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Additional speakers added to TML Conference lineup

The TML Annual Conference in Nashville is right around the corner and additional speakers have been added to the conference

Slated for July 22-25 at the downtown Renaissance Hotel, attendees will hear from Clarence Anthony, NLC executive director, on key happenings taking place at our nation's Capitol.

He will be a part of the opening general session on Sunday, June 23.

On Monday, we will hear from leaders of Tennessee's electric power industry, who will

Justin Mairehofer, Regional Vice

President of TVA; will share their

insights on what the electric indus-

try is doing to meet today's chal-

lenges – such as rapidly changing

technologies, consumer demand,

climate change, and unprecedent-

ed population growth - and how

can cities best adapt to ensure their

own competitiveness and livability.

feature top-notch speakers and

workshop sessions, several special

The four-day conference will







Justin Mairehofer events, and ample time to network

participate in a panel presentation on The Future of Electric Power with you peers. in Tennessee. Brian Solsbee, CEO The conference will kick off of Tennessee Municipal Power Saturday afternoon, July 22, with Association; Mike Knotts, CEO several sessions offered by the Muof Tennessee Electric Coop; and nicipal Technical Advisory Service

> Board Training. Monday will feature additional workshops and TML's annual business meeting. And the conference will wrap up on Tuesday morning, July 25, with the Annual Awards Breakfast.

> that will provide CPEs for CMFO

graduates and required Utility

You can review the conference agenda, click here

For more information and to register, click here.

New statutory meeting requirements for municipal governing bodies

BY ELISHA HODGE MTAS Legal Consultant

The 113th General Assembly amended the Tennessee Open Meetings Act with two separate public chapters that will impact your municipality. Those public chapters are Public Chapter 213, Acts of 2023 and Public Chapter 300, Acts of 2023. The summary and comments on both are found below.

Chapter No. 213 (HB0023/ SB0027). "Agendas Required." Amends Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 8, Chapter 44, Part 1 by adding that at least 48 hours prior to a meeting of the local legislative body (city, town or metropolitan government council, board of commissioners, or board of mayor and aldermen) the agenda for the upcoming meeting must be made available to the public, at no charge, in a place accessible to the public. Requires the agenda to reasonably describe the matters to be deliberated upon or acted on during the public meeting.

Authorizes the local legislative body to deliberate or act upon matters not on the agenda if the body follows its bylaws or properly adopted rules or procedures and all other applicable state laws. Provides that this authorization is not to be used to circumvent the spirit or requirements of the open meetings act by withholding items from the agenda to avoid public disclosure of a matter to be considered by the body.

Permits a local government legislative body to utilize a website it maintains to make an agenda available to the public for purposes of complying with the requirement that the agenda be made available to the public at no charge in a place accessible to the public. Effective: April 25, 2023 Please note the language that

allows the local legislative body to deliberate or act upon matters not on the agenda "if the body follows its bylaws or properly adopted rules or procedures." Staff in each respective municipality should review the municipal code to determine whether Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised has been adopted as the rules of order and parliamentary procedure that govern the transaction of business at the meetings of the local leg-



P.C.300 requires a governing body to reserve a period for public comment at each public meeting. However, the new law does provide that such governing body can place reasonable restrictions on the period for public comment and to also require persons desiring to provide comments at a meeting to give advanced notice.

islative body. For municipalities with municipal codes maintained by MTAS, provisions adopting Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised are typically codified in title 1 of the code. The 12th edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised is currently available. If the local legislative body has not adopted Robert's Rules of Order to govern the transaction of business at its meetings or if the reference in the municipal code is to an older version of the rules, the local legislative body should consider adopting the rules or amending the current language in the code to read, "The rules of order and parliamentary procedure contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the transaction of business by and before the (insert the type of governing body) at its meetings in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with provisions of the charter or this code?

Chapter No. 300 (HB0023/ SB0027). Public comment period required. Amends Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 8, Chapter 44, Part 1 by requiring a governing body to reserve a period for public comment, at each public meeting, where the public has the opportunity to comment on matters that are germane to the items on the agenda for the meeting.

Provides that this section does not apply to:

1. a meeting of a governing body, or a portion thereof, where the governing body is conducting a disciplinary hearing for a member of the governing body or a person whose profession or activities fall within the jurisdiction of the governing body; or

2. a meeting where there are no actionable items on the agenda.

Authorizes the governing body to adopt reasonable restrictions on the period for public comment, including restrictions related to the length of the public comment period, the number of individuals who can speak during the period, and the length of time each individual can speak. Includes that restrictions may also require an individual to sign up in advance of a meeting in order to speak during the meeting. Requires the governing body to take all practicable steps to ensure that opposing viewpoints are represented fairly if those with opposing viewpoints desire to comment.

Requires the public notice for a meeting to include the manner in which an individual must sign up to speak at the meeting, when advance notice is required. Effective July 1, 2023.

Please note that this requirement is applicable to all governing See LEGISLATION on Page 6

Relationships, workforce, and culture strategies for retaining existing industry



Students from Marshall County High School get a chance to tour Talos Engineered Products in Lewisburg to learn more about working for the company. By building their own relationships with local businesses, economic development officials can also help facilitate other relationships with those businesses, such as relationships between businesses and the school system.

By KATE COIL

TML Communications Specialist

Economic development officials discussed easing the apprehension of existing industry as new companies arrive at a recent meeting hosted by the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development.

As large industries like Ford move in, existing companies may express concern to local officials about retaining and recruiting employees in a more competitive

Greg Lowe, director of economic development for Lewisburg, and Ryan Egly, president and CEO of the Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce in Lawrenceburg, suggested the municipal leaders can assuage concerns by building relationships with current industries, getting educational partners involved, finding what segments are missing from the workforce, employing economic development officials, working on community needs, and involving existing businesses in the recruitment of new.

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

While a new industry opening often gets the big headlines, Lowe said the major focus of most chambers of commerce, industrial development boards, and economic development officials is business retention. Lowe said anywhere between 70-90% of his job focuses businesses already in Lewisburg.

"Where most of the job creation and innovation comes from is your existing industry," Lowe said. "I have five local industries today working on expansion projects that will total more than \$80 million. If that was a new project, it would be all over the newspapers. You have to take care of the folks who have invested in your community."

Interaction is key to keeping local industries, but Lowe said it is difficult for smaller communities to do in-person, sit-down visits with companies. Instead, Lowe suggested keeping contact through newsletters, phone calls, text messages, and occasional face-to-face contact. Every month, Lowe said he organizes a lunch where the See INDUSTRY on Page 3

SCOTUS ruling changes EPA authority over certain wetlands

A new U.S. Supreme Court Ruling has narrowed the definition of which waters are subject to federal protections under the Clean Water Act, limiting how the Environmental Protection Agency can implement safeguards in certain wetlands.

In the decision, the court ruled 5-4 that wetlands must have "continuous surface connection" within a protected body of water that makes the two areas "indistinguishable" in order for the EPA to regulate discharges in these bodies of water. While all nine justices agreed that the case should be overturned, opinions differed on the direction the ruling should

Justice Samuel Alito authored the majority opinion, which was agreed to by fellow Justices John Roberts, Clarence Thomas, Neil Gorsuch and Amy Coney Barrett.

"The reach of the Clean Water Act is notoriously unclear," Alito wrote. "Any piece of land that is wet at least part of the year is in danger of being classified by E.P.A. employees as wetlands covered by the act, and according to the federal government, if property owners begin to construct a home on a lot that the agency thinks possesses the requisite wetness, the property owners are at the agency's mercy."

Justice Brett Kavanaugh and



A recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling on a case from Idaho has narrowed the definition of what wetlands are under federal protection from the EPA.

Justice Elana Kagan both authored their own dissenting opinions, with Justices Sonia Sotomayor and Ketanji Brown Jackson signing on to Kagan's argument.

The initial case out of Idaho, Sackett v. Environmental Protection Agency, involved a couple seeking to build a house on a soggy portion of land who sued the EPA after the agency ordered them to remove sand gravel and fill from the property. The lower court made a ruling that the EPA could regulate the property based on the 2006 U.S. Supreme Court decision Rapanos vs. United States.

Both Kavanaugh and Kagan in

their dissents argued that protected waters should include those who are separated by other protected bodies of water by man-made barriers or similar infrastructure rather than the current language that there must be a "significant nexus" between the two bodies of water.

"By narrowing the act's coverage of wetlands to only adjoining wetlands," Kavanaugh wrote, "the court's new test will leave some long-regulated adjacent wetlands no longer covered by the Clean Water Act, with significant repercussions for water quality and flood control throughout the United States."

NEWS ACROSS TENNESSEE



BRENTWOOD

Omnicommander officials will invest \$1.3 million to expand its Brentwood flagship office by hiring several key positions over the next two years. The financial technology internet company will create 58 new jobs with positions including CTO, CMO, COO, vice presidents, directors, managers, product specialists, developers and software engineers. This growth will allow Omnicommander to build out new product and service lines that will support existing and new clients. Veteran-owned and operated, Omnicommander is one of the fastest-growing financial technology, digital marketing and cybersecurity firms in the financial technology space. Upon completion of this project, the company will more than double its existing workforce in Tennessee.

COLUMBIA

Columbia Fire and Rescue has partnered with General Motors to ensure firefighters can safely handle incidents involving electric and hybrid vehicles. The automaker will donate five specialized containment blankets used for EV fires to the department, which help smother EV fires that are generally resistant to water. The blankets will be primarily stored at Columbia Fire Station No. 5, which is located closest to the GM plant and Ultium electric battery facility. GM is also partnering with the department to provide training for dealing with EV fires. The blankets are valued at around \$7,250.

ELIZABETHTON

The city of Elizabethton recently completed its Breezeway Enhancement Project in the 400 block of East Elk Avenue downtown. Additional tables, umbrellas, planters, and artist rendered bike racks were installed in the breezeway which also hosted a restaurant technical assistance training. The city has worked to make its downtown breezeways more community-friendly through the addition of public art and spaces for outdoor dining. The project was made possible from a Placemaker Entrepreneurship Fund grant TNECD granted to the city in partnership with Main Street Elizabethton. The Main Street Design Committee worked with the city Streets and Sanitation Department to make the project happen.

FRANKLIN

Google Fiber will be expanding its high-speed broadband internet service to Franklin. Google first announced they were bringing their fiber internet service to the Nashville area in 2015 and have since expanded to numerous neighborhoods in Davidson County. Google Fiber offers Internet speeds starting at 1,000 megabits per second, providing fast downloads, TV channels, and other services. Google officials said spreading these offerings to Franklin help meet their goal of bringing the service to as many communities as possible. Google Fiber expects to start construction early next year and plan to serve Franklin customers in late 2024.

GOODLETTSVILLE

Goodlettsville has launched a new Mural and Art Tour focusing on a new mural at the Goodlettsville Visitors' Center and vinyl painting displays made by local artists for utility boxes. The art was made

possible through a Tennessee Tourism and Hospitality Recovery Fund grant and features 11 utility boxes with wrappings designed by local artists. Goodlettsville residents of all ages were invited to participate in a contest to pick the 11 wrappings and feature local landmarks such as the Bank of Goodlettsville, Moss-Wright Park, Clark Emerald Trail, Happy Hollow, and Union Hill Baptist as well as local symbols and icons. The mural at the Visitors' Center is named "Blame It All On My Roots" and depicts various historic sites and important events in Goodlettsville history, including the Little League World Series, famous local residents, and more.

GREENEVILLE

Meco Corporation officials announced the company will invest \$27.8 million to expand its Greeneville facility, creating 67 new jobs. Founded in 1959, Meco Corporation has manufactured steel folding furniture, step stools, OEM components and barbecue grills. The company has manufactured millions of grills in Greeneville.

JOHNSON CITY

PVS Plastics Technology has selected Johnson City as the location of its second U.S. manufacturing facility. The company will invest \$5 million and bring more than 50 jobs to the community over the next five years. Headquartered in Niedernhall, Germany, PVS is an environmentally friendly plastics company that is a supplier to ebm-Papst, also located in Washington County. The company will fill a vacant 54,000-square-foot building off of West Market Street in Johnson City and will manufacture and supply injection molding plastics for industries needing high-tech solutions. Production at the Johnson City location is scheduled to begin in September. PVS' other U.S. facility is located in Ohio, and the company has facilities in Germany, Hungary, and China.

MORRISTOWN

Morristown officials have dedicated Evelyn Johnson Way, a two-lane road that leads from Veterans Parkway to Durham Landing where the city's Public Works Complex and the Morristown Landing Recreation and Event Center are Located. The roadway will provide access to these facilities as well as open up development in the area. City leaders chose the road to honor the legacy of local aviation pioneer Evelyn "Mama Bird" Johnson, who holds the Guinness World Record for the most flying hours of any woman and any living person and was instrumental as a flight instructor and manager of the Morristown Regional Airport. Also in attendance of the dedication ceremony were The Ninety-Nines, an international organization of female pilots that promote women in aviation.

MT. JULIET

The city of Mt. Juliet has opened Fire Station No. 3 on the city's northside, the city's third fire station. The \$4.6 million fire station is more than 10,000 square feet and serves several major neighborhoods on the north side. The station includes a kitchen, 13 small bedrooms, a shower area, laundry area, communications space, TV viewing area, fire engine bay, courtyard, and tornado sholter.



Newport cuts ribbon on community center entrance



Officials with the city of Newport recently held the grand opening and ribbon cutting on the newly renovated entrance to the Newport Community Center. The city's parks and recreation department has been working on the project since 2018. The facility on Cosby Highway provides a heated Olympic swimming pool, basketball and volleyball court, racquetball court, gymnastics room, concession stand, meeting rooms, conference center, kitchen, fitness room, and game room. The building is also home to the Newport/Cocke County Museum, the Newport/Cocke County Partnership offices, Keep Cocke County Beautiful, the Newport/Cocke County Chamber of Commerce and the administrative offices of Newport Parks and Recreation.

Cowan purchases new fire truck



The city of Cowan has purchased a new, larger pumper truck for the Cowan Volunteer Fire Department, which will help the department retain its ISO rating and keep the city's fire insurance rates lower. The 2004 Ferrara pumper truck will replace a 1985 Ford truck that has served as the city's main pumper truck. Sharing in the honors are Councilman Anthony Ingle, standing on truck, from left, Councilwoman Josephine Holman, then-Mayor Mark Ledbetter, City Recorder Mary Pearson, Fireman Steve Wilkinson, Fire Chief Tommy Myers, Councilwoman Kim Shelton, Planning Commissioner Tim Shelton, Assistant Fire Chief Scotty Denton, and Fireman Brady Denton.

Chattanooga breaks ground on fire station



Officials in Chattanooga broke ground on a new \$4.3 million fire station. The new Station No. 15 will replace a building originally constructed in 1970 that is also the oldest operating fire hall in the city. The old fire station has become too cramped to meet the needs of the department and community. The existing 3,600-square-foot facility will be demolished and replaced with a new 9,500-foot-facility with construction aimed for completion in May 2024. From left, Chattanooga Mayor Tim Kelly, Pauletta McCollum, City Councilwoman Demetrus Coonrod, Ronny Rahn, Robert Roberts and Fire Chief Phillip Hyman participate in the groundbreaking.

Gatlinburg dedicates wildfire memorial



Officials with the city of Gatlinburg and Sevier County held a ceremony to dedicate a memorial honoring the lives lost in the 2016 wildfires. The memorial is located in Gatlinburg's Mynatt Park, which is in the area that was most impacted by the fires. The memorial includes two seaprate plazas on each side of LeConte Creek, one serving as tribute to the first responders who aided in the response and recovery efforts. The second plaza is dedicated to the 14 people who lost their lives in the wildfires. The Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) is the main funding source of the Memorial and Tribute Plaza through a Transportation Alternatives Grant in the amount of \$852,293 and is a reimbursement grant. The city of Gatlinburg and Sevier County funded 20% of the estimated cost of construction, plus engineering.

Bolivar NeighborHub hopes to connect residents and resources

By KATE COIL

TML Communications Specialist

A new centralized location for community resources is aiming to connect Bolivar residents with the help they need.

Bolivar Mayor Julian McTizic said the resource center, known as The NeighborHub, has been a vision of his since he was first elected in 2017.

"When I was first elected, we had a lot of nonprofits that were asking for donations or meeting space in city buildings, but we didn't have enough to accommodate everyone," McTizic said. "If you give a donation to one group, it's hard to not give it to another. The barrier is getting people who need help to where that help is. We had one particular family who needed help, but it took quite a bit for me to facilitate. I thought if I'm having this much trouble, how hard must it be for someone who is not the mayor to get these resources and help."

To better connect the community to needed resources, the NeighborHub will bring together all local nonprofits in a one-stop shop setting. In addition to helping residents in need, the hope is the facility will help connect local groups with each other and provide a place for volunteers to give time and money.

"It's called the NeighborHub because it's neighbors helping neighbors," McTizic said. "We



Bolivar Mayor Julian McTizic

want one centralized location to connect people. Also, for those who want to help, you can make a gift to this organization in the neighborhood and know it is going to help people in the area. We have a lot of entities that didn't know the next group did this service. By putting them together, they can all help."

When a building that formerly housed the county literacy council reverted back to ownership of the city, McTizic said leaders decided to convert the structure into one that would support organizations benefiting the community.

"We are using that building to house them where they will have their own private, individual space as well as spaces they will share such as meeting rooms, computer labs, and restrooms," he said. "We have been in conversations with non-profit entities that provide assistance with domestic violence,



The vision for the finished NeighborHub in Bolivar. The goal of the project is to provide a one-stop shop for community needs and resources, connecting Bolivar residents to any and all services they may need.

family counseling, anger management, as well as our local food bank.'

Initially, the funding for the project was going to come from an optional choice for residents to add an extra dollar to their utility bills. However, ARPA funds became available to finance the project and buy-in from the Southwest Human Resource Agency (SHRA) helped move the project forward. SHRA will also be one of the organizations providing services in the building, providing resources like utility

assistance, transportation, internet access, employment assistance, senior services, and more.

The building is being renovated to suit its new purpose. McTizic said the structure has been taken back to its shell and renovated to include individual spaces for each organization, a new HVAC unit, new flooring, and other cosmetic improvements. The renovation is expected to cost around \$75,000 to \$100,000.

The building will have space to house every active non-profit in the

Bolivar area with a green space for outdoor activities as well as space for expansion in the future.

McTizic said there is excitement in the community about the potential for the project.

"A lot of communities are dealing with the same problems," McTizic said. "A big city may have 500 homeless people, and we may have five. We all work on our problems better together. By bringing resources and labor together, you can help your neighbors."

Relationships, workforce, and culture strategies for retaining existing industry

INDUSTRY from Page 1 Lewisburg mayor and city manager sit down with officials from the top 12 biggest employees.

"I do this because I want my mayor and city manager to hear any issues that may be going on from the horse's mouth," Lowe said. "Industries like to know they are talking to the leadership of a community. These folks hear from me quite often, so it's good for them to get in front of someone else to let them know what their issues are."

Egly said he organizes quarterly roundtables on workforce issues that has drawn not only Lawrenceburg employers but those in neighboring communities such as Pulaski as both communities pull from the same workforce.

"You are the company you keep, and as a community you are the companies you keep," Egly said. "Take care of your own, but look at where people are going. The place your workforce is going next door probably is facing a lot of the same problems."

Instead of a plant manager or CEO, Lowe and Egly agreed it may be more valuable to build relationships with the human resources departments as HR officials already have relationships with all the company's employees from the CEO to the most recent hire. HR officials also often collect data points for the industry and can explain what workforce issues the company is facing.

Facilitating a symbiotic relationship between business and students is also a way to build relationships in the community. Lowe said Lewisburg recently held a job fair where high school and middle school students got to learn more about careers from local industries, both for rising seniors to look for employment and younger students

to consider career paths. This is part of the Marshall Works Well program that partners K-12, community colleges, and TCATS with area industries to ensure the next generation of workforce is trained to meet needs.

Egly said Lawrence County launched Workforce Wednesdays, a program designed to get local employers and career paths in front of students. The school system also has a dedicated official specializing in industry relations to connect guest speakers to classrooms.

WHO'S NOT THERE

Figuring out what segments are missing from the workforce may also help officials solve problems causing business retention and growth issues in the region.

Lowe said a TVA Innovations survey found one of the things holding back small business and entrepreneurship in Lewisburg was a lack of childcare. When looking at the data, Lowe discovered 88% of women with school-aged children – approximately 380 people - were unemployed, because childcare availability and affordability was a barrier.



Ryan Egly, President and **CEO Lawrence County** Chamber of Commerce



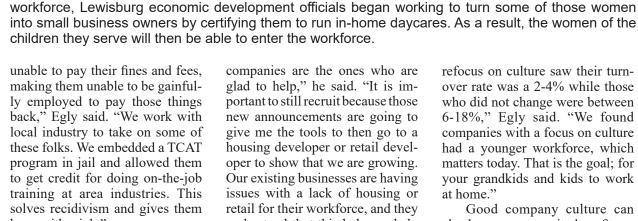
Greg Lowe, Lewisburg Director of Economic Development

By working with the Tennessee Department of Human Services, Lowe said the community found resources to help a few daycares expand and some of the unemployed women in the community start at-home childcare facilities themselves.

"If I have 380 women that are staying at home because of childcare issues, what if we turn them into their own small business by making them an in-home provider," Lowe said. "If you get 20 of those with five kids each, that's 100 kids in daycare. Typically, in-home providers are more affordable than a daycare facility. You have taken someone who was out of the workforce and turned them into a small business owner, and the more affordable options now allows others to go and work."

Egly said his community saw non-violent, incarcerated individuals who were being kept in prison because they couldn't pay back child support or other fees and fines.

"It's never made sense to me that you lock someone up for being



hope with a job." Whether an employee of a chamber of commerce, economic development authority, member of an industrial development board, or city staffer, Lowe and Egly said having a person other than the mayor or city manager who can be the point person for business is a valuable resource. Grant funds as well as resources from organizations like TNECD, TVA, and other governments in the region can help

finance this position. "The mayor has to deal with potholes, the dog catcher and everyone else," Egly said. "I implore you to employ someone to do this on a full-time basis. It is hard to find someone in economic development right now. Find your local champion, whether it's someone with the city or the local chamber."

LEVERAGE EXISTING, RECRUIT NEW

Egly said industries need to understand recruitment of a new business can bring other benefits to a community.

"If you keep everyone in the loop and on the same page, local companies are the ones who are glad to help," he said. "It is important to still recruit because those new announcements are going to give me the tools to then go to a housing developer or retail developer to show that we are growing. Our existing businesses are having issues with a lack of housing or retail for their workforce, and they understand that this helps us help

When discovering that unaffordable childcare was keeping mothers of school-age children out of the

Lowe said it is important to get existing business on board with the recruitment of new businesses so their workforce can benefit. One way can be encouraging local companies to help with recruiting their suppliers.

"As a local economic development official, I can only go so far," he said. "We are trying to recruit people. Being a place people want to visit and live doesn't seem directly involved in workforce, but actually is. If you can demonstrate to employers you are working on that, they will understand how the game is played. Competition also benefits citizenry. Employers are asked to step up their game in order to compete. They can always threaten to pick up and move, but they have to weigh the cost-benefit-analysis of doing that. A lot of times we can demonstrate you are better off staying here."

Encouraging industries to look at their company culture as a recruitment tool is also valuable.

"What we've noticed is that companies that took our advice to

refocus on culture saw their turnover rate was a 2-4% while those who did not change were between 6-18%," Egly said. "We found companies with a focus on culture had a younger workforce, which matters today. That is the goal; for your grandkids and kids to work

Good company culture can also have a community benefit.

at home."

"We have a local industry that is getting a young group there because of their culture that is doing a lot of community work stuff," Lowe said. "They are rebuilding a local playground with their employees. They are raising money for local organizations. Help your existing industries understand it is a different world, and here are some successful things other industries are doing."

Overall, Egly said it is important to remember economic development is a marathon not a sprint.

"We are trying to move a needle, not a mountain," Egly said. "In 2019, we knew we weren't growing enough to interest a big developer. Instead, we went to local developers, bankers, and insurance agencies and said let's talk housing. They began building 16 units a year and saw how profitable it was. Next they were building 36 units a year then 64. Next thing, you turn around and you've added 250 homes in your city. Retail follows rooftops, and that makes a difference."

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



PEOPLE

Mark Becknal, deputy fire chief for the city of Goodlettsville, has retired after nearly 35 years in



the fire service. Becknal has been with the Goodlettsville Fire Department for nearly a decade. Prior to his work in Goodlettsville, he served as a senior captain and EMT with the Houston Fire Department in Texas for 24 years. Officials said Becknal was instrumental in many recent innovations and technology improvements to the Goodlettsville Fire Department. He will be working alongside his wife Stephanie at Gideons International in his retirement.

B i 1 1 Church has been named the new police chief of Johnson City after serving as the interim



Bill Church

chief since February of this year. A 29-year veteran of the Johnson City Police Department, Church was serving as the department's operations major when he was promoted to interim chief. He has also served as a captain, public safety officer, criminal investigator, sergeant, and lieutenant. He holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Bethel University. He is a graduate of both the Southeast Command and Leadership Academy and the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Academy. In addition, Chief Church has completed the Tennessee Law Enforcement **Executive Development Seminar** and multiple Municipal Management Academy trainings.

Elizabeth Doss has been hired as the first horticulturist for the town of Collierville. In the new role,



Elizabeth Doss

Doss will help bring expanded plant species knowledge and creativity to the city's grounds maintenance crew with a focus on beautification and working with the plant and flowerbeds around town. A native of Indiana, Doss worked in restaurant management for many years before returning to school to earn her associate's degree in landscaping and turf management. She worked for several years with the city of Millington where she earned an arborist certification and then spent eight years as a landscaping supervisor with the University of Memphis before joining the city of Collierville.

Audra Gerty has been selected as the new city recorder for Mountain City. Gerty comes to



Audra Gerty

Mountain City from Carter County where she served as the deputy director of finance for two years. Prior to that, she served as the executive vice president and CFO of Dutches County Regional Chamber of Commerce in New York. Gerty holds a bachelor's degree in hotel, motel, and restaurant management from Cornell University and a master's degree in business administration and management from Marist College.

Kim Hadley has retired after serving 26 years as the city treasurer for Humboldt. Before coming to



Kim Hadley

the city of Humboldt, Hadley

also served for 10 years with the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) in the traffic engineering division. During his tenure as city treasurer, Humboldt has received numerous certificates of achievement for excellence in financial reporting from GFOA, including for 15 straight years. He has served under three Humboldt mayors and is a certified municipal clerk, CMFO, and certified public administrator. Hadley holds an associate's degree from Jackson State Community College and a bachelor's degree from Union University.

Jim Hagaman, mayor of Spring Hill, has been selected by Gov. Bill Lee to serve on the state of



Jim Hagaman

Tennessee's Homeland Security Council. Hagaman has been mayor of Spring Hill since 2021 and served for 20 years in the U.S. Air Force, including roles as a protocol officer, courier, flight crew chief instructor, and director of flightline operation. In the private sector, Hagaman served for 15 years as a facilities manager at Vanderbilt University and then for nearly three years as director of facilities management at Nashville General Hospital.

Richard Hunt has been selected as the new mayor of Cowan after Mayor Mark Ledbetter an-



Richard Hunt

nounced his resignation from the board due to health reasons. Hunt will be filing the remainder of Ledbetter's term, which is set to expire in 2025. As Hunt had been serving as vice mayor, former councilman Price Tucker was selected to fill the vacancy left by Hunt's promotion. Cowan has a municipal election scheduled for Aug. 3, 2023.

Mark city manager of Alcoa, has been selected as the 2023 International City Manage-



Mark Johnson

ment Association's (ICMA) Award for Career Excellence in Memory of Mark E. Keane, late ICMA director emeritus. Johnson is one of only 55 city managers to receive the award. He has 49 years in public service and 24 years with the city of Alcoa.

T o n v Massey, city manager for the city of Columbia, has received the Paul Harris Fellow Award



Tony Massey

from the Columbia Breakfast Rotary. The award is in recognition of Massey's outstanding commitment to humanitarian service and exemplary contributions to his local community and is named after Rotary International's founder. According to Columbia Breakfast Rotary officials, Massey has "consistently demonstrated an unwavering commitment to improving the community and has been a catalyst for change in numerous initiatives." A Columbia native, Massey served in Bristol and Frankfort, Ky., before returning to Columbia as city manager in 2013.

G r e g Moore has been selected as the new chief of police for Somerville. Moore comes to



the Somerville Police Depart-

State Rep. Bill Beck dies suddenly

State Rep. Bill Beck, D-Nashville, died June 4, 2023, following a sudden heart attack at the age of 61.

Beck had represented House District 51 in Nashville since 2014. A native of the Madison and Whites Creek neighborhoods of Nashville, Beck graduated from Belmont University where he earned a bachelor's degree in business administration before serving in the Tennessee Air National Guard.

He then attended the Nashville School of Law. Beck worked for several years in the private sector at the firm of Beck and Beck alongside his mother, Martha Lu Cone Beck.

In the legislature, he served a member of the Civil Justice Committee, the State Government Committee, the Transportation Committee, the Ethics Committee, the Civil Justice Subcommittee, the Departments and Agencies Subcommittee, and the Workplace Discrimination and Harassment Subcommittee.

Beck was commemorated by several members of the Nashville City Council, Davidson County government, and Tennessee Legislature, including Sen. Jeff Yarboro, D-Nashville.

"I'm just heartbroken to hear that my friend Rep. Bill Beck has



State Rep. Bill Beck, D-Nashville

died," Yarboro said. "We entered the legislature together in 2014, and he was such a genuinely good

House Minority Leader Karen Camper, D-Memphis, refered to Beck as a "brother."

"Our caucus is a family," Camper said. "Today we lost a brother, and we are devastated. Our hearts go out to Pam, Meredith and Bill's entire family. Bill and I entered the legislature together, and it was a true honor to serve with and learn from him.."

Beck was honored by the Democratic Caucus in a statement. "Our hearts are filled with sad-

ness as we send condolences to the family of State Rep. Bill Beck," the statement read. "For nearly a decade, Rep. Beck served his district and the people of Tennessee as a State Representative and a member of our Democratic Party. His contributions to the betterment of our state and his commitment to public service will never be forgotten."

Condolences came in from both sides of the aisle with the Tennessee Republican Caucus issuing a statement.

"We are extremely saddened to hear of the loss of our dear friend and colleague, State Rep. Bill Beck," the statement read. "He was a passionate public servant whose hard work and unwavering dedication to the people of Nashville served as an example to us all. We pray for his family and give thanks for a well-lived life of service."

Speaker of the House Cameron Sexton, R-Crossville, said Beck will be "greatly missed."

"We are incredibly saddened to hear that our colleague, Rep. Bill Beck, has unexpectedly passed away," Sexton said. "Bill was a dedicated servant and powerful voice for the city of Nashville, a husband, father, and friend to everyone in the General Assembly."

MTAS' Barton and Ward to retire; Sable hired

Two longtime employees will be retiring while a new face will be coming to University of Tennessee's Municipal Technical Advisory Service (UT-MTAS).

Rex Barton and Brett Ward will be retiring from their roles

Barton has been with MTAS since April 1995 as a police consultant. During his role, he served cities across Tennessee until January 2019 when David Moore was selected to serve as a second police consultant. Prior to joining MTAS, Barton was a captain with the Athens Police Department.

He holds a master's degree in business administration and bachelor's degree in organizational management.

Ward joined MTAS in April 1996 as a municipal wastewater consultant. Ward served as a wastewater plant operator with the Sweetwater Utilities Board prior to joining MTAS. He also spent 15 years farming in Loudon and Monroe Counties.

Ward holds professional credentials including a Tennessee Drinking Water/Wastewater Class IV licensure and additional Level 2 Certification in Industrial Pretreatment from the KY-TN



Rex Barton

Water Environment Association. He received his bachelor's degree in agriculture from UT in 1979.

Del Sable will be joining MTAS as a new training consultant for Middle Tennessee based in MTAS' Nashville office. Sable comes to MTAS from Jackson Financial Services' Nashville office where he served as a director of distribution training and devel-

Prior to that, he served for 18 years in various roles at Franklin Templeton Investments, including as a manager of global training and development operations and as a senior training consul-



Brett Ward



Del Sable

tant. Sable holds a bachelor's degree in business management from Eckerd College.

ment from the Hardeman County Sheriff's Department where he has served for the past 13 years as chief deputy. Before joining the Hardeman County Sheriff's Department, Moore also served as police officer with the Memphis Police Officer for eight years. Moore will take over the role from previous Police Chief David Webb.

Mary Prier, longtime city recorder for Ardmore, has announced her retirement after nearly 50



Mary Prier

years with the city. A graduate of the Beech Hill School in Pulaski, Prier said she will spend time with her family in her retirement. She has served for 48 years with the city and a retirement ceremony was held for her on June 1. Kimberly Holladay has been hired to step in as the new city recorder and has been training with Prier.

Eric Schindler has been selected as the new assistant town engineer for the town of Farragut.



Schindler comes to Farragut from the Tennessee Department of Transportation where he has been employed for the past five years as a transportation project specialist and as a graduate transportation associate. Schindler

also served as a civil engineering student with the Knoxville Utilities Board while completing his engineering degree. Schindler holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Carson Newman College as well as a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from the University of Tennessee Knoxville.

Kay Senter, Morristown city councilmember, has been honored with the Lifetime Achieve-



Kay Senter

ment Award for Service to Youth by the Boys and Girls Club Foundation of Morristown. The award recognizes those who have gone the extra mile to support and provide opportunities for the area's youth to grow into productive adults regardless of their background. Senter both serves on the Boys and Girls Club board and works with youth membership. Senter became the first woman elected to the Morristown City Council in 1993 and during her tenure has served as vice mayor and chairwoman of the finance committee. Senter is also the chair of the TMBF board and has served as president of TML, on the MTAS advirosy board, as past president of Tennessee Women in Government, on the TACIR board, and as past president of the NLC Women in Government Advisory Board.

Steven Spano has been selected as the new police chief for Greeneville. Spano has been serving as interim chief since the retirement of Chief Tim Ward in April. Spano has been with the Green-



Steven Spano

eville Police Department since February 1994 when he was hired as an auxiliary officer. He worked for the Tusculum Police Department from 1995 to 1997 before being hired as a full-time patrol officer for the Greeneville Police Department in December 1997. He then moved up through the ranks as a patrol sergeant, patrol lieutenant, patrol captain, service captain, and detective captain. Spano holds an associate's degree from Walters State Community College and has completed numerous training programs through TLEA, TACP, and MTAS.

A n n a Walker has been selected as the new city recorder for the city of Algood. Walker comes to



Anna Walker

Algood from the city of Cookeville where she has been employed as an accounting technician for nearly four years. Prior to that, she worked as an accounts payable clerk and an administrative assistant in the private sector. Walker holds an associate's degree in business administration and management from Volunteer State Community College.

Chattanooga looks to become 'Citywide Testbed for Future Mobility'

BY CHRIS TEALE Staff Reporter, *Route Fifty*

In the next two years, academic researchers in Chattanooga, Tennessee, envision upgrading around 100 intersections with connected vehicle infrastructure, after several years of managing a "living testbed" in the city's downtown.

That testbed, which leverages Chattanooga's gigabit-speed fiber broadband network, uses various sensors to monitor traffic and help city leaders make real-time decisions about signal timings and other measures to enhance safety. The testbed partners—the city and the Center for Urban Informatics and Progress (CUIP) at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga—recently announced they would invest in LiDAR technology to help promote traffic safety.

The testbed began as a 1.2-mile section of street downtown after receiving funding from the National Science Foundation. Mina Sartipi, CUIP's founding director, said it is more of a sandbox that allows innovative technologies to be tested on a small scale to improve street safety and public health.

CUIP also has created a digital twin of the city, which allows it to measure how changes to traffic signal timings or the addition of lanes affects traffic. Sartipi said that digital twin will be especially helpful in Chattanooga's 100-intersection expansion of connected vehicle technology, as it will allow researchers to test decisions before implementing them in the real world.

In addition to the connected infrastructure, the city will soon roll out an autonomous vehicle shuttle to carry passengers around the testbed and other parts of downtown. A spokesperson said in an email it is among the first "real-world applications of AV for a mid-sized university in a city our size." Researchers are most interested in finding out how connected infrastructure can improve AV safety, not only downtown but also on the highway, Sartipi said. In partnership with the Tennessee Department of Transportation, a 2.5-mile section of highway with an on- and off-ramp to the testbed will also be outfitted with sensors and other technology to explore improving AV safety on highways.

Those initiatives all help the overall goal of making Chattanooga a "citywide testbed for future mobility," Sartipi said.

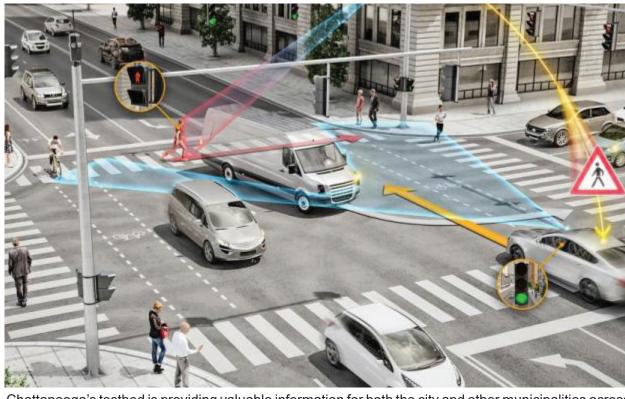
AVs have been the subject of much hype and high expectations over the past decade or more, and headlines about safety incidents have raised public distrust of the technology. Fully autonomous vehicles are probably decades away, Sartipi said, but a "higher level of automation" where technology improves safety for drivers and other road users is a more near-term goal.

But before fully or even partially autonomous vehicles become a reality, Sartipi said the roadway infrastructure must be able to communicate with those vehicles and instantaneously make decisions to help avoid accidents or fatalities.

"I'm a firm believer that connectivity should come first," she said

Researchers in Chattanooga have a leg up on much of the country on connectivity with the city's fiber network, which is run in partnership with its municipal utility Electric Power Board and produces speeds in some places up to 25 Gigabits per second in some places.

In the CUIP testbed, information is sent back and forth between connected vehicles and a data center using the city's fiber network, and Sartipi said academics are now working with officials in nearby Nashville to test the capabilities of their own fiber network.



Chattanooga's testbed is providing valuable information for both the city and other municipalities across the globe.

Chattanooga's quantum network, the first to be deployed commercially and built on the existing fiber infrastructure, also holds a great deal of promise for transportation, Sartipi said. While use cases for the city's quantum network are still being explored, its computing power could advance transit cybersecurity and speed data processing, especially as more intersections get connected and need faster data transmission.

"It might not happen today, but this is what the world of research is," she said. "We have this capability; we have this amazing opportunity and infrastructure that we are going to be leveraging."

Crucial in the success of the testbed has been collaboration with the city, Sartipi said, as well as the willingness of university students to participate in various projects. For example, one group of students defended a senior project in front



More than 100 intersections in Chattanooga will become part of the testbed.

of members of the Chattanooga City Council and have continued to update lawmakers on its progress, something that Sartipi said demonstrates how universities and their host cities can build real-world applications to help local government and residents. "Students at the universities are our main assets," she said.

Stay Safe and Prepared this Summer: June is National Safety Month

As we bid farewell to spring and welcome the warmth of summer, it's crucial to remember that June marks not only the start of the sunny season but also National Safety Month. Additionally, June 1 signifies the beginning of hurricane season, a time when even states like Tennessee, typically unaffected by hurricanes, can experience heavy rainfall, storms, and flooding. While hurricanes might not directly impact the Volunteer State, the Central part of the country can still face the consequences of these powerful weather systems. Therefore, it's essential for commercial organizations, particularly government and municipal employees, to prioritize safety during this time.



Cleaning. Restoration. Construction.

Emergency Preparedness: Be Ready for Anything

Emergency preparedness is the cornerstone of safety, ensuring that we can effectively respond to unexpected situations. While Tennessee may not typically face direct hurricane threats, the heavy rainfall associated with these storms can lead to localized flooding and other weather-related emergencies. It's crucial for government and municipal employees to have comprehensive emergency plans in place. Review and update evacuation procedures, designate emergency

response teams, and establish clear communication channels to ensure the safety of employees and the public. The best time to prepare for an emergency is before it happens, and your local SERVPRO franchise professionals can work with you to set up an Emergency READY Profile for your facilities. This no-cost assessment will provide you with a document that includes all the critical information needed in an emergency, such as the location of shut-off valves, determines a chain of communication, and will help you get back in



While hurricanes might not directly impact the Volunteer State, the Central part of the country can still face the consequences of these powerful weather systems with heavy rainfall, storms, and flooding.

your building as soon as possible following a disaster.

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STATE

The state of Tennessee's unemployment rate remained steady at 3.3% in May, unchanged from the April rate and just above the all-time lowest rate of 3.2%. The Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD) said the rate was 0.1% higher than the May 2022 rate of 3.2%, which was the all-time lowest rate in state history. Statistics show that employers added 2,700 new jobs between April and May wtih the largest increases coming in the health care and social assistance sector. The second largest increase was in the recreation sector followed by the local government sector.Seasonally adjusted unemployment increased nationally in May to 3.7%, up 0.3 of a percentage point from the previous month's rate. In the year-to-year comparison, the United States unemployment rate is up 0.1 of a percentage point from the May 2022 statistic. More data regarding the state's unemployment rate is available here.

Littering on Tennessee roadways declined 12% last year, but 88.5 million pieces of litter were still on Tennessee roadways at any given time, according to a new study by the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT), and Keep Tennessee Beautiful. The study helps TDOT officials see how litter patterns are changing and can best be addressed. Research found that litter was less common on U.S. Highways but highest on locally-maintained roads. Intentional littering increased by 18% due to changes in product packaging though the number of cigarette butts recovered decreased. Most litter items are plastic or paper and motorists are the leading cause of litter. For more information, visit

Portions of East Tennessee will be receiving a new area code due to growth in the region. The Tennessee Public Utility Commission said the current 423 area code will run out of numbers by the end of 2025 and as a result, a new 729 area code will soon be issued. Existing customers will keep their numbers, but new customers or additional lines may be assigned the 729 area code once it is activated. The area code will be centered around the Tri-Cities area and Chattanooga. The Knoxville and Oak Ridge area already have their own 865 area

Methamphetamine is the most commonly found in criminal cases in Tennessee, according to a recent report from TBI. The list is the result of the 393 Initiative, which brings together TBI and District Attorneys to better target and disrupt drug trafficking in the state. While meth was the most commonly found drug, officials reported its usage is actually down with only 32.2% cases involving meth this year, compared to 36% the last two years. Meth was followed by marijuana/cannabis; fentanyl; a fentanyl byproduct known as 4ANPP; cocaine; flurofentanyl, which is an analog of fentanyl; heroin; buprenorphine; xylazine; and Delta-9 THC. Officials said Tennesseans should also be on the

lookout for nitazenes, powerful synthetic opiates that have already been associated with overdose deaths in the state.

The state of Tennessee has taken one more step toward the creation of an Amtrak rail line that would connect Memphis, Nashville, Chattanooga, and Atlanta. TDOT has sent a letter of intent hoping to bring passenger rail back through the center of the state for the first time since the 1970s. Amtrak already operates a line in Memphis with terminuses in New Orleans and Chicago. The cities of Memphis, Nashville, Chattanooga, and Atlanta have also sent applications asking for passenger rail services to connect their cities. Nashville is at present the third largest city in the country without Amtrak services. In addition to Nashville and Chattanooga, other new Amtrak stations could be added in cities like Murfreesboro, Shelbyville, and Tullahoma.

The state of Tennessee's college-going rate has increased in the past year. The Tennessee higher Education Commission (THEC) said that there is a 1.5% point increase between the college-going rate of the Class of 2022 and the Class of 2021 for a total of 54.3% statewide college-going rate. This represents the largest statewide increase of the rate since Tennessee Promise was launched in 2015. Reports show college access is up across all race and gender groups. Dual enrollment programs have helped foster college readiness among students with those participating in dual enrollment having higher college-going rates than their peers.

TDEC: 90 municipalities to share in nearly \$300M in ARP water infrastructure grants

Nearly \$300M in ARP drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater will be divided among 90 municipalities as part of 131 grants recently announced by TDEC.

Of the cities and towns that received grants, 11 municipalities received collaborative grants to work with other entities for projects while 79 municipalities received non-collaborative grants.

The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) announced 131 grants totaling \$299,228,167 from the state's American Rescue Plan (ARP) fund, part of which TDEC is administering in the form of drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure grants. Since August, TDEC has awarded and announced \$933,632,711 in grant funds through ARP programming.

"As Tennessee continues to experience unprecedented growth, we're prioritizing critical infrastructure investments that will address the needs of Tennesseans and give local communities the resources needed to thrive," Gov. Bill Lee said. "We look forward to the improvements these projects will bring, and we commend the communities who have gone through the application process."

Of the 131 grants announced today, 29 are collaborative grants and 102 are non-collaborative grants. Collaborative grants involve multiple entities (cities, counties, or water utilities) partnering on projects to work toward a shared purpose. All grants awarded represent 469 individual drinking water, wastewater, and/or stormwater infrastructure projects.

Tennessee received \$3.725 billion from the ARP, and the state's Financial Stimulus Accountability

Group dedicated \$1.35 billion of those funds to TDEC to support water projects in communities throughout Tennessee.

Of the \$1.35 billion, approximately \$1 billion was designated for non-competitive formula-based grants offered to counties and eligible cities to address systems' critical needs. Those include developing Asset Management Plans, addressing significant non-compliance, updating aging infrastructure, mitigating water loss for drinking water systems, and reducing inflow and infiltration for wastewater systems.

The grants announced today are part of the \$1 billion non-competitive grant program. The remaining funds (\$269 million) will go to state-initiated projects and competitive grants.

Collaborative grants awarded to municipalities include:

- Arlington, \$2,471,640
- Big Sandy, \$1,202,305
- Collierville, \$2,413,620 Etowah, \$1,977,313
- Gleason, \$1,384,057
- Knoxville, \$20,041,514
- Niota, \$1,450,828
- Norris, \$940,139
- Ridgely, \$1,757,555
- Sharon, \$1,298,563 Vonore, \$1,296,774

and White House.

Other cities benefiting from collaborative grants with their counties include Allardt, Atoka,

Baxter, Brighton, Dayton, Dover, Friendsville, Hornbeak, Jamestown, Jasper, Kimball, Mason, Minor Hill, Mt. Pleasant, Munford, Paris, South Pittsburg, Springfield,

Non-collaborative grants awarded to municipalities include:

agreed to monitor, report, and share

data about suspicious activity relat-

tions were led by Attorneys Gen-

eral from Tennessee, California,

Teva and Allergan negotia-

ed to opioid prescriptions.

- Adamsville, \$2,586,083
- Alcoa, \$1,538,078
- Alexandria, \$674,931 Ardmore, \$2,269,128
- Ashland City, \$955,082
- Athens, \$2,371,902
- Bartlett, \$3,412,917 Baxter, \$2,022,955
- Bells, \$780,834 Bethel Springs, \$620,909
- Blaine, \$1,000,000
- Bristol, \$3,692,523
- Bruceton, \$910,480 Church Hill, \$1,698,582
- Clifton, \$1,874,991
- Clinton, \$1,846,039
- Collegedale, \$1,403,121 Collierville, \$503,137
- Copperhill, \$624,579
- Cumberland Gap, \$593,764
- Dandridge, \$1,124,800
- Decaturville, \$1,388,535
- Decherd, \$804,760
- Dresden, \$1,604,005
- Dyer, \$952,163 Englewood, \$1,552,396
- Erin, \$1,900,980
- Forest Hills, \$743,882 Graysville, \$731,440
- Harrogate, \$953,092
- Henderson, \$4,001,247
- Hendersonville, \$4,423,608
- Humboldt, \$1,929,349
- Jackson, \$9,327,640
- Jefferson City, \$1,798,336 Jellico, \$2,500,703
- Kingston Springs, \$701,132
- Lafayette, \$2,190,148 LaFollette, \$4,494,167
- Lakesite, \$677,865
- Lenoir City, \$1,595,024
- Lexington, \$4,474,049
- Livingston, \$1,650,168 Maryville, \$2,978,227
- Maury City, \$621,338
- Maynardville, \$1,757,448
- Michie, \$840,103
- Monteagle, \$1,155,086
- Moscow, \$927,763
- Mosheim, \$814,972
- New Johnsonville, \$1,242,408 Newport, \$1,716,401
- Nolensville, \$1,061,607
- Oak Ridge, \$3,189,584
- Oliver Springs, \$1,242,868
- Parrottsville, \$583,959
- Parsons, \$1,495,345
- Pegram, \$691,373
- Petersburg, \$629,657
- Piperton, \$1,267,346
- Ridgeside, \$583,803
- Rives, \$590,167
- Rockwood, \$2,267,061 Rossville, \$1,220,792
- Rutherford, \$782,658
- Rutledge, \$1,000,000
- Sardis, \$964,078 Sevierville, \$2,388,762
- Shelbyville, \$2,967,622
- Smithville, \$1,336,999
- South Carthage, \$713,968
- Sweetwater, \$1,461,428
- Tellico Plains, \$1,519,768 Trezevant, \$899,487
- Tullahoma, \$2,370,558
- Union City, \$2,144,801 Watertown, \$699,907
- White Pine, \$2,359,661
- Whiteville, \$1,570,118 Woodland Mills, \$592,568

Newmarket and Copperhill will also see water system benefits from non-collaborative grants awarded to their respective coun-

For a full list of grant recipients and details of each individual grant project, visit this link.

TN to receive \$419M in latest opioid settlement

Attorney General Jonathan Skrmetti has announced Tennessee will receive an expected \$419 million as part of a \$17.3 billion opioid settlement made with drugmakers Teva and Allergan and pharmacies CVS and Walgreens.

Following successful state sign-on and subdivision signon periods, the defendants have committed to the deal and will start releasing funds to a national administrator later this summer. Money is expected to start flowing to state and local governments by

the end of 2023. Tennessee will receive \$419 million over 15 years. National in-

vestigations and litigation against the pharmaceutical industry over the opioid crisis has led to more than \$50 billion; Tennessee's share exceeds \$1 billion. The funds are being distributed through the state's opioid abatement council.

In addition to providing funds, the companies will have to follow additional conditions set forth by the settlement. Teva's opioid business will also have to prevent all opioid marketing and ensure systems are in place to prevent drug misuse. Allergan is required to stop selling opioids for the next 10 years.

Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, North Caroli-

na, Pennsylvania, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, and Wisconsin. CVS and Walgreens negotiations were led by Attorneys General from Tennessee, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Nebraska, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Texas

CVS and Walgreens have

New statutory meeting requirements planning commission, tree board, adopt the types of "reasonable re-**LEGISLATION** from Page 1 strictions" described in the public

bodies. For purposes of this provision, "governing body" means "members of any public body which consists of two (2) or more members, with the authority to make decisions for or recommendations to a public body on policy or administration." Tennessee Code Annotated § 8-44-102(b)(1). Based upon the definition, not only will your local legislative body be required to have a period of public comment during its meetings, but so will governing bodies like the

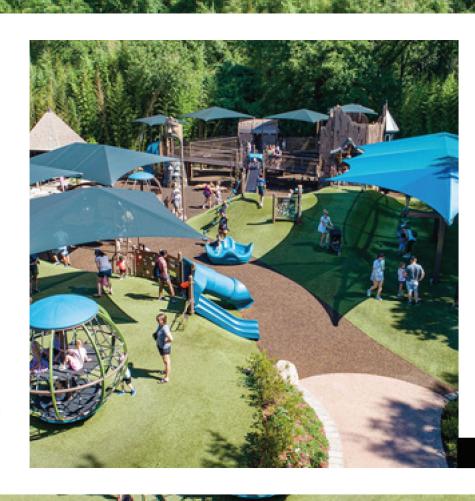
budget committee, and parks and recreation board. This requirement becomes effective July 1, 2023. As such, the local legislative body should review the municipal code to ensure that the adopted order of business includes a period for public comment. Additionally, the local legislative body, as well as all other governing bodies that have the authority to adopt rules, should consider conferring with the municipal attorney or the attorney that advises the governing body

as soon as possible, to prepare and

chapter before July 1, 2023. Please review the legislation contained herein with your munic-

ipal attorney, as these summaries are based upon the MTAS attorneys' interpretation of the new

The legislation will be discussed in depth during the upcoming MTAS Legislative Update classes in June 2023. However, if you have questions before the classes, please contact your assigned MTAS attorney.



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Mental healthcare, childcare and alternative justice could help improve outcomes for Tennessee children

By KATE COIL
TML Communications Specialist

Support services, mental health care, childcare for parents, and alternatives to incarceration are all methods that can better help Tennessee youth have positive outcomes, according to a recent state report.

The 2022 Kids Count: State of the Child report for Tennessee was recently released by the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth in conjunction with the Anne E. Casey Foundation, showcasing areas where the state is succeeding and needs improvement in matters relating to children, youth, and family.

The report noted that Tennessee's population has grown more racially diverse with each generation with Generation Alpha (those born after 2010) being more likely to be non-white or mixed race. An estimated one in eight Tennessee children was born to an immigrant family and one in ten speak a language other than English at home.

Above: The 2022 State

of the Child report for

the state of Tennes-

see has found that in-

vestments in mental

healthcare, childcare,

and alternative justice

programs can have

positive outcomes for

the state's chilren and

Right: Children with

access to libraries, rec-

reation centers, parks,

and sidewalks in their

own neighborhood have

more positive outcomes

in life than those who

ily leave are more likely to

breastfeed their infants and for

longer, which is shown to have

a positive impact on infant mortality.

Paid family leave also decreases the

likelihood of preterm birth, post-

partum depression, or reduced food

insecurity as well as makes women

less likely to require government

assistance program and more likely

(54%) to see their income increase

a single-parent's income to afford

childcare for an infant. The cost of

center-based care for an infant or

four-year-old is 81% higher than the

\$10,780 per year for an infant,

\$8,759 for a four-year-old, and

child before and after school.

lenge, most parents (approximately

70%) ranked accessibility to child-

care as the biggest challenge. Nearly

half (48%) of Tennesseans live in a

childcare dessert with access further

impacted by the pandemic. The result

is an economic loss to the state with

Tennessee seeing \$2.6 billion in losses

state-minimum wage, expanded in-

come eligibility for health insurance,

paid family leave, and refundable

state earned income tax credits could

all better help Tennessee support

The report found increasing the

\$2,937 per year for a school-age

While affordability is a chal-

average rent in the state, including:

\$9,998 for a toddler,

It takes, on average, 40.3% of

within a year of birth.

young adults.

Adverse experiences in

Adverse experiences in child-hood (ACEs) are known to have a negative impact on the development of children and into adulthood.

- 41% of children having at least one of these negative experi-
- 21.5% of Tennessee children more than a fifth have experienced two of these ACEs
- black children are twice as likely to experience an ACE than their peers.

While children in Tennessee experienced both community and household adversity more than their national peers, Tennessee children were more likely to encounter adverse experiences in the home rather than in the community.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Numerous support services and infrastructure provided by the community can increase positive outcomes for children. According to the report, neighborhoods with supportive infrastructure for families can play a significant role in not only health and wellness but also future life outcomes.

The four major amenities for neighborhoods that encourage healthy outcomes are parks, recreation centers, sidewalks, and libraries. A quarter of Tennessee children (25%) live in neighborhoods without any of these amenities while 22.6% live in neighborhoods with all four.

An estimated 60% of Tennessee children live in a "supportive neighborhood," which is characterized as a neighborhood where neighbors help each other out, watch each other's children, and know where to go when in need of community services.

Only one in five Tennesseans has paid family leave despite employers reporting that paid family and medical leave had no negative impact on productivity, performance, turnover, morale, or profitability.

CHILDCARE

Mothers who take paid fam-

KIDS COUNT

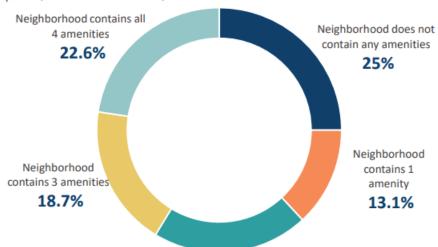
STATE OF THE CHILD

2022





Does this child live in a neighborhood that contains certain amenities -parks, recreation centers, sidewalks or libraries?



Neighborhood contains 2 amenities

20.6%

families.

HEALTH RISKS

Tennessee has seen an uptick in maternal mortality rates, despite 90% of pregnancy-related deaths in the state being preventable. Tennessee also ranks 42nd in the nation for infant mortality with 49 out of 51 for infant premature infant births, with one in seven Tennessee infants born prematurely.

Many Tennessee children experience significant health risk factors, including

- One in four live in a home where
- someone smokes,26% have not had a preventative
- medical visit in the past year, and
 25% have not received their needed vaccinations by the age of 2, a number in decline since

Parents without healthcare often mean children have no access to child-care as well. Approximately 64% of children who are eligible for coverage in Tennessee also remain uninsured because of the difficulty of accessing and navigating the healthcare system.

Many Tennessee children lack access to preventative care that could prevent major health issues down the

An estimated 12% of Tennessee young adults lack health insur-

- one in six report putting off medical care because of the cost.
- One in five reported that they had not participated in any physical activity in the past month.

Young adults were also the most likely to have health risk behaviors, including binge drinking (25.1%), using e-cigarettes (29.3%), and a three-year increase to 28.6% in the amount of young adults diagnosed with mental health issues.

The state of Tennessee ranks 41st in youth mental health. One in four Tennessee children has a mental, emotional, developmental, or behavioral disorder and 71.1% of youth with a major depressive episode received no mental health services, but only 13.7% of these same students report receiving consistent mental health care.

Schools are one of the primary ways children receive mental health crisis services or access to mental health support, yet 56% of Tennessee school districts have only one or no psychological professionals on their staff.

Around 15% of students said they drank more alcohol during the pandemic than they did before while 12% said they used drugs more frequently during the pandemic than before. However, the overall rates of use of cannabis, nicotine, and alcohol decreased during the pandemic for most students. E-vapor products remain the

most common substance consumed by Tennessee teens.

POVERTY

Contributing to issues like food insecurity and housing, poverty among young Tennesseans can often set the stage for poor performance and behavior in school. Tennessee has seen a historic five-year decline in child poverty. Children who face economic struggles often become adults who have financial issues.

Housing is one of the biggest financial struggles for Tennesseans: more than one in four Tennesseans and more than one in three low-income families facing cost-burdens for housing. Research has shown households with high housing cost-burdens are less likely to have enough resources for other necessities such as food, clothing, and medical expenses.

Nearly one in five Tennessee children experience food insecurity in Tennessee with 23% of Tennessee households with children reporting they didn't have enough to eat in the previous week. During that same time frame, 53% said they had difficulty paying for usual expenses. On the national level, those in the lowest income brackets are likely to spend a fourth of their income just on food.

WELFARE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Traumatic childhood events such as abuse and neglect can have negative impacts on the rest of a child's life. In 2022, the state of Tennessee substantiated 5,415 cases of abuse or neglect, a major decline since numbers peaked in 2015. Approximately 3.5 per 1,000 reported cases of child abuse or neglect are substantiated.

Tennessee struggles with foster care instability at a much higher rate than the rest of the country. Approximately 33.7% of Tennessee children experience foster care instability, higher than the national average of 14.9%. One in five children in foster care are aged 16 or older.

The fact that Tennessee provides support for those who age out of foster care through services like wrap-around services, life skills classes, and educational vouchers has a positive impact on the Tennesseans who choose to take advantage of these services.

More than one in ten Tennessee children are victims of domestic violence situations with 29% of the state's domestic violence victims being aged 24 or younger. More than one in six Tennessee high school girls reported experiencing data violence, nearly twice the national rate. Human trafficking reports related to children remained steady throughout the pandemic with 42% of children being trafficked by a family member.

Tennessee has seen a decline in suspensions and expulsions of students since 2019 with alternative discipline methods allowing students to remain educationally engaged. This allows students to have more positive outcomes as suspended and expelled students are 10 times more likely to drop out of school due to falling behind.

No loan is too large or too small



The city of Algood recently closed a \$2.3 million PBA fixed rate draw loan with the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund to be used for sewer system improvements. It is the first time the city has used a TMBF program. Pictured are City Recorder Ann Flatt, Mayor Lisa Chapman-Fowler, TMBF Marketing Representative Kevin Krushenski, and City Administrator Keith Morrison.

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The Town of Halls most recently closed two note issues through the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund's alternative loan program – one \$376,000 note issue for LED street lighting and one \$270,000 note issue for a sanitation truck. The Town of Halls has used TMBF 10 times beginning in 1988. Pictured are Recorder Tammy Lewis, Mayor Eugene Pugh, and TMBF Marketing Representative Justin Hanson.



Tennessee Municipal League holds June Board meeting



TML President Henderson Mayor Bobby King presides over the board meeting.



From left to right, Millington Alderwoman and District 8 Director Bethany Huffman, Somerville Alderman and District 7 Director Mike French, TML Deputy Director Chad Jenkins, TMBF Board Member and Whiteville Mayor Gene Bowden, TMBF Executive Director and CEO Wade Morrell, and Morristown Councilwoman and TMBF President Kay Senter.



Kingsport Alderman and District 1 Director Darrell Duncan, left, and TMBF Executive Director and CEO Wade Morell, right.



From left to right, Farragut City Administrator and District 2 Director David Smoak, UT-MTAS Executive Director Margaret Norris, Paris City Administrator and TCMA President Kim Foster, and TML Executive Director Anthony Haynes.



From left to right, Farragut Mayor and TML Second VIce President Ron Williams addresses the board as Henderson Mayor and TML President Bobby King and TML Executive Director Anthony Haynes listen.



From left to right, Cleveland Mayor and At-Large Director Kevin Brooks, Millington Alderwoman and Distrct 8 Director Bethany Huffman, and Brentwood City Administrator and At-Large Director Kirk Bednar.







Above: From left to right, Farragut Mayor and TML Second VIce President Ron Williams, TMBF Executive Director and CEO Wade Morrell, Henderson Mayor and TML President Bobby King, and TML Executive Director Anthony Haynes.

Top Right: From left to right, Morristown Councilwoman and TMBF President Kay Senter, Algood Parks and Recreation Director Roy Phipps, and Algood City Administrator and District 4 Director Keith Morrison.

Bottom Right: Whiteville Mayor and TMBF Board Member Gene Bowden, left, and Somerville Alderman and District 7 Director Mike French, right.



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TN Recreation and Parks Assn.

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Housing still isn't affordable for minimum-wage workers, report says

BY MOLLY BOLAN Assistant Editor, Route Fifty

Even though many states and cities have increased minimum wages over the last few years, it's still not sufficient to relieve the increasing financial stress many renters face. Nearly half of all workers in the U.S. are not making enough to comfortably afford a one-bedroom apartment, according to a new report.

On average, a person working full time needs to make \$23.67 an hour to afford a one-bedroom apartment or \$28.58 an hour for a two-bedroom apartment, according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition's annual Out of Reach report. It's the latest to show just how unaffordable housing is for minimum-wage workers, a point the report has made for several years.

In only 7% of counties nationwide can a full-time minimum-wage worker afford a one-bedroom apartment at fair market rent. All of those counties are located in states with minimum wages higher than the \$7.25 hourly federal mandate, a rate that was established in 2009 and still applies to seven states. Currently, 30 states and Washington, D.C., have minimum wages ranging between \$10 and \$16 an hour, and 47 localities have increased their minimum wages to surpass their respective state's.

It's an encouraging trend, the reports' researchers said on a media call Wednesday, but those increases don't address the lack of affordable housing nationwide, especially as rents jumped an average of 25% in 2021 and 2022.

"This is partly an income problem," said Andrew Aurand, the report's lead researcher, "but it really is a housing problem. We need to ensure that there's adequate affordable housing."

Take San Francisco. Next month, the city's minimum wage will increase from \$16.99 an hour to \$18.07. But the report found that the housing wage for the city is \$61.31 an hour. (The report defines a "housing wage" as the hourly wage necessary to afford a modest apartment without spending more than 30% of a worker's income.)

The U.S. labor market add-

ed more jobs than expected

in May even as the Federal

Reserve worked to cool the

economy to combat inflation.

U.S. employers added 339,000

jobs in May, an increase from

the revised total of 294,000

added in April. There was also

an increase in unemployment to

3.7% from 3.4% the previous

month and 310,000 Americans

were unemployed though the

labor force participation rate

NATIONAL BRIEFS

13 OF THE 20 LARGEST OCCUPATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES PAY MEDIAN WAGES LESS THAN THE TWO-BEDROOM HOUSING WAGE



Even workers who make more than the minimum wage are cost burdened by rent. Almost 50% of workers make less than the average wage necessary to afford a one-bedroom apartment. Accounting for about one-third of the country's workforce, 10 of the 20 most common jobs—including positions in the food and retail industries, administrative roles, and nursing and health aides—pay median wages that are below the \$23.67 "housing wage."

The state of California clocks in with the highest housing wage in the country at \$42.28 an hour for a two-bedroom rental. The state's current minimum wage is \$15.50, and a person earning that rate would have to work 109 hours a week to afford a fair market rent

apartment. At the other end of the spectrum is Arkansas, where the housing wage for a two-bedroom fair market apartment is \$16.27 an hour. The minimum wage in the state is \$11. Aurand notes that in states and cities with lower costs of living, wages are often lower. As a result, he says, the wage gap still burdens many renters.

The report lists the housing wage for every state and hundreds of metropolitan areas, and compares those figures to average renters' wages and minimum wages.

The gap between income and housing costs is especially large for renters of color. The study found that nationally the median wage for a full-time white worker is enough to cover the costs of a one-bedroom apartment, but the same can't be said for Black and Latino workers. Even workers who make more than the minimum wage are cost burdened by rent. Almost 50% of workers make less than the average wage necessary to afford a one-bedroom apartment. Accounting for about one-third of the country's workforce, 10 of the 20 most common jobs—including positions in the food and retail

slowed 0.3% in May, up 4.3%

over this same time last year. This

indicates that pressure to entice

workers with pay increases is eas-

ing. However, employers remain

eager for workers even as interest

rates remain high and economic

uncertainty continues. Employers,

especially in the service industry,

are bringing on new employees to

Inflation continued to cool in

May, rising at the slowest pace

meet consumer demand.

industries, administrative roles, and nursing and health aides—pay median wages that are below the \$23.67 "housing wage."

The coalition's CEO and president, Diane Yentel, noted on Wednesday's call that rising rents directly lead to increases in homelessness. According to the U.S. Government Accountability Office, a \$100 median monthly increase in rent leads to a 9% increase in homelessness. As pandemic programs like the eviction moratorium and emergency rental assistance end, eviction filings are returning or surpassing pre-pandemic levels in some parts of the country, the report notes.

While communities are successfully rehousing individual people every day, they cannot stem the tide of people falling newly into homelessness, or who are on the cusp, due to a lack of homes affordable and available to the lowest income people and woefully inadequate federal funding for solutions," Yentel said

Published Wednesday, the reports comes as Congress has agreed in the debt ceiling bill to a spending freeze that will likely slash funding for housing initiatives. But states and cities will not be able to close the gap between incomes and housing costs without funneling more money toward the National Housing Trust Fund, expanding housing vouchers and creating a permanent emergency rental assistance program.

sumer Price Index only climbed

4% in the year through May, slight-

ly less than the 4.1% predicted by

economists. While this rate is about

twice the normal rate prior to the

pandemic, it is down from a peak

of 9% last summer. The data shows

that the Fed's push to control price

increases is beginning to work. De-

creases is energy products and ser-

vices, including as and electricity,

largely contribute to these declines

but the prices of used vehicles and

rent remained high.

TENNESSEE **FESTIVALS**

June 24: Franklin

20th Annual Blackberry Jam Boyd Mill Farm and local Rotarians host this bluegrass music festival to benefit the Hard Bargain Association. Learn more here.

June 24-25: Maryville

Summer on Broadway

Come to enjoy three days of food, music, crafts, kids activities, and extreme vertical retriever dog events at Maryville's Summer on Broadway. Learn more <u>here</u>.

June 25-26: Ducktown

46th Annual Miners' Homecoming Allowing visitors to learn about local history and connect with Ducktown's mining past, this festival features music, a parade, a duck race, free admission to the Ducktown Basin Museum, a beauty pageant, kid activities, food and more. Learn more here.

June 29-July 4: Kenton White Squirrel Festival

This six-day festival features food, music, family activities, arts and crafts, vehicle shows, a 5K run, parade, cornhole tournament, fireworks and more. Learn more here.

June 30-July 1: Smithville

52nd Annual Fiddlers' Jamboree The official festival of the state of Tennessee, this event brings together arts, crafts, traditional music, dancing, and more. Learn more here.

June 30-July 1: Savannah

45th Annual Bluegrass Festival Wayne Jerrolds Park and the Savannah Farmers' Market will host this two-day event highlighting traditional bluegrass music. Learn more here.

July 1: Millersville

2nd Annual Bluegrass Festival This free bluegrass festival at the Millersville Community Center will feature music, crafts, food, and family fun. Learn more here.

July 2-3: Jonesborough Jonesborough Days

Jonesborough's biggest party, this festival features a parade, artisans' market, music, contests, storytellers, and more. Learn more here.

July 8: Mountain City

Mountain City Sunflower Festival Downtown Mountain City will include dancers, musical performances, a car show, pageant, fun zone, and more, all to benefit local businesses and charities. Learn more here.

July 14-15: Livingston Pioneer Days

Livingston's courthouse square will feature music, pageants, traditional arts and crafts, and celebrate the history of the area. Learn more here.

July 14-22: Kingsport Kingsport Fun-Fest

Art, music, sports activities, and family fun will be featured throughout Kingsport in this festival that challenges citizens to promote community unit and showcase the friendliness of the city. Learn more here.



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

Cities honor employees for National Public Works Week



A Columbia Public Works employee hangs a sign.



Clinton public works employees clean up a local street following a parade.



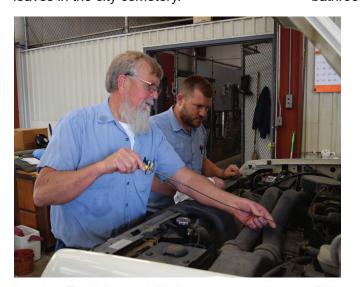
A Covington public works employee cleans up leaves in the city cemetery.



Shelbyville public works employees renovate a bathroom to make it ADA compliant.



Halls public works employees repair a burst pipe.



Loudon Facilities and Maintenance employees Billy Rolan and Ryan Stevens repair a city vehicle



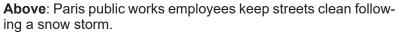
Above: Brentwood public works employees install a new sidewalk.



Right: Cleveland public workers hang holi-



Right: Brownsville public works employees Virgil Tolliver and Tayvarious Hines cutting grass at the Delta Heritage Center.







A Kingsport public works employee shows a youngster the ropes at the city's annual Public Works Day.

To see the complete slideshow, visit this link.



Local elementary school students get a chance at some hands on learning courtesy of the Elizabethton Street and Sanitation Department.