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Emmy-Winning David Pogue to keynote TML Annual Conference

Gatlinburg August 13-16



David Pogue, the go-to expert on tech and science, will be featured as the keynote speaker on Sunday, Aug. 14 in Gatlinburg.

Registration for the TML Annual Conference in Gatlinburg, slated for August 13-16, is now underway.

The four-day conference will feature top-notch speakers and workshop sessions, several special events, and ample time to network with your peers.

The opening general session on Sunday, Aug. 14, will feature Emmy-Winning CBS Sunday Morning Correspondent, NOVA Host and Former New York Times Columnist David Pogue. The goto expert on disruptive tech and science in a fast-changing world, Mr. Pogue is a master communicator who brings even the most non-technical audiences up to speed. His highly entertaining keynotes prove that science and technology blend brilliantly with storytelling, and humor. He provides invaluable insights on how technology impacts our work, businesses, health, society, and connections with each other now and into the future.

Mr. Pogue has been at the forefront of new and emerging

tech trends for decades. For 13 years, he wrote the weekly tech column for the *New York Times*; for a decade, he wrote a monthly column for *Scientific American*. His work *CBS Sunday Morning* has won him six emmys.

Many dynamic workshops will be scheduled throughout the conference. Workshop topics include:

- Affordable Housing
- Smart City Technology
- How to use the Census Data
- Fraud Prevention
- Effective Governance, Ethics and Conflicts of Interest
- Automated Fire ProtectionRising Violence: trends, chal-
- lenges, and considerations for the future
 FLSA HR, Fire & Safety
- Community Resiliency and
- Disaster Preparedness
 TN Electric Vehicle Infra-
- structure Deployment Plan

For more information about the conference and to register, go to www.tml1.org/82nd-annual-conference-and-expo-gatlinburg

Green to retire, Hanson to join TMBF

The Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund (TMBF) would like announce the retirement of West Tennessee Marketing Representative Tommy Green and the selection of Justin Hanson, mayor of Covington, as Green's

successor in the organization.

TMBF President and CEO
Wade Morrell thanked Green
for his role with the Bond Fund
for the past dozen years. Green
joined TMBF on July 1, 2010.

"While Tommy will be missed at TMBF, he certainly deserves his retirement," Morrell said. "His hard work and diligence have greatly benefited TMBF for the past 12 years in his role as West Tennessee marketing representative. Tommy has been kind enough to stay on board through the end of the year to help Justin with his transition. This speaks volumes about Tommy's character and work ethic and is just further proof of the kind of man that he is. We wish Tommy much success and happiness in retirement."

Prior to coming to the Bond Fund, Green served as mayor of Alamo for 30 years and is a past-president and former board member of the Tennessee Municipal League.

Covington Mayor Justin Hanson will be stepping into Green's shoes. Morrell said Hanson will be primarily assigned to the West Tennessee region but will be available to serve communities across Tennessee.

"We are very fortunate to have a man with Justin's background, training, and enthusiasm joining the TMBF staff," Morrell said. "The results of his time as mayor in Covington over the last eight years speak for themselves.



Tommy Green

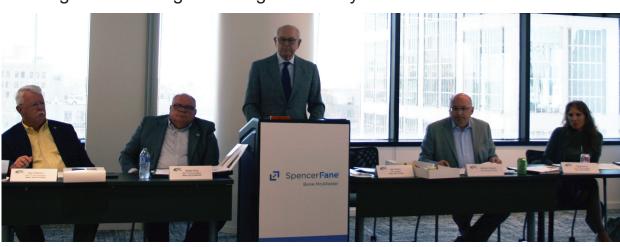


Justin Hanson

He is a great addition to our very strong team that is committed to serving as the trusted borrowing option for our cities and counties in Tennessee. Justin's passion for the communities in West Tennessee is contagious and will allow him to seamlessly transition into his new role with TMBF. His contacts throughout West Tennessee will allow him to hit the ground running and will be a valuable resource for the region as they prepare for the coming growth and development with the arrival See TMBF on Page 4

TML membership approves by-law revisions

Most significant changes in League's history



TML President and Franklin Mayor Ken Moore, center, presents the new by-law revisions during the June 9 board meeting. Also pictured are from left to right: Farragut Mayor and Second Vice President Ron Williams, Henderson Mayor and First Vice President Bobby King, Moore, TML Executive Director Anthony Haynes, and Gallatin Mayor and TML Third Vice President Paige Brown.

Members of the Tennessee Municipal League (TML) approved by-law changes in a special called membership meeting held June 9 in Nashville. The changes were proposed and approved by the TML Board of Directors and include some of the most significant changes in the League's history, aimed at fostering a more engaged, dynamic and inclusive board that advocates on behalf of Tennessee's municipalities.

"Today our members took a huge step in helping to modernize our League and to create more opportunities for municipal officials to get involved in TML," said Franklin Mayor and TML President Dr. Ken Moore.

The by-law revisions include reducing the overall size of the board from its current 35 members to 23, as well as adding term limits to board positions. Board members will be term limited to four consecutive years, with the exception of the mayors from the four largest cities and those directors who are selected for a TML officer position (president and three vice presidents).

District directors will continue to be elected from their grassroots regional caucuses, but more effort will be placed in bringing about greater awareness of these opportunities to serve.

In an effort to right size the board, all past presidents will be eliminated from the board with the exception of the immediate past president. However, to ensure that TML past presidents remain active in the League, TML has created a Past Presidents Council that will



From left to right; UT-MTAS Executive Director Margaret Norris, Goodlettsville City Manager and TCMA President Tim Ellis, Metro Nashville Mayor John Cooper, and East Ridge City Manager and District 3 Director Chris Dorsey.

support the League's mission in the areas of mentoring new officials, fundraising, testifying before state and federal legislative hearings, public speaking engagements, and to serve on key award selection committees.

"Our past presidents will always be honored and recognized for their contribution to this organization," said Anthony Haynes, TML executive director. "Through the creation of the Past Presidents Council, we will continue to benefit from their passion, knowledge and advocacy."

The by-laws also include a diversity statement that ensures diversity of the board along the lines of race, gender, geographical and city population.

In addition to the by-law changes, the Board also approved the League's budget for FY 2022-

23. The TML Board and Staff have continued to strive to increase efficiencies and reduce the size of the budget. The FY23 budget includes increases in the required TCRS contribution (35% increase) and state local government health care (5% anticipated), and a 16% decrease in revenues due to Public Entity Partners and Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund's reduced contributions. The budget also includes a 2.5% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for all but two TML employees. Many cities, as well as the state have approved a 3.5 % or higher COLA, with inflation at 6.5 % and rising.

The new by-law changes will take effect July 1. The final version of the new by-laws will be posted on the TML website to download and review.

See Pages 7-8 for more photos

Kingsport mixed-use project gains accolades for industrial redevelopment

By KATE COIL

TML Communications Specialist

A mixed-use development bringing new park space and housing to Kingsport is already winning awards for its revitalization of a former industrial site.

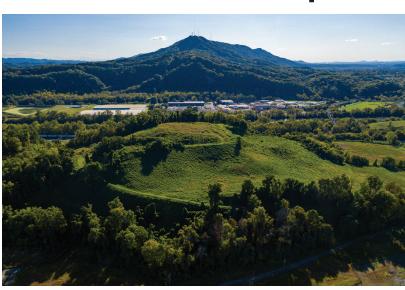
former industrial site.

The Brickyard Park-Cement Hill project is already drawing attention – both because the national recognition it has received and the sight of goats keeping greenery in check on the steep Cement Hill. Featuring new parkland and a planed mixed residential development, the project will connect to Kingsport's downtown via a pedestrian bridge over the CSX Railroad while reutilizing a former industrial site.

Already in place at the 112-acre Brickyard Park section are two baseball fields, two softball fields, a concession stands, restrooms, a scoring town and perhaps the park's best-known feature: the Kingsport Miracle Field and accompanying adaptive playground. Now, the expansion of a local company, a land exchange, and community-driven plans are bringing housing and greenspace back to an iconic local property that has served local industry for the past 50 years.

Kingsport City Manager Chris

Kingsport City Manager Chris McCartt said when the land was purchased by the city in the early 2000s from General Shale Brick, the intent wasn't to create a park where Brickyard Park now stands.



Originally a site for worker housing, the Cement Hill area of Kingsport will come full circle as the city redevelops what has been an industrial property for the past 50 years into a mixed-use project featuring new area for the city's Brickyard Park and a new residential community that will bolster the city's downtown.

"The thought at the time was that the property would be returned to some sort of industrial use," Mc-Cartt said. "We had conversations with multiple companies over a ten-year period there and really had no luck with that. We decided to step back and asked ourselves if industrial use was the desired outcome or if we wanted to look at something that could have a significant economic impact on our downtown. That spearheaded the efforts to begin looking at this property through a different lens, one that was from more of a residential, quality-of-life development that would serve as a downtown neighborhood."

In 2015, Brickyard Park opened as a \$7 million, 43-acre premiere complex featuring a four-field baseball and softball complex, the Kingsport Miracle Field, and an accompanying all-abilities playground. However, Kingsport officials weren't finished yet.

McCartt said it has long been the desire of many local residents and city officials to make the local landmark known as Cement Hill accessible to the public again. That opportunity came when Domtar, a local paper manufacturer, announced it was making major See KINGSPORT on Page 3

NEWS ACROSS TENNESSEE



BRISTOL

Tri-City Extrusion, Inc. (TCE) officials announced the company will invest \$30.8 million to expand its manufacturing operations in Bristol, creating 51 new jobs. The company will construct a new 120,500-square-foot facility at the Bristol Business Park, a Select Tennessee Certified Site. Due to an increase in customer demand, TCE's expansion will strengthen production and allow the company to upgrade its manufacturing equipment. Once completed, TCE's new facility will house a brand new 14-inch, 5,550-ton press and adequate space for product distribution. Established in 1987, Tri-City Extrusion specializes in the production of precision aluminum extrusions in hollow and solid profiles for a variety of market applications. With the addition of the new positions, TCE will employ nearly 200 people in Bristol.

CHATTANOOGA

Five Star Food Service will expand its headquarters operations in Chattanooga, creating 25 new jobs as the company relocates to 412 E. 10th Street. The new downtown location will allow Five Star to expand its operations and hire more headquarters-related positions to support the company's substantial revenue growth and geographic expansion. Founded in Chattanooga in 1993, Five Star Food Service, Inc. is a food and beverage retail solutions provider for employers and other commercial, institutional and educational locations. The company's operations include micro markets, full-line vending machines, pantry, coffee and water services, full-service dining, catering, fresh food production, coffee roasting, secured delivery and sustainable products. Today, Five Star employees nearly 2,000 people across its facilities in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, Ohio, and Tennessee.

CLARKSVILLE

The state of Tennessee has pledged a \$20 million grant for the new Tennessee Wings of Liberty Museum. which will offer both educational opportunities surrounding the aerospace industry as well as the history of Fort Campbell. First proposed in the early 1990s, the museum anticipates some 350,000 visitors a year when it opens. The 75,000-square-foot-facility will sit on a 35-acre site in north Clarksville. The museum will include a hall dedicated to the history of units stationed at Fort Campbell, a multi-use auditorium, a gift shop, parade grounds, and a memorial building. Construction is expected to begin around March 2023 with an opening tentatively scheduled for spring 2025. The museum will warehouse military relics as also offer civics-based education for children aged kindergarten through high school.

FAYETTEVILLE

The city of Fayetteville has unveiled a new Community Art Wall featuring art created by Lincoln County High School advanced art students as part of a community art project. The student works were digitally adapted and placed on a wall on North Elk Avenue on the Fayetteville Liquidation Center. The works of art were printed on metal signs that are mounted to the building as painting the wall was difficult due to its texture.

JACKSON

Toyota has announced that it will invest \$36 million in its Jackson manufacturing plant as part of \$383 million being invested in its U.S. production operations. This is the second major investment Toyota has announced at its Jackson facility this year. The Jackson plant is already responsible for a number of crucial parts of the assembly process for many vehicles, including engine blocks for all vehicles sold in North America. The investment will allow the facility to produce more than 2 million engine blocks annually, which is being done in advance of the company's commitment to vehicle electrification in four of its U.S. manufacturing plants that build the heart of new Toyota and Lexus vehicles. The new investment supports the production of four-cylinder engines, including options for hybrid electric vehicles, also at its Alabama, Kentucky and Missouri.

MANCHESTER

A new Head Start facility in Manchester has been renamed after late Manchester Mayor and TML Board Member Lonnie Norman. The Lonnie Norman Coffee Early Head Start facility is a new multi-million dollar, 6,100-squarefoot facility that Mayor Norman supported through his final days. The new Early Head Start facility will serve children age birth through 3 years old. There are three classrooms, one for infants and two for toddlers. The new building is located adjacent to the Head Start at 1206 Oakdale Street.

NASHVILLE

Prisma Nashville, LLC officials announced the company will invest \$12 million to expand operations in Nashville and will create 109 new jobs over the next five years at its facility located at 2947 Brick Church Pike. Due to increased demand across the company's locations in Tennessee and Arizona, Prisma will expand its existing Nashville facility by more than 100,000 square feet, which will include new office space and additional upgrades. Prisma provides end-to-end marketing supply chain management and logistics with on-demand printing, brand management technology and strategy. For more than 40 years, Prisma has managed the manufacturing and distribution of marketing materials for several national brands. The company presently employs roughly 330 people across its locations in Nashville and Phoenix, Ariz.

PURYEAR

Columbiad Fabrication and Aviation, LLC officials announced the company will invest \$4.8 million to expand its manufacturing operations, creating 144 new jobs in Puryear in the next five years. The company will expand a building that currently houses its welding operations. This will allow all the company's operations to be located under one roof, improving production flow and providing additional space for expected growth. Founded in Paris, Tennessee, Columbiad specializes in precision metal fabrication. The company's full-fabrication welding team can cut, form and weld parts to send its customers a completed assembly. Hiring for Columbiad's new Puryear operations will begin in the first quarter of 2022.

SEVIERVILLE The Sevierville Fire Department recently held a grand opening for its new Station No. 3 located on Prince Street downtown. The new station replaces a former aging facility that was originally built in 1961 and was torn down in 2019 after a new headquarters for the department was constructed on Dolly Parton Parkway. The new station incorporates the site's history with a plaque and the original door as well as other architectural elements from the first facility. The new station will be staffed by six firefighters as well as an engine ladder truck and rescue truck.

SPRING HILL

S&PGlobal Ratings raised its longterm municipal bond rating to AA+ for both the city's existing general obligation debt and the long-term rating of about \$40 million in 2022 general obligation bonds. This will make several priority city projects, like road projects and the construction of a new police station, less expensive to complete. The previous rating for the city was AA and the long-term outlook needs to be stable. The bonds are a credit obligation of the city, payable from existing, ad valorem property taxes. City officials said the upgrade reflects the city's continued economic growth, strengthening reserves, and increased financial forecasting, all of which is expected to be sustained. Direct debt will nearly double with this issuance, increasing to \$83 million from \$43 million.

THOMPSON'S STATION

The town of Thompson's Station was presented with an award for historic preservation by the Heritage Foundation of Williamson County at the fifth annual Pres-

Kingsport receives APA award for **Cement Hill/Brickyard Park project**



Left to right, Kingsport Assistant City Manager Jessica Harmon, Vice Mayor Colette George, Business Development Specialist Steven Bower, and Economic Development Director John Rose receive the Donald E. Hunter Excellence in Economic Development Award from the American Planning Association (APA) for the city's Brickyard Park/Cement Hill Project. The Brickyard Park/Cement Hill project includes a four-field baseball complex, a Miracle League field and all-inclusive playground, the new Scott Adams Memorial Skatepark and a bicycle pump track

Pigeon Forge officials cut ribbon on new Trolley Mass Transit facility



From left to right, Pigeon Forge Vice Mayor Kevin McClure, TDOT Transit Oversight Manager Brian Higdon, TDOT Transit Programs Manager Kaitlyn McClanahan, Pigeon Forge Mass Transit Director Lynn Wilhoite, City Manager Earlene Teaster, Mayor David Wear, City Commissioner Jay Ogle, architecture Mike Smelcer, and Assistant City Manager Eric Brackins cut the ribbon on the new Pigeon Forge Trolley Mass Transit Complex. The \$5.4 million facility is located at the city's Patriot Park near the Old Mill and is designed to improve efficiency of the city's trolley transit system. The more than 20,000-square-foot facility includes 10 new trolley births and a dedicated lane of traffic for trolley loading and unloading. Pigeon Forge operates the third-largest rural transit system in the U.S. and transports more than 3 million riders on six routes annually with routes running year-round.

Preservation Park, which was purchased by the town in 2013 using a conservation easement with the Land Trust for Tennessee and the Civil War Trust. This park buffers development from the south and north while linking a regional trail and greenway system in the town. The park also preserves a portion of the battlefield for the March 5, 1863, engagement at Thompson's Station during the Civil War. To tell that story as well as a broader story of the town — the people, places, events and cultural history —Thompson's Station's Parks and Recreation board partnered with the Civil War Trails, MTSU Center for Historic Preservation, and the Heritage Foundation to place a series of historic markers along the trail system in Preservation Park. The seven panels provide park patrons of with an in-depth and grounded history of the surrounding landscape, people and culture.

TUSCULUM

Work will soon be underway at an 80-acre solar farm in Tusculum. Nashville-based company Silicon Ranch said the farm featuring 180 solar panels featuring 14,350 solar panels modules with the resulting electricity generated being sold to Greeneville Light and Power System, which powers much of Greene County. The Tusculum location is one of four planned solar farm sites in the county by the company. The solar farm will have a 40-year lifespan with the company pledging to restore the property to its natural state afterwards. As an offer of good faith, the company has also made a \$25,000 donation toward the renovation of the Tusculum City Park playground.

WINCHESTER

A new 15,000-square-foot aviation maintenance program building to be operated by TCAT's Aviation Maintenance Technology program is nearing completion at the Winchester Municipal Airport. The facility only lacks approval from

ervation Symposium. The town was recognized for the 207-acre Caryville dragon restored



The big, green dragon that has served as an iconic local landmark for residents of Caryville has been restored. Original creator Jim Cole repainted the sculpture, which has stood in the town since the late 1980s and served as an advertisement for a local fireworks display company. The statue has withstood multiple sales of the property and is presently on land owned by Dollar General. Cole and a local resident paid for the restoration of the statue, which had been damaged by fire and graffiti as well as the elements. The 40-foot statue has become not only a local icon but a popular stop off point for families traveling along I-75 to take pictures.

TCAT and the FFA before it can begin work to educate students. TCAT has already hired the first of two instructors for the site and begun developing curriculum and training aids for the classes to be operated at the airport. TCAT plans to begin the first classes for the program in early

2023 to train students licensing as airframe and power-plant technicians. The program is being backed by Winchester, Franklin County, TCAT, and FedEx, who have supported grants to bring additional training equipment to the facility.

Nashville to host National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials summer summit

By KATE COIL TML Communications Specialist

This year the city of Nashville will host the Summer Summit of the National League of City's National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials (NBC-LEO) for the first time.

NBC-LEO membership will converge on the city from July 21-25 with the conference being hosted at the Grand Hyatt in Nashville Yards. NBC-LEO represents the interests of African American municipal officials and provides a forum to share ideas, best practices and develop leadership experiences.

Nashville Councilwoman and President of NBC-LEO Sharon Hurt is eager to show off all the city has to offer.

"Nashville, in my opinion, is postured beautifully to show inclusion, to show people how different people, nationalities, and ethnicities come together and work together," Hurt said. "We have industries that effect all races: the healthcare industry, music, and education. When Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. came to Nashville he said he came not to bring inspiration but to gain inspiration. With people making comments like that about the city of Nashville, I am proud for people to see Nashville, especially people of color. They think Nashville is all about country music, but that is just one gift Nashville has. I want to brag about it, boast about, and stand proud as a peacock and say this is my city."

Hurt has long been involved in the Nashville community, spending 17 years with Meharry Medical College and 18 years with the Jefferson Street United Merchants Partnership (JUMP). She initially ran for her at-large seat on the Metro Nashville City Council in 2015.

"I had worked in the community for almost 20 years as a public servant," she said. "I consider myself a public servant. I saw the need to be engaged in the political process in order to get things done and make things happen. It was a natural foray for me to move from being in the public servant role into getting into a position where I could help create legislation that would make things easier for those who are disenfranchised, marginalized, or just



Sharon Hurt, Nashville Councilwoman **NBC-LEO President**

unaware of the resources in the city." When she joined the city council, Hurt said it was a natural step to join the council's minority caucus.

She eventually served as both vice chair and chairwoman of the caucus. "It was just through being a freshman councilmember I became a part of the caucus because it focused on issues for minorities, which has been a passion of mine," Hurt said. "Once I got on the council, I wanted to help create legislation that would make a difference. We know that there are disparities for minorities. We know that there is

systemic racism and discrimination when it comes to black and brown communities. I wanted to do something to bring about that change. I felt it was my responsibility to be a part of the caucus to address those needs." The same year Hurt joined the

Metro Council, NLC held its annual City Summit in Nashville. Hurt said attending the city summit showed her the importance of both being involved in NLC and NBC-LEO.

"My first introduction to the political world beyond Nashville came during that summit," she said. "Being a new councilmember, I was introduced to NBC-LEO. Karen Johnson, who is now our register of deeds, was a seasoned councilmember at the time and had been involved in NLC and NBC-LEO. She told me I needed to be a part of it. I went into that meeting where Erica Gilmore,



who was a councilmember at that time, was running for office. I got the opportunity to participate in the election process of one of our very own for a board position. It was educational, informative, and exciting."

The following year after becoming a member of NBC-LEO, there was an opening for an assistant secretary position, so Hurt volunteered for the spot. A year later, she was elected to serve as secretary for two years before most recently being elected the organization's president.

Hurt said she has received numerous benefits as both a member and as president of NBC-LEO.

"It has allowed me to specifically focus on policy, the process, and how what's happening on a federal level impacts us on a state and local level," Hurt said. "It has given me opportunities to build relationships with people across the country who are also experiencing the same type of challenges or barriers we do. Many of them have offered solutions we have been able to take on and adopt ourselves. It's almost like getting a fast track on the process, especially on things like the CARES Act and the ARP Act."

The ability to connect with others across the country and work together on new ideas are among the key reasons Hurt encourages local leaders to join NLC and NBC-LEO.

"I wholeheartedly would encourage everyone to join," she said. "Things are going too fast nowadays. Everything has to be instantaneous. It amazes me how much these young people know and what they learn. I believe this membership has offered me the opportunity to have the on-the-job training, and the plan of how it should be, and then see the reality of how things are in comparison to what it is on a national level. You get benchmarks, best practices, and learn about the scope of things, how to chart out a timeline to accomplish what needs to be done, and the advocacy that can be done."

For those coming into Nashville this summer, Hurt has a must-do list to get the real feel of the city.

"Of course, we definitely need to talk about the HBCUs, because many of them have children and grandchildren, and we want them to send them to school here," Hurt said. "We would love to have people visiting our city and get to experience the universities we have. They don't know about the Hiram Van Gordon Gallery at Tennessee State University. They know as Music City, but they don't realize we are home to the Grammy Award-winning Fisk Jubilee Singers or the

world-renown TSU Aristocrat of Bands. We have the National Museum of African-American Music, and music is a universal language. People can relate and resonate with a lot of the music and musicians who are featured in the museum. They need to see Fort Negley and see the impact these soldiers and troops had in our Civil War. Jefferson Street has a wonderful history and all the entertainers who made it how it historically is. And of course, they have to try the Nashville hot chicken from Mr. Prince."

Most of all, Hurt said she hopes visitors feel the positive energy the city puts out.

"There is something in the air in Nashville," she said. "There is a spirit that is here that is contagious and infections. I want them to feel it, to feel what it is people love about Nashville. You have to be here to understand it. You see me and the energy I have and the joy I have, it's because of the things I have here in Nashville and what I've been able to do and how I've been able to grow here in Nashville."

To register for the NBC-LEO conference this summer, visit https://www.nlc.org/events/national-black-caucus-of-local-elected-officials-nbc-leo-summer-con-

Kingsport mixed-use project gains accolades for industrial redevelopment

KINGSPORT from Page 1

changes to how it did business.

"Cement Hill is an iconic figure within our downtown," he said. We had gone through visioning studies going back 20 to 25 years with different groups with the city and chamber of commerce asking what we could do with the hill and how we could acquire it from Domtar. The company approached the city of Kingsport two years ago and said they were changing their production away from copy paper to move into packaging, to make cardboard packaging. In order to do that, they would need some additional land from us they had tied up in a lease."

The historic exchange led to Kingsport granting Domtar the city's former Cloud Park, home of its Scott Adams Memorial Skate Park, and Domtar giving the city the 40-acre Cement Hill site as well as \$500,000 toward the reconstruction of a new skatepark at Brickyard Park. Soon to be opened, the new Scott Adams Memorial Skate Park has been created by California-based Newline Skateparks and will have features for skaters of all abilities. A bicycle pump track will also be built adjacent to the skate park.

Kingsport Economic Development Director John Rose said the new skatepark and pump track are significant additions to the amenities at Brickyard Park.

"I think these will complement some of the things we have in long-term vision for Cement Hill," Rose said. "We are diving into that right now. We are securing a contract with a local architect and engineering firm to go in and give us an idea of what can be done with the hill. We will be working with citizen groups and city staff to put together a master plan for that hill. Some of the conversations we have had early on include a passive park with hiking and biking trails as well as observation points on the hill."

One sign that things are changing on Cement Hill are the goats that the city has hired to help maintain the steep area, which offers a more economical and environmentally-friendly way of controlling kudzu. McCartt said



Between the Brickyard Park Miracle Field, the \$3 million pedestrian bridge connecting the Cement Hill section and downtown, and the new Scott Adams Memorial Skatepark, there are plenty of things to talk about the city's Brickyard Park-Cement Hill project. However, one of the most frequent subjects of conversation surrounding the project is the more than 130 goats who have been dilligently working to ensure the property is free of kudzu and has neatly trimmed greenery on steep slopes.

the city receives more questions and public interest about the goats than any other aspect of the project.

"The developer at Brickyard has a very social and environmental component to their build-out," he said. "The whole concept there is attaching 150-acres to our existing downtown footprint. When we started developing Cement Hill, we knew it was a large, steep terrain, and we didn't know how we were going to clear it. The idea was floated that we use goats. We contacted a local company - Enviro-Goat LLC – and provided them with a budget. It started out with 50 goats on a monthly contract and with no increases charged to the city. They increased that to 100 because they were so happy to be a part of the project. We are now north of 130 goats on the property. They have

become a part, literally and figuratively, of our local landscape."

Parkspace isn't the only plan on the agenda for the development. Plans call for a more than 350-unit residential development of houses, townhouses, duplexes, and apartments, community pool, basketball court, clubhouse, pocket parks, dog parks, community garden and greenhouse, a walking paths at the base of Cement Hill.

Rose said the plan brings local use of Cement Hill full circle.

"Cement Hill for a while was an industrial dumping ground," he said. "We are taking what would be considered an industrial landfill and has now been approved for public use because it contains benign material that doesn't affect the environment. The original use for Cement Hill was workforce and supervisor housing for the Penn-Dixie Cement Plant. There will now be housing near the base of the hill."

A \$3 million pedestrian bridge over the CSX Railroad, funding in part by a \$1.85 million TDOT grant, will connect the park and the new residential area with Kingsport's downtown, boosting the economic revitalization of the area. McCartt said the bridge will be a vital link to downtown.

The project is already raking in awards. The Kingsport Miracle Field won both the TNAPWA and national APWA project of the year in 2020 and the Brickyard Park-Cement Hill project recently won the American Planning Association's (APA) Donald E. Hunter Excellence in Economic Development Award.

"It's humbling to be a part of that," Rose said. "To be from northeast Tennessee and to win one of these highly-sought after awards is amazing. There is also the hometown pride. It makes you proud of your home city." Of course, the best praise

comes closer to home.

"The public has been very supportive, and there is a lot of excitement about this project and the reuse of this property," McCartt said. "Cement Hill has been something that has been absent for our city for 50 or more years. When we drew up the RFP for this, we involved citizens and downtown businesses to see what type of housing and amenities they wanted to see. They feel invested in the project. As we move forward with the master plan for Cement Hill, we will call in some of those same people. One of the reasons this project has been so successful is that it's not being driven by city hall; the vision was set years ago by a multitude of people and that vision continues to unfold."

Rose said the RFP process for the project has been rewarding in

"I come from the private side and have worked for the city for almost two years," Rose said. "To be able to work on that with a group of surrounding citizens and business owners was a very rewarding process. There was so much positive involvement and input, which is making this project popular."

McCartt said, after 25 years with the city and being part of the team who acquired the property a decade ago, it is rewarding to see things coming together.

"We are seeing our work come to fruition with actual development on the site," McCartt said. "The other piece I am excited about is the impact it will have on our downtown. We started asking a decade ago about how we could get more residential involvement in our downtown. As we start to see residential development occurring, we start to see our downtown come to life as a full-service downtown. I think the next couple of years will be very exciting in downtown Kingsport."



PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Joe Barker, executive director of the Southwest Tennessee Development District (SWTDD), has been appointed by



Joe Barker

SWTDD, the West Tennessee City Mayors Association, and the West Tennessee County Mayors Association to be their local government representative with the Ford Motor Company and its Blue Oval city project. Barkers role will include working with Ford officials to help locate suppliers and investment in West Tennessee communities as well as communicate with local officials with information from Ford.

Mike Billingsley, city attorney for Kingsport, has announced his retirement following nearly 30 years of service. Bill-



Mike Billingsley

ingsley has been with the city since March 1994 and has worked under six mayors, five city managers, and dozens of aldermen. He also served twice as interim city manager during his tenure. He earned his law degree from the University of Tennessee and spent a number of years representing public agencies in private practice before going to work for the city of Kingsport.

Fred Burton, Lebanon city councilmember, has been honored with a Legends of Lebanon Award for his contributions to the



Fred Burton

city at the government and civic level. Burton has served five terms on the council and was recognized by Mayor Rick Bell for his years of service. Burton served in the military during the Korea War, has been a longtime local business owner, and is perhaps most famous as a radio host and DJ for Nashville's WBOL as well as Lebanon's WANT and WCOR stations. He has also worked in his role as a city councilmember to bring improvements to Lebanon neighborhoods.

Jennifer Casey, public information officer for the town of Collierville, has received a 40 Under 40 leadership award from the



Jennifer Casey

Memphis Business Journal for her work. The 40 Under 40 honorees include professionals in the Memphis area who are making an impact in their communities through career advancements, leadership positions, and volunteer service. The Memphis Business Journal received over 200 nominations and Casey was chosen as the first honoree from the town of Collierville. Casey hosts the weekly "Monday Minute" update for the town that showcases what is going on in Collierville, manages the distribution of town communications, and is managing the launch of the town's new website. In addition to her four years as the PIO, Casey previously

served for five years as the town's first digital media specialist.

Jeff Dobson, planning and codes director for the city of Brentwood, has retired after 28 years with the city.



Jeff Dobson

Dobson was hired by Brentwood as a city planner in 1994. He was promoted to lead the planning and codes department in 2009, a role he has served for the past 13 years. City officials lauded Dobson for his role in historic preservation, participation in several special censuses, and involvement in city growth plans.

Kirsten Ert has been selected by

where she served as senior com-

the Lakesite Board of Commissioners as the new city manager. Ert comes to Lakesite from Collegedale



Kirsten Ert

munity planner and social media coordinator. She also served as a city planner and government management graduate intern with Collegedale. A native of Germany, Ert graduated with a bachelor's degree in sociology from the University of Hawaii at West Oahu and worked with the Hawaii Legislature as a senate research coordinator. She then earned a master's in public administration from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. She also worked at Chattanooga State Community College as an assistant for the director of the Center for Academic Research and Excellence. Ert serves on the Board of the Tennessee Urban Forestry Council and is a member of TCMA, ICMA, and the Association for Strategic Planning. She was selected for the ICMA Emerging Leaders Development Program which recognizes promising leaders in local government and helps them build skills in the management profession.

Sean Garett has been selected as the new community planner for the McMinnville Community Development



Sean Garrett

Department. Garrett comes to Mc-Minnville from Fremont County, Colo., where he has served as the county's planning director since 2018. Prior to that, he worked in the Fremont County Code Enforcement Department for three years. Garrett holds a bachelor's degree in environmental planning and an associate's degree in general studies in addition to a certificate in GIS fundamentals and several building inspection certifications.

Stephanie Graham has been hired as the new public information officer and community outreach coordinator for the Jackson



Graham

Police Department. A Jackson native, Graham is presently pursuing her bachelor's degree in criminal justice at Lane College. Graham has more than 25 years of community relations and community service in her background.

Eric Grizzard will take the helm of the Germantown Fire Department as its new chief effective July 1.



Eric Grizzard

Grizzard is presently the department's assistant chief of operations and joined GFD in 2005 after working for Ambulance Services Inc., Horn Lake Emergency Medical Services, and the Southaven Fire Department. He also served as an adjunct EMS instructor at Southwest Community College for 12 years. He holds a bachelor's degree in fire science as well as 30 certifications including Municipal Management Academy Level III and Fire Officer IV. He also served as the Region 8 President for the West TN EMS Directors Association and the Committee Chair for Tennessee Emergency Management Agency Swift Water Credentialing Committee.

Jessica Harmon has been promoted to assistant city manager of Kingsport and will oversee the



Jessica Harmon

city's building, code enforcement, planning, community development, and public information and communications departments. Harmon has served as the assistant to the city manager for Kingsport since November 2019. Prior to that, she was a principal planner with the city beginning in April 2019 and was initially hired by the city in May 2016 as a senior planner. Before coming to Kingsport, Harmon worked in the planning field for more than a decade including as a planner with Johnson City and a land use planner with the city of Bristol. A Kingsport native, Harmon holds a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Tennessee and a master's in public administration from ETSU. She is also the current vice president of the Tennessee Chapter of the American Planning Association.

Chris Shaffer, city administrator for Lawrenceburg, has retired after 30 years of government



Chris Shaffer

city administrator in 2012. Prior to that, he worked for 15 years as a police officer with the Lawrenceburg Police Department, serving first as a patrolman and then as a sergeant. During his tenure with LPD, Shaffer earned his law degree from the Nashville School of Law. He also holds a bachelor's degree in speech communication from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville. In addition to his work as city administrator, Shaffer serves on the Lawrenceburg Federal Board of Directors and operates his own legal practice. Lawrenceburg Mayor Blake Lay will serve as interim city administrator while the city and University of Tennessee Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) conduct the search for a new city administrator.

service. Shaffer was appointed

Green to retire, Hanson to join TMBF

TMBF from Page 1 of Blue Oval."

Hanson thanked the citizens of Covington for allowing him to serve as the city's mayor.

"Serving as mayor of this wonderful city has been one of the greatest joys of my life," he said in a letter addressed to colleagues and friends. "It has also been a great privilege to serve with such wonderful and dedicated employees. It's always been my goal to leave our wonderful city better than I found it. I certainly feel that's the case. Our streets are safer, our debt is lower, our economy is strong, our pension is fully funded, and our fund balance is higher than it has ever

been! During these past eight years, we have successfully prepared Covington for the growth and development we are about to experience with this generational transformation called Blue Oval City. I will forever be grateful for the trust you have given me to lead you to this most critical point. I wish Covington the absolute best in its bright future"

Hanson was first elected mayor of Covington in 2014. He holds a degree from Christian Brothers University and worked at Covington's KBJ station before moving to WMC-TV in Memphis. He resigned his position there as a multimedia journalist when he was elected Covington's

mayor.

Created by the Tennessee Municipal League in 1985, TMBF, began making loans in 1986. Since its inception, programs administered by TMBF have resulted in total borrowings by local governments in Tennessee of \$5 billion. Many borrowers have multiple loans through one or more programs.

Loan sizes range from \$4,500 to \$68 million. More than 280 local governments have utilized the services of TMBF resulting in tremendous cost savings for these borrowers. The interest rate on the popular variable rate pooled loan program has averaged under 1.20% since 1986.

Chester Darden named PEP Loss Control Director

Chester Darden has been named director of loss control for Public Entity Partners. The loss control department serves PE Partners members by providing best practice recommendations to reduce work-related injuries, lower liability exposures, protect public property and facilities, and help facilitate our training, grant and scholarship programs.

Darden began his career with the Tennessee Department of Transportation before joining the city of Hohenwald as city recorder. He joined PE Partners in November 2006 as a casualty loss control consultant, and most recently served as the assistant director of loss control.

The loss control team conducts more than 500 surveys annually, working one-on-one with members to review policies and procedures, visit worksites and make risk management recommendations. The team also administers the grant and scholarship programs, through which more than \$500,000 is invested annually in member safety equipment, driver training and property conservation.

PE Partners' loss control training program serves thousands of Tennessee's municipal employees through online training, in-person training facilitated by our loss control staff and an expansive DVD library.

"It is an honor to serve PE



Chester Darden

Partners in this new role," Dardensaid. "I look forward to making a difference in the risk management efforts of our members, and continuing our loss control team's legacy of providing top-notch programs and services."

"Chester has been an integral part of our loss control team for many years, said George Dalton, vice president of risk services for PE Partners. "His experience working in local government, along with his nearly 15 years of service as our Middle Tennessee loss control consultant, have prepared him well for moving into this leadership position within our organization.

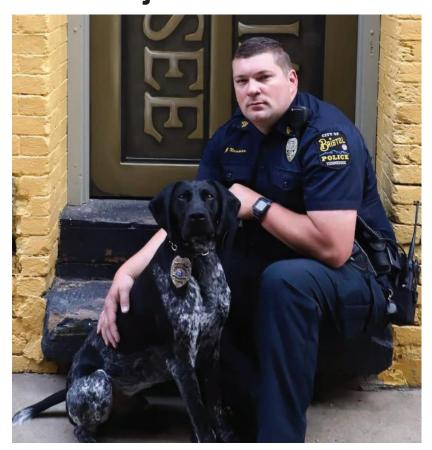
Public Entity Partners' mission is to partner with Tennessee governmental entities in providing effective risk management products and services with a commitment to member best interests. Please visit www.PEpartners.org for more information.

Camden's Pate wins state award for water distributors



Left to right, Camden Water Superintendent John Beasley and employee Timmy Pate who recently was awarded the Distribution System Operator of the Year award from the Tennessee Association of Utility Districts (TAUD). The award was presented at the annual Operator Expo held in Lebanon. Pate is a supervisor in the maintenance division of the Camden Water Department and has been employed with CWD since 2008. He is a state-certified Grade II Distribution System Operator with a background in industrial maintenance.

K9 Nash joins Bristol Police



K9 Nash, seen here with his partner Sgt. Joe Newman, is the latest addition to the Bristol Police Department. A German shorthair pointer trained in narcotics detection, Nash began his career with the Seymour Police Department in Seymour, Ind., and was certified to detect marijuana, cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine. Nash will take over from BTPD K9 Scout, who retired after eight years of service and was the previous partner of Sgt. Joe Newman.

TML subcommittees meet, review pending legislation, plan for next year



Karen Reynolds, Clarksville city council; Scott Bullington, Greeneville alderman and vice chair of the Municipal Infrastructure Subcommittee; Niki Ensor, Kingsport utility director; Bolivar Mayor Julian McTizic and chairman of the Municipal Infrastructure Subcommittee; and Trevor Hobbs, Farragut assistant to the city manager.



Trevor Hobbs, Farragut assistant to the city manager; Brian Hercules, Smyrna town manager and chairman of the TML Subcommittee on Development; C. Seth Sumner, Athens city manager and vice chair of the Development Subcommittee; and Todd Smith, Greeneville city administrator.



Jenkins reviews the duties and responsibilities of each subcommittee.



TML Deputy Director Chad Jenkins and Bolivar Mayor McTizic



Unicoi Mayor Kathy Bullen and McKenzie Mayor Jill Holland discuss ideas during the subcomittee meeting on development.

Members of the newly formed TML Subcommittees recently met in Nashville to get organized, review responsibilities, and preview the various legislation each subcommittee will be tasked to study.

The TML Board of Directors approved a new legislative policy process through the creation of the TML Standing Policy Committee. The committee is charged with fully exploring issues and questions of relevance to municipalities, seek solutions to immediate challenges as they arise, review legislation, develop and propose policy initiatives, and to identify issues over the horizon.

The Policy Committee will oversee and coordinate the ac-

tivities of the four subcommittees (Development, Municipal Governance, Infrastructure and Finance), and serve as the primary conduit for information shared between these subcommittees and the TML Board of Directors.

The subcommittees will prepare and deliver their first annual report to the Policy Committee in late October. These annual reports will summarize the subcommittees' activities, identify issues and legislation referred for consideration, update the status of their reviews and report and findings or recommendations.

The Policy Committee will present its report to the Board at their fall meeting.

No loan is too large or too small



Oakland recently closed on a \$5,200,000 PBA fixed rate loan through the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund to finance parks and recreational facilities for the town. Oakland previously used TMBF's alternative loan program last year to issue two capital outlay notes. Pictured are Jay Johnson, Town Manager; Tommy Green, TMBF Marketing Representative; H. Michael Brown, Mayor; and Yvonne Bullard, Town Recorder.

See us for your special projects needs (615) 255-1561



The city of Waverly used the TMBF fixed rate PBA loan program to borrow \$5,000,000 to finance necessary projects due to the August 2021 flood disaster. First Federal Bank provided the financing through the TMBF program. The city has used our programs previously. Pictured are Waverly Mayor Buddy Frazier and City Recorder Kayla Thomas.



STATE BRIEFS

Tennessee led the nation in tech industry job growth from December 2019 through December 2021, according to a new report from the Technology Councils of America. Tennessee saw a 7.6% increase in tech job growth during the two-year period, beating out Idaho, Washington, Utah, and North Carolina for the top spot on the list. The amount of remote work in the tech sector has increased by 421% since the start of the pandemic, meaning that many of the new tech workers in Tennessee are not working for locally-based companies. Nashville has become the epicenter for much of the state's new tech growth as is the Oak Ridge National Laboratory and Y-12 National Security Complex.

Tennessee could see less federal funding in coming years because the state's population was undercounted by nearly 4.78% on the 2020 U.S. Census. The U.S. Census Bureau said that around 1 in 20 Tennesseans were missed during the census with some 330,000 Tennesseans going uncounted. Challenges including the COVID-19 pandemic and controversy surrounding proposed citizenship questions led to undercounts in several states. As a result, distribution of federal funding as well as the drawing of legislative maps could have been impacted.

State unemployment remained at an historic low in April, the second month of record-breaking low unemployment in Tennessee. The state's 3.2% seasonally adjusted unemployment is 1.6% lower than it was this same time last year and 12.7% below the record-high of 15.9% reported in April 2020. Tennessee also had a new high number of workers in the state's workforce with 3,388,426 Tennesseans on the job. Unemployment across the nation also remained unchanged

in April at 3.6%. One year ago, the national rate came in at 6%.

A new state report shows that the college-going rate of Tennessee students has trended downward over the past five years. The inaugural state "College Going and the Class of 2021" report released from the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) found that the number of students from the class of 2021 going to college was at 52.8%, down from the 63.8% reported by the class of 2017. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic led to a 9% drop in the college-going rate between 2019 and 2021. The state also saw a 9.2% overall decline in freshmen enrollment at colleges in the same period. The report notes there are disparities in college-going rates of different counties across the state as well as a considerable gap between students who are white and students who are black or Hispanic. View the full report at https://www. tn.gov/thec/research/college-going-reports.html.

Tennessee's T.O. Fuller State Park is now home to one of the longest rubber-bearing trails in the country. The 2.5-mile trail for hiking and biking was made from rubber crumbs produced by recycled tires collected in and around the park area. Volunteers and workers collected more than 24,000 dumped tires in a partnership between Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC), TDOT, the city of Memphis, Shelby County and Memphis City Beautiful. The collected tires were then turned into rubber crumbs by a company in Bristol. The project was funded by a Tire Environmental Act Program grant of \$250,000 from TDEC, a special litter grant of \$200,000 from TDOT, and a federal Highway-Recreational Trails Program grant of \$280,000 from TDEC.

PE Partners Symposium Aug. 24 - 26 in Franklin



We are less than three months away from Public Entity Partners' Risk & Insurance Symposium, to be held Aug. 24 - 26 at the Franklin Marriott Cool Springs. This three-day event is open to all PE Partners members and agents.

At PE Partners, we believe that everyone within an organization is responsible for that entity's risk management and safety. We want every employee to end each workday safely and free from injuries and accidents. The Risk & Insurance Symposium is designed to provide risk management and safety training topics aimed at reducing injuries and accidents, as well as liability exposures.

From cyber security to safe driving practices and the Tennessee Drugfree Workplace, the Symposium offers three days of sessions from which to choose, along with networking opportunities with your risk management peers from across the state.

The agenda, hotel information and frequently asked questions are available on our website, https://www.pepartners.org/pages/risk-insurance-symposium-1.

The Tennessee Comptroller's Office has approved several sessions for Certified Municipal Finance Officer (CMFO) credit.

Safe driving practices will be highlighted during the Thursday afternoon keynote session. Public safety speaker Kim Schlau will share her firsthand account of tragedy when her daughters were killed during a car accident with an Illinois State Trooper. The state trooper was traveling more than 120 miles per hour to a call that was already secured while taking a personal call on her cell phone.

Distracted driving is dangerous and claims thousands of lives each year. Whether your employees are emergency responders, transit drivers or public works personnel, or are just running a few errands for your organization, this session will serve as an impactful reminder to pay attention while behind the wheel, and will offer several steps for reducing distractions inside

your organization's vehicles.

If you have questions about the Symposium, please contact: Heather Hughes at HHughes@PEPartners.org or call 615.371.0049

13 cities receive TDEC parks grants

More than a dozen cities have received funds to provide improvements to local parks and recreation offerings ranging from the creation of new parks to the improvement of sports fields and building of trails.

Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) has announced 13 cities are recipients of funds being distributed as part of three programs aimed at improving recreation opportunities across the state.

The state is awarded \$448,000 for the Recreation Trails Program (RTP) as well as \$6.37 million in grants through the Local Parks and Recreation Fund (LPRF) program and the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) program.

"Local leaders need resources to provide recreational activities for their communities, and this is a way to help make it happen," TDEC Deputy Commissioner Jim Bryson said. "We are pleased to announce these grants and look forward to the recreation projects that result from this assistance."

As part of the TRP funds, **Dyersburg** received a \$288,000 grant for improvements at Forked Deer Park, which includes construction of an ADA bathroom facility and a scenic river overlook. The Reagan Levee Road Trailhead will be constructed to include parking including ADA spaces, ADA access walkways, and a trailhead kiosk. At Jennie Bell School, a one-half mile walking trail with parking and an ADA parking space will be constructed.

As part of the LPRF and LWCF funds, 12 municipalities received grants.

Athens received \$500,000 for renovations at Heritage Park and will include architectural and engineering work, construction of a hard surface ADA walking trail that is approximately 1,100 feet long, demolition of an existing non-ADA youth baseball/softball field, and construction of a youth-size ADA field. The project also includes construction of ADA access and parking spaces to serve the entire park.

Cookeville received \$450,000 to add 31.39 acres to Cane Creek Park and develop that property for use as a hard-surface, non-motorized trail. The grant will help pay for restroom facilities; picnic shelter; access road; and parking area with ADA accessibility including parking, sidewalks and all struc-



Cookeville's Cane Creek Park is one of the 13 parks and recreation projects that received funding through grants from TDEC's Recreation Trails Program (RTP), Local Parks and Recreation Fund (LPRF), and Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) program.

tures. Also included will be general park amenities such as benches, trash receptacles, drinking fountains and picnic tables. Most of the construction and grading will be by city workers.

Cumberland Gap received \$250,000 to acquire 1.4 acres in downtown Cumberland Gap for the first phase of development of the Cumberland Gap Commons, including constructing a parking lot, ADA spaces, an ADA boat ramp, bathrooms, and a walkway.

Dickson received \$500,000 to repave and restripe an existing parking lot of approximately 40 spaces and create ADA-compliant parking spaces; build two tennis courts; build two basketball courts; provide a new playground with artificial turf safety surfacing; provide a restroom building; ADA access to the amenities; a pavilion; and provide ADA accessible sidewalks between all the features.

Friendsville received \$245,000 for the development of a new park adjacent to city hall. The site plan for the new park encompasses several features, including a parking lot, ADA accessible parking and compliant access paths, a shade structure, and an ADA compliant restroom.

Erwin received \$500,000 for renovations at Fishery Park, including replacing existing playground equipment with modern playground equipment, adding a new splash pad and ADA access paths.

Hendersonville will receive \$500,000 to address needs in the Systemwide Master Plan – arti-

ficial turf and LED lights on one soccer field at Drakes Creek Park and LED lights on the rugby field at Rugby Park. ADA improvements will allow access to the two fields.

Memphis received \$500,000 for the construction of a splash pad at Audubon Park. Mt. Juliet received a \$430,000 grant for the construction of a restroom building and playground at Hamilton Denson Park. Munford received \$500,000 for the development of Veterans Plaza. The city will acquire a .925-acre parcel downtown and include demolition of an existing building, site clearing and site preparation. The plan is to construct an amphitheater, ADA accessible restrooms, pavilions/ shade structures, walkways, seated planters/seat walls, a parallel access drive, landscaping, signage and site amenities.

Ripley received \$500,000 for improvements to Ripley City Park, including the addition of a splash pad and its support facility as well as ADA accessibility at the existing pool and restroom facilities. Improvements on the east side include the addition of lighting and electrical sources at a new amphitheater, ADA accessible restroom facilities, an ADA accessible parking lot and ADA accessible routes.

Savannah received \$305,000 for lighting at three soccer fields at the Savannah Sportsplex. Smyrna received a \$500,000 grant for six tennis courts, six pickleball courts, an ADA accessible route from the existing parking lot, ADA compliant parking spaces, a gated fence, a walkway and signage.

Seven cities see site development grants

Sites located in seven cities will share in approximately \$7.6 million in grants awarded to nine entities as part of the state of Tennessee's Site Development Grants.

Gov. Bill Lee and Department of Economic and Community Development Commissioner Bob Rolfe announced the grant recipients. The grants are designed to help communities achieve Select Tennessee site certification and prepare industrial sites for economic development projects.

The Clarksville-Montgomery County Industrial Development Board will receive \$700,000 for property grading and tree clearing at Site 19B at the Clarksville-Montgomery County Industrial Park. The Joint Economic and Community Development Board of Lawrence County will receive \$2 million for a property purchase at the Lawrenceburg Industrial Park while the Lexington Industrial Development Board will receive \$586,741 for property grading at the Reeves Property at the Timber-

lake Industrial Park.

The city of **Savannah**'s industrial development board will receive \$80,370 for due diligence studies on the Boyd Property while the **Selmer**/McNairy County Industrial Development board has received \$897,942 for property grading and access road construction at the Selmer North Industrial Park.

The Industrial Development Board of Rhea County has also received \$950,000 for property grading at a site in **Spring City** while **Waynesboro** will receive \$1,345,630 for property grading and access road construction to its Waynesboro Industrial Park.

The Cocke County Partnership also received \$1 million for the Smoky Mountain Innovation Park, and the East Tennessee Regional Agribusiness Marketing Authority received \$80,000 for a due diligence study.

"When we provide rural communities with the tools needed to attract new jobs and support economic growth, more Tennesseans have opportunities to thrive," said Lee. "I commend the General Assembly for their partnership in funding nine additional industrial sites to support future development projects and ensure prosperity across Tennessee."

The Site Development Grant program, part of the Rural Economic Opportunity Act, works in tandem with TNECD's Select Tennessee program. Since 2016, TNECD has awarded 136 Site Development Grants across the state, totaling more than \$54 million in assistance to local communities.

"The Site Development Grant program enables Tennessee communities across the state to invest in the infrastructure needed to develop shovel-ready sites," said Rolfe. "We are proud to partner with these nine communities as they move one step closer to achieving the ultimate goal of Select Tennessee site certification, and we look forward to seeing the successes that follow this latest round of awards."



Tennessee Municipal League Board of Directors met June 9 in Nashville



Gallatin Mayor and TML Third Vice President Paige Brown, left, with Goodlettsville City Manager and TCMA President Tim Ellis



Knoxville Director of Legislative Affairs Fiona McAnally, back left, McKenzie Mayor and TML Past President Jill Holland, and Three Way Vice Mayor and At-Large Director Mary Ann Tremblay.



Franklin Mayor and TML President Ken Moore, far right, addresses the room while Farragut Mayor and Second Vice President Ron Williams, left, and Henderson Mayor and First Vice President Bobby King, center, look on.



Henderson Mayor and First Vice President Bobby King, standing, makes a report to the board while Farragut Mayor and Second Vice President Ron Williams, left, Franklin Mayor and TML President Ken Moore, center right, and TML Executive



Athens Mayor and TML Past President Bo Perkinson, left, and Three Way Vice Mayor and At-Large Director Mary Ann Tremblay, right.



East Ridge City Manager and District 3 Director Chris Dorsey asks a question. Also pictured are Athens Mayor and TML Past President Bo Perkinson and Athens City Manager and At-Large Director C. Seth Sumner.



Bartlett Mayor and At-Large Director Keith McDonald, left, and Everett Brock, McMinnville vice mayor



Franklin Mayor and TML President Ken Moore, left, with Cleveland Mayor and At-Large Director Kevin Brooks.

WAUF()R

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

Tennessee Municipal League Board, membership approve by-law revisions



McKenzie Mayor and TML Past President Jill Holland, left, with Athens Mayor and TML Past President Bo Perkinson.



Athens City Manager and At-Large Director C. Seth Sumner, left, with Kingsport Alderman and District 1 Director Darrell Duncan, right.



Board members listen as the new by-law revisions are presented.



Sparta Alderman and District 4 Director Hoyt Jones, left, with East Ridge City Manager and District 3 Director Chris Dorsey.



Mayor and TML At-Large Director Kaie Lamb, right.



TML Executive Director Anthony Haynes presents the FY 2022-23 budget for Board



Above: Henderson Mayor and First Vice President Bobby King, left, and Franklin Mayor and TML President Ken Moore, right.

Right: Sparta Alderman and TML District 4 Director Hoyt Jones and Cleveland Mayor and At-Large Director Kevin Brooks review the proposed by-law provisions.



Tennessee Municipal League 2021-2022 Officers and Directors

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TN Building Officials Assn.

TN Assn. of Chiefs of Police

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Kevin Krushenski, Legislative Research Analyst Denise Paige, Government Relations

Does your municipality plan to pay a Ransomware ransom? States are starting to say "No"

BY KEVIN HOWARTH

VC3 Communications Manager

When municipalities get caught off guard by a ransomware attack, they sometimes see paying the ransom as a way out. It's not a pretty option, but it's (supposedly) a way to get your data back in a worst-case situation.

However, cybersecurity experts and law enforcement officials have warned for years that paying a ransom is not the right decision for many reasons:

- 92% of impacted organizations don't get all their data back.
- 29% of impacted organizations cannot get more than half their data back. Of those organizations that pay a ransom, 80% get hit again.
- Cybercriminals may still be inside your systems after you pay.
- You are keeping cybercriminals in business and validating their business model.
- You may be funding terrorism, sex trafficking, drug trading, and other illicit activities.
- You are saying "Target me again!"

Romance scammers stole \$1

billion from U.S. citizens in

2021, according to data from

the Federal Bureau of Inves-

tigation (FBI). The amount of

romance scam-related thefts

are on the rise, increasing \$600

million from last year and being

the third costliest type of scam

following email account scams

and investment fraud. The FBI

said scammers pretending to be

fake lovers get into the heads

of their victims in order to take

money. The isolation brought on

by COVID has seen an increase

in victims falling prey to these

scams, according to numerous

states attorneys general. Pros-

ecuting these crimes can be

difficult on the state level, espe-

cially as many of the con artists

NATIONAL BRIEFS

For those and many other reasons, municipalities should not pay a ransom. Yet, they do.

To stop these payments from happening, states are seeking to deter municipalities.

- North Carolina: On April 5, 2022, North Carolina passed a law prohibiting municipalities from paying a ransom related to a ransomware attack and even communicating with any cybercriminals instigating the ransomware attack.
- Florida: HB 7055 (passed by the House and Senate and likely to be signed into law by Governor Ron DeSantis) also prohibits municipalities from paying a ransom.
- Pennsylvania: SB 726 passed the Senate but stalled in the House. This bill prohibits using taxpayer money to pay a ransom but makes an exception if the Governor declares a disaster emergency and deems paying a ransom to be necessary in that situation.
- New York: Senate Bill S6806A made it to committee in the Senate. Like the other bills, it prevents governmental entities (including municipalities) from paying a ransom related to a ransomware attack.

These are just a few examples of states that are aggressively pursuing laws, with bipartisan support, that prevent municipalities

Federal traffic deaths hit the

highest number in more than 15

years with a 10.5% increase in

deaths over the previous year,

according to the U.S. Depart-

ment of Transportation. Federal

estimates indicate nearly 43,000

lives were lost due to traffic inci-

dents in 2021 with more people

dying in traffic crashes than any

year since 2005. The increase in

deaths may be due to motorists

engaging in more reckless driving

behavior during the pandemic as

well as bigger and more powerful

vehicles on the roadway that can

cause more damage. To address

concerns over highway safety, the

Federal Highway Administration

intends to distribute \$6 billion over

involved live overseas.

from paying ransoms. Similar to data breach notification legislation or data privacy laws, it just takes a few states to set the example before other states follow suit.

This is a good time to ask yourself, "Am I prepared for a ransomware attack without the option of paying a ransom?"

If you're concerned about this trend and don't like the idea of a ransom payment removed from your arsenal, consider once again the above facts and statistics while also taking the opportunity (especially with ARPA funds) to put a foundation in place that helps you deal effectively with a ransomware attack.

- Regularly patch your software.
- Update your operating system. Modernize your technology
- and get rid of legacy systems. Build a highly available data backup and disaster recovery solution.
- Monitor systems to proactively detect issues and contain
- Separate critical systems from less critical systems.
- Never pay the ransomware ransom!

Visit www.vc3.com to learn more.

the next five years aimed at safety

The U.S. added 390,000 new jobs

in May, a stronger than predicted

number that signals the labor

market and economy are still

strong despite some issues. The

increase in employment was the

smallest in 13 months, but econo-

mists said that employment growth

is slowing because most of the jobs

lost during the pandemic have now

been recovered. The federal unem-

ployment rate was unchanged at

3.6%, which is narrowly above the

pre-pandemic low. The labor force

participation rate sits at 62.3%, up

0.1% from last month. The amount

of working age Americans who ei-

ther have jobs or are looking for one

is still below pre-pandemic levels.

improvements.



June 18: Hendersonville

6th Annual Main Street Porch Festival

Come out for music, art, crafts and food. Bring your own chair and sit a while. For more info, visit https://www.facebook.com/ HendersonvilleTNPorchFest/ about/?ref=page_internal

June 18: Lenoir City

Festival of Friends

Bringing the local disabled community, family and friends together for music, food, games, and vendors at Lenoir City Park. For more info, visit https://lenoircitytn.gov/ special-events/

June 24-25: Maryville

Summer on Broadway Downtown Maryville kicks off the summer with food and fun highlighting outdoor activites in the Peaceful Side of the Smokies. For more info, visit http://www. summeronbroadway.net/

June 25-26: Ducktown

46th Annual Miners Homecoming Celebrating the history and heritage of Ducktown and the mining industry. For more info, visit https://polkmix.com/6-26-miners-homecoming-ducktown-tn/

July 1-2: Millersville

2nd Annual Bluegrass Festival Enjoy free bluegrass music at this event hosted by Millersville Parks and Recreation. For more info, visit https://www.facebook.com/ events/1608456052843561

July 1-2: Savannah

44th Annual Savannah Bluegrass

Headliner Queen of Bluegrass Rhonda Vincent will be present for this two-day event at Jerrolds Park and the Savannah Market. For more info, call (731)-727-6848 or (731)-925-3300.

July 1-2: Smithville

51st Annual Fiddlers' Jamboree and Crafts Festival If you love bluegrass and old-time

Appalachian style music, dance, and craft, visit downtown Smithville for this free family festival. For more info, visit http://smithvillejamboree.com/

July 3: Greenbrier Turning of the Pig

Greenbrier City Hall Park hosts the annual Turning of the Pig to benefit the local high school band. Come out for food, music, games, and more For more info, visit https:// www.greenbriertn.org/Calendar. aspx?EID=218

July 17: Greenbrier

18th Annual Mountain City Sunflower Festival

Enjoy arts, crafts, food, music, games, and more at this annual Mountain City event. For more info, visit https://www.facebook. com/mctn.sunflowerfestival



Sign up for the 2022 TML Annual Scholarship Golf Tournament on Aug. 14, to be held in conjuction with the TML Annual Conference in Gatlinburg. Registration and breakfast to begin at 6:30 a.m. Shot gun start at 7:30 a.m. TML uses the proceeds of this event to provide scholarships to Certified Municipal Finance Officers (CMFOs) in Tennessee. TML does not financially benefit from this golfing event. https://www.cognitoforms.com/TML1/tml3rdannualscholarshipgolf tournament



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Ed Stewart, ChFC, CLU, CF **Financial Advisor**

Six months after fatal tornados, Tennessee cities still recovering

By KATE COIL

TML Communications Specialist

Six months after a major storm system and tornado outbreak struck five states and led to the deaths of 89 people, Tennessee cities are working to recover from severe damage that changed their communities forever.

The storm system would rip through five states during the late evening of Dec. 10, 2022 into the early morning of Dec. 11. Five major cells in total brought an estimated \$3.9 billion in damage and led to 71 confirmed tornadoes through five states. Two of these cells passed through Tennessee.

The first major cell to hit was an EF-4 tornado that originated in Arkansas and the Missouri bootheel region. This storm reached its second peak near Tiptonville and Samburg along Reelfoot Lake, resulting in three of the four fatalities of the storm reported in Tennessee. In addition to the EF-4 parent storm of the super cell, another EF-1 and an EF-0 tornado were recorded between Samburg and Union City. The cell progressed northwest of Union City near Woodland Mills before heading to Illinois.

Samburg Mayor John Glessner said city officials and local residents had been tracking the deadly F-4 tornado since it originated in Arkansas.

"We have had several close calls in this area over the past two or three years," Glessner said. "Earlier that year in May we had pretty severe damage from a tornado or straight-line wind storm, so we had just finished getting cleaned up from that when this tornado hit. Obviously, it's surreal. You hear the stories of how they sound and the damage that can take place, but you can't really appreciate the severity of the situation until you are actually standing in the debris field. The carnage is unbelievable of what mother nature can do."

The third cell of the event and second to hit Tennessee began near Newbern, intensifying to an EF-2 before striking in Kenton as an EF-3. The storm weakened as it passed through Sharon but again began to strengthen as it approached Dresden, hitting downtown as an EF-3 and continuing through Cottage Grove before entering into Kentucky.

Kenton Mayor Danny Jowers said the previous storms that day had led to many residents knowing they needed to take cover at their homes or in local shelters, which helped prevent loss of life in the community. The area of Kenton that was struck was primarily residential, but damage to utilities wound up impacting more areas of the community.

"The town was cut in half," Jowers said. "You couldn't get from one side to the other. If you were coming from the northside of town, you had to drive out of the way to get to the southside of town. It was a logistics nightmare. Thank goodness most of the help game from the south end. We are a town split but the county line, so half of our town gets its electricity from one utility and the other from the other. While only about a quarter of the town was hit by the tornado, all of the electrical infrastructure was destroyed. There were areas not hit by the tornado that had no electricity for almost seven days. It was odd coming in because the north side of the town was lit up, but once you crossed the county line everything went dark. The tornado dug into the ground and dug into a couple of our water mains, and we couldn't get in there to cut them off. It completely drained our water tanks."

The same storm that hit Kenton then made a direct hit on downtown Dresden, leaving damage to nearly 200 structures, including more than 100 homes, 21 businesses and municipal infrastructure. Dresden Mayor Jeff Washburn said the city was fortunate no lives were lost and only a handful of significant injuries from the storm in Dresden.

"We did lose our city hall, our police department, and fire department buildings that were located in the downtown area," Washburn said. "We were fortunate it hit at 11 o'clock at night rather than during the day when a lot of people are downtown in the courthouse, city hall, and those businesses. My family and I were in the basement of our house, which was in the direct path of it. We had several of our children and grandchildren in the basement with us. We noticed when we opened the door that the



Dresden Mayor Jeff Washburn provides an update following the devasting storms.



An aerial view of Samburg following the devastating tornado. Tourists often far outnumber residents in Samburg and ensuring that both visitors and local residents were safe was a major priority in the

hours following the storm. cars were thrown around and the garage was gone. There were trees and electric lines down. It was total chaos there for several hours just trying to get the streets where

The combination of the storm hitting at night and the fact that Samburg caters to numerous tourists could have easily complicated search and rescue operations. However, Glessner said early warnings to residents and visitors helped save lives despite the town taking a direct hit. Within a half hour of the storm, Glessner said local officials began organizing to assess the situation and ensure everyone was accounted for.

we could get the emergency crews

down them."

"We are a small community of several hundred, but we are a big tourist destination since we sit here on the banks of Reelfoot Lake," he said. "We have hundreds of tourists in the area at all times. Because we are a tourist town, one of our biggest concerns was a head count. The first several hours were going house by house to make sure everyone was identified and accounted for. We had to see what tourists were in town and if they were accounted for."

Washburn said quick thinking by local police and fire officials meant the city didn't lose all of its emergency services infrastructure with the destruction of its city hall, police headquarters, and fire department.

"They had dispersed three fire trucks away from the station that took a direct hit, which was smart on the part of our fire station," he said. "It kept us from totally losing all of our fire fighting apparatus. The police department likewise was out and about prior to the storm. The biggest thing that amazed me was that I walked around – there was no driving around - that night, and I saw the mutual aid response from our surrounding communities. It was really beneficial to have them in our time of need."

Washburn said there were some streets in town where one side was completely demolished and the other was intact.

"I was with my pastor and we walked around until about 6 a.m. that morning," Washburn said. "I went home, got an hour's sleep, and came back out. The biggest thing to me was the total extent of the devastation our community had suffered and the number of buildings that were destroyed, including the entire southside of the courthouse square where our municipal buildings were. Today, that has been totally demolished and it is down to bare earth waiting for construction to start. It was amazing how much debris was thrown about in such a small area."

The real assessment of the structural damage couldn't begin until about 10 hours later when



Samburg Mayor John Glessner tours the devastation with Gov. Bill Lee.



The tornado only went through a quarter of Kenton, but the city is split by two counties, which left half the town without utility services for a week while restoration work was being done. The neighborhood hit was older, and many residents have chosen not to remain.



Downtown Dresden after the tornado. Much of Dresden's municipal infrastructure, including Dresden's city hall, fire department, and police department. The city hall and police department are operating out of the Dresden civic center while the fire department is in a rented garage property until a new municipal complex can be built.

the sun began to rise. Glessner said Samburg lost around a quarter of all of its housing and the complete municipal infrastructure including city hall, the fire department, and water and sewer departments as well as associated equipment including the police vehicle and public works equipment. Within 48 hours, Samburg had established a command center and donation center, begun clearing local roads to allow for emergency vehicles, and started working with TEMA

and FEMA. "I'm very proud of the effort in and around this community," Glessner said. "I think Samburg can be used as a model in how you handle yourself and act in this kind of situation. We did very well with our organizational skills, with our volunteerism, and I'm proud of everyone who was involved."

In Kenton, Jowers said the storm downed many trees that were 100 or 150 years old, making it hard to see damage until they were

"I grew up in this town, so it was a real shock," he said. "There was major damage to houses. There were probably 26 to 30 structures that were entirely demolished, which is a lot in a small town. The next day, people were bringing in trucks, backhoes, trackhoes, and you name it. Our sister cities were bringing in their resources to help us clean up. The cleanup started that night. We had farmers, private citizens, and other cities who sent all kinds of resources here. The biggest thing was getting the roadways cleaned up and opened. Once we got the roads open, we could start addressing the electric and water issues we had that night."

Along with cleaning up streets, Washburn said Dresden officials had to find where to move their own operations temporarily.

"We were able to restore our city hall operations by moving it to our civic center on a temporary basis," he said. "Our fire department has located its trucks and things out to some garage space that is

loaned to us while our police are operating out of a cramped office space in our civic center. The city was able to get back online in a couple of days with our computers to keep up with our utility billing and things like that."

Six months after the storm, Glessner said Samburg is continuing to work with government agencies to help rebuild both the community and the local government facilities. Debris from both the town and surrounding county is being gathered and processed at a local ballfield, and Glessner said nearly all the heavy debris has been processed. Approximately 75,000 cubic yards of debris has been

processed. While bad weather and supply chain issues have increased expect recovery times, Glessner said there are 16 houses expected to be built in the next 18 months – perhaps the most that have ever been under construction in the small town at the same time. The town has used disaster funds to replace most of its municipal equipment. Local government continues to operate out of temporary buildings, but a silver lining is that the storm has allowed plans for a more consolidated municipal complex.

"We have a plan to secure a single location to house our fire department, city hall, water department, and police department all under one roof," he said. "We have seen several other cities do that in the past. Before this, we had all of our departments in different buildings. We have put that on the table with FEMA, and they like that idea. We believe we can build a single site cheaper than we could put four or five buildings back in their locations. We also have plans to put in a storm shelter that would house our community because we are in the path of Tornado Alley now."

Jowers said supply chain issues have also complicated the long-term recovery in Kenton.

"The cost of building materials is so high and there isn't the labor you need to build," he said. "There

are a lot of empty lots right now. People want to rebuild, but for modular homes its two years behind and 18 months on contractors coming in to build. That is our challenge now is to get things rebuilt. There have been a lot of properties sold. These were older people who lived here their whole lives. They aren't going to stay and rebuild. The area will never look the same again, and that's just the way it is."

In Dresden, plans are being made for a new municipal complex in addition to private rebuilding.

"We are ready to start picking up all the debris that needs picked up once FEMA approves our contract," Washburn said. "We have some houses already under construction. We have two or three businesses that have already begun rebuilding, two have already opened for business, and we have two businesses that have made announcements they are coming to our community since then. We are working with architects and engineers to build a municipal complex that would encompass city hall, the fire and police departments under one structure. We have acquired some additional space and are working to acquire two more lots where businesses were previously located to build our city hall. We are looking at a 20,000-square-foot municipal complex."

Six months on, officials said the tornado has helped bring their communities together.

"You never know how you are going to react in this kind of situation until you are put in it," Glessner said. "This entire community stepped up in a way that would make anyone proud. We are well on our way to recovery. It reaffirms what you hope would happen, but you never know until you know."

Jowers said support from other cities has also been invaluable.

"I knew we would come together, and I was pleased to see other cities coming to help us and get us back on our feet as soon as we could," Jowers said. "That was the biggest thing."