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What a Conference! ...

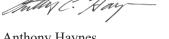
Wow! Our 85th conference and expo was a huge success! A heartfelt thanks to all who attended, sponsored and presented, that made our event possible. Our conference app identified a total of 718 attendees to our four-day event.

Our friends and partners at the University of Tennessee Institute of Public Service (IPS), particularly MTAS, provided second- to-none educational programing on a range of current issues facing officials. We enjoyed the largest number of exhibitors of any past conference. Donnie Campbell, the coach who's lessons inspired the Emmy Award winning character Ted Lasso shared many lessons on leadership and building

Our Day two panelist shared a glimpse into the future of the Tennessee and national economy and Anthony Haynes

of AI and quantum computing.

But the best "take-home" was the time shared with each other. Over 700 officials from Tennessee's largest cities to the very smallest, all engaging in issue discussions and learning from each other. Cities who came thinking they were very different from others, found out how much in common they really share. In July 2026, we're headed to Kingsport! And we're committed to concluding our 85th anniversary year with the best conference ever. The city - its business, people and attractions - will roll out the red carpet for TML. If you're not at TML's annual conferences, you're just not in the know. See you in Kingsport



municipal management in the world TML Executive Director

Paris' Kim Foster named TCMA City Manager of the Year



Paris City Manager Kim Foster, left, receives the TCMA City Manager of the Year Award from TCMA President and Brentwood Assistant City Manager Jay Evans, right.

Known for her ability to strengthen teamwork, encourage others, and develop community, Paris City Manager Kim Foster has been instrumental in creating a positive, connected municipal workforce that easily accomplishes major goals and projects for the city.

It is for this reason that the Tennessee City Management Association (TCMA) has recognized Kim Foster as its City Manager of the Year for 2025. Foster was presented with the award Tuesday, Aug. 5, 2025, at the 85th Annual Conference of the Tennessee Municipal League (TML) held at the Chattanooga Convention Center in Chattanooga.

Joining the city of Paris as its city recorder and finance director in 2011, Foster was selected as Paris' city manager in May 2015. Recognizing that employees who work supportively and cohesively can get more done for the city, Foster has worked to develop personnel both individually and as teams working together for the same goals. Initiatives like a wellness program for municipal employees and annual employee appreciation events have

helped promote a positive culture and encouraged staff growth.

Foster brought together employees in a citywide training session with MTAS to determine a mission and vision statement for the city as well as a slogan, "Committed to Excellence Community Service," now printed on all city materials and vehicles. Foster also actively listens to and engages with her department heads when making important decisions for the city and has created several positions aimed at ensuring the best people are in place to determine what Paris needs, including hiring a new human resources director, community engagement coordinator, risk and compliance coordinator, stormwater director, and sanitation foreman.

To ensure she and employees remain tuned in to what the citizens of Paris want and need, Foster has worked to strengthen communication between government and the public. The city's Community Outreach Program helps engage citizens through social media, a city newsletter, and a Citizen's Government Academy which pre-See TCMA on Page 5



Save the Dates

March 2-3, 2026

TML Legislative Conference Nashville DoubleTree

July 9-12, 2026

TML Annual Conference Kingsport MeadowView

TML names 2025-26 board; Bolivar Mayor Julian McTizic elected president

The Tennessee Municipal League (TML) elected its 2025-2026 board of directors during its general business meeting recently held in conjunction with the TML Annual Conference in Chattanooga. Bolivar Mayor Julian McTizic was elected president.

As president of the League, Mayor McTizic 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

McTizic. "Our state needs strong cities now more than ever. And cities – all 345 - need TML. Local leadership is so very important. When our cities and towns stand together with



TML 2025-26 Board Officers (L to R) TML 2nd Vice President Blake Lay, Lawrenceburg mayor; TML President Julian McTizic, Bolivar mayor; TML Immdiate Past President Paige Brown, Gallatin mayor; and TML 1st Vice President Kevin Brooks, Cleveland mayor.

our citizens. "

Other board elections include two vice presidents: 1st Vice President Cleveland Mayor Kevin Brooks, and TML 2nd Vice Presone voice, the results benefit all of ident Lawrenceburg Mayor Blake See BOARD on Page 3

Lay. TML vice presidents are traditionally in line to serve as president. Gallatin Mayor Paige Brown will remain on the board as immediate past president.

Savannah's Bob Shutt named 2025 TML Mayor of the Year

Savannah Mayor Bob Shutt was named the 2025 Mayor of the Year by the Tennessee Municipal League at their 85th Annual Conference in Chattanooga.

Each year since 1954, the Tennessee Municipal League has honored a city mayor that typifies the attributes of intelligence, effectiveness, hard work, dedication and sacrifice. First elected in 1999, Shutt has worked tirelessly to support economic development in rural areas to ensure their survival, while utilizing his relationships on the local, state, and federal level to bring industrial, retail, and tourism industries to his community.

Economic development has been Shutt's major focus as mayor, leading legislation to adopt a business district with incentives to attract new retail and building Savannah into a rural retail hub for other rural surrounding counties.

Knowing that tourism can serve as an important economic driver for smaller communities, Shutt has also promoted tourist development in Savannah. Founded in the 1820s as a major riverport on the Tennessee River, Savannah has long been known for its history tied to river travel and is home of the Tennessee River Museum.

Shutt has used the city's history



From left to right, Janie Shutt, Savannah Mayor Bob Shutt, and TML President and Gallatin Mayor Paige Brown.

on the river as a catalyst for tourism efforts, adopting "River Resort" status in the city. This has led to added revenue to qualify and maintain the city's Main Street Program as well as promoted tourism.

He has also worked relentlessly for the past seven years to develop a \$35 million marina project along the Tennessee River. The project has plans for gift shops, restaurants, condos, and other water related businesses in the city and has just been awarded a \$5 million grant from the state of Tennessee. As the Tennessee See **SHUTT** on Page 5

Shelbyville's Henry Feldahus receives TML's Bob Kirk Local Leadership Award

Since 1981, Councilman Henry Feldhaus III has been a fixture in Shelbyville municipal government, advocating for the development of parks and recreation facilities, revitalizing the city's riverside district, and bringing new industry and educational opportunities to the community.

In recognition of his dedication to public service, Feldhaus was awarded the Bob Kirk Local Government Leadership Award on Tuesday, Aug. 5, during the 85th Annual Conference of the Tennessee Municipal League (TML) held at the Chattanooga Convention Center.

The Bob Kirk Local Government Leadership Award is presented to a council member, alderman, or commissioner who is at least in their second term of service to their municipality and has shown themselves to be an outstanding public servant to both their municipality and their community. The award is named for Dyersburg City Alderman and TML Past President Bob Kirk who served his city for nearly 51 years as an elect-

ed official. See FELDHAUS on Page 5



Shelbyville Councilman Henry Feldhaus III, left, receives the Bob Kirk Local Leadership Award from TML President and Gallatin Mayor Paige Brown, right, at the TML Annual Conference in Chattanooga.

NEWS ACROSS TENNESSEE



ASHLAND CITY

Ashland City has officially opened its new city hall building for business. Construction began on the new facility in November 2023. The new building houses the town's administrative offices, municipal court as well as the building and codes, technology, and finance departments. The approximately \$9.5 million project was funded in part from grant and loans from the USDA. The new building provides additional space needed by town employees as well as upgraded technology. The previous city hall building will continue to house the parks and recreation, police, and public works departments.

BRISTOL

Bristol's Nature Center at Steele Creek Park has earned accreditation by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), becoming one of only 4% of museums nationwide to earn this top-tier recognition. Only 17 museums in Tennessee and about 1,100 nationwide have gained this distinction. To earn accreditation, the nature center underwent a year of self-study, followed by a site visit by a peer review team. All aspects of the center's operations were thoroughly examined before the visiting team recommended accreditation. The 8,000-square-foot nature center serves as the gateway to the 2,200acre park site, educating visitors about the plants and animals located in the park through features like an apiary, arboretum, and native gardens.

CHATTANOOGA

Master Machine, LLC officials announced the company is expanding manufacturing operations in Chattanooga, investing \$11.7 million and create 44 new jobs. The company plans to upgrade an existing facility with new machinery and equipment to support the needed technology across its nuclear utility customer base. Master Machine was founded in Chattanooga in 1993 and today specializes in system design and manufacturing, build-to-print services, obsolete reverse engineering, equipment qualification, commercial-grade dedication and complex fabrication, primarily for nuclear-focused industries, including nuclear power generation, the Department of Energy and naval nuclear. The announcement represents the fourth company awarded dollars from the state's Nuclear Energy Fund, which assists nuclear power-related businesses choosing to relocate or grow in the Volunteer State and supports the state's educational and research institutions in further developing their nuclear education programs.

CHATTANOOGA

The Chattanooga Area Regional Transportation Authority (CARTA) will add three new electric shuttles utilizing \$1.2 million in federal grants and the Tennessee Department of Transportation's allocation for congestion mitigation and air quality improvement projects. The three shuttles will run on free routes that serve downtown, St. Elmo, and the North Shore. The new shuttles will also replace older electric models that are 30 years old and will come with air conditioning, unlike their predecessors. The downtown route is among the most popular with stops at garages between the Chattanooga Choo Choo and Tennessee Aquarium, with a record-high ridership of 39,000 a month. The three new buses will bring CARTA's number of electric buses to 12 with the system also running two hybrid buses in addition to diesel buses.

FAYETTEVILLE

BuildEx Modular-Tennessee LLC officials announced the company is establishing off-site, modular manufacturing and distribution operations under its MODMAX brand in Fayetteville. The company will create 110 new jobs and invest \$23.3 million by acquiring and retrofitting an existing modular manufacturing facility to expand its capacity for high-quality modular housing. The company will serve large developers and commercial clients across the Southern Middle Tennessee region. BuildEx Modular is a member of the Modular Building Institute, an international nonprofit trade association serving modular construction.

LAKESITE

The city of Lakesite is celebrating the completion of three new facade improvements as part of the city's Facade Improvement Program launched last year. The program assists both new and existing businesses within the commercial business district with improving the attractiveness of their buildings to attract both business and potential tenants. Grantees receive a 50/50 matching grant of funds up to \$5,000. Initial grantees of the program included Lakesite Wine and Spirits, S & H Erectors, and New York Pizza Department.

MORRISTOWN

Clayton Supply announced the expansion of its door manufacturing operations in Morristown. The company will invest \$6.8 million and create 90 new jobs as part of the project, nearly doubling its headcount in the city. The company's current operation in Morristown, Clayton Morristown Lux Doors, builds doors for all 40 Clayton Home Building Group homebuilding facilities in the U.S. Clayton Supply is part of Clayton, a leading national single-family homebuilder dedicated to opening doors to a better life through attainable homeownership. Founded by Jim Clayton in 1956, the company's portfolio includes a comprehensive range of modern manufactured and site-built housing.

NASHVILLE

The Nashville Public Library-Donelson Branch has been selected as the 2025 Governor's Environmental Stewardship Award winner for the Building Green category. On the site of a declining strip mall, the 24,014-square-foot facility is an example of environmentally conscious design, earning LEED Gold Certification. The high-performance green building design includes a 33-kilowatt rooftop solar array, a geo-exchange system with 30 500-foot wells for efficient heating and cooling, LED lighting with daylight sensors and building automation, high-efficiency plumbing fixtures, native/adaptive landscaping and irrigation design, permeable pavers, a bioswale for stormwater filtration, and flood mitigation.

ROSSVILLE

Vibrant Health Products, Inc., doing business as Silver Hills, announced the company will expand, selecting Rossville for its first U.S. manufacturing operations. The company will create 394 new jobs and invest \$48.5 million over the next five years in the former Kellogg's Eggo facility, which closed in 2024. The company will begin operations with bread production for its U.S. customers with plans to expand its manufacturing capacity for additional products as the project progresses. Founded in 1989, Vibrant Health Products produces sprouted and certified organic, gluten-free, grain-free, plant-based, paleo and keto baked goods for its own betterfor-you consumer brands as well as private label partners. Today's announcement marks the company's first U.S. manufacturing location, expanding on its main operations in Abbotsford, British Columbia, Canada.

STANTON

The town of Stanton has been awarded more than \$129,000 from the Delta Regional Authority (DRA) as part more than \$1.5 million the organization awarded through its Strategic Planning Program in communities across eight states. The funds will be used to create a downtown revitalization master plan aimed at attracting new businesses. The DRA program provides communities with the necessary resources to develop strategies that maximize opportunities in public infrastructure, workforce development, and small business

Sevierville breaks ground on new fire station



From left to right, Sevierville Public Works Director Doug Tarwater, Police Chief Joseph Manning, Central Services Manager Bob Moncrief, Fire Chief Matt Henderson, Alderman Wayne Helton, Alderman Travis McCroskey, City Administrator Dustin Smith, and Alderman Mitch Rader break ground on Sevierville's new Fire Station No. 4. Located on the north end of town, the new fire station 4 is being built on property the city purchased next to the Sevierville Visitor Center on Winfield Dunn Parkway. The North Sevierville Center campus is also set to include space for use by the Sevierville Police Department and a public works facility. The 15,601-square-foot facility fire station with an additional 6,452 square feet for other city services will also house a fuel farm. The new facility is expected to be completed by summer of 2026 and cost an estimated \$18.63 million.

Oak Ridge marks atomic bomb anniversary



Local residents, officials, and rangers with the Manhattan Project National Historic Park marked the 80th anniversary of the dropping of the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan with a ceremony in the city's A.K. Bissell Park. Attendees were given a chance to ring the International Friendship Bell erected in the park that symbolizes peace and unity between the U.S. and Japan. The 3,000-pound bronze bell was cast in Kyoto and depicts scenes of Oak Ridge, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as well as scenes from World War II and symbols of peace. It was first erected in the city's A.K. Bissell Park in 1993. (Photo by Caitie McMekin/*Knoxville News Sentine*I)

Johnson City cuts ribbon on new dog park



Officials with Johnson City cut the ribbon on the city's dog park, the West King Street Bark Park. The one-acre park has space for dogs of all sizes to run, play and socialize off-leash, featuring shaded areas for pet owners, a ramp and tunnel station, tug of war area, decorative fire hydrants, and separate areas for large and small dogs. Members of the city's public works, communications and engagement, and parks and recreation teams worked together to bring the park to life, utilizing funds from the Boyd Foundation's Dog Park Dash grant and contributions from citizens Fred Warren and Bill Greene. Construction began on the park on May 1, 2025, with most of the work being done in-house.

development and entrepreneurship. To learn more about the <u>Strategic Planning Program</u> or to apply, visit <u>www.dra.gov</u>.

SWEETWATER

The Sweetwater Fire Department and city of Sweetwater have an-

nounced the city's fire protection rating has been reclassified from a Class 4 to a Class 3 by the Insurance Services Offices (ISO). This is the second time the rating has improved in recent years with the city moving from a Class 5 to a Class 4 in its previous evaluation. Fewer

than 14% of fire departments under 10,000 achieve a Class 3 rating or better, placing the Sweetwater Fire Department among the top 8% of departments nationwide. The rating improvement also means cheaper insurance rates for home and business owners in the community.

WAUFORD

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

Maryville's Johnny Garner receives Murphy Snoderly Award

By LISA HOOD SKINNER
Tennessee Public Works
Magazine

The city of Maryville is on a winning streak. For the second year in a row, Maryville had the winner of the Murphy Snoderly Award. Last year's winner was Doug Strickland, the city's heavy equipment operator in engineering and public works.

This year's award, a prestigious annual TCAPWA statewide honor given to a highly deserving public works employee, goes to the city of Maryville's Johnny Garner.

Garner began his career on July 13,1993, first starting out on the city of Maryville's rear load garbage truck. After a half year of hard work, he was promoted to grounds maintenance, mowing the city's parks and right of ways for the next seven years.

He then was promoted to the sanitation department, where he learned to operate many different pieces of equipment, including the rear load garbage truck, the front load dumpster truck and the knuckle boom trucks.

About Those Knuckle Boom Trucks...

Brad Hurst, Garner's supervisor and Sanitation Superintendent



From left to right, TCAPWA Chapter Administrator Mark Miller, Maryville Sanitation Collectoin Crew Leader Johnny Garner, and TCAPWA President and Chattanooga Office of Constituent Services Director Kimberly Strong.

for the City of Maryville, says Garner "found that his true love was operating knuckle boom trucks," and that for the past more than 22 years, Garner has been the standard for the city's knuckle boom operators.

"When a new employee came along and thought he would 'outwork' Johnny, he found out real quick that he had bitten off more than he could chew," Hurst said.

Hurst added that during Garner's more than 32 years at the

city, "Johnny has maintained a tremendous safety record and always takes time to train the new employees or show them some "old tricks" that might help them learn."

Throughout those years, he's

been known to take great pride in his work, receiving many compliments on his operating abilities and stellar customer service.

Origins of the Murphy Snoderly Award

Murphy Snoderly, for whom the award is named, was a longtime engineering and Public Works consultant for the state's Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS).

He 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.

Guidelines say the award recipient must be "an operation level or 'working person' employee." It is presented annually at the Tennessee Municipal League Conference.

Hurst said that as one of the city's most caring and loyal employees, Garner "truly is the picture of what the Murphy Snoderly Award represents. Johnny is a 'working person' who is nearing retirement and deserves recognition for a great career."

"The city of Maryville is very fortunate to have an employee like Johnny," Hurst added.

Elections held in six cities

Elections were held in six municipalities over the summer.

A new mayor was elected in Sweetwater while Huntland votes turned down a measure to permit retail package stores in the town.

COWAN

A municipal election was held in Cowan on Aug. 7.

Incumbent Richard W. Hunt defeated challengers Dwayne E. Holman and Stephanie Sweeton to retain the mayoral seat. Hunt led the vote tally with 179 followed by Holman with 44 and Sweeton with 20.

Incumbent councilmembers Ben Merrill and Brandi Speck will be joined by newcomer Amanda Wiseman, defeating challenger Jackie Cagle for the three open seats. Merrill led the vote count with 158 followed by Speck with 149, Wiseman with 145, and Cagle with 111.

DECHERD

The city of Decherd held a municipal election on Aug. 7.

Incumbents David Hillstrom and Shuler Hopkins retained their seats on the Decheard Board of Aldermen as the only two candidates to run for two open seats. Hillstrom and Hopkins received 35 and 29 complimentary votes respectively.

ESTILL SPRINGS

A municipal election was held in Estill Springs on Aug. 7.

Incumbent Pat Thomas will be joined by newcomer Darrell K. Day on the board of aldermen, running for the two open seats. Day earned 15 votes while Thomas earned 21.

HUNTLAND

A municipal election was held

in Huntland on Aug. 7.

Incumbent Dolton Steele Jr. Defeated challengers Harry Evans Allen III and Billy R. Damron to retain the mayoral seat. Steele earned 98 votes followed by Allen with 23 and Damron with 21.

Dace A. Benson ran unopposed and was re-elected to one of the open alderman seats with 108 votes. No candidate qualified for the seat vacated by Allen to run for mayor, but a write-in candidate received 4 votes.

Huntland residents also voted 71 against and 62 for permitting retail package stores in the municipality.

SWEETWATER

A municipal election was held in Sweetwater on June 12.

Newcomer Angie Kyle was the lone candidate seeking to fill the mayoral seat after outgoing Mayor Doyle Lowe decided to not seek re-election for the first time since 2009. Kyle, principal of Brown Intermediate School, was elected with 332 total votes.

Incumbent Jim Stutts will be joined by newcomer Branham Lovingood on the city commission, defeating fellow challenger Cotton Upton for the two open seats. Stutts earned 275 votes, Lovingood 227, and Upton with 163 votes.

WINCHESTER

A municipal election was held in Winchester in Aug. 7.

Newcomers Steve Cagley, David Eldridge Jr., and Tim Wright defeated will incumbent Lydia Curtis Johnson and challenger Douglas Freund for the three open seats. Cagley led the vote tally with 338 followed Wright with 373, by Eldridge with 298, Johnson with 278, and Freund with 153.

TML names 2025-26 board; Bolivar Mayor Julian McTizic elected president



Bolivar Mayor Julian McTizic is sworn in as the new 2025-26 TML President by outgoing president Paige Bown, mayor of Gallatin, during the Annual Business Meeting in Chattanooga.

TCMA, from Page 1

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 Paul Young, and Metro Nashville Mayor Freddie O'Connell.

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

members in attendance at the business meeting. Those directors are: Roland "Trey" Dykes, Newport Mayor; Johnny Dodd, Jackson City Council; Paul Montgomery, Kingsport Mayor; and Joe Pitts, Clarksville Mayor.

The eight district directors, representing their section of the state, were nominated and elected during district caucuses. They are: District 1: Michael Baker, Erwin Alderman; District 2: Gary Chesney, Morristown Mayor; District 3: Stefanie Dalton, Red Bank Mayor; District 4: Keith Morrison, Algood City Administrator; Dis-

trict 5: Tim Ellis, Goodlettsville City Manager; District 6: Jessica Salamida, Nolensville Vice Mayor; District 7: Kim Foster, Paris City Manager; and District 8: Bethany Huffman, Millington Alderwoman.

Mike Callis, Portland Mayor and Chairman of the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund also sits on the board. And a representative from an affiliate organization is also a voting board member, Jay Evans, Brentwood assistant city administrator and president of the Tennessee City Management Association.







PEOPLE

Kristeen Duren has been selected as the new city manager for the city of Clifton, taking over from City Record-



Kristen Duren

er Samantha Haines who had held the position as interim city manager since April. Duren has spent a decade as a dietitian at Wayne Care Nursing Home and Wayne Medical Center as well as her family's business Duren Pharmacy for more than 20 years. She holds a bachelor's degree in home economics from Tennessee Technological University.

Marvin Flatt, alderman representing Martin's Ward 2, died July 15, 2025, at the Henry County Medical Cen-



ter in Paris at age 71. Flatt was first elected to the Martin Board of Aldermen in 2016 and had been elected to his third term in 2024. A native of Lawrenceburg, Flatt earned a bachelor's degree in agriculture at the University of Tennessee at Martin in 1976. His lifelong career as an educator included serving as the agriculture teacher and FFA advisor in Martin. From 1987 until 1995, he served as assistant commissioner of education for vocational education under Gov. Ned McWherter and Commissioner Charles Smith. He then served as vocational education director and attendance supervisor for Weakley County Schools until retiring in 2019.

Tracy Harness has retired after 25 years of service in the city of Franklin's human resources department. Harness was



Tracy Harness

first hired by the city in 2000 as an administrative secretary. She was promoted to human resources generalist in 2011 and in 2019 was reclassified as a benefits specialist. She then was promoted to benefits supervisor in 2021.

Terry Knowles has been selected as the new fire chief for Chattanooga. Knowles has served as the department's assistant



Terry Knowles

chief of special operations since 2022 and will replace retiring Chief Phil Hyman, who stepped down in July. Knowles joined the Chattanooga Fire Department in 2005, serving as a lieutenant, captain, battalion chief, and an urban search and rescue instruction. A member of the Chattanooga Fire Fighters Association Local 820 who previously served as president of the Chattanooga Fire and Police Pension Fund, Knowles served in the U.S. Navy before going to work for the Catoosa County Sheriff's Department in 1994. He attended both Dalton State College and the University of Tennessee Chattanooga.

Kelly Lancaster has been selected as the new human resources director for the town of Nolensville. Lancaster has more than



Kelly Lancaster

three decades of experience in both the public and private sectors. Prior to joining the town of Nolensville, Lancaster spent ten years as director of talent management for the state of Tennessee. Before that, he served as director of human resources for Columbia-based Maury Regional Hospital. He has also held human resources roles at Smith and Wesson Security Solutions; Healthways, Inc.; and multiple startup companies. He holds a

bachelor's degree in communications from Freed-Hardeman University, a master's of business administration from the University of Tennessee, and a doctorate in business from Apollos Uni-

Kingsport Mayor Paul W. Montgomery has been selected to participate in Leadership Tennessee's 12th Signature Program, joining pro-



Paul Montgomery

fessionals from business, government, education, and nonprofit sectors. Montgomery will participate in the cohort over the course of 10 months, working on a statewide study to address solutions and opportunities to challenges Tennessee faces. Since Leadership Tennessee's founding, 850 Tennessee residents have become class members of the Signature Program and Leadership Tennessee NEXT, which is dedicated to emerging leaders.

Carter Napier has been selected as the new city administrator for Spring Hill following a nationwide search. Napier comes



Carter Napier

to Spring Hill from Casper, Wyo., where he has served as city manager since 2017. Previously, Napier served as city administrator for Gillette, Wyo., from 2011-2017 and city administrator for Riverton, Wyo., from 2003-2011. He also served as an analyst and assistant to the city manager of Casper, Wyo. His first job in local government came in 1997 with the city of Longview, Wash., as an intern to the city manager. He holds a master's degree in public administration from the Romney Institute of Public Management of the Marriott School of Management at Brigham Young University. Napier is also a Credentialed Manager through the International City County Management Association (ICMA).

Michelle Pence has been promoted to director of administrative services for the town of Farragut. Pence has been serving



Michelle Pence

as the town's human resources director, joining the town in 2021 after working in the private sector. In her new role, she will oversee the finance, human resources, information technology, and customer service departments.

Stevan Pippin has been appointed as the seventh member of the Brentwood City Commission following the resignation of



Stevan Pippin

former Commission Susannah Macmillan. Pippin will hold the position for the remainder of the term, which ends in May 2027. Pippin has resided in Brentwood for 44 years and is an entertainment industry professional. He has served on the Brentwood Planning Commission since 2015, serving three times as the commission's vice chair in that time.

Clarksville Mayor Joe Pitts has been re-elected as chair the Greater Nashville Regional Council (GNRC), which serves



Joe Pitts

as the regional council of local governments for 13 counties in Middle Tennessee. Pitts was unanimously re-elected by the 93-member council body composed of mayors, county executives, state legislators, and local community development officials.

TML, TMBF mourns death of longtime former Dyersburg Alderman, TML President Bob Kirk

Longterm TML member and Dyersburg Alderman Bob Kirk died peacefully on July 16, 2025, at the age of 87 after years of service to his community and Tennessee.

Kirk was first elected to the Dyerbsurg Borad of Mayor and Aldermen in 1967, a position he held for 51 years until his retirement in 2018. He also held the position as interim mayor for six months in 1980 when mayoral election results were contested.

Kirk was present at every TML conference since his election and served on the TML Board of Directors and as TML Board President for 2004-5. He also served as a longtime chairman of the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund and on the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Affairs (TACIR) for nearly a decade.

In honor of Kirk's service, TML established the Bob Kirk Local Government Leadership Award in 2018. The award is presented to a council member, alderman, or commissioner who is at least in their second term of service to their municipality and has shown themselves to be an outstanding public servant to both their municipality and their community.

TML Executive Director Anthony Haynes said that Kirk's love and dedication for Tennessee municipalities would be sorely missed. "Bob was a great ambassador for all Tennessee cities and the people that call them home," Haynes said.

TMBF President and CEO



Bob Kirk

Wade Morrell said Kirk's work with the organization was transformational.

"We are deeply saddened by the passing of Bob Kirk," Morrell said. "Bob was the former chairman of the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund board, and his leadership and unwavering dedication profoundly shaped TMBF. His legacy of service to all Tennesseans will continue to inspire us."

Kirk was also recognized on the local level for his dedication to Dyersburg. He was selected as the Dyersburg-Dyer County Man of the Year in 1993 and was selected as a 2013-14 inductee to the Dyersburg High School Hall of Fame.

During his tenure on the Dyersburg board, he saw the growth of several large manufacturers and industry as well as retail and small businesses. He oversaw the opening of a five-lane road between the city and downtown toe ase traffic issues and improvements to the local school system and opening of a new library.

A native of Dyer County, Kirk graduated from Dyersburg High School in 1955, having earned a reputation for playing on the school's basketball team, participating in Future Farmers of America, and in numerous public speaking roles in school.

He served for four years at the U.S. Air Force and enrolled in Memphis State University before going to work for Colonial Rubberworks in 1960. He served the company in human resources and public relations for 33 years before retiring in 1997 and also worked in healthcare consulting and owned two local restaurant franchises.

Kirk has also been involved in various local organizations including the Jaycees, Chamber of Commerce, Kiwanis Club, and local hospital board.

"I love this community, this entire area," Kirk said upon reaching 50 years of service on the Dyersburg board. "I've been blessed by it, and I've continued to be re-elected all these years. When I came out of the Air Force in the 1960s, I knew I wanted to become involved in this community. I knew I was going to make it my home. My opportunity in public service was to help this community grow, develop and be a better place to work and play. My desire and commitment have remained strong."

Kirk is survived by his son Carter and three grandchildren. He was predeceased by his daughter

Goodlettsville announces new titles amid restructuring

The city of Goodlettsville has announced organizational restructuring as part of a large effort to improve operational effectiveness and efficiency.

"The mission of the City of Goodlettsville is to operate with efficiency and integrity in all we do, as we strive to enhance the quality of life for the community we serve," said City Manager Tim Ellis. "This restructuring will enable the city to better serve its residents by increasing operational efficiency and delivering an unparalleled quality of life."

Sarah Jennings, formerly serving as director of parks and recreation, has been selected as senior director of public services. She will head the new Department of Public Services, which combines the city's parks and recreation department and public works department into a single entity.



Sarah Jennings



Presley





McCormick



McCormick

Jack Presley, who previously served as superintendent of parks, will serve as serve as assistant director of the new Department of Public Services.

Jeff McCormick, who formerly served as director of public works, has been named director of wastewater utilities. He will oversee daily operations and ensuring regulatory compliance for the city's wastewater department, restructured from the city's wastewater division.

Addam McCormick has been selected as senior director of community development and will oversee the new Department of Community Development. The department was created by merging the codes department and planning department and will encompass planning and zoning, building codes, property maintenance, stormwater, GIS, capital programs, and economic development.

The GNRC also convenes more than 60 area mayors with state and federal officials for cooperative policymaking and to prioritize public funding for infrastructure projects and social services.

Chris Sheffield has been selected as director of public services for the town of Farragut. Sheffield most recently served as the town's opera-



Chris Sheffield

tions manager. Before joining the city, he spent 24 years in the U.S. Air Force, earning a bachelor's degree in Latin American studies from the U.S. Air Force Academy and a master's degree in international relations and affairs from Troy University.

Todd Smith, city manager for the town of Greeneville, has been appointed to the Governor's Homeland Security Council by



Todd Smith

Gov. Bill Lee. Smith will represent the Tennessee Municipal League on the 22-member council. Smith was selected both because of his leadership in municipal government and because of the nearly 20 years he spent in the Tennessee Air National Guard. The Homeland Security Council, established in 2003, collaborates with the Office of Homeland Security to plan and direct statewide homeland security initiatives. The council works closely with local, state, and federal partners

to enhance Tennessee's preparedness and resilience.

Clark Taylor has retired as chief after 42 years with the Morristown Fire Department. Taylor began his career with the department in



Clark Taylor

1983 and worked his way through the ranks to being named chief in 2020. Under his tenure, the department launched its First Responder Medical Program and oversaw the building of the first fire training facility and campus in the city. Taylor holds a bachelor's degree in both fire administration and fire science technology from the University of Memphis.



David Travis

as acting city administrator for a year after the retirement of previous City Administrator Rydell Wesson. Travis began his career with the city of Dickson in April 1995 as a part-time employee with the city's parks and recreation department. He became a full-time employee in June of that year, rising to the position of crew leader. He became supervisor of building and grounds in 2014 and then superintendent of the public works department in 2015. He then became director of the department in 2017.

Tonya Travis has been selected as the new finance director for the city of Brentwood. Travis is a certified municipal fi-



nance officer and has more than 23 years of experience in public finance. Travis will take over the role from Karen Harper, who plans to retire in early 2026 and will be working alongside Travis. She earned a bachelor's degree in accounting from Middle Tennessee State University and served as a finance professional in Spring Hill, Fayetteville, and Shelbyville, most recently working with Tennessee cities as a finance and accounting consultant for the University of Tennessee Institute of Public Service Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS).

Rick Woods, longtime director of Leisure Services for the city of Cookeville, will retire from his position on Oct. 3, 2025. Woods began



Rick Woods

working for the city of Cookeville in 1985 when he worked at a local nonprofit that operated out of the Drama Center, now the Cookeville Performing Arts Center (CPAC). He was the first cultural arts superintendent for the newly created Department of Leisure Services in 1987. After 13 years in that role, he was promoted to director of the department in 2000.

Shutt named Mayor of the Year



From left to right, Savannah Economic Development Director Timothy White, Janie Shutt, Savannah Mayor Bob Shutt, and Savannah City Manager Blake Walley.

SHUTT, from Page 1

River is one of the main focuses of tourism in Savannah, Shutt has also pushed to stabilize the riverbank from erosion.

Whether coming into Savannah via roads or docking with one of the Tennessee River cruises that makes landfall in the city, visitors can also enjoy local events Shutt champions like Christmas on Main, Riverfest, fishing tournaments, and the city's salute to the 40s WWII Reenactment.

During his tenure, Shutt has also overseen the building of three

major new parks in Savannah: the Tennessee Street Park, the Savannah Sportsplex, and the Veterans Memorial Park.

A graduate of Savannah's Central High School Class of 1969, Shutt enrolled at the University of Tennessee at Martin and graduated in 1971. He then enrolled in the University of Tennessee College of Pharmacy, receiving his pharmacy degree in 1974. After a short stint at a national chain, he returned to his hometown and opened an independent retail pharmacy that he operated for 36 years.

In 1999, he was appointed to the Tennessee Board of Pharmacy by then Gov. Don Sundquist, eventually serving as the board's president before stepping down in 2005. He also served as a pharmacist investigator for the board for nine years.

Shutt married his high school sweetheart Janie in 1976. The couple live in a historic home in Savannah they lovingly restored and frequently open it up for historic home tours to visitors. They have three children – Susan, Spence, and Sam – and six grandchildren.

Paris' Kim Foster named TCMA City Manager of the Year

TCMA, from Page 1

miered in 2018 to better inform citizens about government work. In addition, Foster holds annual events such as Breakfast with the City Manager and the Positively Paris and Heny County Community Forum. She also launched a Young Professionals organization in the city to elevate the voices and perspectives of younger residents.

Under Foster's tenure, the city has seen various revitalization projects including:

- a traffic signalization study that resulted in nearly \$50,000 yearly savings for the city, ongoing long-range planning for the downtown,
- launching the historical preservation Preserve Paris effort,
 an effort to revitalize down-
- town alleys through the arts, the demolition of 35 blighted
- properties for redevelopment,repairs to aging properties through the HOME grant
- secured TNECD facade grants for downtown buildings multiple times, and
- acquired grants for ADA compliance and sidewalk projects, bridge replacement projects, and multimodal transportation projects.

Several city facilities have also undergone renovations under Foster, including overseeing a remodel of downtown hall, a new police department safety facility, a new fire hall, and the acquisition and development of property around the city's public works building.

Tourism development has also been a major focus. Foster helped secure Tourism Enhancement grants to build public bathrooms in the downtown as well as the addition of a sidewalk, stage, improved parking, and signage at Eiffel Tower Park; a new splash pad at Eiffel Tower Park; the creation of new "welcome" signs for the city; a new BlueCross BlueShield Healthy Place playground for the city in 2020; and expansion of music, theater, and recreational programming in the city.

Numerous developers who have worked with the city have remarked on how the positive work culture has made Paris an easy community to do business with. Foster has also leveraged tax-increment financing to secure the city a new shopping center and Hampton Inn for the community. Foster is also a founding member of the Tennessee Retail Alliance.

A past president of TCMA, Foster also works regionally through organizations like the West Tennessee City Managers group she helped organize, as well as statewide through TCMA to share knowledge, expertise, and encouragement between city leaders.

Shelbyville's Henry Feldahus receives Bob Kirk Local Leadership Award

FELDHAUS, from Page 1

Feldhaus' service to the city initially began in 1978 when he was appointed to the Shelbyville Airport Authority. Over the course of 27 years, Feldhaus has served as a councilman representing Ward 1, Shelbyville's vice mayor and mayor. He was first elected to the city council in 1981, serving until he was elected mayor from 1987 to 1995. Feldhaus returned to elected office as the Ward 1 Councilman in 2012, a position he has held since.

He also has served on virtually every board and committee associated with Shelbyville's municipal government in the past 45 years as well as past president of the Shelbyville Rotary Club, a founding member of Leadership Bedford, and as member of the Shelbyville-Bedford County Library Board, Shelbyville-Bedford County Chamber of Commerce, and others.

A key proponent of parks and recreation opportunities, Feldhaus helped create the city's H.V. Griffin Park and the 142-acre Shelbyville Recreation Center that boasts multiple gyms, craft rooms, indoor and outdoor pools, and numerous other amenities for active and passive recreation activities.

He was also a major driver in the Riverview District project, which revitalized the area between Shelbyville's Historic Square and the Duck River. The city purchased blighted and dilapidated properties in the southwest corner of the square for retail redevelopment, seeing the buildings through an RFP process for redevelopment. New developers, investing in excess of \$3 million, have created an upscale steakhouse, mercantile stores, and short-term rentals. The city has also facilitated underground utilities with period decorative lighting, increased public parking, string lights to provide atmosphere, a landscaping plan for beautification, seating areas, and a staging area for concerts and special events.

Feldhaus also enlisted support from local leaders, MTSU, and state officials as well as a TDOT Transportation Alternative Program grant to finance the Riverwalk and Duck River Overlook. The \$2.7 million project will connect downtown, the Fly Arts Center, and open the park area bordering the Duck River for numerous opportunities for recreation and entertainment.

Drawing on his relationships in aviation, Feldhaus was instrumental in relocating the MTSU Aerospace Campus and flight training program to the Shelbyville Municipal Airport. The program is part of a larger expansion of the airport, including a new 50,000-square-foot building and a 28,000-square-foot hangar. Several aircraft have also been relocated to the airport as it continues to grow.

Other economic and community development initiatives Feldhaus has taken a leadership role in include the creation of the 231 North Business Park that has landed more than \$100 million in major industrial investment in the city.

Perhaps the most notable achievement to date in Councilmember Feldhaus' storied career is the recent court ruling in the Shelbyville v. Bedford County court case. Shelbyville and Bedford County entered into an agreement where the county would receive a portion of the city's local option sales tax to assist with retiring school debt in the 1970s. Although the Local Option Sales Tax Agreement should have been retired in the early 1990s, the city's revenue continues to be channeled to the county.

Finally, in 2025, primarily due to Councilmember Feldhaus' knowledge of the situation, his persistence to correct an oversight going for decades, and his expert testimony, the city received a favorable court ruling for the agreement to terminate in 2027. If the Court of Appeals upholds the original ruling as expected, the city will start receiving an additional \$2 million annually in local option sales tax revenues.

Councilman Feldhaus is the eldest of six children of the late Mary Jo Feldhaus and the late Dr. Henry Feldhaus. He graduated from The University of Tennessee in

Business Administration majoring in Industrial Management in 1976. He later received his MBA from Middle Tennessee State University in 1999, graduating first in his class and was inducted into the coveted Phi Kappa Phi National Honor Society.

He is married to Jenni, who is a CPA and certified financial planner. They currently own and operate Feldhaus Investor Services, where they are SEC licensed financial analysts and stockbrokers. Henry and Jenni have three children - Dr. Jennifer Feldhaus; Dr. LauraAnne Feldhaus Stewart, and Henry Feldhaus IV - and three grandchildren.

The previous recipients of the Bob Kirk Local Leadership Award include former Columbia Vice Mayor Dr. Christa Martin (2018), Jackson Councilman Johnny Dodd (2019), former Franklin Alderwoman Margaret Martin (2021), Germantown Alderwoman Mary Anne Gibson (2022), Collegedale Commissioner Katie Lamb (2023), and Franklin Alderman Clyde Barnhill (2024).

No loan is too large or too small



The City of Red Bank has used TMBF's various programs 14 times since September 1997. The most recent loan was in June for a\$100,000 note issue for police vehicles through the TMBF alternative loan program. Seated: Red Bank City Recorder Tracey Perry, left, and Mayor Stefanie Dalton, right. Standing Red Bank CFO Kris Pickel, left, and TMBF Representative Steve Queener, right.



TMBF was able to assist the Town of Stanton with obtaining a \$1,000,000 public building authority draw loan to finance the renovation of the Town Hall, construction of a new public works shop, and renovation and improvement of the Town's Fire Station. Security Bank and Trust, a local bank, was the lender for the loan. Pictured are Mayor Norman Bauer, Jr., seated, and TMBF Representative Justin Hanson, standing.



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TML Annual 85th Conference Aug. 2-5 in Chattanooga



Above: From left to right, Madisonville Alderwoman Nancy Franklin, Alderman Chris Bowers, Mayor Scott Hunt, Alderman Danny Long, Alderman Ed Dawson, and Alderwoman Rhonda Cooley-Harold. **Right**: Bolivar Councilmember Caroline Miller, left, and Knoxville Mayor Indya Kincannon, right.





East Ridge CMFO/Finance Director Diane Qualls, left, and Councilwoman Aundie Witt, right.



From left to right: Sparta's Angie Scarlet, Alderman Hoyt Jones, Alderman Brent Young, Algood City Administrator Keith Morrison, and Algood Mayor Lisa Chapman-Fowler.



From left to right, Fayetteville Alderman Mike Keenan, Mayor Donna Hartman, and Alderman Joseph Faulkner.



Cleveland Mayor and TML First Vice President Kevin Brooks, left, and State Rep. Greg Vital, R-Harrison.



Chattanooga Mayor Tim Kelly, left, and Nashville Mayor Freddie O'Connell, right.



From left to right, Covington Chief of Staff Jason Fleming, Mayor Jan Hensley, and Public Works and Codes Director Mark Daughtery.

TML Annual 85th Conference Aug. 2-5 in Chattanooga



From left to right, Clinton Mayor Scott Burton, City Manager Roger Houck, and Senior Staff Administrator Bill Riggs.



Kansas high school basketball Coach Donnie Campbell, who provided inspiration for the character of Ted Lasso in the Apple+ series, provides lessons on teambuilding and leadership during the Opening General Session.



Second General Session keynote speaker and Professor of Economics and Dean of the Baker School of Public Policy and Public Affairs Marianne Wanamaker, left, and Incoming TML President and Bolivar Mayor Julian McTizic, right.



From left to right, Somerville Mayor Ronnie Niell, Three Way Alderman Danny Wade, and Three Way Mayor David Turner.



From left to right, Spring Hill Alderman Alex Jimenez, Alderwoman Jaimee Davis, and Alderwoman Erinn Hartwell.



Shelbyville HR Director Stacy Claxton, left, and City Recorder Lisa Smith, right.



Greeneville City Manager Todd Smith, left, and Bartlett Mayor David Parsons, right.



From left to right, Paris Community Development Director Jessica Crouch, Mayor Kathy Ray, and City Manager Kim Foster.

TML Annual 85th Conference Aug. 2-5 in Chattanooga



Left: From left to right, EPB Vice President of Government and Community Relations Evann Freeman, Google Customer Engineer Jairobe McPherson, and Deloitte QuantamAl Scientist Dr. McKena McGrew discuss the future of Al and quantum technology in a session moderated by Chattanooga Mayor Tim Kelly.

Below Left: From left to right, Milan Alderwoman Tammy Wade, Clarksville Mayor Joe Pitts, and Cynthia Pitts.

Below Right: From left to right, Loretto Alderman Chris Beckman, Mayor Steve McMasters, and Utility Director Soapy Dial







Jackson Councilman Richard Donnell, left, and Millington Alderman Thomas McGhee, right.



From left to right, Morristown Vice Mayor Tommy Pedigo, Morristown Councilwoman Kay Center, Cleveland Mayor and TML First Vice President Kevin Brooks, and Morristown Mayor and TML District 2 Director Gary Chesney.



From left to right, Nolensville Vice Mayor and TML District 6 Director Jessica Salamida, Red Bank Mayor and TML District 3 Director Stefanie Dalton, and Millington Alderwoman and TML District 8 Director Bethany Huffman.



Dover Mayor Lesa Fitzhugh, right, and LaFollette Councilwoman Stephanie Solomon, right.



TML Executive Director Anthony Haynes, left, and Nashville Chief Strategy Officer and Senior Advisor Marjorie Pomeroy-Wallace, right.



From left to right, Winchester Mayor Sean Crabtree, City Administrator Beth Rhoton, and Henderson City Record Jim Garland.

TML Congratulates 2025 Achievement Award Winners



From left to right, Gatlinburg's Public Works Director Roger Sims, City Manager Greg Patterson, TML President Paige Brown, and Gatlinburg Director of Operations and Communications Seth Butler.



From left to right, Jackson Councilman Johnny Dodd and Police Chief Thom Corley receive the Excellence in Police Services Award from TML President and Gallatin Mayor Paige Brown.



From left to right, Farragut HR Director Michelle Pence and Farragut Mayor Ron Williams receive the Innovation Award from TML President and Gallatin Mayor Paige Brown.



From left to right, Pulaski Vice Mayor Ricky Keith and Mayor J.J. Brindley receive the Small City Progress Award from TML IPresident and Gallatin Mayor Paige Brown.



Cleveland officials receive the Excellence in Community and Economic Development Award. From left to right: Cleveland Staff Engineer Brian Gilbert, City Manager Joe Fivas, City Engineer Brian Beck, Assistant City Manager Development & Recreation Jonathan Jobe, Mayor Kevin Brooks, Brown, Councilman Tom Cassada, Assistant to the City Manager C. Seth Sumner, and Transportation Director Dave Sheely.

Kingsport officials receive the Excellence in Community and Economic Development Award. From left to right: Alderman Gary Mayes, Barge Design Project Engineer Chris Jenkins, Vice-Mayor Darrell Duncan, Mayor Paul W. Montgomery, Brown, City Manager Chris McCartt, Alderman Morris Baker, and Deputy City Manager Ryan McReynolds





Franklin officials receive the Excellence in Police Services Award. From left to right: Franklin Executive Assistant Kim Bennicas, Alderman Clyde Barnhill, Mayor Ken Moore, Assistant Fire Chief Greg Baltimore, Fire Engineer Emily Nelms, Brown, Fire Chief Glenn Johnson, City Administrator Eric Stuckey, Assistant City Administrator Kristine Brock, and Assistant City Administrator Public Works Mark Hilty.

Greeneville officials receive Excellence in Parks and Recreation Award. From left to right: Greeneville Councilman Tim Teague, Maintenance Supervisor John Darnell, Athletics Director Tim Bowman, Parks & Recreation Director Butch Patterson, Brown, City Manager Todd Smith, Parks & Recreation Crew Leader, Billy Valentine, Jr., Assistant City Manager Cathy Osborne, and Councilman Matt Hensley.





Chattanooga officials receive the Excellence in Community and Economic Development Award. From left to right: Water Quality Supervisor Joshua Rogers, Water Quality Specialist 2 Tiia Sailstad, Brown, Assistant City Engineer/ Stormwater Division Director Maria Price, Administrative Support Specialist Tori Reed, and Civil Engineer Christen Snyder.

STATE BRIEFS

Tennessee's June unemployment rate held steady at 3.5%, the same rate the state has reported for three months. The state's June 2025 rate is higher than the 3.3% recorded in June 2024. The 3.5% rate is more than half a percentage point below the national rate, according to data released by the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD). The U.S. unemployment rate was 4.1% in June, down one-tenth of a percentage point from the previous month. A year ago, the U.S. rate also was 4.1%. Over the month, total nonfarm employment increased by 6,100 jobs. The largest gains were in the professional and business services sector, followed by the education and health services sector and the trade, transportation, and utilities sector. TDLWD has compiled a complete analysis of the June 2025 unemployment data, which is available here.

The Tennessee Department of Treasury's Unclaimed Property Division returned a record \$125 million of missing cash money to the rightful owners or their heirs during fiscal year 2025. This milestone is double the \$62.5 million paid out last year and exceeds the previous record of \$68.7 million by more than 80%. The Division also processed an unprecedented number of individual claims. From July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025, over 168,000 claims were paid, more than doubling the previous high of 78,305 in FY 2024. Tennesseans are encouraged to check if they have unclaimed property online at ClaimItTN.gov. If property is found, the owner can file a claim on the spot. About 70% of claims are paid in as little as two weeks, on average.

Tennessee is among the states with the highest violent crime

rate despite overall declines in violent crime in the state and nationwide since 2019. Both violent and property crime rates declined again in 2024, the lowest the violent crime rate has been since recording of rates began in 1969. However, Tennessee reported the fourth most violent crimes per capita, coming in only below Washington, D.C., New Mexico, and Alaska. Tennessee's crime rate was 68% higher than the national average. Additionally, the FBI reported then only 39% of violent crimes committed in Tennessee last year were solved, an 11% decrease from the solve rate a decade ago.

Attorney General Jonathan Skrmetti launched Operation Robocall Roundup, a bipartisan, multistate effort by the Anti-Robocall Litigation Task Force to crack down on robocalls across the country. Attorney General Skrmetti and 50 attorneys general are sending warning letters to 37 telecommunications companies demanding that they stop routing illegal robocalls through their networks. The 37 companies have failed to comply with one or more federal anti-robocall requirements, such as responding to government requests to trace illegal calls, registering with required federal databases, or filing mandatory plans outlining how they will reduce illegal robocalls on their network. By disregarding these simple rules, these companies are opening the door for scammers to use their networks to route robocalls to Tennessee consumers. The task force is also notifying 99 other telecommunications companies that accept call traffic from the 37 non-compliant companies, alerting them that they are doing business with bad actors that are not willing to follow federal anti-robocall rules.

Cities to share in \$22M in state parks and recreation grants



Goodlettsville's Moss-Wright Park is one of 23 cities receiving grants.

The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation's Office of Outdoor Recreation announced more than \$22 million in grants to be shared among 23 municipalities across the state.

The \$22,059,191 in funds awarded come from the Local Parks and Recreation Fund (LPRF) program, the Tennessee Recreation Initiative Program (TRIP), and the Recreational Trails Program (RTP). The 23 municipalities were among 31 total entities receiving

The LPRF program provides state funding to match local government investments for projects and the purchase of land for parks, natural areas, greenways, and recreational facilities. All grant projects must be on publicly owned

LPRF awards included \$300,000 for Atoka, \$400,000 for Bells, \$445,125 for the Johnson City Parks and Recreation Department, \$359,000 for Crossville, \$300,000 for Gallaway, \$1.129 million for **Goodlettsville**, \$3.5 million for **Hendersonville**, \$292,500 for **Huntingdon**, \$1.75

million for Jonesborough, \$2.773 million for Lafollette, \$963,421 for Lakeland, \$353,625 for Lebanon, \$255,817 for Louisville, \$55,000 for Luttrell, \$2.25 million for White Bluff, \$704,000 for White House, \$125,000 for Whitwell, and two awards of \$100,000 each for Greeneville. Other LPRF awards were given to Megis and Williamson counties.

The TRIP is a state funded program that provides grant money to cities and counties who lack professional park and recreational directors and do not provide a comprehensive recreation delivery system in their community to assist with the establishment of the first Parks and Recreation Department.

TRIP awards included \$50,000 for Ardmore and \$50,000 for Decherd. Other funds were awarded to White County

The RTP program provides federal funding to match local government investments for land acquisition for trails, non-routine trail maintenance, trail construction, trail rehabilitation, and trail head support facilities.

RTPawards included \$348,065

for Bolivar, \$392,000 for Oneida, and \$392,000 for Piperton. Other awards were given to Bedford County, the Great Smoky Mountains Institute Tennessee Division of Natural Areas, Cumberland Mountain State Park, and Johnsonville State Historic Area.

"Local parks are an important aspect of outdoor recreation, and we are glad these grants will help communities across the state,' said Greer Tidwell, deputy commissioner of Conservation for the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation. "This makes parks affordable for local governments, and we look forward to the results of this assistance."

"We are grateful for the opportunity to partner with our local communities to help enhance enjoyment of the great outdoors," said Brian Clifford, director of the Office of Outdoor Recreation. "These projects will directly improve health and strengthen economies, helping Tennessee thrive through parks and outdoor recreation."

Four municipalities receive state site development grants

Four municipalities are among the six new recipients of state Site Development grants totaling more than \$6 million.

The grants are designed to help communities invest in infrastructure and engineering improvements to land economic development projects and achieve Select Tennessee site certification.

Bartlett received a \$100,000 grant for due diligence at the Bartlett Innovation Park. Livingston received \$1 million for property grading at the Livingston industrial site. Milan received \$241,769 for master planning and sewer infrastructure design as the Milan Arsenal Property. Winfield also received \$100,000 for due diligence at the Winfield Industrial Park.

Additional grants were awarded to the Knox County Industrial Development Board and Morgan County Economic Development Board.

"What happens in rural Tennessee matters to all of Tennessee, and today's grant announcement marks another step forward in creating greater economic opportunity across our state," said Gov. Lee. "I thank our local leaders for their partnership to drive growth in their communities that will in turn attract future investment and job creation."

The Site Development Grant program is part of the Rural Economic Opportunity Act, which provides funding to improve the economies of Tennessee's rural communities. Since 2016, TNECD has awarded 197 Site Development Grants across the state, totaling over \$120 million in assistance to local communities and generating 7,459 new jobs for Tennesseans.

"TNECD's Site Development program is vital to attracting economic development opportunities in our local communities," said Commissioner McWhorter. "Just last month, we announced a major project on one of our state's certified sites - proof that having shovel-ready industrial sites gives Tennessee a competitive edge and we're excited that seven more communities are now moving closer to earning this valuable certification."

Applications were reviewed by an advisory committee made up of TNECD, Austin Consulting, the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation and the Tennessee Department of Transportation.

Each application was supported by the community's senator and representatives in the Tennessee General Assembly.

Department of Finance and Administration Commissioner Jim Bryson reported that total June tax revenues were \$2.36 billion, \$173.1 million more than the budgeted estimate and \$68.2 million

more than June 2024. The total tax growth rate for the month was 2.98%.

General fund revenues were \$171.6 million more than the June estimate, and the four other funds that share in state tax revenues were \$1.5 million more than the estimates.

On an accrual basis, June is the eleventh month in the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

"June tax revenues demonstrated promising growth relative to our monthly budget estimates," Bryson said. "Sales tax collections were slightly above forecast, based on May's spending. Also, corporate tax revenues, including franchise and excise taxes, were significantly higher than anticipated. We also saw substantial increases in professional privilege taxes, which further contributed to this month's positive results.

"With just one month left in the 2024–2025 fiscal year, we remain optimistic and will continue to monitor the year-end results."

On a year-to-date basis, August through June, total tax revenues are 0.40% more than the budget estimate, or \$81 million more than expectations. When compared to this same period last year, total tax revenues have decreased by \$209.3 million or 1.02%.

State June revenues \$173.1M over estimates

General fund revenues are 0.41% more than the year-to-date budgeted estimate, or \$70.6 million. Likewise, year-to-date general fund collections compared to this same period last year have decreased 0.72% or \$125.7 million.

Individual tax performance compared to June 2025 Budgeted **Estimates:**

- Sales Taxes: Above estimate by 0.58% or \$7.3 million
- Corporate Taxes (Franchise & Excise): Above estimate by 24.70% or \$151.1 million
- Fuel Taxes: Below estimate by 1.23% or \$1.4 million
- All other taxes: Above estimate by 7.76% or \$16.1 million

Year-to-date performance compared to Budgeted Estimates:

- Sales Taxes: Above estimate
- by 0.93% or \$123.5 million Corporate Taxes (Franchise

- & Excise): Below estimate by 4.56% or \$171.2 million
- Fuel Taxes: Below estimate by 0.37% or \$4.4 million
- All other taxes: Above estimate by 6.81% or \$133.1 million

Individual tax performance compared to June 2024:

- Sales Taxes: Up 2.76% or \$33.8 million
- Corporate Taxes (Franchise & Excise): Up 3.31% or \$24.5 million
- Fuel Taxes: Up 1.54% or \$1.7 million
- All other taxes: Up 3.82% or \$8.2 million

Year-to-date tax performance compared to August 2023 through June 2024:

- Sales Taxes: Up 4.38% or \$562.4 million
- Corporate Taxes (Franchise & Excise): Down 18.80% or \$830.4 million
- Fuel Taxes: Up 0.65% or \$7.6 million
- All other taxes: Up 2.51% or \$51.1 million

See the <u>full report here.</u>

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UT's Baker School announces national award honoring young public servants



Newly established awards program honors an exceptional young national leader whose work embodies a deep commitment to public service. The inaugural recipient will receive \$25,000 and be honored during the Baker School Gala in Knoxville on Nov. 14 Deadline for nominations is Sept. 1

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville's Baker School of Public Policy and Public Affairs announces the establishment of the Howard H. Baker Jr. Award for Public Service.

Created as a tribute to Baker's enduring legacy, the award recognizes an exceptional young national leader whose work embodies a deep commitment to public service, meaningful civic engagement and the advancement of democracy. The inaugural recipient will receive \$25,000 and be honored during the Baker School Gala in Knoxville on Nov. 14.

"Howard Baker was a statesman who brought a calming hand to partisan divides and consistently sought common ground to resolve our nation's differences," said Marianne Wanamaker, dean of the school. "Senator Baker began his elected political journey as a student at the University of Tennessee. He firmly believed that young people should find a path into public service — even if only for a few years. This award reflects that belief by recognizing a rising leader making a meaningful impact early in

Carole Graves

TT&C Editor



BAKER SCHOOL



Sen. Howard Baker

their public affairs career."

The Baker School Board will annually select the award recipient from a pool of nominated individuals. To be eligible, a candidate must be an early-career professional, 40 or younger at the time of the award presentation, who exemplifies a commitment and track record of public problem-solving as an elected official or in another public service role.

Selection is based on a demon-

As I prepare to close this

chapter with my final edition as

editor, I find myself reflecting

on the privilege it has been to

share the stories that matter most

to our communities. Week after

week, I have been inspired by the

wonderful stories and projects

happening in city governments-

innovations that improve lives,

leaders who step up in times of

need, and neighbors who work to-

gether to make our towns stronger.

Signing Off. but the Stories Live On

strated ability to find common ground and advance solutions to difficult challenges, a commitment to working through America's democratic institutions to institute change, respect for diverse perspectives and a commitment to civil discourse.

'We believe it's important that acts of true statesmanship are celebrated and emulated," said James H. Haslam II, chair of the Baker School Board. "Senator Baker set a towering example of such statesmanship on issues ranging from environmental protection to entitlement reform, national security and government integrity, and that example should inspire everyone in public service for all time to come."

In addition to \$25,000, the Baker Award includes recognition on a commemorative plaque at the Baker School. Nominations are open and will be accepted through Sept. 1. The winner will be announced annually around Senator Baker's birthday (November 15).

For more information or to submit a nomination, visit here.

It has been my honor to shine

a light on these moments, large and

small, that show the heart and spirit

of our cities. I know my succes-

sors will continue this good work,

bringing readers the same dedica-

tion to truth, connection, and cele-

bration of civic life that has been

the hallmark of this publication.

part of telling your stories. It has

been a joy I will carry with me

Thank you for letting me be a

FESTIVALS

Aug. 16: Loudon

Loudon Riverfest

Glide through the river in our exciting kayak paddle event, indulge in delicious offerings from local food vendors, and cap off the day with a spectacular fireworks display.

Aug 16: Townsend

7th Annual Great Smoky Mountain Hot Air Balloon Festival

Join us for a spectacular evening of hot air balloons and family fun.

Aug 16: White Bluff

World Honeybee Day Festival

Featuring 90+ vendors, food trucks, beer and mead tent, live music, children's activities, educational opportunities, raffles and a silent auction.

Aug. 23-24: Beersheba Springs Beersheba Springs Arts and Crafts

Come out and support our craft vendors at the 58th Annual Beersheba Arts and Crafts Fair.

Aug. 29-30: Surgoinsville Riverfront Festival

Featuring live music, door prizes, vendors, bounce houses, food trucks, fireworks and more.

Aug. 30: Watertown Watertown Bluegrass Festival

Join us on the Historic Watertown Square for the Bluegrass Festival.

37th Annual Hooray for Harriman

Save the date and bring the whole

crew for a jam-packed day of fun.

Sept. 1: Harriman

Sept. 4-6: Martin Tennessee Soybean Festival

Located in the heart of downtown Martin, the Tennessee Soybean Festival has been a beloved tradition for more than 30 years.

Sept. 5-6: Cookeville Fall FunFest

Come celebrate Cookeville's 28th Annual Main Street festival with great music, delicious food, and fun for all ages.

Sept. 6-7: Hendersonville Middle Tennessee Highland Games

Where families come together every year to learn, appreciate, preserve and celebrate Celtic traditions for charitable, educational, social, and athletic purposes.

Sept. 6: Germantown Germantown Festival

One of the longest, continuously

run festivals in the area, The 52nd Annual Germantown Festival will once again provide a Free Family Fun Weekend for all.

Sept. 6: Millington International Goat Days

This family-friendly event celebrates community, fun, and a little bit of quirky charm.



always.

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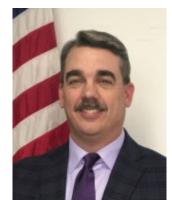
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