

www.TML1.org

6,250 subscribers





Franklin Mayor Ken Moore and his wife Linda are exuberant after his landslide victory on Oct. 24, 2023. (Photo by John Partipilo)

Elections held in 6 cities

By KATE COIL

Elections were held in six municipalities this fall, including a run-off in Knoxville.

CENTERVILLE

Only one of the six aldermen seats up for election in Centerville had a contested race in the city's Oct. 7 election.

Incumbent Dagan Bates retained the Alderman Ward 1 seat, defeating challenger Glenda Delk 134 to 49. Incumbents Lonnie Horner and Derek Newsom ran unopposed and were re-elected to the Ward 2 and Ward 4 seats respectively. Newcomer Beckie Bates ran unopposed and will be elected to the Ward 3 seat previously held by Molly Bates while Terry Glen Barber ran unopposed

opposed and was elected to the two-year, unexpired Ward 1 term. Daron was appointed to this seat in 2022 until an election following the death of Ward 1 Alderman David Dansby.

FRANKLIN

The city of Franklin held a municipal election on Oct. 24.

Incumbent Ken Moore defeated Alderwoman Gabrielle Hanson with Moore earning 12,822 votes to Hanson's 3.322.

Incumbent Brandy B. Blanton defeated challenger Gary Moore 10,946 to 4,666 in the Alderman At-Large Position B race while incumbent Ann Petersen fended off challenger Jeff Feldman in the At-Large Position C race with Petersen earning 10,961 votes to Feldman's 4,243.

Amid slower growth, state budget requests focus

By KATE COIL TT&C Assistant Editor

With economic officials expecting the state to see slight to moderate growth in the next fiscal year, budget presentations from state department heads to Gov. Bill Lee focused largely on leveraging federal programs, economic development, and infrastructure.

Economic experts predict that both state and national revenues will grow at a slower pace over the next two years when presenting before the Tennessee Funding Board.

While Tennessee revenue has grown from \$17.4 billion to \$24.7 billion in the past five years, revenue is expected to dip as COVID relief funds expire, business tax cuts such as the slowdown in franchise and excise tax collections on the state level, and the leveling off of internet sales tax collections.

Dr. Don Bruce with the University of Tennessee's Boyd Center projected a 0.8% revenue decrease while Department of Revenue officials predicted a 0.3% decrease this year followed by a 0.4% increase next year.

The General Assembly Fiscal Review Committee projected a 1.1% revenue growth this year and 3.4% while the economic research team from ETSU proposed a more optimistic 4.8% increase this year and 4.2% the next.

TDEC

Requests from TDEC officials include:

- \$13 million in non-recurring funds that will allow the department to draw down \$70 million in continuing federal funding for water and wastewater projects
- \$1 million state match to draw down \$7.6 million to address electric grid resilience and EV infrastructure
- Investment in water reuse,



From left to right, Tennessee Chief Operating Officer Brandon Gibson, Gov. Bill Lee, Finance and Administration Commissioner Jim Bryson, and State Budget Director David Thurman take part in budget hearings from various state departments. With economic officials expecting the state to see slight to moderate growth in the next fiscal year, budget presentations from state department heads to Gov. Bill Lee focused largely on leveraging federal programs,

such as what is being researched in Franklin

AGRICULTURE

Highlights from the Department of Agriculture presentation included:

- Record investment was made last fiscal year in emergency good assistant programs through federal programs and funding
- Agriculture and TDEC officials are working together on conservation, nutrition management, and water quality issues
- Work is being done to establish a plan for addressing issues surrounding farmland loss.

WORK FORCE DEVELOPMENT

٠

Requests from the Department of Labor and Workforce Development include:

- Funds to allow for more upto-date data collection to help bolster decision-making
- Adding in-house researchers

for data collection

Developing strategies to address differing labor force needs in different areas of the state

November

Programs that mitigate labor force barriers such as lack of childcare, transportation, and stable and affordable housing.

TDOT

Goals and projects highlighted by TDOT officials included:

- Conducting environmental surveys earlier in the process to reduce time and cost
- Providing choice lanes on interstates, potentially as early as 2026
- Focusing on projects that can be done quickly and already have funding
- Focusing on repairing infrastructure rather than replacement
- Continuing to leverage private investment in EV fastcharging stations.
- See **BUDGET** on Page 9

on infrastructure, and economic development

Volume 74, Number 11

for the Ward 5 seat previously held by Gary Wright. Ken "Guido" Daron ran un-

Newcomer Greg Caesar defeated fellow challengers Patrick See ELECTIONS on Page 9

Mayors can play vital role in ending summer hunger for local kids



Traditional summer feeding programs where kids are provided with nutritious meals, physical activity, and mental stimulation to avoid summer learning loss are important, but there are still challenges to reaching all children. Expansion of the traditional program, new delivery and grab-and-go options, and summer EBT options are hoping to meet these challenges.

By KATE COIL

Mayors are being asked to lead the charge to defeat childhood hunger across America by promoting new programs in their cities.

More than 30 million American children participate in the US-DA's school breakfast and lunch program, but many of those lose access to healthy meals when schools are closed, particularly during the summer. Lessons learned from the pandemic prompted Congress to pass a bipartisan piece of legislation aiming at closing gaps in summer food programs, including the expansion of the traditional summer feeding programs, new to-go and delivery options in rural communities, and increased EBT benefits for families with children during the summer months.

To take advantage of these programs, however, states have to offer match funding to federal money. The Mayors Alliance to End Childhood Hunger is calling on mayors and city leaders from communities big and small to contact their governors and state policymakers about participating in these programs, help connect their local community organizations with summer feeding programs, and educate qualifying citizens on how they can benefit from these programs.

Mayors Alliance Chair and Mesa, Ariz. Mayor John Giles said through his leadership with the organization he has seen ending childhood hunger is a non-partisan issue impacting cities of all sizes.

"This is truly a solvable problem," Giles said. "There is no See HUNGER on Page 5

Municipalities use opioid abatement funds to finance life-changing recovery facility

By KATE COIL

A former prison work camp is giving a new lease on life to those in recovery in Northeast Tennessee.

The Northeast Tennessee Regional Recovery Center is the result of funds from 11 counties and cities obtained through the Baby Doe lawsuit settlement and aims to work with individuals, families, and recovery courts in the region to provide rehabilitation for addicts.

The municipalities of Elizabethton, Erwin, Kingsport, and Unicoi as well as Carter, Hawkins, Johnson, Sullivan, Unicoi, and Washington counties contributed a portion or all of their opioid abatement funds from the settlement toward the new facility, which they hope will aid those in recovery throughout the region.

The project began with the opioid lawsuit known as the Baby Doe suit, which was brought by a group of Tennessee District Attorneys General on behalf of an unnamed child born in addiction and municipal and county governments in the region.

After numerous battles to settle the suit, 2nd Judicial District Attorney Barry Staubus said he wanted to see the funds put to work in a way that would battle not just the opioid crisis but addiction in the region.

"When we obtained the settlement, my hope was we would come to some comprehensive use of the moneys to combat opioid and other drug abuse in the Northeast Tennessee region," Staubus said. "Most of the cities and counties did so, and a result of our district judges, we have this facility."

After Staubus approached them, First Judicial District Criminal Court Judge Stacy Street, whose district covers Carter, Johnson, Unicoi, and Washington counties, said he and his fellow judges in the region knew the idea of a recovery center could greatly benefit the region.

"For a long time, we've been looking for a residential facility,"



The new Northeast Tennessee Regional Recovery Center outside Elizabethton is located in a former TDOC work camp at the base of Roan Mountain. The facility was renovated for \$10 million from the settlement funds and will continue to be financed through them. Local nonprofit Families Free will operate the center with the Elizabeth TCAT and Northeast Community College providing education services. TDOC agreed to transfer the facility to TDMHSAS, who will rent it out for \$1 a year.

Street said. "We've had great success with our recovery courts in the district, but we are seeing a lot of folks coming into our criminal courts over and over again because they are committing crimes because of an addiction. If we put them in jail, they just get out and are right back there."

However, the program needed the municipalities and county governments receiving funds from the lawsuit to invest. Street and fellow First Judicial District Criminal Court Judge Lisa Rice presented before local government boards advocating for the creation of the recovery center because of their experience running the area's drug court.

"For a long time, we've been looking for a residential facility," Street said. "We've had great success with our recovery courts in the district, but we are seeing a lot of folks coming into our criminal courts over and over again because they are committing crimes because of an

addiction. If we put them in jail, they just get out and are right back there. We went on a crusade around to the counties and municipalities involved in the lawsuit and asked them to hold their money for a while to see if we could come up with something."

At the same time, the Tennessee Department of Correction had decommissioned the Northeast Correctional Complex's Carter County Annex in Roan Mountain - also known as the Roan Mountain Work Camp – and was deciding what to do with the unused property. Local officials invited state leaders with TDOC, the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS), and Gov. Bill Lee to discuss the possibly of the property becoming a recovery center.

Kingsport Alderman Darrell Duncan said there was no question among the members of his board See **RECOVERY** on Page 3



CLARKSVILLE

The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) has once again awarded the city of Clarksville with the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its annual comprehensive financial report for the 2022 fiscal year. The city's report was judged by an impartial panel to meet the high standards of the program, which includes demonstrating a constructive "spirit of full disclosure" to clearly communicate its financial story and motivate potential users and user groups to read the report. This marks the ninth consecutive year Clarksville has earned the award. Tennessee's Comptroller of the Treasury also recognized the city of Clarksville with a certificate recognizing the hard work and commitment of our local officials, including budget and finance staff, to operate our government with a sound financial plan for Fiscal Year 2023's budget.

COLUMBIA

SGB Enterprises, Inc., will invest \$1.7 million to relocate its headquarters and expand its design and manufacturing operations, creating 41 new jobs in Columbia. The move will position SGB in closer proximity to its primary customer base across the Southeast and will be a driving force in allowing SGB to expand its products and services for the commercial and military simulation training sectors. Founded more than 30 years ago, SGB Enterprises, Inc. specializes in designing and manufacturing procedural training systems, flight simulators, maintenance trainers and other simulated avionics and control components for the aerospace industry. SGB will more than double its employment by expanding to Tennessee.

COOKEVILLE

US Pillars, LLC, will invest \$981,00 to expand manufacturing operations at its headquarters in Cookeville. The expansion will create 56 new jobs as the company acquires a wood door product line from Hörmann, a German, family-owned manufacturer headquartered in Sparta. The acquisition of the wood garage door product line will not only greatly expand US Pillars' manufacturing capabilities and overall facility footprint with these door panels, but it will also strengthen its business partnership with Hörmann. Hörmann is one of the world's leading garage door and construction component manufacturers. In 2020, the company completed construction of its 325,000-square-foot stateof-the art manufacturing facility in Sparta, TN., which houses its North American headquarters and operations of both sectional and high-performance door product lines. Founded in 2015, and headquartered in Cookeville, US Pillars is a manufacturer of display shelving, tables, display cabinets, bookcases, work counters, gondolas and more.

Polco and the International City/ County Management Association (ICMA) to honor local governments that best engage residents and include public opinion in community decisions. These are the first and only nationally recognized awards given to local governments based on resident input. Franklin City Administrator Eric Stuckey thanked the city's leadership team for their transparency on financial issues as well as all city employees who work hard for their community each day.

KINGSPORT

Kingsport's Fleet Maintenance Division has finished the restoration of the city's first fire engine back to its original condition on a project that took two years to complete. During their spare time, employees worked to restore the 1917 American LaFrance truck - nicknamed Old Huldy - that went into service 106 years ago at the city's first fire station on Watauga Street. With a maximum speed of 30 miles per hour and starting with a hand crank, the engine carried hoses, wooden ladders, axes, and about 100 gallons of water. Lanterns had to be hung from the side of the truck to operate it in smoky conditions. After his retirement, the engine went on display at Kingsport's Fire Station No. 2 around 20 years ago, but many felt more should be done to preserve the engine. The engine is now within 80-85% of its original condition and will be housed at Fire Station No. 1 until the completion of the new Fire Station No. 2. The restored engine will be used for parades and special events in Kingsport.

LENOIR CITY

Malibu Boats will invest \$75 million to expand manufacturing operations in Lenoir City and will create 770 new jobs in the next five years. The company will locate some of its Cobalt boat brand production in an existing facility at the Roane Regional Business and Technology Park. The Lenoir City location will be the company's second plant outside of its headquarters in Loudon, TN., and will allow the company to expand production and manufacturing capabilities of Cobalt boats to better meet its growing global customer demand Malibu Boats LLC is a subsidiary of Malibu Boats, Inc. and one of the largest employers in East Tennessee. The company designs, engineers, manufactures, markets, and sells recreational powerboats globally. Founded in 1982, the parent company employs roughly 3,000 people. Production and hiring for its new Cobalt boats facility are anticipated to begin in the first quarter of 2024.

Ashland City breaks ground on new city hall



Officials with Ashland City broke ground on the city's new \$9.4 million city hall facility, which has been several years in the planning. The funding comes from the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund, USDA funds, and \$750,000 in town funds. Architect Josh Wright and officials with Solomon Builders were also on hand to help in the groundbreaking. The town also hosted a ribbon cutting for the new Fire Station No. 1, which will serve as the new headquarters for the Ashland City Fire Department.

Three Way dedicates road signs honoring local Super Bowl Champ, Kansas City Chief Trey Smith



Three Way Alderwoman Franca Young, far left, Alderman Danny Wade, left, and Kansas City Chief Right Guard Trey Smith, right, unveil the new signs that will honor Smith at the entrances to the city. Three Way officials, Smith, members of his family, the University School of Jackson Bruins football team, and the Three Way community gathered to honor the Super Bowl winner in his hometown. A sign was unveiled that will proclaim Three Way as the "Home of Super Bowl LVII Champ Trey Smith," and Smith was presented with a proclamation in his honor. A superstar high school and college athlete, city officials wanted to honor Smith for his contributions to the community. Three new signs will be displayed at each of the major entrances to the city.

Athens cuts ribbon on Cook Park improvements

COOKEVILLE

The Cookeville Police Department has purchased a new mobile command center that will enhance the department's ability to respond to a large range of critical situations including rescue operations and natural disasters. The center will strengthen public safety and community support efforts across the city while proving to be a valuable resource during large-scale public events. In addition to providing a visible security presence, it will also serve as a mobile command post for law enforcement personnel. Because it is mobile, the command center can be strategically positioned to provide security for crowds, prompt response to incidents, and positive engagement with the community.

FRANKLIN

The city of Franklin has won a 2023 Voice of The People (VOP) Award for Excellence in Economy. The VOP Awards are presented by

SHELBYVILLE

Gov. Bill Lee joined officials with the city of Shelbyville and Middle Tennessee State University's Aerospace Department to announce a new, state-of-the-art aerospace campus located at the Shelbyville Municipal Airport. The rapid growth of the aerospace program at MTSU has necessitated the move from the Murfreesboro Airport to Shelbyville, where there is more room for growth. The move is being financed through a combined \$62.2 million from the state and the university. By next spring, temporary facilities will be ready and around 10 to 20 aircraft will be relocated to Shelbyville. A groundbreaking for the new campus is scheduled for fall 2024 with the goal of the relocation of the facilities completely by the summer or fall of 2026. The new aerospace campus will include facilities for flight operations, aircraft, simulators, and fleet maintenance as well as lab spaces, classrooms, and equipment for the maintenance management concentration. MTSU's Aerospace Program was originally created in 1942 and is one of the most well-respected in the nation, receiving support from various partners including Delta Airlines, Southwest Airlines, Diamond Aircraft Canada, and Piper Aircraft.





Athens officials and students of the former J.L. Cook School cut the ribbon on upgrades and improvements to the J.L. Cook Memorial Park. The park is located on the site of the former all-black school that served McMinn County and was named in honor of prominent local educator J.L. Cook. Improvements to the park include drainage improvements, rubberized mulch to make the park and playground more accessible, and a new kitchen space added to a pavilion in the park.

Johnson City cuts ribbon on city water complex



The Johnson City Board of Commissioners joined city staff; representatives from Cain, Rash and West Architects; and GRC Construction to celebrate the completion of the new Johnson City Water and Sewer Services Complex located at 2250 Eddie Williams Road with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. The former 7-acre Water and Sewer Services Complex located at 901 Riverview Drive reached the end of its service life after 50 years of use. The previous facility had insufficient square footage to support future operations for the department. The new complex is host to 149 employees out of the over 180 total employees in the Water and Sewer Services Department with room to grow. This expansion is adaptive and forward-thinking, effectively meeting the needs of current and future staff. Among the many new features, the complex offices for city staff, a training room, conference rooms, storage, a new warehouse, a fueling station for all the city departments, truck wash bay, and a repair garage and machine shop for maintenance.

Municipalities use opioid abatement funds to finance life-changing recovery facility

RECOVERY, *from Page 1* when approached with the idea of using their funds for the facility.

"Northeast Tennessee probably has a more rampant opioid problem that's probably as bad as some larger cities," Duncan said. "There was never any discussion or any argument among our board members about what the money should be used for because we recognized there is a problem in this area. We saw an opportunity to use this money where it would go back in and have the potential to change lives."

Street said it was a testament to the leadership of Northeast Tennessee municipalities that many of them chose to give every dime of their Baby Doe funds to the recovery center instead of using it on other needs.

"Addiction has become such a drain on our cities, our counties, and our states," he said. "Everybody in those rooms know somebody or care about someone who – if they are not in addiction – has experienced it. They realized what a problem this is. Our counties and cities had the foresight to say let's try to stop this cycle if we can, but they held our feet to the fire to come back with a lot of things, like the facility and the grant money we were able to secure. It all started with the cities and counties who said if you can do this, we're in."

Erwin Alderman Michael Baker said that Unicoi County will need its own jail in the near future largely due to the opioid issue in the region. He found out about the plan for the recovery center from town of Unicoi Mayor Kathy Bullen and invited those involved with the facility, like the judges and Carter Couty Mayor Patty Woodby, to make a presentation before the Erwin board.

"Our town was originally going to use this money for non-recurring funds," Baker said. "I found out about the program and reached out. At their pitch, we committed all \$175,000 of our money to this program. It has been pretty remarkable to see where we've come from an idea to see this facility opening."

Woodby said addiction reaches various aspects of government on all levels in the region, from overloading the juvenile court system with cases where parents have lost custody of their children to taxpayers being burdened by recidivism in local jails to the healthcare system being overloaded.

"These people are suffering from addiction, which is a mental illness," Woody said. "They aren't necessarily bad people, but they can't function in society without feeding that habit. It leads them to commit crimes, and they get put in our facilities, which means



Gov. Bill Lee; State Rep. Tim Hicks, R-Gray; Northwest Tennessee officials, and representatives with Families Free cut the ribbon on the new Northeast Tennessee Regional Recovery Center outside Elizabethton. The facility has been renovated using funds from the Baby Doe opioid settlement and will continue to operate with those funds, helping those who have chosen a path to recovery through local drug courts.

This was a prison, and now it will be a place that sets people free. That is redemption."



we have to provide food, healthcare, and everything they need while they are in those facilities. In the end, it becomes a major burden on the taxpayer."

An agreement was made that the facility, surrounded on three sides by the Appalachian National Forest, would be transferred from TDOC to TDMHSAS ownership and would be rented to local recovery organization Families Free for \$1 a year. TDMH-SAS is also providing an additional recurring annual grant of \$1.3 million for the facility,

Recovery care at the center is being administered by local non-profit Families Free, which has long been working with individuals, families, and recovery courts in Washington, Sullivan, and Carter counties. The facility will host one year to 18-month recovery programs that help residents address both physical and mental causes of addiction as well as provide



Gov. Bill Lee Of the Northwest Tennessee Recovery Center

them with job training through the Elizabethton TCAT and Northeast State Community College.

The facility has the capacity to house 85 individuals but initial planning calls for a capacity of 45 while the program begins. At present, there are already four residents of the facility with the hope that the program will grow slowly and become a pilot project across the state and country.

The recovery center is for male-only participants who have been sentenced through the local drug court. Those who are allowed to enter the facility must be vetted by a judge, show a commitment to the program, and can be sent back to jail if they don't. Families Free offers separate residential programs for women in Johnson City to better fit their needs not funded through other means. Woody said there is also a larger population of men in the region who need services. At the end of their stay, the hope is clients in recovery will have new skills for a career, help with places to live, and be on their way to serving as contributing members of the community instead of languishing in local prisons. Wrap-around services will be provided to help connect those in recovery with places to live, job opportunities, and ways to continue their recovery journey.

Duncan said Kingsport municipal officials consider giving their money to the facility an "investment" in their community.

"We know that here in Kingsport and Sullivan County that some of our citizens will be in that facility," he said. "We know this is going to be regional people that have problems with drugs but have the potential to rehabilitate. They can go through this program and come out to be working in society and functioning with their families. Opioids doesn't just impact one person; it impacts an entire family tree."

Baker said the facility is a chance for Northeast Tennessee communities to not only save their own future but show others the way forward.

"This was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," Baker said. "It's not every day that municipalities have money with no strings attach. No one is coming; no one is going to save us. This is our opportunity to save ourselves and generations to come. There was no one saying 'you have to do this.' Everyone in the region has seen there is a huge epidemic up here, and what we have done in the past is not working. That's true not just in our area but in all of Tennessee and the whole U.S. If we are going to save ourselves, we need to lead and make something happen."

The project has also been touted as a great example of regionalism solving issues that impact various localities.

"It was particularly nice to see judges, community leaders, elected officials, and prosecutors all come together and play different roles to see this come together," Staubus said. "I was glad I was able to play a role by having a successful outcome in the lawsuit. A lot of cities and counties have a lot of needs, but for them to turn lose that money for this was a tough decision but the right decision. Most of the folks in the area understand the extent of our drug program and knew we needed something like this."

Woodby said she thinks the facility is the best example of regionalism in Northeast Tennessee.

"You have every facet of government working together from the judicial, the legislative, and the executive branch," she said. "This project has the support from the top down, which is the governor of Tennessee. Having all those entities involved has made this successful.

Duncan said buy-in from across the region is financing a program that no one community could have done on its own.

"It also showcases that everybody up here realizes the importance of this program," he said. "We know this will change people's lives in all these counties and cities up here. Everybody has got a certain amount of money invested in this."

For Staubus, the opening of the facility is "a dream realized."

"If we won the lawsuits, I wanted to see a long-term facility that would not only provide rehabilitation but vocational training and address all the needs they have," he said. "Insurance sometimes limits how long people can stay in treatment, but you can't treat addiction in 30 days or 60 days. Many of them do not have insurance and will move from incarceration to this facility. Hopefully, the goal is not just sobriety, but turning their lives around and becoming productive members of society. I'm very gratified and excited to see this program up and running."

Perhaps the program was best summed up by Gov. Bill Lee when he helped cut the ribbon on the facility earlier this year.

"This was a prison, and now it will be a place that sets people free," Lee said. "That is redemption."

Opioid abatement Council delivers annual report; updates grant info

The Tennessee Opioid Abatement Council issued its <u>annual</u> report for 2023 including the total amount of funds received by the fund, abatement strategies that have been approved, and what funds and expenses have been disbursed.

Franklin Mayor Dr. Ken Moore, who serves as the TML representative on the opioid abatement council, said the first disbursements of funds show that the council is working to help local communities find and fund solutions that work to address the opioid crisis across the state.

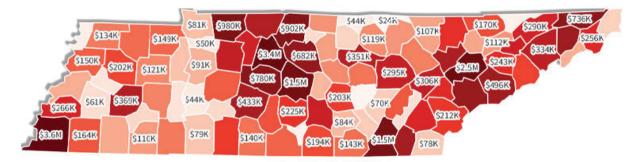
"Tennessee has not been immune to the opioid pandemic and the devastation brought upon the families of over 70,000 of our fellow citizens," Moore said. "The work of the Opioid Abatement Council will distribute the millions in settlement funds toward programs, strategies, and expenditures that lead to healing, hope, and wholeness to Tennesseans and their families who have suffered and been impacted by opioid use disorder. The OAC has begun the process in a transparent and professional fashion by the 16 professionals authorized by the Tennessee General Assembly.'

Dr. Stephen Loyd, chair of the opioid abatement council, said the past year has laid the groundwork for the council to continue to support positive investments of abatement funding.

"This past state fiscal year for the Opioid Abatement Council has laid the foundation for years of impactful investment to make the most of the opioid litigation dollars coming to Tennessee," Loyd said. "Our proudest achievement was the initial disbursement of \$31 million directly to county governments in early 2023. Also in the last fiscal year, our council staff took on the herculean task of building a grant application and disbursement process from scratch. That work combined with the engagement of our members and their willingness to

OPIOID SETTLEMENTS PAYMENTS MAKE THEIR WAY TO TN COUNTIES

The state's opioid abatement council made its first settlement payments from drug manufacturers and distributors to counties this year totaling \$31.4 million.



Source: Tennessee Opioid Abatement Council • Created by Adam Friedman, Tennessee Lookout

The Tennessee Opioid Abatement Council released its first payments to all 95 counties earlier this year with a total of \$31.4 million being paid out. Annual payments to counties will continue for at least 17 years. By July, the opioid abatement trust fund still had more than \$78.8 billion in its funds, meaning only 0.31% had been spent. In addition to the portion of funds that will be paid out to counties and municipalities who partcipated in opioid lawsuits directly, the council will soon be accepting proposals for grants from various organizations. These funds must be used on opioid abatement programs as approved by the council.

look at all components of a recovery-oriented system of care shows that Tennessee's Opioid Abatement Council truly had a full and meaningful year of work."

Opioid abatement council manages 70% of Tennessee's abatement funds with 15% going to the state and 15% going to government subdivisions, such as municipalities and counties, that were part of opioid lawsuits. Of the 70% managed by the opioid abatement council, 35% goes to all 95 counties based on calculations set forth by the Tennessee Attorney General's Office with some counties sharing their funds with municipalities. The remaining 65% of the abatement council's funds are available for communities to apply for.

Tennessee received a total of five deposits into its opioid abatement funds in Fiscal Year 2023 totalling \$95 million. Of those funds, \$4.1 million was received from the Mallinckrodt settlement, \$651,000 was received from the McKinsey settlement, and three payments were received from major distributors settlement totaling \$14.9 million, \$15.7 million, and \$59.7 million each.

During the same period, \$1.35 million in funds was kept for departmental expenses by the opioid abatement council. Staff for the opioid abatement council includes the executive director, deputy director, grants program director, two grants analysts, two accountants, an executive administrative assistant, and a part-time attorney.

First annual payments totaling \$31.4 million were paid out from the council to all 95 counties in February and March. Annual payments to counties will continue for at least 17 years with each county expected to receive a payment during the first quarter of each calendar year.

As of July 30, 2023, the abatement trust fund had a balance of \$78,871,342.86, meaning only 0.31% of its funds had been spent.

The opioid abatement council met 8 times between July 2022 and August 2023 as well as held three town halls in Cleveland, Dyersburg, and Murfreesboro to hear from the public about what projects are working and their thoughts on how to prevent opioid misuse and encourage treatment. Additional town hall meetings are planned and will be announced <u>via the council's</u> <u>website</u>.

Many of the council meetings were devoted to designing and approving the process by which communities can apply for the 65% of the opioid abatement funds being made available through grants. This process was done between the winter of 2022 and summer 2023 with the grant process opening for applications on Sept. 1, 2023.

While a maximum amount of funding for each grant has not been set, all grant contracts must comply with all applicable contractor requirements and will be subject to both program and fiscal monitoring. Grants will be funded on a quarterly basis and are not considered federal or state grants. Semiannual reports will be required to the opioid abatement council from grantees. Grants may be approved for one, two, or three years. <u>Uses for grant funds</u> include:

- Expand training for or distribution of naloxone or other FDA-approved drugs to reverse opioid overdoses
- Medication-assisted treatment (MAT) distribution and other opioid-related treatment
- Programs for pregnant and post-partum women
- Expanding treatment for Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS)
- Expansion of warm hand-off programs and recovery services
- Treatment for the incarcerated population
- Prevention programs
- Expanding syringe service programs
- Evidence-based data collection and research analyzing the effectiveness of abatement strategies
- Treatment of opioid use disorder (OUD)
- Support of people in treatment and recovery
- Connections to care
- Prevention of over-prescribing and dispensation
- Harm reduction programs
- Leadership, planning, and coordination, and Support of first-responders

For more information on the council, its work, and future meetings, visit the council's website.



Tiffany Adams has been appointed the new municipal judge for Crossville following the resignation of Ivy Gardner Mayberry,



who has held the position since 2015. Adams has operated a local legal practice since 2009 and has served as the alternate administrative hearing officer for the city of Crossville since 2015. She holds a law degree from the Nashville School of Law following studies at Tennessee State University and Roane State Community College. She is a member of the Tennessee State Bar and admitted to the Middle District of Tennessee Federal

Toni Chadwick has been selected as the new open records counsel in the Tennessee Comptroller's Office of Open Re-

cords Counsel

Court.



Toni Chadwick

(OORC). Prior to joining the Comptroller's Office, Chadwick was an administrative judge for Tennessee's Division of Tenn-Care. She has also served as a commissioner's designee with the Department of Labor. Chadwick is a graduate of Mississippi State University and the University of Mississippi School of Law.

Larry Cox, former Knoxville city councilman, died on Oct. 18, 2023, at the age of 81. A graduate of Fulton High School, Cox



served 15 years in the Air National Guard. During that same period, he earned an associate's degree from Cumberland University and then a bachelor's degree at Middle Tennessee State University. He served as a coach and then director of the inner-city sports program the Knoxville Falcons. He then served for two decades on the Knoxville City Council, continuing to advocate for youth sports in the com-

from Lee University and a master's of business administration from Bryan College.

PEOPLE



Andrew Fisher

a new position in Nevada. Fisher has been with the city of Lakeland since March and served as a recreation manager. Prior to this, he served for nearly 10 years with the city of Memphis as an athletic manager and athletic specialist. He holds a bachelor's degree in kinesiology and exercise science from Mississippi State University as well as several certifications in the parks and recreation field.

O'Mara took



Health Ser-Beth Goodner vices with the

Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS). She will lead the new division that encompasses the department's growing portfolio of services. Goodner has more than 30 years of mental health and substance abuse treatment experience working with all ages. She most recently spent a decade at TrustPoint Hospital in Murfreesboro, serving more than five years as CEO. She spent two years in private counseling practice in Lebanon and also has 10 years' experience in various behavioral health roles at University Medical Center in Lebanon. Goodner holds a bachelor's degree in social work from MTSU, a master's degree in social work from UT, and a master's in business administration from Western Governors University.

Beverly Holloway, city clerk for Piperton, was named the 2023 recipient of the



been appointed to by the Shelby County Commission. She represented Memphis City Council District 4 for 16 years between 1991 and 2005. She then worked as the parks and neighborhoods director under the administrations of former Memphis mayors Myron Lowery and A.C. Wharton, serving until 2016.

Rachel Meyers has been hired as the first female patrol officer for the Red Boiling Springs Police Force.

Meyers comes

to the depart-



ment with a decade of experience in law enforcement, most recently serving with the Gallatin Police Department for five years. She also has five years of experience with the Vanderbilt University Police Department and served in the Tennessee Army National Guard as a medic for 11 years. The Red **Boiling Springs Police Department** was incorporated in 1953.

Jamey Owen has been hired as the new as-

sistant finance director for the city of Columbia. She has nearly a decade of experience, includ-

Jamey Owen

ing serving as the finance director of Shelbyville and Fayetteville. She has also served in the private sector as a finance manager at Marelli and a senior cost accountant at Newell Rubbermaid. She holds a bachelor's degree from Martin Methodist College and is a certified municipal finance officer (CMFO).

Manager Cindy Cameron Ogle officially



Greg Patterson

retires next March. Patterson presently serves as the assistant city manager for Gatlinburg and has since 2021. Prior to that, he served

Student serves as mayor for a day in Cleveland



Cleveland High School junior Mario Ulloa had a chance to serve as mayor for a day in Cleveland. Ulloa is interested in pursuing a career in public service and presided over the Cleveland City Council work session. Cleveland Mayor Kevin Brooks said Ulloa was "able to use the gavel to start the meeting, listen to upcoming projects, and listen to citizens voice their concerns" as part of his experience.



Public Entity Partners named Best Places to Work in insurance

Public Entity Partners (PE Partners) has been recognized as a member of the elite group of companies named in the 2023 Best Places to Work in Insurance.

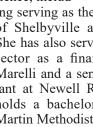
This is the fourth consecutive year PE Partners has received the award, which recognizes employers for their outstanding performance in establishing workplaces where employees can thrive, enjoy their work and help their companies grow.

Best Places to Work in Insurance is an annual content feature presented by Business Insurance and Best Companies Group that lists the agents, brokers, insurance companies, and other providers with the highest levels of employee engagement and satisfaction. "We are honored to again be listed among the best places to work in insurance," says Michael Fann, president/CEO of Public Entity Partners. "Our employees enable PE Partners to successfully demonstrate our mission of making a difference in the lives of Tennessee public entity employees

and the citizens they serve. Our success is rooted in our relationships with our members, and our strong commitment to teamwork and empowering our employees creates a culture that enables us to provide our members with the best solutions, service and support."

The insurance industry's leading employers are identified through a two-part assessment, which includes a questionnaire completed by the employer about company policies, practices and demographics, along with a confidential employee survey on engagement and satisfaction.

The program divides employers into the categories of small, 25-249 employees; medium, 250-



Greg Patterson has been selected as the new city manager of Gatlinburg when current City

munity. A Knoxville community center and athletic field are both named in his honor.

Corey Divel has been selected as the new downtown development director for Sevierville. Divel comes

to Sevierville



Corey Divel

from Cleveland, where he has served for more than a decade, most recently as the downtown coordinator and communications coordinator as well as assistant to City Manager Joey Fivas. He has also served as a senior planner and city planner with the city of Cleveland. Prior to his work with the city of Cleveland, he served for more than seven years as the director of planning for Bradley County. Divel holds a bachelor's degree

Tennessee Association Beverly of Municipal Holloway Clerks and

Reporters (TAMCAR) Clerk of the Year award. Pipertown Mayor Henry Coats was also present to help honor Holloway at the 2023 TAMCAR Fall Conference held in Murfreesboro. Holloway has been with the city of Piperton for 13 years.



Janet Hooks

Oct. 10, 2023, at the age of 70. Hooks had been serving as a special advisor to the Shelby County Clerk at the time of her death, a position she had

as the Sevier County trustee, chief of the Gatlinburg Fire Department, administrator of the Pigeon Forge Fire Department. He began his career with the Pigeon Forge Fire Department at 18, serving as a firefighter, lieutenant, captain, training officer, and secretary/treasurer before ultimately becoming administrator.

Alicia Pigue has been selected as the new financial officer for the city of Humboldt. Pigue has worked for the city of Bells as a fi-



nancial officer and CMFO since 2006. She earned her CMFO certification in 2010. She holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Memphis.

999 employees; and large, 1,000 or more employees. This year's report features 100 companies of various sizes, from 25 employees to more than 4,000.

The list of 2023 winners may be viewed here. The official list will be published in the November issue of Business Insurance.

Department. During his career with NPD, Shults also served as patrolman and detective. Prior to that, he served as a dispatcher, jailer, and patrol deputy with the Cocke County Sheriff's Department. Shults was a member of the 4th Judicial District Drug and Violent Crime Task Force (DVCTF) and served on the boards of the Appalachia HIDTA Executive Committee and Tennessee HIDTA State Coordinating Committee.

COVERAGES DESIGNED TO PROTECT YOUR COMMUNITY

- GENERAL LIABILITY
- CYBER COVERAGE
- LAW ENFORCEMENT LIABILITY
- **EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES** LIABILITY
- WORKERS' COMPENSATION
- PROPERTY



800.624.9698 www.PEPartners.org



years as the town's police

chief and more than 40 years in law enforcement. Of those 40 years, 36 were spent with the Newport Police

Maurice Shults

Maurice Shults, police chief of Newport, has announced he will retire in January after marking 20

5-TENNESSEE TOWN & CITY / NOVEMBER 2023

Mayors can play vital role in ending summer hunger for local children

HUNGER, from Page 1 excuse for children to go hungry in our country or in our cities. As mayors, we are uniquely situated to unite our communities to solve these challenges. Recently, the White House issued a challenge to us to convene in our cities the movers and shakers that can address this issue. That's the thing we are best at. The meeting I sponsored here in Mesa was a gamechanger and really elevated our response. I hope you each take that opportunity, because you know better than anyone the people in your community who can address this."

Alberto Gonzalez, a senior advisor with US-DA's Food and Nutrition

Service (FNS), said the bipartisan omnibus bill passed last December marks the first time Congress has allowed states to offer expanded EBT services for children in need during the summer months as well as the first new, permanent USDA program in 40 years.

There are three new programs that are options for communities including an expansion of the traditional summer feeding programs; grab-and-go or delivery programs for rural communities; and a summer EBT program that will expand EBT funds by providing an additional \$40 per child per month during the summer months to balance the loss of school meals.

"Summer hunger and summer learning loss impact too many kids across the nation when they lose access to nutritious school meals, meals that nearly 30 million children rely on throughout the school year," Gonzalez said. "This is a remarkable opportunity to address childhood hunger at scale and to use all our tools to ensure no child goes hungry over the summer."

Liz Campbell, branch chief with USDA-FNS and a registered dietitian, said children need to be supported year-round.

"We know children need consistent access to nutritious food to grow, learn, and thrive," Campbell said. "Addressing summer hunger is something we all want to accomplish. For children, food insecurity is particularly devastating, and especially as mayors, I think it's important to start with the framing that not having enough healthy food can have serious implications for a child's physical and mental health, academic achievements, and future economic prosperity." While traditional feeding programs offer vital nutritious meals, physical activities, and programming that counters summer learning loss, there is a gap in services,



How local mayors can help end childhood summer hunger in their communities.

particularly for children in more rural communities due to issues like transportation and staffing. The rural pick-up and delivery services as well as summer grocery benefits through EBT are two new tools designed to help fill these gaps.

"We witnessed during the pandemic the difference that can be made providing delivery and pickup for rural families," Campbell said. "This addresses issues like lack of transportation, staff, and funds. We started this new option this past summer, which provides equitable access to children across the country during the summer. It could benefit up to 8 million children in rural America, which is equivalent to filling up the Kansas City Chief's stadium a little more than 100 times."

The summer EBT program could benefit 29 million children across the country. Benefits will be based on food prices each summer and will be provided in addition in-person and grab-and-go or delivery options to fill any gaps. In addition to addressing food insecurity, studies have shown the summer EBT program can also bring federal dollars into the local economy through stores that provide EBT grocery services.

"We know summer EBT works," she said. "We have had rigorous evaluation that has found it has reduced food insecurity and also increased diet quality. It's critical to note it is not just addressing awareness among families in need that these programs are now available to them.

Gonzalez said securing funding is the first step in making sure these gaps are filled.

"It is critical that mayors call on their state leaders to prioritize match funding for summer EBT programs and administration as soon as possible so states begin operations next summer," he said. "Understand you don't have to do this alone. Know that you can partner on community, faith-based, business, and philanthropic leaders who can also serve as powerful voices behind securing funding for state EBT."

Campbell said focusing on the "why" of the program is an important conversation to have with state leadership.

"We know this is what is best for kids," she said. "If there is one thing I know, anyone who is working in summer childhood hunger issues wants to do what's best for kids. We can refocus the conversation on what is best for kids and how we can work through the challenges to make that happen."

Gonzalez said mayors are a powerful voice for educating community members on these programs.

"We know mayors are trusted messengers within a community," he said. "We hope you can get the word out this spring ahead of the summer so all those eligible for these programs are aware and take advantage of them. I also ask that as you help bring down these barriers you keep in mind the potentially profound impact we can have on children if we do this right. For more information and resources to help end child hunger, contact Tennessee USDA officials, visit No Kid Hungry, or get involved with The Mayors Alliance to End Child Hunger.

O'Connell announces new staffers; Young chooses transition committees

Following their elections, new Memphis Mayor Paul Young and Nashville Mayor Freddie O'Connell have announced a new transition team and municipal staff members, respectively.

Nashville Mayor Freddie O'Connell announced his campaign manager Marjorie Pomeroy-Wallace will serve as his mayoral chief of staff with former Nashville Councilman and attorney Bob Mendes serving as chief development officer.

TennesseeRep.DarrenJernigan, D-Nashville, who has represented District 60 since 2012, will serve as O'Connell's director of legislative affairs. Jernigan previously served as the Nashville District 11 councilmember from 2007 to 2014.

Katy Varney, who formerly worked under Gov. Ned McWherter, will serve as director of communications while Alex Apple, who served as communications director for the campaign, will serve as deputy communications director and press secretary.

TSU professor Isaac Addae will serve in a role focused on small business and entrepreneurship, particularly as a liaison for minority businesses, while Keidron Turner, who worked on the campaign, will serve as constituent services coordinator. Brittany Irby has been selected as director of the office of neighborhoods and community engagement.

Former Metro Finance Director Keith Crumbo will also return to his office on an interim basis until a new hire can be made. Those who will remain on staff include Kathy Floyd Buggs as director of neighborhoods, Bonita Dobbins as administrative assistant, Wallace "Wally" Dietz as legal director, Kristin Wilson as chief of operations and performance, and Jamie Brown will return as director of economic and community development after having served nine months in the same role in 2019.

O'Connell also said he doesn't intend to make "any major changes" in public safety leadership.

Meanwhile, Young – who will not be sworn in until Jan. 1, 2024 – has also announced a transition team comprised of 85 top leaders in nonprofit, government, education, business, and law enforcement in Memphis.

The team includes 25 sub-committees to focus on appointments, public safety, economic development, strong neighborhoods, supporting youth, arts and culture, transportation and infrastructure, and governance.

"Diversity is a defining element

according to the release. Chairs of each transition committee include:

People/Appointments

- Emily Greer, CEO, Greer Leadership Solutions. Former chief administrative officer, ALSAC/ St. Jude
- David Rudd, former president, University of Memphis
- Chris Winton, former chief people officer, FedEx

Public Safety

- Jennifer Collins, president, Rhodes College. Former Assistant US Attorney
- Sandy Bromley, deputy director of Justice Programs, Shelby County Division of Community Services
- Toney Armstrong, director of security, St. Jude Children's Hospital. Former MPD Director
 K. Durrell Cowan, director,
- Heal 901

Economic Development

- Christina McCarter, owner, Feast & Graze
- Ted Townsend, president & CEO, Greater Memphis Chamber
- Jozelle Booker, president and CEO, Mid-South Minority Business Council Continuum

Strong Neighborhoods

- Archie Willis, president, Com-Cap Partners
- Janet Boscarino, executive director, Clean Memphis
- Regina Blount Williams, neighborhood leader

Supporting Our Youth

- Jonathan Torres, CEO, Memphis Athletic Ministries
- Patrice Thomas, chief of staff, Memphis Shelby County Schools
- Sarah Lockridge Steckel, CEO, The Collective Blueprint

Thriving Arts & Culture

- Cara Greenstein, vice president of Public Engagement, Doug Carpenter & Associates
- Craig Brewer, Filmmaker
- George Monger, CEO, Connect Music
- Rachel Knox, senior program officer, Hyde Family Foundation

Transportation & Infrastructure

- Anna McQuiston, executive director, Mid-South Development District
- Courtney McNeal, chief of staff,

food inequality but improving nutrition as well."

There are three major ways that local mayors can help implement these programs in their own communities: asking lawmakers and legislators to approve the 50% administrative match required for the summer EBT program, bring together local organizations and volunteers to bring the programs to their communities, and raising of this team," Young said in a news release. "It was important to pull together the best and brightest people from all neighborhoods and all facets of our community. Our business sector, civic, nonprofit, and community organizations are all represented in this team, and we look forward to adding more."

The team is 45% Millennial, 40% Generation X, 57% black, 36% white, and 4% Latino or other races, Innovate Memphis

Stephen Edwards, senior engineer, TREKK Design Group

Good Governance

- Cheyenne Johnson, Councilwoman, Memphis City Council
- Dorcas Young Griffin, director, Shelby County Community Services and Young's sister
- Marco McClendon, mayor, city of West Memphis

No loan is too large or too small



The City of Memphis recently closed its first loan with the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund in the amount of \$6.8 million for the purpose of financing equipment for the city's solid waste department. The loan was funded through Commerce Bank in Nashville. Pictured are TMBF Marketing Representative Justin Hanson, Memphis Deputy Chief Financial Officer Andre Walker and TMBF President and CEO Wade Morrell.

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



The City of Portland has used the TMBF loan programs 16 times beginning in 1999 with the latest loan being a fixed rate public building authority draw loan in the amount of \$5 million to finance water and sewer system improvements. First Federal Bank in Dickson provided the financing. Pictured are Portland Finance Director Rachel Slusser, TMBF Marketing Representative Kevin Krushenski and Portland Mayor Mike Callis.



READY TO REPLACE OLD DIESEL VEHICLES?

2024 Diesel Replacement Funding Now Available

VISIT RDE4HT.INFO TO LEARN MORE

RDE4HT Reducing Diesel Emissions for a Healthier Tennessee



STATE BRIEFS

Unemployment in Tennessee inched upward in September 2023 from the state's all-time low rate of 3.1%, The Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD) reported a rate of 3.2% in September after two months of historic low rates. The rate of 3.2% is still 0.2% lower when compared to September 2022. Nationally, the seasonally adjusted unemployment in September remained unchanged from the August rate of 3.8%. Over the month, Tennessee employers created a substantial number of new jobs across the state. They reported an increase of 8,700 new nonfarm jobs. The mining, logging, and construction sector accounted for the largest percentage of those jobs, followed by the leisure and hospitality sector, and then the education and health services sector.

The state of Tennessee will receive more than \$1.2 billion from the federal government for roads and bridges thanks to the new bipartisan infrastructure law. The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) announced the state will receive \$1.28 billion from 12 different programs to address critical infrastructure needs, including roads, bridges, tunnels, carbon emission reduction, safety improvements, and workforce development to support transportation programs. The \$1.28 billion in funds includes: \$641,415,017 from the National Highway Performance Program; \$312,039,738 from the Surface Transportation Block Grant program; \$67,283,600

from the Highway Safety Improvement Program; \$5,449,799 from the Railway-Highway Crossings Program; \$41,991,060 from the Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Program; \$6,597,871 from the Metropolitan Planning program; \$30,490,016 from the National Highway Freight Program; \$27,823,543 from the Carbon Reduction Program; \$31,637,363 from the PROTECT Formula Program; \$18,815,036 from the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Program; \$15,405,516 for the Appalachian Development Highway System; and \$80,654,726 from the Bridge Formula Program.

The Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS) is providing a majority of licensed child care agencies with increased reimbursement rates under the Child Care Certificate Program. Under the Child Care Certificate program, the state pays a reimbursement rate directly to child care providers on behalf of families who are enrolled and meet the income and work or education requirements of the program. Child care providers participating in the program will be funded to at least the 60th percentile. To further address deficits in capacity, TDHS has also updated a comprehensive mapping of child care deserts. This mapping has identified areas with a deficit of 250+ child care slots to meet the demand of children under age 6 with all parents in the labor force. These findings will result in adjustments to the counties identified that will receive the 15% Child Care Desert differential.

DRA: Three West TN cities to receive \$2.9M in funds



The Main Street Dyersburg Farmers Market provides important

TDEC: 25 municipalities to share in more than \$26M in parks funding

More than \$26 million in funds for parks and recreation will be shared among 25 municipalities for projects including improvements to and purchases of parks, natural areas, greenways, and recreational facilities.

Gov. Bill Lee and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) announced 26,501,705 has been awarded to 32 communities - including 25 municipalities - across Tennessee for local parks and recreation projects. In total, 28 municipal parks will benefit from all 32 grants.

Funding is made possible through the Local Parks and Recreation Fund (LPRF). Administered by TDEC's Division of Recreation Resources, LPRF funds may be used for the purchase of land for parks, natural areas, greenways, and the purchase of land for recreational facilities. LPRF is a competitive grant program and provides funds via reimbursements for awarded projects with qualified expenses.

Adamsville will receive \$101,200 for resurfacing and batting cage improvements at City Park while Bolivar will use \$601,194 for improvements to utilities, the amphitheater, restrooms, parking, and boat ramp at Sand Beach Park.

Camden will receive \$440,000 for improvements at Camden City Park, including the amphitheater, a new restroom facility, and ADA-compliant walkways, while Centerville will use \$72,100 to purchase two sets of playground equipment at C.A. Thompson Park

Dyer will utilize \$210,284 for a playground expansion, resurfacing, tennis courts repairs, pickleball court conversion, and ADA compliance projects at David Robinson City Park. East Ridge will receive \$400,000 to install two new youth basketball courts and a full-sized regulation court at the East Ridge Community Center.

Farragut will use \$1.365 million for synthetic turf replacement, ADA compliance projects, and volleyball court reconstruction at Mayor Bob Leonard Park and for the construction of a new, 1.2-acre dog park at McFee Park. Gatlinburg will utilize \$850,000 for a pedestrian connectivity network at Mills Park

Greenbrier will receive \$290,000 for ADA improvements and nature playground construction at Louise Martin Community Park while Henderson will use \$512,008 for resurfacing, playground expansion, creation of a new play area and Rockwood Community Center.



Children at play at Henderson's Gene Record Park.

a new pavilion at Gene Record Park.

Jackson will use \$1,083,012 for the creation of the new Windy City Road Park as well as a new skatepark at Matchpoint Park and improvements at Shirlene Mercer, Wallace Road Park, and Stella Duncan parks. Jonesborough will also receive \$2,445,250 to create the new Tiger Park, which will have four playgrounds, tennis and pickleball courts, and a rubberized track.

Lexington will receive \$688,778 for the creation of the new Depot Park with a 10,000-square-foot trainthemed playground, stone nature play area, pathways, and benches. LaFollette will use \$225,000 for improvements at Liberty Park.

Medina will use \$339,800 to build two new pickleball courts, two shade structures, and an inclusive playground at Medina Community Park while Mount Carmel will receive \$200,000 for improvements to the walking trail and restrooms at Mount Carmel City Park.

Newbern will use \$200,000 to replace a swimming pool with a splash pad, relocate a basketball court, and add a new parking lot Oakview Recreation Park. Oakland will receive \$2.5 million for the new Oakland Sports Complex, which will feature four multipurpose fields, a restroom and concession facility, and walking and jogging asphalt trail,

Pleasant View will receive \$444,575 for new playground, four tennis courts, and ADA-compliant walkways at Community Park. Rockwood will use \$365,000 for swimming pool repairs and ADA-compliance projects at the

Rogersville will receive \$500,000 for improvements to its concession and restroom facility, playground, and walkways at Rogersville City Park.

South Pittsburg will use \$1,571,556 for the new, 16.2-acre River Park, which will include a kayak launch, dog park, event lawn, sports field, and restrooms. Springfield will use \$500,000 for improvements at Garner Street Park, including a playground replacement, ADA renovations, and conversion of a tennis court to two pickleball courts.

Sweetwater will use \$554,000 for swimming pool replastering, ADA improvements, resurfacing four tennis court and walking track, and conversation of a tennis court to two pickleball courts at the Sweetwater Recreation Complex. Winchester will receive \$475,000 for lighting and ADA-compliance projects at City Park.

Other entities receiving funds include \$1.945 million for Grundy County to build an inclusive playground in Coalmont, \$343,266 for Henderson County to create Westover Park in Lexington, \$630,000 to McMinn County for improvements at McMinn County Bicentennial Park, \$1,412,257 to McNairy County for improvements to the McNairy County Agricultural Event Center, and \$1,568,399 to Rhea County for the Abel Sports Complex. Stewart County also received \$1.3 million for improvements at Cumberland City Park, the Stewart Couty Athletic Association Fields, Stewart County Community Park, Hickman Creek Park, Dover Park, and the creation of the new Indian Mound Park.

resources to a food desert.

Three Tennessee municipalities will benefit from \$2.9 million in investments through the Delta Regional Authority's (DRA) States' Economic Development Assistance Program (SEDAP).

The three new investment projects will improve basic public infrastructure and support business development and job training in communities across Western Tennessee. These projects are projected to create or retain nearly 200 jobs and train over 700 individuals. Funding comes in part from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Dyersburg has been awarded \$216,000 to renovate the Main Street Dyersburg Farmers Market to better serve a local food desert and provide training to food-related entrepreneurs in the area.

The city of Parsons received \$560,000 for the removal and replacement of a 27,000-square-foot roof at a commercial facility. The Monogram Refrigeration Facility Expansion project in Selmer also received more than \$2.2 million to add 140,00 square feet to the existing facility.

Additional information about SEDAP is available at States' Economic Development Assistance Program - Delta Regional Authority.



200 W M.L.K. Blvd, Suite 1100 • 855.550.0090

Tennessee revenues \$7.4M below estimates; still above collections for same time in 2022

Tennessee revenues for September totaled more than the state collected in September 2022, but less than the budgeted estimates.

Finance and Administration Commissioner Jim Bryson reported that September tax revenues were \$2.2 billion, which is \$29.4 million more than September of last year, but \$7.4 million less than the budgeted estimate. The total growth rate for the month was 1.37%.

"September sales tax receipts remained strong, with notable growth from online retail sales, motor vehicle sales, apparel and clothing sales, and restaurant activity," Bryson said. "Food store sales tax revenues for September, the first of a three- month food sales tax holiday, were level with collections from the same period last year, when there was also a food tax holiday. Franchise and excise taxes, privilege taxes and motor vehicle registration fees underperformed for the month while the state's gross receipts tax had a large one-time tax payment that increased its growth. We're encouraged to see consumer activity continuing to hold strong and will continue to closely monitor state finances especially in a few months when holiday shopping begins."

On an accrual basis, September is the second month in the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

For September, general fund revenues were less than the budgeted estimates in the amount of \$9 million, and the four other funds that share in state tax revenues were more than the budgeted estimate by \$1.6 million.

Sales tax revenues were \$26.2 million more than the estimate for September. The September growth rate was 2.95%. Year-to-date revenues are 3.06% more than this time last year.

Franchise and excise taxes combined were \$36.2 million less than the September budgeted estimate of \$792.7 million. The September growth rate was negative 2.47%, and the year-to-date corporate tax growth rate is negative 6.78%.

Gasoline and motor fuel revenues for September increased by 9.34% and were \$6.9 million more than the budgeted estimate of \$109.5 million.

Motor Vehicle Registration revenues were \$8.5 million less than the September estimate, and on a year-to-date basis are less than the estimate by \$11.5 million.



Tobacco tax revenues for the month were \$0.7 million less than the budgeted estimate of \$19.9 million. For two months, revenues are \$3.1 million less than the budgeted estimate

Privilege tax revenues were \$11.8 million less than the budgeted estimate of \$48.1 million, and on a year-to-date basis are less than estimate by \$25.1 million.

Gross receipts tax revenues were \$14.6 million more than the September estimate, and on a year-to-date basis are \$14.3 million more than estimates.

Business tax receipts were \$0.8 million more than the budgeted estimate for September. For two months, revenues are near level with the budgeted estimate.

Mixed drink, or liquor-by-thedrink, taxes were \$0.6 million more than the September estimate, and on a year-to-date basis, revenues are \$1.2 million more than the estimate.

All other taxes were more than estimates by a net of \$0.7 million.

Year-to date revenues for the first two months of the fiscal year were \$46.9 million less than the budgeted estimates. The general fund is less than estimates by \$53.1 million and the four other funds that share in state tax revenues exceeded estimates by \$6.2 million.

The budgeted revenue estimates for 2023-2024 are based upon the State Funding Board's consensus recommendation from November 28, 2022 and adopted by the first session of the 113th General Assembly in April 2023. Also incorporated in the estimates are any changes in revenue enacted during the 2023 session of the General Assembly.

These estimates are available on the state's website.

TML Board of Directors hold autumn meeting in Nashville



Top: At-Large Director and Newport Mayor Trey Dykes, left, and TMBF Chairwoman and Morristown Councilwoman Kay Senter, right.

Right: TML President and Farragut Mayor Ron Williams addresses the board meeting with TML Executive Anthony Haynes to his right.





Nashville Mayor Freddie O'Connell, far right, addresses the board as At-Large Director and Cleveland Mayor Kevin Brooks, At-Large Director Brentwood City Manager Kirk Bednar, TMBF Chairwoman and Morristown Councilwoman Kay Senter, and TCMA President and Farragut Town Administrator David Smoak look on.



From left to right, District 1 Director and Kingsport Alderman Darrell Duncan, District 5 Director and Springfield Mayor Anne Schneider Williams, and Past President and Henderson Mayor Bobby King.



TML 2nd Vice President and Bolivar Mayor Julian Mc-Tizic, left, and At-Large Director and Jackson Councilman Johnny Dodd.

Lamb, right.

From left to right, District 5 Director and Springfield Mayor Anne Schneider Williams, District 6 Director and Lawrenceburg Mayor Blake Lay, District 7 Director and Savannah City Manager Blake Walley, District 8 Director and Millington Vice Mayor Bethany Huffman, At-Large Director and Jackson Councilman Johnny Dodd, and At-Large Director and Newport Mayor Trey Dykes.



District 3 Director and Red Bank Vice Mayor Stefanie District 6 Director and Lawrenceburg Mayor Blake Lay, left, with TML Executive Director Anthony Haynes, left, and Dalton, left, with Collegedale Commissioner Katie District 8 Director and Millington Vice Mayor Bethany Huffman.

Nashville Mayor Freddie O'Connell, right.



From left to right, District 1 Director and Kingsport Alderman Darrell Duncan, District 2 Director and Morristown Mayor Gary Chesney, and District 3 Director and Red Bank Vice Mayor Stefanie Dalton.



From left to right: TML Past President and Henderson Mayor Bobby King, TMBF Chairwoman and Morristown Councilwoman Kay Senter, and TML President and Farragut Mayor Ron Williams.



Elections held in 6 cities

ELECTIONS, *from Page 1* George and B.K. Muvvala for the At-Large Position C seat formerly held by Gabrielle Hanson. Ceasar earned 10,336 votes over Geroge's 4,249 and Muvvala's 825. Caesar presently serves as the vice-chair of Franklin's Board of Zoning Appeals.

Incumbent Clyde Barnhill ran unopposed and was re-elected to his At-Large Position A seat with 11,837 complimentary votes.

KNOXVILLE

Four council seats and the municipal judge seat went to run-off elections in Knoxville on Nov. 7.

Newcomer Debbie Hensley beat fellow challenger R. Bentley Marlow with 10,576 votes to 4,303 votes in the At-Large Seat B race. The seat was previously held by Janet Testerman.

Incumbent Amelia Parker fended off challenger Tim Hill with 9,240 votes to Hill's 6,181 for the At-Large Seat C race.

Two incumbent candidates also ran unopposed and were re-elected to their seats. Lynne Fugate received 11,236 complimentary votes for the At-Large Seat A while Charles Thomas received 10,599 complimentary votes for the Council District 4 seat.

Newcomer Tyler Caviness defeated incumbent John R. Rosson Jr. for the municipal judge seat. Cavinness earned 9,450 votes to Rosson's 5,925.

MILAN

Milan held its municipal election on Nov. 7.

Incumbent B.W. Beasley defeated challenger Clay McCoy with 752 votes to 325 votes in the mayoral race. McCoy is presently a Ward 1 alderman in Milan.

In the Ward 1 race, incumbent Michael A. McAdoo defeated challenger Bradley Arnold with 460 votes to 100.

The remaining races for alderman were uncontested with newcomer Richard Rushing Jr. earning 248 votes for the Ward 2 seat, and incumbent Richard Adkisson earning 108 votes for the Ward 4 seat.

Michael A. McAdoo also ran unopposed and was elected to the city court clerk seat with 969 votes. Patsy Bradley did not seek re-election.

ONEIDA

Oneida held a municipal election on Nov. 4, bringing four new faces to the Oneida Board of Mayor and Aldermen.

Lori Phillips-Jones defeated fellow challengers Harold Brooks and Bruce Mays to take the mayoral seat previously held by Jack E. Lay, who did not seek re-election after 28 years as Oneida mayor.

Phillips-Jones received 545 votes to Mays' 342 and Brooks' 27. Phillips-Jones has been serving as an alderwoman, but left her seat to run for mayor and previously served as the 8th Judicial District Attorney General.

Incumbent Mark Byrd will be joined on the board of aldermen by former Oneida vice mayor and Scott County Mayor Jeff Tibbals as well as newcomers Rick Harper and Dakota Smith, beating out incumbent and current vice mayor Tobey Mays and challenger Dusty J. Lewallen for the four open seats. In addition to Phillips-Jones, Alderwoman Allison Mays did not seek re-election.

Harper led the vote count with 606 votes followed by Smith, with 487, Byrd with 469, Tibbals with 457, Mays with 456, and Lewallen with 349.

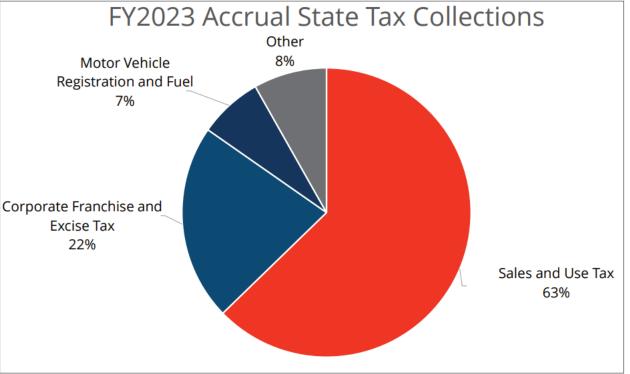
SELMER

Selmer held a municipal election on Nov. 7

Incumbent Willie C. Sain will be joined on the Selmer Board of Mayor and Aldermen by two newcomers, Mike Cain and Lashell Moore, after defeating incumbent J.T. Hawkins and challengers William Britton, Ed Huggins, Thomas O'Neal, and Larry Tomaszewski.

Sain led the vote count with 261 followed by Cain with 252, Moore with 251, Hawkins with 235, O'Neal with 210, Tomasze-

Amid slower growth, state budget requests focus on infrastructure, and economic development



A chart from the Tennessee Department of Revenue Depicting state tax collections for Fiscal Year 2022-23. Preliminary information from the department expects negative revenue collections in October 2023 followed by collections that are positive, but lower than they have been in prevolus years.

BUDGET, from Page 1 **TNECD**

Economic and Community Development officials said their focus for the upcoming fiscal year is on diversification of industry, elevating rural communities, small business, entrepreneurship innovation, innovations, and incentives. Requests included:

- \$78 million in non-recurring funds for Fast Track incentives
- \$3 million for film and music incentives
- \$48 million for community infrastructure and rural economic growth strategies
- \$3 million to offset technical and research costs for Launch TN
- \$5 million in continued funding for TNGO
- \$2.5 million for industry new hire training grant programs

REVENUE

Revenue Department Commissioner David Gerregano noted that spending habits and buying habits in Tennessee have returned to where they were pre-pandemic. Of particular note, Gerregano said:

- Revenue collections are leveling out to where economists expect them to be flat for the remainder of this year and into the end of the fiscal year,
- Sales tax collections are still growing
 - Spending habits did not change

holiday is yet to be reported Finance and excise tax collections have been down but there has been a spike in refunds. Finance and excise collections are still trending to negative growth.

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

SERVICES (TDMHASAS) Commissioner Marie Williams noted that 30% of Tennesseans are struggling with some sort of mental illness and 20% are struggling with substance abuse. Many of these Tennesseans have no insurance, which means they rely on department funding as a stop gap measure.

To improve outcomes for these individuals, Williams said the department is focusing on programs like:

- Stable housing and wraparound services for those exiting treatment and incarceration
- Providing school-based behavioral health liaisons in every county with the goal of ultimately providing every school with its own liaison
- Expanding the Children in Need Crisis Stabilization Unit piloted at Knoxville's Helen Ross McNabb Center to four other locations in the state
- Co-locating mental health and substance abuse staff into county health departments based on a pilot program in

court programs as well as ensuring those in those programs have needed services to complete their court-mandated programs.

TOURIST DEVELOPMENT

Tourism Commissioner Mark Ezell touted tourist development efforts, both through educating local municipalities and governments about how to market their own assets as well as efforts to do marketing nationally and internationally. Ezell noted new occupancy taxes passed in Pikeville, LaFollette, Tazewell, Gainesboro, Livingston, and Elizabethton have added revenue streams from visitors to help local economies.

Upcoming projects for the department include:

- Continuing to provide marketing training and destination development tools for local tourism officials
- The development of BikeTN, a road cycling initiative that will traverse backroads in 40 counties
- Additional marketing campaigns in viable but undeveloped markets including Washington, D.C.; Austin; Denver; Baltimore; and Toronto
- Marketing to recover the 28% loss in travel from Western Europe that has not yet returned since the pandemic

seat, incumbent Jeffrey Paul Lifsey earning 103 votes for the Ward 3 wski with 170, Huggins with 147, and Britton with 54.

as a result of the grocery sales tax holiday, though the final month of revenue from the

Jackson County Working with judges to expand mental health and drug To rewatch budget hearing livestreams by state department, <u>click</u> here.

End-of-the-year planning ensures emergency preparedness

Submitted by SERVPRO *TML Feature Level Sponsor*

As the year comes to a close, it's essential to reflect on the importance of end-of-year planning, particularly when it comes to emergencies and disasters.

At SERVPRO, we understand that being prepared for unforeseen events is crucial for the safety and well-being of your community and the continuity of essential services. We will highlight the significance of end-of-year planning and how SERVPRO can assist you in ensuring a smooth response and recovery process.

SERVPRO's Commitment to Commercial Customers

SERVPRO has established itself as the No 1 choice in the cleanup and restoration industry, offering a wide range of services to commercial clients.

We understand that time is of the essence for businesses, and our highly trained professionals are equipped to handle both large and small cleaning, construction, and restoration projects.

From immediate response after a disaster to returning the property to its pre-loss condition, we strive to make the process as seamless as possible.

Flexible Solutions for Various Industries

We recognize that different industries have unique requirements and challenges during restoration projects. That's why our professionals are trained to provide flexible solutions, including working after hours or around the clock to minimize disruption to your operations. In many cases, we can isolate the damaged space from functional



areas, allowing normal business operations to continue while cleanup is underway. Some of the industries we proudly serve include property management, hospitality facilities, education facilities, healthcare facilities, food service facilities, and retail facilities.

Streamlined Construction Services

When it comes to repairs and construction, SERVPRO is your one-stop solution. Managing multiple crews repairing your property can be overwhelming, which is why we streamline the process by overseeing the entire project from start to finish.

Our construction services cover inspection and estimating, restoration, and construction, ensuring a smooth and efficient experience. With more than 50 years of experience, our professionals understand the importance of maintaining a clean jobsite throughout the process, delivering design-quality workmanship that will leave you proud of your remodeled space.

Benefits of Choosing SERVPRO Construction Services

By choosing SERVPRO Construction Services, you gain several advantages:

- Single Point of Contact: You have one dedicated project manager who serves as your advocate and is familiar with every detail of your project, ensuring clear and efficient communication.
- **Faster Time to Completion:** Our streamlined approach allows us to coordinate res-



toration and construction simultaneously, accelerating the repair process and minimizing downtime.

- **Design-Quality Workmanship**: Attention to detail is at the core of our construction services, delivering high-quality workmanship that meets your expectations and restores your property to its pre-damaged condition.
- **Clean Construction:** We take extra precautions to keep the construction area separate from the rest of your property, minimizing disruption and maintaining cleanliness. Additionally, our proprietary, EPA-registered products enable us to provide COVID-19 decontamination services if needed.
- **On-Time and On-Budget Completion:** Our construction service providers work closely with your insurance company to ensure a timely and cost-effective completion of the project.

Our comprehensive construction services cover all aspects of new construction and remodels, including appraisals and estimates, permit acquisition, demolition and debris removal, board-ups and site security, post-restoration construction, and various trades such as electrical, painting, plumbing, flooring, roofing, and structure framing.

As you engage in end-of-year planning, we urge you to prioritize preparedness for emergencies and disasters. SERVPRO is here to support you every step of the way, offering a range of services tailored to your specific needs.

By choosing SERVPRO, you gain access to industry-leading professionals dedicated to delivering exceptional results, ensuring a smooth response and recovery process for your community.

No matter where you are in Tennessee, there is a SERVPRO franchise nearby that can tackle all your water, fire, mold, and construction needs, allowing you to focus on serving your community.

More than 50 SERVPRO franchises serve the Volunteer State. To find a franchise near you, visit servpro.com or call 1-800-SERVPRO.

Wishing you a safe and prosperous year ahead.

2023-2024 Officers and Directors PRESIDENT **Ron Williams** Mayor, Farragut VICE PRESIDENTS **Paige Brown** Mayor, Gallatin Julian McTizic Mayor, Bolivar DIRECTORS Kirk Bednar City Manager, Brentwood **Kevin Brooks** Mayor, Cleveland **Gary Chesney** City Mayor, Morristown (District 2) Stefanie Dalton Vice Mayor, Red Bank (District 3) Johnny Dodd Councilman, Jackson Darrell Duncan Alderman, Kingsport (District 1) **Roland Dykes** Mayor, Newport **Blake Walley** City Manager, Savannah (District 7) Bethany Huffman Vice Mayor, Millington (District 8) **Blake Lay** Mayor, Lawrenceburg (District 6) Tim Kelly Mayor, Chattanooga Indya Kincannon Mayor, Knoxville **Bobby King** Mayor, Henderson Keith Morrison City Administrator, Algood (District 4) Freddie O'Connell Mayor, Metro Nashville Jim Strickland Mayor, Memphis Ann Schneider Williams Mayor, Springfield (District 5) AFFILIATE DIRECTOR Kay Senter, City Council, Morristown (TMBF)

Tennessee Municipal League

TMLAFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS

David Smoak, City Manager, Farragut (TCMA)

TN Assn. of Air Carrier Airports TN Building Officials Assn. TN Assn. of Chiefs of Police TN Assn. Municipal Clerks & Recorders TN Government Finance Officers Assn. TN Fire Chiefs Assn. TN Fire Safety Inspectors TN Assn. of Floodplain Management TN Assn. Housing & Redevel. Auth. TN Municipal Attorneys Assn. TN Municipal Judges Conference TN Chapter, American Public Works TN Recreation and Parks Assn. TN Chapter, American Planning TN Personnel Management Assn. TN Assn. of Public Purchasing TN Section, Institute of Transport TN Public Transportation Assoc. Assoc. Independent & Municipal Schools TN Renewable Energy & Economic Development Council TN Urban Forestry Council TN Stormwater Assn

TML SPONSORS FEATURE LEVEL GovDeals SERVPRO DIAMOND LEVEL PATH Voya Financial Advisors PLATINUM LEVEL Keep TN Beautiful Verizon TN Electric Cooperative Association GOLD LEVEL AT&T C-Spire First Horizon Bank J.R. Wauford & Co. Samsara SILVER LEVEL Alexander Thompson Arnold AARP Apptegy Asa Engineering Bank of New York Mellon, Co. BCA Environmental Consultants Blue Cross Blue Shield BuyBoard Purchasing Cooperative Charter Communications Collier Engineering Cunningham Recreation Davenport & Associates Environmental Products Group Local Government Corp. Mark III Employee Benefits Mauldin & Jenkins Onsite Environmental Pavement Restorations, Inc. Performance Services Recreational Concepts **Rehrig Pacific** Sherill Morgan Siemens Simmons Wealth Management Tennessee Development District Assn Trane Commercial Systems Waste Connections of TN Waste Management BRONZE LEVEL A2H, Inc. Ameresco Deckard Technologies Employee Benefit Specialists Mattern & Craig, Inc. Smith Seckman Reid Tennessee Health Works TLM Associates, Inc. TML Sponsored Programs Public Entity Partners Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund TML PARTNERED PROGRAMS American Fidelity Everywhere.care GovCard Peachtree Recovery Services, Inc. Reach Alert TN Drug Card VC3 TML STAFF Anthony Haynes, Executive Director Chad Jenkins, Deputy Director Mark Barrett, Legislative Research Analyst Kate Coil, Communications DirectorJackie Gupton, Administrative Assistant Carole Graves, Communications Director & Editor, Tennessee Town & City Sylvia Harris, Conference Planning Director John Holloway, Government Relations Debbie Kluth, Marketing Director / Member Services

Helping cities flip money pits into gold mines

benefits-of having someone who

thinks about city properties like

a real estate developer would.

Moreover, separate management

of public assets can help ensure

they are handled in a way that is

both accountable and insulated

ment typically falls to the agency

that owns and uses the space.

Thinking about how to monetize

an empty building or parking lot

just isn't something most agency

and department managers have the

time or expertise to do. And insti-

tutionalizing the idea that public

assets should be put to better use

to me," recalled McAdams, "So,

[this project] is going to generate

\$5 million a year but my budget

is \$1 billion—how's that going to

From Empty Lot to Downtown

cities may be "sitting on a virtual

Hall in the heart of downtown is a

gravel and grass lot that had been

there as long as anyone could re-

member. As part of their examina-

tion, Atlanta officials discovered

that the city actually owned the

lot-or rather, it was owned and

used a few times a week by the

Department of Corrections to stage

be used for something that could

potentially be accomplished else-

where? It may have something to

do with the fact that the recorded

the lot decades ago and the value

was never updated. While it's not

uncommon to report asset values

based on historic costs instead of

the likely market value, it creates a

distorted and undervalued picture.

Dag Detter, the Swedish invest-

ment advisor whose book The

Public Wealth of Cities inspired the

incubator project, has previously

estimated that Cleveland's capital

assets are in reality worth four or

even seven times their reported

value because of this practice.

Why would prime real estate

That was what Atlanta paid for

prisoner transport buses.

value of the lot was \$25.

'gold mine' without realizing it."

Atlanta's experience shows why

Across the street from City

"I had one mayor comment

can take some convincing.

move the needle?"

Housing

As it stands, property manage-

from politics.

By Liz Farmer Route Fifty

An innovative public finance experiment is turning money pits into new revenue streams.

The idea behind the program is that local governments could be sitting on millions of dollars in potential annual revenue in the form of assets they own but aren't using to their full potential. A downtown surface parking lot or a staging area near public transit, for example, could be redeveloped into income-generating properties.

But in many cases, governments don't have a single list of everything they own and they definitely haven't assessed the market value or potential better uses for their assets. That's where the incubator, called Putting Assets to Work, or PAW, helps cities understand exactly what they have, what it's worth and how that value can be leveraged to fund residents' priorities.

"Initially, some jurisdictions will push back and say, 'We already know what we own," said Ben McAdams, who is now heading up the incubator and formerly served as mayor of Salt Lake County and in the U.S. House of Representatives. "What we do is put it all on a geospatial map [and] compare them with nearby private parcels to identify where there are opportunities."

The project launched last year with six pilot cities including Atlanta; Chattanooga, Tennessee; and Cleveland. The incubator is a collaboration between the Government Finance Officers Association, the Common Ground Institute and Urban3, which conducts economic analysis through geospatial modeling. The partnership is currently working with the second cohort-made up of four cities-and recruiting for the third.

McAdams said the experience of the first 10 cities has demonstrated the need-and

NATIONAL BRIEFS

U.S. economic growth accelerated in the third quarter with gross domestic product expanding at a 4.9% annual The Federal Reserve left interest rates unchanged in October, but left the door open for a future increase. Rates have been at a range of 5.25 to 5.5% since July, up from near zero in March 2022. The Fed took a cautious stance at a time with inflation seems to be relenting and borrowing costs are high enough to weigh on economic growth if kept at this level. The Fed is hoping companies will raise prices less quickly as strong summer growth brought down inflation. Overall, price growth decelerated to 3.4% as of September, down from a peak of 7%. The Fed hopes to bring this rate of growth down to 2%.

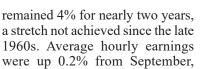
On paper, using a \$25 parking lot for occasional prisoner transfers makes sense. But not in reality, when the downtown location's market value is in the millions.

Atlanta, which has assembled a Housing Strike Force as part of its incubator project participation, is working with a private developer to build a mixed-use residential building on the lot that will include 200 affordable units and ground floor retail. As a result of the asset mapping and valuation work, the city has some 35 public land projects either in the pipeline or under construction.

Putting Small City Assets to Work

With each group of cities, McAdams hopes to refine and institutionalize the principles that guide public asset portfolio management so that mid-size and smaller cities with fewer resources can be just as adept at the practice as larger cities. In fact, three of the four cities in the second cohort-Evanston, Illinois; Mt. Vernon, New York; and Sugar Land, Texas-are mid-sized suburban cities. Each one is looking for assistance with development issues. Mt. Vernon, located outside New York City, hopes to monetize the public land by a commuter rail stop that requires coordinating with the state agency that operates the rail. Evanston is interested in better capitalizing on its parks and waterways. And Sugar Land hopes to figure out the best use for city-owned parcels near the site of a major, mixed-used development now underway.

Cleveland's participation in the pilot prompted the city to create a \$100 million "Site Readiness Fund" with the help of federal pandemic recovery dollars that will identify sites of 10- to 50-plus acres to get into shovel-ready shape. McAdams said other mid- and small-size cities could work with their regional or local economic development corporation and nonprofits to build something similar. "Next step is building that institutional capacity," he said. "The New Yorks and the Chicagos can handle this. It's the Mt. Vernons and the Evanstons that really need the help."





Nov. 22-26: Gatlinburg

50th Annual Festival of Trees The festival will feature a children's craft and play area, photos with Santa Claus and beautifully decorated Christmas trees.

Nov. 22-26: Knoxville

Fantasy of Trees

The Knoxville Convention center will host this event that benefits the East TN Children's Hospital.

Nov. 27: Dyersburg

Annual Christmas Parade Downtown Dyersburg hosts its 72nd Annual Christmas parade.

Dec. 1-2: Bell Buckle

<u>A Quilted Christmas</u>

A Quilt Walk featuring local historic homes and churches throughout historic Bell Buckle.

Dec. 1-3: Lebanon

Mistletoe Merchants

The Farm Bureau Expo Center will host this market of crafters. artisans, and more.

Dec. 2: Clarksville

SpiritFest and Christmas Parade Downtown Clarksville hosts this event featuring hot chocolate, food trucks, a live nativity and more.

Dec. 2: Goodlettsville

Yulefest

For more than 35 years, this free event at Historic Mansker's Station kicks off the holiday season with live demonstrations, storytellers musicians, and more.

Dec. 2: Monterey

67th Annual Christmas Parade Santa Claus comes to the mountain at this parade through the town of Monterey.

Dec. 2: Somerville

Somerville Christmas Parade Santa will visit the Somerville Historic Square during this year's Bright Lights, Christmas Delights Parade.

Dec. 8: Loudon

Christmas in the Park (https:// www.facebook.com/loudonparks)

Loudon Municipal Park will host a Christmas light display

TENNESSEE **FESTIVALS**

rate over the summer. Consumer spending powered this expansion, largely due to a strong job market and falling inflation. This is the strongest pace GDP has shown since late 2021 and defied economic projections, which projected a recession. However, economists don't expect the growth to stay as many Americans used their savings to power the spending that expanded the GDP. Higher-income earners in particularly fueled much of the spending in service areas though there are indications that those on the lower end of the income spectrum are running out of funds. Disposable personal income and personal savings both decreased during the quarter.

The U.S. labor market added 150,000 jobs in October, lower than projected but around the same rate as job gains being reported pre-pandemic. Unemployment ticked up 3.9% from 3.8% in September. Unemployment has

slightly less than expected and 4.1% above this time last year. Economists noted that numbers from October may have been lower than expected due to major work stoppages caused by notable strikes in the automotive industry.

Inflation moderated in October with consumer prices rising 3.2%, a decline from the previous month's rate of 3.7%. Inflation has continued to decline since it reached a high in summer 2022, and Fed officials are hoping to return the inflation rate to the 2% pace that was considered normal prior to the pandemic. The downward trend of prices was driven largely by the supply chain returning to normal as well as cooling in housing and service costs.

food trucks, bon fire, Santa and Mrs. Claus, horse-drawn carriage rides, inflatables, and performances by the Loudon High School Chorus.

Dec. 9: Paris

Downtown Paris Christmas Festival (https://www.facebook. com/visitdowntownparis) Support local businesses and get in Christmas shopping at this holiday event.

Dec. 9: Madisonville

Christmas Festival on the Square (https://www.facebook.com/ MadisonvilleChristmas)

Eat, drink, shop, and be merry at this event featuring downtown businesses leading up to the Madisonville Christmas Parade.



For more than 30 years, Voya in partnership with the Tennessee Municipal League has provided retirement plan services to municipal employees all across the great state of Tennessee.

Competitive Retirement Plan Services for Tennessee's Towns & Cities



Investment adviser representative and registered representative of, and securities and investment advisory services offered through Voya Financial Advisors, Inc. (member SIPC). 385783777_0321



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

Tennessee municipalities get festive for fall





Above: Somerville residents attend the town's 25th Annual Music on the Somerville Square. Left: Atoka held its fourth annual Autumn in Atoka event, which included kids activities like a petting zoo.



Employees with the city of LaFollette put up the city's fall display.



The town of Farragut's annual Freaky Friday Fright Nite was held Friday, Oct. 27, at Mayor Bob Leonard Park.





Visitors and residents of Pittman Center are being greeted this fall by displays at the city's entrance sign on Highway 321. All of the decorations were handmade by Pittman Center Maintenance Supervisor Bill Way.



Downtown Athens was packed for the city's annual Pumpkintown Festival.





Members of the Gatlinburg Fire Department hand out candy during the Gatlinburg Recreation Department's 10th Annual Spooktacular, held at Rocky Top Sports World.

Above: Concertgoers enjoy the show at Columbia's annual Fall Fest on the Square.

Right: Decorations in downtown Rossville invite everyone to celebrate the autumn.

Bottom Left: Hendersonville PigFest attendees cheer on participants in the festival's goat races. (photos by Rick Murray of Memories by Murray Photography)

Bottom Right: Kingsport held its 6th annual Fall Festival at the Kingsport Farmers Market on Oct. 21. Folks came out to enjoy sweet fall treats, to purchase produce from vendors and show off their pumpkin carving skills. Meanwhile, children played games, made crafts and painted mini pumpkins.





