four men became trapped inside a South Memphis residence while battling a blaze. Norman is the first Memphis firefighter to die fighting a blaze in more than 20 years. Norman began his career as a firefighter with MFD in 2002.

David Windrow, fire chief for the town of Nolensville, was named Fire Chief of the Year by the Tennessee Fire Chief's Association



David Windrow

(TFCA). The award is the most prestigious honor given to fire chiefs in the state, reflecting leadership in both the fire service and the community. Windrow has been with the Nolensville Fire Department since December 2020 and is the first fire chief for the town's department. He has worked to both create and build the Nolensville Fire Department through hiring staff, establishing policies and procedures, and overseeing the purchase of a new fire engine and land being developed into two new fire stations. Windrow also serves as co-chair of the Tennessee Ultimate Firefighter competition, on the Firefighting Personnel Standard and Education Commission, is the Chairman of the Legislative Committee of Tennessee Fire Chiefs. chairs the fundraising efforts for the Fire Service Coalition, and has recently been appointed to the Board of Trustees for the Southern Hills Hospital in Nashville.

Three State House elections, one primary election held in August

Three special elections and one special primary were held on Aug. 3 to fill vacant seats in the Tennessee State House.

Republican Timothy Hill defeated Democrat Lori Love for the House District 3 seat that covers Johnson County and parts of Carter, Hawkins, and Sullivan

Hill earned 2,655 votes to Love's 907. Hill will take over the seat from Tennessee Rep. Scotty Campbell, who resigned in April.

Hill previously held the District 3 seat from 2013 to 2020 during which time he rose to the position of House Majority Whip. He left the seat in 2020 for an unsuccessful congressional run.

Two ousted lawmakers were also returned to their seats by the voters in Tennessee House races.

Nashville Democrat Justin Jones defeated Republican challenger Laura Nelson 5,218 votes to 1,494 votes in the District 52 race while Memphis Democrat Justin Pearson defeated independent challenger Jeff Johnston 2,439 to 157 votes in the District



Timothy Hill

89 race.

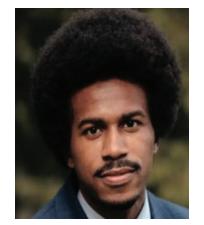
A Democratic primary was also held Aug. 3 for the District 51 seat left vacant by the death of Nashville Democrat Bill Beck.

Community organizer Afytn Behn defeated former Metro Councilmember Anthony Davis for the Democratic nomination with 5,259 votes to 4,579.

Behn will go on to face Republican David C. Hooven in the primary election scheduled for



Justin Jones



Gov. Lee announces leadership transitions

Gov. Bill Lee announced key leadership transitions and appointments in the governor's

Michael Hendrix will succeed Tony Niknejad as policy director, effective Sept. 1, and Elizabeth Lane Johnson will serve as press secretary, effective Aug.14, succeeding Jade Byers, who will serve as senior communications officer.

After more than four years in the administration, Niknejad is stepping down to return to the private sector. Additionally, Alec Richardson has been appointed to serve as a senior advisor to the Governor.

"For more than four years, Tony has played a critical role in the administration's work to strengthen Tennessee's economy, ensure responsible fiscal stewardship of taxpayer dollars and expand educational opportunity for students across the state," said Lee. "I wish him much success in his next chapter and have full confidence that Michael's significant public policy and leadership experience will continue our work to make life better for all

Tennesseans." As policy director since January 2019 and one of the longest-serving members of Lee's team, Niknejad has been instrumental in achieving the Governor's policy agenda and crafted major legislative initiatives, including the Literacy Success Act of 2021 and Tennessee Works Tax Act of 2023. He was also the lead coordinator for the Financial Stimulus Accountability Group (FSAG), a bipartisan group of executive and legislative branch officials convened by Lee to support Tennessee's economy and ensure the responsible stewardship of

federal relief funds. He has also advised the Governor on national policy relations and led coordination with 27 governors' offices during Lee's



Jade Byers



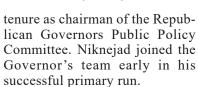
Michael Hendrix



Chrissy Freeland



Tony Niknejad



Michael Hendrix currently serves as special advisor to the Governor. Previously, he was a senior fellow and the director of state and local policy at the Manhattan Institute, as well as the senior director for research and emerging issues at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation. Hendrix attended the College of William & Mary and is a graduate of the University of St. Andrews.

Chrissy Freeland recently assumed the role of senior policy analyst and has served in the Governor's office since November 2020. Freeland previously worked for the Tennessee General Assembly and earned her bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Tennessee,

Elizabeth Lane Johnson will join Lee's communications office as press secretary, and Jade Byers, a longtime member of the Governor's team, will assume the role of senior communications

"Elizabeth's significant media and communications experience will play a key role in our administration's work to serve Tennesseans, and we welcome her to the team," said Lee. "Jade is a dedicated public servant,



Alec Richardson

and I am confident that she will continue to ensure that our key priorities and accomplishments are communicated effectively."

Johnson currently serves as press secretary for Tennessee Attorney General Jonathan Skrmetti. She has deep media and communications experience from her previous roles in broadcast journalism, including morning television anchor and reporter at the ABC affiliate in Nashville, and service with Texas Governor Greg Abbott. Johnson graduated from The University of Alabama with a degree in Communication and Information Sciences and a minor in Political Science.

Jade Byers, currently Lee's press secretary, will assume key strategic communications responsibilities as senior communications officer. Byers has served Lee since his successful primary run in 2018, including her previous roles as deputy press secretary and the director of boards and commissions. Byers earned her bachelor's degree at Belmont University.

Alec Richardson has been appointed to serve as a senior advisor to the Governor and a member of Lee's cabinet, in addition to his current role as the director of external affairs. Richardson earned his bachelor's degree at the University of Tennessee at Martin and has served Lee since his successful primary run in 2018.



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Summer elections held in 12 municipalities

By KATE COIL

TML Communications Specialist

Elections were held in 12 municipalities this summer, including a mayoral run-off in Jackson and a highly contested mayoral race in Nashville.

COWAN

Incumbent Josephine Holman will be joined by newcomer Price Tucker on the Cowan City Council after defeating challenger Tiffany L. Walker for the two open seats in an Aug. 3 election. Tucker led the vote count with 76 followed by Holman with 74 and Walker with 33.

DECHERD

Mary Nell Hess ran unopposed and was elected as mayor of Decherd with 111 complimentary votes in an Aug. 3 election. Hess has been serving as mayor of Decherd since October 2022 after former Mayor Michael Gillespie resigned. Prior to her appointment, Hess served as Decherd's vice mayor.

Two newcomers were also seated on the Decherd Board of Mayor and Aldermen. Larry E. Fraley and Glenn T. Summers defeated fellow challengers Mark Bassett and Anita Bohanan for the two open seats. Fraley led the vote count with 110 followed by Summers with 100, Bohanan with 53, and Bassett with 20. Fraley and Summers will take the seats vacated by Hess and former Vice Mayor Richard Gulley, who resigned in March.

ESTILL SPRINGS

Incumbent Mayor James David Kelley ran unopposed and was re-elected with 51 complimentary votes in Estill Springs' Aug. 3 election. In the Board of Aldermen race, four incumbents also ran unopposed for four open seats. Earl L. Davis led the vote count with 42 followed by Bobby Taylor with 38, Pat Thomas with 33, and Troy L. Jernigan with 29.

GREENEVILLE

Incumbent Ginny Kidwell will be joined by newcomer Tim Ward filling the two open seats in Greeneville's City Council Ward 1 on Aug. 3. They defeated incumbent Kirstin Girton. Ward led the vote count with 403 followed by Kidwell with 343 and Girton with 186.

HUNTLAND

Three incumbents ran unopposed and were re-elected to the seats on the Huntland Board of Mayor and Aldermen on Aug. 3. Troy Gamble led the vote count with 19 followed by Ken Pendleton and Harry E. Allen III both with 15.

JACKSON

Incumbent Scott Conger defeated challenger Ray Condray with Conger earning 5,304 votes to Condray's 3,813 in a run-off election. This is the second time Jackson has held a run-off election for the mayoral seat and the second time Conger has run in and won a run-off election for mayor.

LUTTRELL

A municipal election was held in the city of Luttrell on June 6.

Incumbent mayor Jerry Lawson ran unopposed and was re-elected to the seat with 35 complimentary votes.

Newcomer Barry K. Corum will be joining incumbents Kyle Muncey and Lloyd Railey in the three open seats on the Luttrell City Council. Railey led the vote count with 33 followed by Muncey with 29 and Corum with 27.

MCEWEN

The city of McEwen held an election on May 20 where three candidates ran unopposed for three open offices.

Incumbent Brad Rachford ran unopposed for the mayoral seat while fellow incumbents Heather Leegan and Kim Moultire ran unopposed for the alderman-at-large, and Ward 4 alderman seats respectively. Rachford earned 27 complimentary votes while Leegan and Moultire each earned 25 votes.

MILLEDGEVILLE

The city of Milledgeville held an election on May 27.

Incumbent Kevin Essary was re-elected to his seat on the Milledgeville Board of Mayor and Alderman with 14 votes while Perry Neal Smith was elected to the unexpired, two-year term he had been previously appointed to also with 14 votes.

Incumbent and Vice Mayor Brenda Essary had been on the ballot for one of the two open four-year alderman seats, but following the resignation of Milledgeville Mayor Ricky Hollin during the election period, Essary was appointed to his seat.

NASHVILLE

In the city of Nashville's municipal election on Aug. 3, 106 candidates vied for 42 open seats. Run-offs will be held in the mayoral, at-large, and District 11 council seats after not enough votes were secured for candidates

to be seated in those races.

A field of 11 candidates vied for the Nashville mayoral seat left vacant by the decision of current Mayor John Cooper to not seek re-election to a second term. A twelfth candidate, Jim Gingrich, remained on the ballot but dropped out of the race prior to the election. He still received 1,668 votes.

Freddie O'Connell and Alice Rolli took the top two spots and will go to a run-off election on Sept. 14. O'Connell led the vote total with 27,470 followed by Rolli with 20,458, Matthew Wiltshire with 17,186, Jeff Yarbro with 12,343, Heidi Campbell with 8,330, Sharon Hurt with 6,100, Vivian Wilhoite with 4,754, Natisha Brooks with 1,455, Stephanie Johnson with 577, Fran Bush with 503, and Bernie Cox with 321.

Councilmember Angie Henderson defeated incumbent Jim Shulman for Nashville's vice mayor seat. Henderson earned

45,812 votes to Shulman's 42,008. Incumbent Zulfat Suara was the only one of 21 candidates for the five at-large seats on the Nashville City Council who secured enough votes to be seated. The remaining four seats will be determined through a run-off with the eight top candidates: Delishia Porterfield, Burkley Allen, Olivia Hill, Howard Jones, Quin Evans-Segall, Russ Pulley, Chris Cheng, and Jeff Syracuse.

Suara earned 40,538 followed by Porterfield with 34,450, Allen with 30,296, Hill with 24,775, Jones with 25,309, Evans-Segall with 22,627, Pulley with 22,371, Cheng with 21,978, and Syracuse with 20,625. Candidates who did not secure enough votes to move on to the run-off include Marcia Massulla, Yolanda Hockett, Arnold Hayes, Chris Crofton, Ronnie Greer Sr., Tony Chapman, Stephen Downs, Deloris Vandivort, Gilbert Ramirez, Indrani Ray, Jonathan Williamson, and Brian Hellwig.

A run-off will also be held in the District 11 Metro Council race where none of the four candidates earned enough votes to secure the seat.

In District 11, Jeff Eslick, who earned 1,142 votes, will face off against Eric Patton, who earned 1,086 votes in the race. Challengers who didn't earn enough votes

to progress were Sherard Edington and Joe DeLucas. The seat was formerly held by Larry Hagar.

Newcomer Joy Smith Kimbrough defeated four fellow challengers for the District 1 seat previously held by Jonathan Hall. Kimbrough led the vote count with 2,115 followed by Ruby Baker with 681, Rob Harris with 413, Timothy Thompson with 208, and Sean Dailey with 125.

Davette Blalock defeated two challengers for the District 4 seat previously held by Robert Swope. Blalock earned 1,378 votes to challenger Mike Cortese's 1,325 and Brian Sullivan's 543.

Incumbent Sean Parker defeated challenger Terri Laine Klinger with 2,079 to 620 votes in the District 5 race. In District 6, newcomer Clay Clapp earned 2,739 votes to defeat Daniel McDonell (1,982 votes) and Brandes Holcomb (140) votes, for the seat previously held by Brett Withers.

Incumbent Emily Benedict defeated challenger Danny Williams with 3,598 to 486 votes for the District 7 seat while Deonte Harrell defeated fellow challenger Martez Coleman with 865 to 803 votes for the District 8 seat previously held by Nancy VanReece. In District 9, incumbent Tonya Hancock defeated challenger Stephanie Montenegro with 940 votes to 906.

In District 14, newcomer Jordan Huffman defeated fellow challenger R.J. Namula 1,786 to 320 in the seat formerly held by Kevin Rhoten. Newcomer Jeff Gregg also defeated fellow challenger Dan Jones 2,237 to 750 in the District 15 seat previously held by Jeff Syracuse. Incumbent Ginny Welsh held on to her District 16 seat against Alexa Little with 1,000 votes to 906.

For the District 17 seat previously held by Colby Sledge, Terry Vo earned 1,272 votes to defeat fellow challengers Teaka Jackson (697 votes) and Tonya Esquibel (396). Incumbent Tom Cash defeated challenger Angus Purdy 1,836 to 781 for the District 18 seat.

Newcomer Jacob Kupin earned 1,211 votes to defeat fellow challengers Jasper Hendricks III (377) and Jonathan Turner (309) for the District 19 seat previously held by Freddie O'Connell. Likewise, newcomer Rollin Horton earned 1,629 votes to fellow challenger Scott Gillihan's 559 to secure the District 20 seat previously held by Mary Carolyn Roberts.

Incumbent Brandon Taylor secured a win over challenger Jamel Campbell-Gooch with 1,105 votes to 538 in the District 21 race while incumbent Thom Druffel defeated challenger Lisa Williams 3,544-1,500 to keep the District 23 seat.

Newcomer Jeff Prepitt earned 2,438 votes over fellow challenger's David Ackerman's 1,549 and

Rolando Toyos' 297 to earn the District 25 seat previously held by Russ Pulley. David Benton earned 557 votes to fellow challenger Travis London's 366 to take the District 28 seat previously held by Tanaka Vercher.

In District 29, Tasha Ellis earned 911 votes, defeated fellow challengers John Reed (484), Michele Vetter (382), and Jana Mohamed (268) for the seat previously held by Delisha Porterfield. Incumbent John Rutherford defeated challenger Dia Hart with 1,040 to 742 votes in the District 31 seat

Newcomer Sandy Ewin defeated fellow challenger Luke Austin Elliot 2,979-1,416 in the District 34 seat previously held by Angie Henderson while newcomer Jason Spain defeated fellow challenger Carson Smart 2,852-637 for the District 35 seat previously held by Dave Rosenberg.

Seats in 11 districts were uncontested with nine incumbents and two newcomers taking seats. Incumbents re-elected to their seats included Kyonztè Toombs in District 2, Jennifer Gamble in District 3, Erin Evans in District 12, Russ Bradford in District 13, Courtney Johnson in District 25, Robert Nash in District 27, Sandra Sepulveda in District 30, Joy Styles in District 32, and Antoinette W. Lee in District 33. Sheri Weiner returned to the council after running unopposed for the District 22 seat previously held by Gloria Hausser. Brenda Gadd ran unopposed for the District 24 seat previously held by Kathleen Murphy.

SWEETWATER

Amunicipal election was held in Sweetwater on June 8. Incumbent Sam Moser and Alan Richeson will be joined by newcomer JoAnna Jinks on the Sweetwater City Commission after defeating challengers Branahm L. Lovingood and Cotton Upton.

Moser led the vote count with 370 followed by Richeson with 309, Jinks with 266, Lovingood with 240, and Upton with 182 votes.

WINCHESTER

Newcomer Sean Crabtree defeated challengers Steve Cagley and David A. Marlowe for the open mayoral seat in Winchester after incumbent Terry Harrell did not seek re-election in the Aug 3 election. Crabtree led the vote with 414 followed by Cagley with 315 and Marlowe with 113.

Incumbent Barbara Lucas will be joined on the Board of Aldermen by newcomer Mike Foster in the seat vacated by alderman Steve Cagley, both defeating three other candidates. Foster led the vote count with 343 followed by Lucas with 307, Tim L. Wright with 298, Kent Bean with 216, and Gary L. Horn with 215.

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The City of Lebanon was one of the first borrowers when the variable rate loan program started in 1986. The city has used our programs 34 times since 1986. The most recent loan was a fixed rate loan in the amount of \$5 million to finance a portion of the costs of a new municipal sports complex for the city. Wilson Bank & Trust in Lebanon provided the financing. Seated is Lebanon Mayor Rick Bell. Standing L-R: Stuart Lawson, Commissioner of Finance and Revenue; Linda Mooningham, TMBF Marketing Director and Legal Coordinator; Taylor Walker, Chief Credit Officer of Wilson Bank & Trust in Lebanon; and TMBF Marketing Representative Kevin Krushenski.

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The City of Charleston has used our loan program five times beginning in 2010. The latest was a \$100,000 capital outlay note issued to purchase a building to use as a new city hall. Pictured seated are: Mayor Donna McDermott and City Recorder Janet Newport. Standing is Steve Queener, TMBF Marketing Representative



STATE BRIEFS

Tennessee's June unemployment rate reached an all-time low of 3.2%, the same historic low the state first reached prior to the pandemic in 2020. The Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD) said the 0.1% drop from last month ties June's unemployment rate with both pre-pandemic and June 2022 historic lows. In the past year, employers have created 84,600 new jobs across the state with the biggest gains coming in the education and health services sectors. Government still saw the most month-over-month growth followed by the professional and business sector and manufacturing sector.

The application period for new enrollments to the Tennessee RiverTowns Program is now open through Sept. 9, 2023. Tennessee River communities are the beating heart of the Tennessee RiverLine. All Tennessee River communities - counties, cities, towns, and consortium thereof - are invited to apply to become part of North America's next great regional trail system. The 2024 cohort will be publicly announced in January. The new communities will join the 20 Tennessee River communities that have already enrolled in this voluntary, multistage program that cultivates collaboration between Tennessee River communities and the Tennessee RiverLine team in the pursuit of a shared vision. Learn more at the <u>Tennessee RiverLine</u> website or by contacting Liz Reister at liz@tnriverline.org.

A new bill before Congress would provide recording funding approval for uranium processing facilities at the Y-12 National Security Complex in Oak Ridge. The latest defense spending bill would authorize \$760 million for the presently un-

der construction facility at Y-12, the largest sum since the project was approved by the U.S. Department of Energy in 2012. The \$6.5 billion facility is scheduled for completion in 2024. The National Defense Authorization Act would also provide \$505 million for construction and cleanup projects in the Oak Ridge Reservation. The legislation is expected to be finalized after the Congressional recess in August. Once the Senate and House versions of the bill are reconciled, the bill is expected to head to President Joe Biden's desk for signature in December.

More than 25 million pounds of invasive carp have been removed as part of a million-dollar incentive program in Tennessee. The most recent count comes in June as commercial fishermen worked to remove carp from reservoirs at Kentucky Lake, Lake Barkley, Cheatham Lake, Old Hickory Lake, and Pickwick Lake as well as the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers. The agency funded a \$75,000 grant in 2017 to the Paris Henry County Industrial Committee to help fund a commercial fishing industry to help with carp removal. The program has since added \$900,000 in grants for commercial fishing incentives and wholesale fish dealing as part of the Asian Carp Harvest Incentive Program. The Tennessee Fish and Wildlife Commission said the immediate concern from carp is the safety of boaters as silver carp are known to jump and injure boaters in a moving boat. The fish also change the ecosystem of waterways and deplete resources for natural fish species. Many invasive carp species were brought to the U.S. in the 1970s to control nuisance algae and as food for human consumption, but the rapid overpopulation of carp in American waterways has created issues for native species.

TNECD announces expansion of Site Development Grant program

The Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development has announced an expansion of the state's <u>Site Development Grant Program</u>, which aims to prepare rural industrial sites to attract new businesses and investment to Tennessee.

The changes are designed to mitigate the time and risk associated with industrial development projects across the state and will include increased funding, reduced match requirements for eligible sites and the introduction of speculative building construction.

"Tennessee remains committed to being a premier destination for businesses, and the updated Site Development Grant Program reflects our state's proactive approach to economic growth," said TNECD Commissioner Stuart McWhorter. "Through these changes, we are reinforcing Tennessee's position as a competitive player in the economic development landscape, and we look forward to seeing the new opportunities that these updates will bring to our rural communities."

The three key features of the enhanced Site Development Grant Program include increased funding, reduced match for eligible sites, and speculative building construction.

The program now offers an expanded pool of funds, enabling TN-ECD to provide even greater financial support to eligible applicants. This increased funding will facilitate infrastructure improvements and site readiness, ensuring companies have the necessary resources to establish a strong presence in the state. The increased grant maximum will go to \$5 million from the current \$1 million while the due diligence maximum will remain at \$100,000.

To enhance accessibility and support economic progress in targeted communities, the Site Development Grant Program has reduced the match requirements for the most competitive and prepared sites. At present, Tier 1 counties have a 50/50 match, Tier 2 a 70/30, Tier 3 a 90/10,



The Innovation Campus in Spring Hill is a recent Site Development Grant recipient.

and Tier 4 a 95/5 match. With the updated program, there will also be a 50% match reduction for sites that have received a site visit from Austin Consulting through the Select Tennessee Certified Sites Program. This reduction will enable communities facing economic challenges to take advantage of the program's benefits, fostering their growth and revitalization.

The revised program now allows for the construction of speculative buildings, addressing the evolving needs of businesses. To be eligible for a Site Development Grant (SDG), the applicant must be a governmental entity (city, county, industrial development board, etc.). The site must be publicly owned at the time of application unless the grant request is to purchase the property or perform due diligence studies.

Sites must be at least 20 acres and have gone through, at a minimum, the site visit by Austin Consulting (Foote) for the Select Tennessee certification program, the site visit and evaluation by Austin Consulting for the Property Evaluation Program or the site visit by KPMG for TVA's Invest Prep program. Entities in Tier 3 and 4 counties may submit sites that are at least 10 acres and meet all other requirements. Sites with open SDG projects are not eligible to apply.

This addition empowers communities to proactively construct speculative facilities, providing ready-to-use spaces for companies considering relocation or expansion in Tennessee. This flexibility will attract a wider range of industries and stimulate economic activity throughout the state.

The Site Development Grant program, part of the Rural Economic Opportunity Act, works in tandem with TNECD's Select Tennessee program. Since its inception, TNECD has awarded 153 Site Development Grants across the state, totaling more than \$60 million in assistance to local communities and generating approximately 6,400 new jobs for Tennesseans.

For more information about the updated program, visit <u>here</u>.

NATIONAL BRIEFS



The U.S. economy grew at 2.4% in the second quarter. The gross domestic product was bolstered by consumer spending, showing that previous recession forecasts were premature. The GDP growth was up from 2% in the first quarter, far stronger than initially predicted. Consumers have led the way through the recovery with spending rising at 1.6%. Services, particularly those related to vacation travel and restaurant meals, have made up a large portion of consumer spending. Many economists have been surprised that both high inflation and efforts to reduce it via increasing interest rates have not led to a recession, especially as a slump in the housing market and a number of bank failures occurred. However, both the bank and housing issues have begun to stabilize.

Seven major automakers have announced plans to build a multi-billion dollar North American EV charging network. General Motors, BMW, Honda, Hyundai, Kia, Mercedes, and Stellantis have banded together to finance the fast-charging EV network to challenge the massive Tesla network. These high-power charging stations would

add at least 30,000 plugs along major travel corridors by 2030 and double the number of fast-charging stations in the U.S. and Canada. The move is intended to both encourage EV adoption and allay concerns over range anxiety. At present, there are 8,7000 direct-current, fast-charging stations in the U.S. and Canada with nearly 36,000 charging plugs. The National Renewable Energy Laboratory estimates that 182,000 fast chargers will be needed by 2030.

The U.S. economy added fewer jobs than expected in July though unemployment remained close to record-low levels. Nonfarm payrolls expanded by 187,000 in July, below the 200,000 estimate by economists. However, the unemployment rate decreased to 3.5% despite predictions it would hold steady at 3.6%. Unemployment is just above the lowest unemployment rate recorded since 1969. Additionally, hourly wage earnings rose 0.4% month-over-month, good for a 4.4% annual growth pace that is above expectations. Leading sectors for job creation included health care, social assistance, finance, and wholesale trade.

June revenues more than \$283M above estimates

Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration Commissioner Jim Bryson announced that revenues for June were \$2.3 billion, which is \$283.3 million more than the budgeted monthly revenue estimate.

State tax revenues were \$38.7 million more than June 2022 and the overall growth rate was 1.74%.

"June tax revenues grew at a modest pace but continue to demonstrate a deceleration of economic activity," Bryson said. "Growth from sale tax receipts, reflecting consumer activity from the month of May, led all tax categories for the month and was higher than the 1.6% reported national retail sales increase. Corporate tax revenues, or franchise and excise taxes, rose slightly from last June while all other tax categories taken together were lower by 2.22%."

On an accrual basis, June is the eleventh month in the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

General fund revenues were more than the budgeted estimates in the amount of \$267.5 million and the four other funds that share in state tax revenues were \$15.8 million more than the estimates.

Sales tax revenues were \$133.1 million more than the estimate for June and 3.18% more than June

2022. For eleven months, revenues are \$1.3 billion higher than estimated. The August through June growth rate is 7.17%.

Franchise and excise tax revenues combined were \$127.5 million greater than the budgeted estimate in June, and the growth rate compared to June 2022 was 1.21%. For eleven months, revenues are \$827.1 million more than the estimate and the year-to-date growth rate is 5.88%.

Gasoline and motor fuel revenues for June decreased by 1% compared to June 2022, and they were \$1.5 million less than the budgeted estimate of \$111.7 million. For eleven months, revenues are less than estimates by \$4 million.

Motor vehicle registration revenues were \$3 million more than the June estimate, and on a year-to-date basis, revenues are \$35.1 million more than the estimate.

Tobacco tax revenues were \$3.2 million less than the June budgeted estimate of \$20.7 million. For eleven months, they are \$15.6 million less than the budgeted estimate.

Privilege tax revenues were \$11.3 million more than the June estimate, and on a year-to-date basis, August through June, revenues are \$68.6 million less than the estimate.

Business tax revenues were

\$0.2 million more than the June estimate of \$11.5 million. For eleven months, revenues are \$74.1 million more than the budgeted estimate.

Mixed drink, or Liquor-by-thedrink, taxes were \$5.9 million more than the June estimate. For eleven months, revenues are \$62.1 million more than the budgeted estimate.

All other tax revenues were more than estimates by a net of \$7 million.

Year-to-date revenues, for eleven months, are \$2.3 billion more than the budgeted estimate. The general fund recorded \$2.1 billion more than the budgeted estimate and the four other funds were \$188.8 million more than estimated.

The budgeted revenue estimates for 2022-2023 are based upon the State Funding Board's consensus recommendation from November 23, 2021 and adopted by the second session of the 112th General Assembly in April 2022. Also incorporated in the estimates are any changes in revenue enacted during the 2022 session of the General Assembly. These estimates are available on the state's website at https://www.tn.gov/content/tn/finance/fa/fa-budget-information/fa-budget-rev.html.

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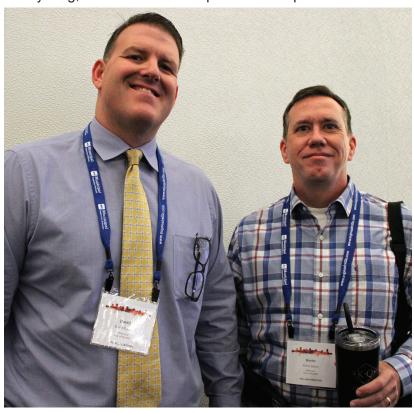
TML Annual 83rd Conference July 21-25 in Nashville



TML President and Farragut Mayor Ron Williams, far right, addresses the membership at the annual business meeting at the TML 83rd Annual Conference in Nashville while, from left to right, Public Entity Partners President/CEO Michael Fann, Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund President/CEO Wade Morrell, TML Executive Director Anthony Haynes, and TML Immediate Past President and Henderson Mayor Bobby King, look on. All of the representatives provided an annual update.



Newport Mayor and TML At-Large Director Roland "Trey" Dykes, left, and Clarksville Alderwoman Karen Reynolds, right.



Bartlett Aldermen David Reaves, left, and Kevin Quinn, right.



From left to right, Kingston Mayor Tim Neal, City Manager David Bolling, Councilmember Stephanie Wright, and Councilmember Randy Childs.



From left to right, Brentwood City Manager and TML At-Large Director Kirk Bednar, Thompson's Station Community Development Director Micah Wood, and Thompson's Alderman Cubert Bell. Station Town Administrator Ken McLawhorn.





From left to right, Trenton Alderman Ricky Graves, Alderwoman Cece Jones, Kathi Burris, Mayor Tony Burris, Alderman Peyton Harper, Alderwoman Myra Elam, Haywood Elam, and Alderwoman Kim Holt.

TML Annual 83rd Conference July 21-25 in Nashville



NLC Executive Director Clarence Anthony addresses the TML membership at the Opening General Session of the TML 83rd Annual Conference in Nashville.



Metro Nashville Police Sgt Shelby Hughes performs the National Anthem as part of the opening ceremonies of the TML 83rd Annual Conference in Nashville



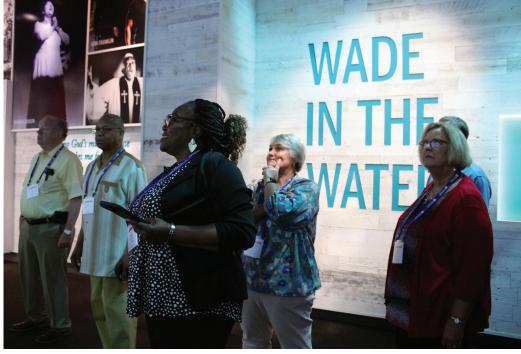
From left to right, Henderson Alderman Keith Smith, Lexington Mayor Jeffrey Griggs, Henderson Alderman Mark Barber, Bolivar Mayor and TML 2nd Vice President Julian McTizic, and TML Immediate Past President and Henderson Mayor Bobby King.



Lawrenceburg Mayor and District 6 Director Blake Lay, left, and Memphis Mayor Jim Strickland, right.



From left to right, Covington Mayor Jan Hensley, Athens Mayor Steven Sherlin, and Covington Mayoral Assistant Jason Fleming.



TML delegates explore the National Museum of African American Music during the Welcome Reception in Nashville.







Above: From left to right, Johnson City Assistant City Manager Steve Willis, Vice Mayor Aaron Murphy, Mayor Todd Fowler, and Assistant City Manager Randy Trivette.

Top Left: Milan Alderwoman Tammy Wade, left, and McKenzie Mayor Ryan Griffin, right.

Bottom Left: Oakland Vice Mayor Adrian Wiggins, left, and Alderman Jeff Fisher, right,

TML Annual 83rd Conference July 21-25 in Nashville



"Tennessee Crossroads" host and executive producer Joe Elmore discusses his adventures in small towns across Tennessee at the Opening General Session of the 83rd Annual TML Annual Conference in Nashville.





NLC Executive Director Clarence Anthony, left, and Chattanooga Mayor Tim Kelly, right.



Above: Paris Councilman Sam Tharpe, left, and Dyersburg Mayor John Holden, right.

At Left: From left to right, Madisonville's Rick McCrary, City Record Sherri McCrary, Edorah Dawson, Deborah Dawson, Alderman Ed Dawson, and Alderman Chris Bowers.



Sparta Vice Mayor Robert Officer, left, and Morristown Vice Mayor Tommy Pedigo, right.



Shelbyville City Manager Scott Collier, left, and Alderman Bobby Turnbow, right.



Morristown Councilmember/TMBF Chairwoman Kay Senter, left, and Three Way Mayor Mary Ann Tremblay at the Women in Municipal Government STIR event.



Niota Mayor Lois Preece, Collegedale Commissioner Debbie Baker, Communications Strategist Bridgett Raper, East Ridge Vice Mayor and State Rep. Esther Haynes, and Collegedale Councilmember Katie Lamb at the Women in Municipal Government mixer.



Bolivar Councilman Chris Williams, left, and Selmer Mayor Sherry Inman, right.

TML honors 2023 Achievement Award recipients



Smyrna received the award for Excellence in Governance. Front row, from left to right: Smyrna Town Clerk Amber Hobbs, Smyrna Mayor Mary Esther Reed, TML President and Henderson Mayor Bobby King, Smyrna Councilmember Raquel Peebles, Councilmember Steve Sullivan, and Councilmember Gerry Short. Back row, from left to right: Assistant Town Manager Todd Spearman, Councilmember H.G. Cole, Town Attorney Jeff Peach, Vice Mayor Marc Adkins, Councilmember Tim Morrell, Town Manager Brian Hercules, and Assistant Town Manager Rex Gaither.



Algood received the award for Excellence in Community Development. From left to right, Algood Mayor Lisa Chapman-Fowler, TML President and Henderson Mayor Bobby King, and Algood Town Administrator Keith Morrison.



Collegedale received the award for Excellence in Public Works. From left to right, Collegedale City Manager Wayon Hines, TML President and Henderson Mayor Bobby King, Commissioner Debbie Baker, and Assistant City Manager and Finance Director Michelle Toro.



Clarksville received the award for Excellence in Police Services. From left to right, Clarksville Deputy Police Chief Richard Stadler, Police Chief David Crockarell, TML President and Henderson Mayor Bobby King, Clarksville Councilman Travis Holleman, and Mayor Joe Pitts.



Harriman received the award for Small City Progress. From left to right, Harriman Mayor Wayne Best, TML President and Henderson Mayor Bobby King, and Harriman City Manager Scott Mason.



Nolensville received the award for Excellence in Strategic Planning in Fire Service. From left to right, Nolensville Fire Captain Adam Wyngaard, Assistant Fire Chief Matthew Lupo, Fire Chief David Windrow, TML President and Henderson Mayor Bobby King, Nolensville Commissioner Jessica Salamida, Mayor Hailee Gailick, and Town Manager Victory Lay.



La Vergne received the award for Excellence in Fire Service. From left to right, La Vergne Deputy Chief Nick Matthews, Fire Chief Ronny Beasley, TML President and Henderson Mayor Bobby King, and La Vergne Fire Marshal Curtis Brinkley.



Kingsport received the award for Excellence in Economic Development. From left to right, Kingsport City Manager Chris McCartt, Alderman Darrell Duncan, Vice Mayor Colette George, Mayor Pat Shull, TML President and Henderson Mayor Bobby King, Alderwoman Betsy Cooper, Deputy City Manager Ryan McReynolds, Alderman James Phillips, and City Attorney Bart Rowlett.



White House received the award for Excellence in Parks and Recreation. From left to right, White House Leisure Services Board Chair Jim Varellie, Parks and Recreation Director Kevin Whittaker, TML President and Henderson Mayor Bobby King, White House Parks Maintenance Supervisor Steven Russell, Assistant Parks Director Selena McCall, and Vice Mayor Jana Spicer.



Lakesite received the award for Small City Progress. From left to right, Lakesite City Manager Kirsten Ert Acuff, Commissioner Michelle Wilson, TML President and Henderson Mayor Bobby King, Lakesite Mayor David Howell, and Vice Mayor Bobby Bishop.



Morristown received the award for Excellence in Recreation Facilities. From left to right, Morristown Councilmember Al A'Hearn, Mayor Gary Chesney, TML President and Henderson Mayor Bobby King, Morristown Vice Mayor Tommy Pedigo, Councilmember Kay Senter, and City Administrator Tony Cox.



Paris received the award for Excellence in Green Leadership. From left to right, Paris Commissioner Sam Tharpe, Vice Mayor Vickey Roberts, Mayor Kathy Ray, TML President and Henderson Mayor Bobby King, Paris Commissioner John Etheridge, Commissioner Jackie Jones, and City Manager Kim Foster.

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Julian McTizic Mayor, Bolivar

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Vice Mayor, Millington (District 8)

Blake Lay Mayor, Lawrenceburg (District 6)

Tim Kelly

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Mayor, Knoxville

Bobby King Mayor, Henderson

Keith Morrison City Administrator, Algood (District 4) Jim Strickland

Mayor, Memphis

Ann Schneider Williams Mayor, Springfield (District 5)

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TN Municipal Attorneys Assn.

TN Municipal Judges Conference

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TN Chapter, American Planning

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Five years after Wayfair ruling, states' reliance on sales tax grows

BY LIZ FARMER

Route 50

Five years ago, the U.S. Supreme Court issued one of the most significant rulings for state and local government finance ever. The court's decision in South Dakota v. Wayfair overturned a two-decade-old ruling and paved the way for states and localities to collect taxes on remote sales.

Calling the old precedent "flawed" and "removed from reality," the 5-4 decision did away with the notion that governments can only collect sales taxes on purchases made from retailers with a physical presence in the state. In doing so, the court overturned two previous rulings that predated the world of e-commerce and agreed with South Dakota that an economic presence—not a physical one—should be the basis for taxing a sale.

The timing of the 2018 decision was fortuitous, coming just ahead of the pandemic when state sales tax revenues would skyrocket as consumers turned to online shopping amid stay-athome orders. Thanks to that shift and federal stimulus money, state sales tax revenues jumped by 10% in fiscal 2021 and by nearly 14% in 2022.

Now, as other types of revenue are slowing significantly, sales taxes are holding steady. According to the latest figures from the Urban Institute, inflation-adjusted state tax revenues fell by nearly 6% through the first 10 months of the 2023 fiscal year. The decrease is entirely driven by falling corporate and personal income tax revenue. Sales tax revenues, on the other hand, inched up by one-tenth of a percent.

"As consumers have slowly shifted to spending more on services and less on goods, the Wayfair decision has helped states maintain strong levels of sales tax collections," noted Brian Sigritz, director of state fiscal studies for the National Association of State Budget Officers.

While there's no way to determine the exact revenue impact of Wayfair, it's well into the billions. A U.S. Government Accountability Office report last year found that states collected at least \$23 billion from remote sellers in 2022. Before the pandemic shopping surge, the 2019 total was just under \$7 billion. And before the ruling and most remote sales tax laws took effect, the total was half that amount.

Sovos, a consulting firm that sells sales tax solutions, recently released a report that found a 3.4% increase last year in the number of local jurisdictions that implement a sales tax. In addition, sales tax revenue as a share of state budgets, continues to grow.

"The ability to collect from e-commerce at the precise moment when e-commerce spiked I think changed the way a lot of states look at the sales tax," said Chuck Maniace, author of the report and the vice president of regulatory analysis and design at

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Sovos. "To me, that's why we're seeing this increased reliance."

Still a Burden on Businesses

But while states and localities increasingly turn to the sales tax, businesses are struggling to keep

The ever-evolving updates to sales tax rates and what can be taxed means businesses need to keep track of rate increases, state sales tax holidays, legislation that extends the sales tax to more categories and bills that exempt it from things like groceries or feminine hygiene

Even the same product is treated differently from state-tostate. Pennsylvania, for example, exempts clothing, except for formal apparel, items made from fake fur and athletic apparel, while New York state exempts clothing sold for less than \$110. Definitions of products get complicated as well. Some states tax dried fruit as if it is candy because the products contain added sugar. Other states define dried fruit as groceries, and exempt them from

Some 24 states are members of the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement, an initiative established well before Wayfair and aimed at simplifying business compliance with state and local sales taxes. Businesses that register with SSU-TA and sell to member states can have their software-related costs reduced and certain remote sellers

can even have them eliminated. But the initiative has only gained one new member since the ruling and large states like California and New York are not part of it. Scott Peterson, vice president of U.S. tax policy and government relations at Avalara, thinks that it hasn't gained more momentum because becoming a member could create too many changes to a state's sales tax structure and hurt revenue.

Peterson, who previously served as the executive director for the SSUTA Governing Board, remembers when it took the group a year to come up with a suitable definition for candy. The final definition specifically excluded wheat products, which meant states had to drop things like Twix bars and Kit Kats from taxation. "That's honestly what keeps most states out," he said. "They can't deal with the taxability changes."

What's more, compliance

135,000

costs can be significant given the increased exposure to state audits. This is particularly burdensome for smaller businesses. In a separate report last year, the GAO noted that large organizations generally just incur an increase in their compliance software costs.

"In contrast," the report said, "a small business with about \$20 million in annual gross receipts told us it incurred start-up costs of about \$8,000 to purchase new tax collection software and \$43,000 to integrate the software with its existing systems. Another business with about \$42 million in annual gross receipts reported spending about \$200,000 on software integration."

No Simple Solution

The GAO recommended that Congress work with states to "establish parameters" that "balance state interests with the need to address multistate complexities."

costs and save a lot of headaches."

Alabama and Texas, for example, have created a way for remote sellers to pay a single blended rate sales tax given that they both have a lot of local taxing jurisdictions. Other states have simplified the threshold that determines whether a remote seller has an economic nexus in that state.

other policy objectives. 'Wayfair did not create com-

plexity," Peterson said. "It exposed everyone to the complexity that was already there."

At a Senate Finance Committee hearing held earlier this month, committee members appeared to sympathize with small businesses. "Family-owned furniture makers, tool and die shops, clothing boutiques—they shouldn't be forced into spending big on sales tax consultants and software," said Oregon Sen. Ron Wyden, the committee chair. "This committee has a bipartisan interest in helping small businesses get ahead, and this is an opportunity for us to lower their But observers in the industry like Maniace and Peterson doubt that Congress will intervene in an area that's long been under the control of states. They believe that states will continue to whittle away at the issues themselves.

Meanwhile, legislatures continue to adjust sales tax laws and many states are turning to an expanded sales tax in favor of reducing their income tax rate and achieving

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Aug. 18-19: Johnson City

Meet the Mountains Festival

Johnson City's Winged Deer Park will serve as a showcase of Northeast Tennessee's outdoor recreation

Aug. 19: Loudon

Loudon Riverfest

Legion Park hosts this event featuring food, crafting vendors, music, classic car show, kids zone, inflatables, fireworks, and more.

Aug. 19: Springfield

Crooked Eyes Blue Fest

Enjoy great music, food, and vendors at this festival celebrating blues

Aug. 19: White Bluff

World Honeybee Day Festival More than 70 vendors will be at

the Bibb-White Bluff Civic Center to celebrate the importance of the honeybee.

Aug. 19: Townsend

Great Smoky Mountains Hot Air Balloon Festival

This summertime spectacle sees professional balloonists light up the event sky with hot hair balloons against the backdrop of the Smoky Mountains.

Aug. 20: Elizabethton

6th Annual BBQ, Blues, and Brews

Elizabethon's Covered Bridge Park hosts this festival to benefit the renovations and operations of the 1926 Bonnie Kate Theater.

Aug. 19: Ardmore Ardmore Crape Myrtle Festival

Ardmore's famous blooms. Aug. 25: McKenzie

John Barnes Park hosts this annual

festival celebrating local culture and

<u>Festival</u> Downtown McKenzie brings together good food and good music for this summer celebration.

Sweet Tea and Southern Pickin'

Aug. 26-27: Beersheba Springs Beersheba Springs Arts and Crafts

This two-day festival brings out the best of arts and crafts from both new and professional artisans.

Celebrate 30 years of cool beans and good times at this award0winning festival.

Sept. 2-9: Martin

<u>Tennessee Soybean Festival</u>

Sept. 4: Harriman

Hooray for Harriman Historic downtown Harriman hosts this annual street festival celebrating community pride.

Sept. 8-10: Bristol

Bristol Rhythm & Roots Reunion Celebrating the legacy of the Bristol Sessions and Appalachian music

since 2001. Sept. 9: Niota

Fried Green Tomato Festival

Featuring food trucks, vendors, a 5K, games, and family activities, Niota Fried Green Tomato Festival has fun for everyone.



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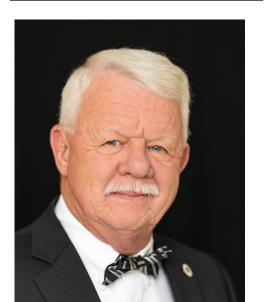
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