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TN cities must submit ethics codes, contact info by end of year

By KATE COILTML Communications Specialist

A new law is requiring municipal and other government boards to submit to the state and keep updated both their code of ethics and contact information for their ethics officer by the end of the year.

A newly revised subsection of Tennessee Code §8-17-104 related to ethical standards for publicly elected officers and employees requires entities such as municipal, county, utility district, and school boards to have and keep up-to-date contact information regarding the board's ethical codes and ethics officer with the Tennessee Bureau of Ethics and Campaign Finance by no later than Jan. 1, 2024.

The law also impacts any "board, commission, authority, corporation or other instrumentality that is created by two or more local government entities."



Bill Young, Executive Director of the Tennessee Bureau of Ethics and Campaign Flnance Ethics Commission (BECF)



Municipal government boards are among several entities required by state statute to update their ethics codes and ethics officers' contact information by the end of the year.

The revision comes from Senate Bill 158/House Bill 182 and was signed into law by Gov. Bill Lee on Feb. 27, 2023. A list of entities that are not in compliance with the law by Jan. 31, 2024, will be submitted to the lieutenant governor and speaker of the house.

Bill Young, executive director of the Tennessee Bureau of Ethics and Campaign Finance Ethics Commission (BECF), said his office promoted the passage of the bill as a way to help build up public confidence that government entities throughout the state are operating ethically and that citizens have recourse on the local level. The new law is a more updated version of one previously on the books.

"Under the past law that was in statute, each local governmental entity as defined by the statute has been required for years to submit their local code of ethics with us," Young said. "The Legislature passed that as part of the Ethics Reform Act of 2003. They are required to not only file that code with us but to also file any updated amendments with us. We then put all that information on the website

so everyone has access to it. As to how updated our website is, we don't know. We suspect with certain entities it may be a little

Young said BECF supported the revision of the law because they are increasingly being contacted with local concerns that are not within the bureau's purview.

"We don't handle a local advocate complaint," he said. "We refer them back to the local jurisdiction for their ethics officer or whoever is responsible to do an investigation and figure out whether or not there is a problem with a local code of ethics. We only handle state ethics here. The problem we run into is that we do not have a list of the folks at those entities who handle ethics complaints. We always assume it's probably the general counsel, but it's not always."

He hopes the new legislation will not only help to notify the entities named in statue of their responsibility but to also provide better resources for the public. While there is a submission deadline, Young said there is no pen-See ETHICS on Page 5

Emotions, tempers, run hot during special called session on public safety



Photo by Nicole Hester / The Tennessean

Gallery spectators in the Senate chambers drop a banner saying "No Gun Reform No Peace' at during one of the chaotic days of the Special Session on Public Safety.

After what could only be characterized as a tumultuous Special Session on Public Safety, the Tennessee General Assembly concluded its business on Aug. 29.

In the end, only four pieces of legislation were passed and all were part of Gov. Bill Lee's slate of priorities he presented in the special session proclamation.

• Legislation to eliminate the sales taxes on gun locks and gun safes.

• A bill to codify Lee's executive order requiring court clerks to notify the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation about felony convictions within 72 hours instead of 30 days, and

• A requirement for TBI to compile annual reports on human trafficking.

Both chambers also passed a Special Session Appropriations bill that includes:

• \$1.1M for a PSA campaign advocating for the use of gun locks

and storage;

- \$12M for sign-on bonuses and pay incentives for mental health workers
- \$4M for behavioral health safety net grants
- \$30M non-recurring for safety upgrades for higher education institutions; and
- \$50M non-recurring for community mental health agencies contracted with Department of Mental Health funded through the TennCare reversion amount.

TACN aims to ease emergency communications across agencies

By KATE COIL

From natural disasters to mass casualty events to search and rescue operations, emergency response efforts need reliable communication channels to coordinate their efforts when seconds count.

The Tennessee Advanced Communications Network (TACN) provides mobile and fixed radio transmission sites in both urban and rural areas, allowing law enforcement, fire, EMS, healthcare providers, and other first responders to maintain real-time contact both in the event of disaster and for their day-to-day operations.

The third phase of build-out for the network is presently underway, and TACN Director Jeff Gray said work is being done to ensure as much of the state is covered as possible, allowing responders on all levels to better work together.

"Really the goal is to make things more efficient and make sure responders are not caught off guard," Gray said. "One of the frustrations I hear a lot of the time is that they can see other responders but can't talk to them. We are See TACN on Page 5



The third phase of construction is underway on the Tennessee Advanced Communication Network. Approximately 320 towers will provide the infrastructure needed for mobile and radio communications aimed at connected local, state, and federal first responders both in the event of disaster and for day-to-day operations.

NLC's Clarence Anthony calls on city officials to lead with purpose

By KATE COIL

National League of Cities Executive Director Clarence Anthony delivered remarks on the important role local civic leaders play in solving national problems and restoring unity at the Tennessee Municipal League's 83rd Annual Conference in Nashville.

After returning from college, Anthony ran for mayor of South Bay, Fla., a position he held for 24 years. He recalled what prompted him to first run for office.

"I looked at this place that I left, and it wasn't the same," he said. "In five years, crime had risen. We also saw drug trafficking increase right down the street from where I grew up. I went to the city commission and got up during the public comments. I told them what was happening on my mother's street. The mayor listened to me,

shook his head, and told me 'Mr. Anthony, we have a lot going on. We'll get to your issue at a certain point, but we have a lot going on.' And that was the start of my political career, because I just said my mother told me there is a problem on her street, and my mayor just told me he's not going to deal with that problem."

Following his election, Anthony said he dealt with the issue that made him run in the first place but soon found there were other issues the city needed to address that he had no background in. As a result, Anthony said he joined first his state league and then the National League of Cities.

"It helped me become a better leader, a more informed leader," Anthony said. "I was able to go to Washington and lobby on behalf of my small city of 9,000 people. I encourage you to utilize TML as

much as you can to get the education, to learn the best practices, to support Anthony (Haynes), and to be able to go to the Hill. With 345 cities and towns in this state, you guys should be the most powerful lobbying group that anyone has in this state. Why? Because you have the residents behind you. You were all elected, and most often we don't recognize the power. The easy part is getting elected; the hard part is governing."

As the world shut down due to the pandemic, Anthony said local leaders were the ones making sure essential services were up and running – often taking on thankless work to do so.

"I want you to recognize what you did in order to help America rebound and reimagine, because we are not the same communities and not the same leaders we were See NLC on Page 3



NLC Executive Director Clarence Anthony delivers inspiring remarks during the TML Annual Conference in Nashville.

NEWS ACROSS TENNESSEE



COLLIERVILLE

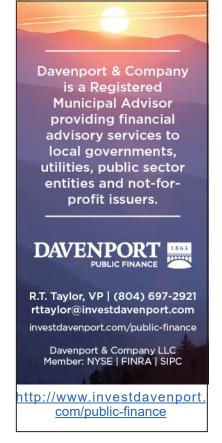
The town of Collierville earned its 32nd consecutive Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). The certificate was awarded for the department's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report. The GFOA awards government organizations who go beyond the requirements of Generally Accepted Accounting Principles to provide users with a transparent representation of their financial affairs. Members of the Collierville Board of Mayor and Aldermen recognized Collierville Finance Director Valesa Wells and her staff for the achievement.

JONESBOROUGH

Tennessee's oldest town will be depicted on a series of three new license plates that will benefit the Jonesborough Genealogical Society and the Heritage Alliance. The license plate design was sponsored in the General Assembly by State Rep. Rebecca Alexander, R-Jonesborough, and will go into production once 1,000 pre-orders have been made. For now, those interested in the license plate can vote on which of three designs they want for the plate, two depicting the courthouse and one with the historic Chester Inn. Members of the Heritage Alliance and Jonesborough Genealogical Society will then pick one of the designs based on votes and public comments. The city of Franklin also has its own license plate that benefits Historic Franklin.

KNOXVILLE

International IT and consulting company CGI opened its new delivery center in Knoxville with the goal of creating 300 jobs by 2026. After more than two years of the planning, the 37,000-square-foot onshore delivery center in downtown Knoxville is the eighth such U.S. facility for the company. CGI is one of the largest IT and business consulting firms in the world. Founded in 1976 and headquartered in Montreal, Canada, the company has locations in 40 countries across the world. CGI has already partnered with the University of Tennessee at Knoxville to create an emerging technologies Center of Excellence as well as established



partnerships to support workforce development and entrepreneurship in the community.

LEBANON

Lochinvar, LLC, will invest \$35 million to expand manufacturing operations at its headquarters in Lebanon, creating 141 new jobs. Located at 300 Maddox-Simpson Parkway, the expansion will allow Lochinvar to house its state-of-the-art engineering, product management and support, platform electronics and development laboratories under one roof. Lochinvar, LLC was founded in 1939, and is a subsidiary of A.O. Smith Corporation (NYSE: AOS). The company specializes in high-efficiency water heating and manufactures residential and commercial boilers, commercial water heaters, heat pumps, pool and spa heaters and storage tanks. With the additional 141 new positions in Lebanon, A.O. Smith will employ nearly 4,000 people in Tennessee.

MEMPHIS

American Residential Services, also known as ARS and Rescue Rooter, will invest \$2.75 million to expand its headquarters operations in Memphis, employing an additional 125 new people at its Ridge Lake Boulevard facility in a five-year period. American Residential Services is a privately held Memphis-based company and one of the nation's largest providers of heating, air conditioning, plumbing, and sewer and drain services for homes and businesses. Established in 1975, ARS/Rescue Rooter has built a distinguished national portfolio of heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC), plumbing, electrical and energy-efficient services across its locations in 24 states.

MORRISTOWN

The city of Morristown has received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA). Morristown received this award for its annual comprehensive financial report for the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2022. The report has been 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 11th time in a row the city has received the award consecutively.

NASHVILLE

Southwest Airlines will locate its newest crew base at the Nashville International Airport (BNA) beginning in 2024, creating an estimated 1,300 jobs. Of these new jobs, approximately 150 to 250 will be pilot positions, growing into 500 to 600 pilot positions, while roughly 500 to 700 flight attendants will be employed by the crew base with more growth planned. The decision was made based on the continued growth of BNA and Tennessee as a travel destination. BNA welcomes an average of 60,000 passengers a day, including 24,500 passengers who are returning to BNA from travel elsewhere.

Crossville officials break ground on next-generation airport hangar



Officials have broken ground on a new hangar for electric jets and modern aviation projects at the Crossville Memorial Airport. The Whisper Aero hangar was funded through a \$1.2 million grant from the state. The 80-foot-by-80-foot hangar will aid in research and development for Crossville-based Whisper Aero, who is developing next-generation propulsory for ultra-quiet and efficient aircraft such as its Whisper Drone and Whisper Jet product lines. The company also works as a contractor for the U.S. Special Operations Command and U.S. Air Force.

Former mayor's historic model train set goes on display in Mt. Juliet



A model train set showcasing the history of Mt. Juliet is now display at the city's Hibbett Hall Community Center, a gift from the family of two former Mt. Juliet mayors. The display features two main train lines and a small trolley track as well as 75 individual buildings depicting Mt. Juliet and west Wilson County as they appeared prior to the city's incorporation in 1972. The entire display was created by N.C. Hibbett, the first mayor of Mt. Juliet, who also served as a city commissioner. Hibbett's wife, Jenny Bess Hibbett, also later became mayor of the city. The Hibbett family decided to gift the display to the city in hopes it would help residents look into the past while also appreciate how far the city has come.

NASHVILLE

Summer events in Nashville generated at least \$88.5 million in tourism dollars, according to new numbers by the Nashville Convention and Visitors Corp. CMA Fest brought in the highest amount of tourism dollars with an estimated \$74.7 million with hotel room sales increasing 3% over last year and hotel revenue increasing 7.4%. The Let Freedom Sing Fourth of July event brought in \$11.6 million with an 8% increase in demand over last year. Taylor Swift and Ed Sheeran concerts at Nissan Stadium both broke attendance records. Swift's concert generated an estimated \$2.2 million in hotel taxes. The NHL Draft, NHL Awards, and SEC Media Days also broke records with 681,000 in-person spectators and 903,000 viewers of the draft and 247,000 viewers of the awards ceremonies.

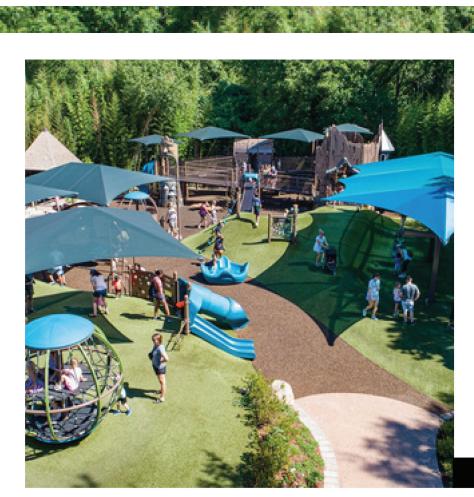
OAK RIDGE

Oak Ridge School system has been named a Top Workplace in the Greater Knoxville area by the Knoxville News Sentinel, earning third overall in the category for businesses with more than 500 employees. This is the third consecutive year that Oak Ridge Schools has landed on the Top Workplace list, and second time being recognized in the top three. The business rankings are determined solely by employee feedback gathered through a third-party survey that measures 15 culture drivers that are critical to the success of any organization including alignment, execution, connection, and appreciation. In total, 91 companies representing more than 26,000 employees were surveyed by KnoxNews firm partner Energage. The district was also awarded the Appreciation Award, given to a company whose survey responses demonstrated that their

employees feel appreciated for the work they do on a regular basis.

SELMER

GE Appliances, a Haier company, has announced they will invest \$34 million and create 150 new jobs as part of an expansion of their subsidiary Monogram Refrigeration, LLC, in Selmer. The expansion to the refrigeration manufacturer will increase the size of the plant and add new fabrication equipment and an assembly line to build Monogram and Café brand integrated bottom-freezer refrigerators. The expansion will double the capacity of the facility and make Monogram the largest industrial employer in McNairy County. Construction will begin immediately with a target date of new production in the third quarter of 2024. The company has been located in Selmer since 2018.







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New MTAS initiative pairs CPA firms with smaller cities to assist with financial reporting requirements

UT-MTAS has put a new initiative place which is aimed at assisting cities that are struggling to provide accurate and timely financial reports to its elected officials and to the public.

Brad Harris, CPA, a finance and accounting consultant with the Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) developed the initiative as his capstone project as a requirement of the Certified Public Manager certification process.

MTAS consultants work with every city in Tennessee and often find that some are struggling to maintain accurate and timely book-keeping and accounting records. This happens for various reasons, including frequent turnover, lack of proper training and not understanding how important it is to provide good data.

The Tennessee Legislature and Comptroller of the Treasury recognized the problem and in the 2022 legislative session passed Public Chapter No. 716 which amended T.C.A.§ 6-56-105. It states that if a municipality fails to prepare auditable financial records in a timely manner, the Comptroller may appoint a certified public accountant (CPA) or Certified Municipal Finance Officer (CMFO) to prepare financial records for the municipality's annual audit.

Cities are responsible for preparing auditable records, and this initiative seeks to assist those that struggle to do so. It is designed to aid cities prior to intervention from the Comptroller's office. The result is to provide a support system, assist, help train and mentor those who are having difficulty with the policies and procedures to provide good accounting and financial re-

The initiative is designed to pair cities in need with a qualified CPA firm or CMFO that can assist, on a fee basis, and help eliminate backlogs in reporting and to do so with accurate records. The program is not intended to be a permanent solution, but rather a temporary help system. Working with qualified CPA firms across Tennessee, this initiative will recommend to cities several firms in their region of the state that can be contacted for assistance.

The decision to contract with a firm is solely a city's... unless the State requires it to do so. Harris states, "A couple of years ago I was working frequently with a small city that struggled consistently to provide accurate and timely accounting and bookkeeping. I saw that the governing body could not make good, informed decisions because it didn't have good financial data. The city had numerous audit findings as well and frequent turnover in the city recorder position."

Harris continues, "I approached some firms about helping the city with basic things like reconciling bank statements and posting revenues and expenditures on a timely basis. I was able to pair the two and help provide much needed assistance. The result was amazing, and today that city is doing much better. It has good records and audits are completed on time. The difference is night and day." This is a success story, but it needs

to be told again and again. Tennessee prides itself on annually being named one of the top two or three most well managed and financially strong states in America. National rating agencies will tell you that any state is only as strong as its local governments. By helping to pair cities in need with qualified assistance, I believe this initiative will have a big impact on our state".

As stewards of public funds, every local government in Tennessee has a fiduciary duty to properly record, account for, and report on all financial transactions. This means everything from a parking fine to a large grant. Internal controls must be in place to help minimize risk and give confidence to its residents that the city is operating efficiently. A big part of good stewardship is proper recording and reporting of results. Unfortunately, some cities struggle to fulfill these responsibilities.

MTAS finance and accounting consultants are in a unique position to see the need, but do not have enough hours in the day to consistently provide these services on a daily, weekly, monthly basis as may be needed. However, MTAS consultants typically recognize when a problem exists and can utilize this program to make a real difference that is long lasting. MTAS also works very closely with the Tennessee Comptroller's Offices of Local Government Audit and Local Government Finance, and this partnership can further identify needs and help to provide support to cities that need assistance.

As noted earlier, the ultimate



MTAS Finance Consultant Brad Harris works with Missy Layne, city recorder with Powells Crossroads.

decision is on the local government as to whether it will contract with a qualified firm to help it fulfill its recording and reporting responsibilities. There are several factors that can cause a city to need the services outlined in this program, but in the end, the goal is to overcome the problems and make improvements. Poor accounting and bookkeeping records can lead to poor and uninformed decisions. When that happens, no one wins. Additionally, while there is a cost to cities, they should consider that reporting problems can snowball and lead to the inability to get debt

issued and, perhaps, missing out on grant opportunities.

In summary, the goals of the initiative are to assist cities with a need to improve on accurate and timely recording and reporting of its financial transactions, to give the governing body good data to assist in making good decisions, and to give residents confidence in its local government officials. The initiative exists only to bring cities struggling in these areas to the point of fulfilling its duty of care and its responsibility to provide accurate and timely auditable financial records.

NLC's Clarence Anthony calls on city officials to lead with purpose

NLC from Page 1

because of what we went through," he said. "I know personally what it was like watching people that I love pass, helping the elderly during that time be able to get food, and also making sure your communities continued to provide services to their residents -- and a lot of people don't say thank you. When city halls closed and streets were vacant, they looked to you – as local leaders. You carried that heavy burden of making sure your communities had what they needed."

Anthony said the changes wrought by the pandemic give municipal officials both the opportunity and responsibility to chart a new way forward.

"This is our opportunity as local leaders to continue to lead," he said. "As we look across America, what we're seeing is that we need to be even stronger leaders because there is so much divisiveness among us. We need to make sure that America keeps its promise to its residents."

Coming out of the pandemic, Anthony said local leaders are going to need to be open to their citizens but also have the data and information to back up decisions they make.

"As we look toward the rest of this reimagination of our communities, there is going to be a certain type of leader that we need," he said. "We are going to need leaders who really respect their residents in a really dignified way no matter their race, their culture, or economic background. In the future, we need leaders who will love everyone in their community even if they don't agree with them. We need leaders who are educated, who read and have data in front of them to make decisions. If we are continuing to lead our communities into the next generation, we are going to need leaders who are going to take risks. We need folks that are inspired about what they do every day. We need leaders who remember why they ran. If you don't have that, you need to go back and remind yourself why you ran for office. Finally, we need leaders who lead with purpose."

To help with the recovery and changes brought by the pandemic, NLC worked with lawmakers from both sides of the aisle to secure CARES Act funding, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and helped secure \$65.1 billion for local governments in ARP funds. He advised local leaders to use these funds

"These funds are going to you all to deal with the gaps that exist because of the pandemic," he said. "I emphasize gap because these are one-time dollars. I don't want you to create anything that is going to be recurring expenses on your community. Deal with those issues that you didn't have the money to deal with before. I think that if we look at it that way, all our communities will be better. These dollars are coming down for the first time in the history of America. We want to make sure, however you use those dollars, you use them appropriately and tell the story of how you used those dollars to make your community better."

In addition to filing potholes,

replacing bridges, and adding water and wastewater infrastructure, Anthony encouraged city leaders to also frame how they are using the funding in terms of creating jobs in the community, improving systems, and bettering life for citizens. For smaller and rural municipalities, Anthony encouraged investment in technology – particularly broadband – as it is an essential service.

Anthony said he foresees four major issues coming into focus for local leaders: affordable housing, drug addiction and the abuse of drugs like opioids and fentanyl, public safety, and pre-emption. He challenged city officials to tackle issues like housing quality and quantity.

"It's not just affordability; it's quality of housing," Anthony said. "We encourage our kids to come back after they've gone to college or started their families, but they don't have any place to live. Let's focus on that."

He also encouraged leaders to put aside stigma to address issues relating to addiction and not to turn a blind eye to the problem.

"If we all look around our communities right now, unfortunately we know someone who has overdosed or been impacted by opioids," he said. "And this is not just an issue for adults. We're seeing middle school kids die in America. We as local leaders have to tackle that issue using data and information."

Perhaps the most challenging issue, Anthony admitted he himself was not sure how to move



NLC Executive Director Clarence Anthony (center) talks with Jackson Councilmember Johnny Dodd (left) and Clarksville Councilmember Karen Reynolds (right) following his keynote speech at the TML Annual Conference in Nashville.

forward on concerns facing public safety but said he firmly believed local leaders could find solutions. "I can talk about affordable housing and transportation, but the public safety and mass shooting issues around America is something we have to figure out how we can address as municipal officials. There is no better group to get around the table to talk about these issues and to work to solve these issues."

Anthony said he has an "old school" approach to pre-emption from when he was mayor of South Bay. "My citizens trusted me to make the decisions to ensure what happened in our community reflected what we wanted for our community," he said. "That's what you have. You have that authority,

that right, that mandate by your citizens to advocate for them on the issues that they care about. What we are seeing around America – and even just this year there have been 600 preemption bills filed from January to June 1."

He encouraged city leaders to fight bills that limit local authority.

"What they are doing is taking away your ability to make decisions for your residents. It may be on housing, public safety, governance, or any issue. All of those are the issues you should have responsibility for. Local authority and local home-rule is the bedrock of local government. We cannot legislate from the capitals of our nation what needs to happen in local cities."

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PEOPLE

Logan Engle has been promoted to assistant city manager for the city of Elizabethton. Engle has served as the director of planning and



Logan Engle

economic development since 2020 and will continue to perform those duties until a replacement can be found. Prior to her work with the city of Elizabethton, she worked in planning-related roles for Morristown and Greeneville. She is presently serving as the Tennessee APA Section Director for the Northeast and is a member of TVA's Economic Development's Young Talent Cabinet. She holds a bachelor's degree in political science and history from Carson-Newman University and a master's of public policy and administration from the University of Tennessee.

Lt. Kody Fox of the Cleveland Police Department was recently selected as the 2023 American Legion Department of Tennessee Law



Lt. Kody Fox

Enforcement Officer of the Year. Fox has served CPD in a variety of ways, including on the SWAT team, as a field training officer, and as a criminal investigator. During his time as an investigator, he oversaw several major investigations resulting in the arrest and prosecution of the suspects. Additionally, Fox was tasked in the forensic recovery and analysis of cell phones for multiple cases.

Randall W. Hemann has been selected as the new city manager for Oak Ridge. Hemann comes to Oak Ridge from Mooresville, N.C., where he



Randall Hemann

has served as town manager since 2019. Before that, he served as assistant city manager for community services with High Point, N.C.; city manager of Oxford, N.C.; executive director of Downtown Salisbury, N.C.; and executive director of Pride of Kinston, N.C. Hemman holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Marshall University and a master's of public administration from East Carolina University. He is also a member of ICMA.

Burt Johnson, city manager of Soddy-Daisy, has been selected to serve on the Parkridge Health System Board of Trustees, which pro-



Burt Johnson

vides input on strategic direction and leadership. Parkridge recently broke ground on a new, freestanding emergency room in Soddy-Daisy projected to be open in the spring of 2024. The Chattanooga-based company presently operates four hospitals in the Greater Chattanooga area. Johnson is a graduate of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, a certified public accountant (CPA), and a certified municipal finance officer (CMFO). He has been employed with the city of Soddy-Daisy since 2011. Prior to his work in local government, he worked for the Joseph Decosimo and Company accounting firm in Chattanooga. He also presently serves on the North Hamilton County Council of the Chattanooga Chamber of Commerce board.

Rachel Malone has been selected as the new recreation and event manager with the Farragut Parks and Recreation Department.



Prior to joining the town of Farragut, Malone served as a recreation generalist with the Johnson City Department of Parks and Recreation where she helped start a therapeutic recreation program. Malone has a bachelor's degree in therapeutic recreation from the University of Ten-

nessee and a master's in recreation administration from the University of Indiana. She is also a certified therapeutic recreation specialist, a field that focuses on finding community-based paths for recreation at therapy for those with physical and intellectual disabilities.

Jerry Neal, Jellico alderman, died August 5, 2023, at the age of 79. Born in Greensburg, Pa., Neal graduated from Jellico High



School in 1962 then attended Cumberland College where he majored in business administration. He also served in the U.S. Army. Neal worked for 32 years at the McComb Supply Company, ultimately becoming president before shifting his career to real estate where he served as an agent and broker. Neal served four terms as an alderman with the city of Jellico and as the city's vice mayor.

Gwen Noe, fire chaplain for the Nolensville Fire Department, was named the 2023 Fire Chaplain of the Year by the Tennessee Foundation of



Gwen Noe

Fire Chaplains. Noe has served as a critical incident stress management trainer, peer supporter, and first responder for psychological crisis with the department. Last October, she was chosen to lead the prayer at the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation Memorial Weekend in Emmitsburg, Md. In addition to her work with the fire department, Noe owns a business in Nolensville and is a member of the town's Economic Development Advisory Committee. She holds a master's degree in Christian ministry from Liberty University.

RickStephens, alderman with the town of Petersburg, died Aug. 13, 2023, at the age of 63 following a vehicle accident. been chosen to



fill a vacancy on the Petersburg Board of Mayor and Aldermen on May 2. A native of Muncie, Ind., he was employed as a machinist at Schwan Cosmetics in Murfreesboro. Flags at Petersburg Town Hall were flown at half mast in his memory.

Christina Temple has been selected as the new chief of staff for Secretary of State Tre Hargett. As chief of staff, Temple will serve as senior advisor to Sec-



Temple

retary Hargett and lead legislative affairs with the Tennessee General Assembly and Tennessee's congressional delegation. A ninth generation Tennessee from Bledsoe County, Temple most recently served as the New Hampshire State Director for the Republican National Committee during the 2022 election cycle. Prior to that, she served as coordinator on the Delegates and Party Organization team on former President Donald Trump's 2020 campaign. She has also worked on various political campaigns as a consultant with Hill City Strategies. Temple is a graduate of Southern Adventist University.

Monique Williams has become the first African-American alderperson for the city of Bartlett after being appointed to fill the vacancy left by Bobby Simmons. Sim-



Monique Williams

mons resigned from alderman position 4 seat in July due to ongoing health issues. Williams is a business owner with three restaurants operating in Bartlett, Whitehaven, and Cordova. She previously worked for 24 years in clinical research before getting into the restaurant business. She holds a degree from Christian

Former Gov. Don Sundquist dies at 87

Former Tennessee Governor Don Sundquist died Aug. 27, 2023, following surgery and a short illness at the age of 87.

Born in Moline, Ill., Sundquist was a graduate of Augustana College and served in the U.S. Navy during the Vietnam War.

After years serving in the printing and advertising industry in Shelbyville and Memphis, he became involved in politics, leading the National Young Republicans for three years, serving as a delegate to the Republican National Convention, and working on the presidential campaigns of Barry Goldwater and Howard Baker.

Running on his own, Sundquist was elected to Congress representing the state's District 7. After serving six Congressional terms, he was elected governor in 1994 and again in 1998.

Even after leaving office,



Gov. Don Sundquist

Sundquist remained an important figure in growing business and cultural relationships between Tennessee and Japan.

"We are comforted by our faith and friends, and know he is with our Lord and loved ones in heaven," said former First Lady Martha Sundquist.

Gov. Bill Lee announced plans for Sunquist to lie in state at the Tennessee State Capitol on Sept. 7 with a burial service in Townsend the following day.

"Governor Sundquist was an impactful leader and principled statesman who devoted his life to public service," said Gov. Bill Lee. "As Tennessee's governor for two terms, he contributed to our state's legacy of fiscal responsibility and expanded opportunity for Tennesseans through historic economic development. Maria and I join all Tennesseans in honoring Governor Sundquist's remarkable life, and we pray God's comfort over Martha and their family in the days ahead."

Sundquist is survived by his wife Martha, three children, and two grandchildren.

Nashville post office renamed to honor late State Sen. Thelma Harper



A Nashville post office has been renamed in honor of late Tennessee state lawmaker Sen. Thelma Harper, becoming one of less than 1,000 nationwide and only 11 in Tennessee named for a person. An act of Congress approved the renaming of the post office on Rosa L. Parks Boulevard to honor Harper, the first African-American woman elected to the state Senate in 1990. Additionally, Harper was the first African-American woman to chair a senate committee and was the longest-serving female senator in state history, representing District 19 for 28 years. Prior to her work in the Tennessee General Assembly, Harper served on the Metro Nashville City Council from 1983 to 1991. Federal, state, and local officials as well as members of Harper's family were on hand for the dedication ceremony

Johnson City announces police promotions



The Johnson City Police Department recently celebrated several promotions within the department. Johnson City Police Department Billy Church announced the promotions of Reggie Sparks to Platoon 2 captain, Jeff Wilson to Platoon 3 captain, Tim Hensley to Platoon 4 captain, Drew Guider to lieutenant, Jeff Legault to lieutenant, Joe Roberts to lieutenant, Matt Gryder to lieutenant, Andy Clevinger to lieutenant, and David Hilton to lieutenant.

Brothers University and a master's in health services administration from Central Michigan University.

Justin P. Wilson, Tennessee comptroller emeritus, has been named winner of the 2023 Robert Sparks Walker Lifetime Achievement



Award, administered by TDEC. Wilson has been one of Tennessee's most important conservationists over the last five decades through his work and contributions in the public sector, private business, and non-profit partnerships. His knowledge in the law, public policy, people, and possibilities has made a clear, lasting difference for Tennessee. Wilson served as commissioner of TDEC from 1996-1997 and deputy governor for policy under Gov. Don

Sundquist in 1997-2003. He served six consecutive terms in 2009-2021 as Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury. He also helped establish the 300-mile Cumberland Trail that now bears his name and initiated a regional air quality collaboration meeting in 2001 between the governors of Tennessee, North Carolina, and Georgia. He also led efforts to clean up one of the largest and severely contaminated Resource Conservation and Recovery Act sites in Tennessee – the 7,700-acre Volunteer Army Ammunition Plant in Chattanooga that became Enterprise South. In 1986, he was one of seven founding members of the Nashville Tree Foundation and served as its first treasurer.

Burkett L. Witt, the longtime former and first black mayor of Athens, died Aug. 11, 2023, at the age of 97. Witt spent more than 30 years on the Athens City Council after being first elected to office in 1971 as the city's

first black councilman. In 1983, he was elected mayor by his fellow councilmembers. He served as mayor for four years and then resumed



Burkett Witt

his seat on the council, holding it for another 33 years. Witt's niece, Frances Witt-McMahan, has followed in his footsteps and served on the Athens City Council since 2020. In addition to his role on the council. Witt worked in the food industry for decades at Tennessee Wesleyan University and also owned his own restaurant and catering service. He was awarded an honorary doctorate in public services from Tennessee Wesleyan, and the university plans to name a room in his honor at the new campus center for his contributions to the school, Athens, and McMinn County.

TACN aims to ease emergency communications across agencies

TACN from Page 1

As buildout has progressed, Gray said adjustments have been made to the initial plan and only around 320 towers will be needed with 104 already in place. At present, the agency is working on securing property agreements allowing them to build towers with a few dozen sites still being negotiated, many of which are on properties owned by other state agencies. Other towers are located at locally-owned and operated emergency operations sites.

"If local partners want to come on to the network, they can look at the statewide plan and see how that overlays with their needs locally," Gray said. "They can certainly add towers if they desire at their expense. We are not forcing anyone to do this. We want it to be interagency operable so if we have an incident where a local agency needs to talk with highway patrol. That is the intent, to get the global coverage and interoperability plan so everybody can talk. We can expand the coverage if a local partner wants to come on and add to that coverage as well."

Tennessee's geography and terrain has played some role in deciding where to place towers. Some areas of the state need more towers to provide the same amount of coverage.

"We have the same challenges that cell companies do in that all radios rely on line-of-sight," Gray said. "You have to be high enough to see over a ridge or into a valley in order to effectively operate. East Tennessee has proven a little more challenging while West Tennessee is a little more flat, so it's not as difficult to cover that area in most places because the tower can see further. There isn't as much tower density in the west side of the state as there is in the east side of the state because we can get better coverage with the topography. It depends on the height of the tower and the terrain on how far that tower reaches. We kind of plan to have towers within 15 miles of each other, but out west that could be double."

Gray said a lot of the focus has been on ensuring there is coverage in areas where multiple jurisdictions are most likely to interact.

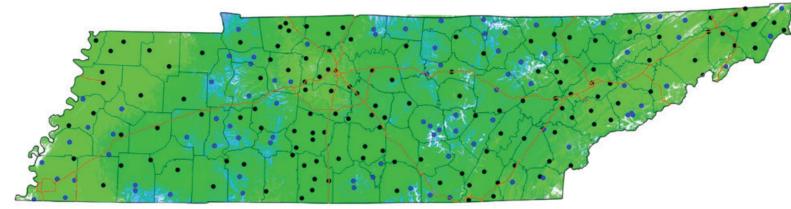
"We are focusing our coverage needs on the interstates, major highways, and our state parks where we do a lot of multi-agency response there with state and local responders," he said. "We also have in major population centers where there is more of a need. We are now looking at those white spaces and figuring out where would be the best place for us to ensure we get coverage in that blank area that we can get. We know that you can't eliminate all white spaces. A mobile radio has a lot more power so it's easier to cover that area whereas a global radio in a vehicle has more power. We are trying to build out critical coverage in those white spaces."

As the third phase is in progress, Gray said studies are being completed and plans finalized with the goal of construction of the first

WHAT IS TACN?

Statewide 2-way radio system available to all of Tennessee's mission critical users.

- Providing interoperability for over 58,000 state and local users with over 75M push-to-talks in 2022.
- Latest partners include Carter, Giles, Bedford, Maury, Robertson, Hamblen, Coffee, and Cannon counties.
- TACN charges no user fees and allows partners to customize coverage to fit their needs.
- · Currently adding several hundred additional sites statewide.



At present, 140 TACN towers are already in operation across the state. Jeff Gray, director of TACN, said geography has played a role in where towers are located as the mountains and valleys of East Tennessee often mean towers can cover less distance than those towers placed in flatter parts of the state, such as West Tennessee. While the state plans to build out the network along major roadways and other areas where interagency cooperation tends to occur, the state is willing to work with local governments interested in adding to the network to cover their areas of concern. While not all areas of the state will have coverage, Gray said the goal is to provide as much coverage as possible.

wave of new towers beginning in September. As more agreements are finalized and prep work is done, he said tower construction will progress quarter-by-quarter. O n e

thing local agencies need to do is ensure they purchase radios that are compatible with the system. Gray said many agencies opt for cheaper systems that do not offer options that are quickly

becoming the standard for emergency communications, which can leave them out of the loop when trying to work with state or other agencies

"We can build out all the towers, but it doesn't work if they don't have the radios that are compatible," Gray said. "There is still going to be the long-term challenge because not everyone will have the money to buy the radios that is compatible with the infrastructure. When they do, they

won't have to pay for the infrastructure because it's already been built out. It is really challenging when the local department arrives and can see the trooper but can't talk to them. We encourage local agencies to start thinking about how they want to participate or how they can potentially allocate funds for radios."

Having knowledge of incident command structure and other strategies for working with other agencies are also valuable for ensuring



The TACN Network has already played a vital role in several major operations in the state, including the Gatlinburg wildfires, Nashville bombing, and during the West Tennessee tornado outbreak.

the communication infrastructure works as intended.

"Local responders are often first on scene, and this network can help them stay connected as more agencies come on scene and that incident command system is built up," Gray said. Gray encourages local leaders to learn more about how they can participate in the network. Local agencies who want to know what resources are available to them or want to learn more about being a part of the network can contact TACN online at <a href="https://www.https:

Cities must submit ethics contact info by end of year

ETHICS from Page 1

alty for entities not in compliance save their names being submitted to legislative leadership. The goal, he said, is to get up-to-date information and all entities into compliance.

In addition to an updated code of ethics, BECF is also seeking updated contact information for the ethics officer appointed by the board. Young said usually this is legal counsel for the board or commission. The name, business address, phone number, and email address of the ethics officer must also be submitted to the BECF. If a new ethics officer is appointed, this information must be updated with the BECF within 30 days.

"Generally, if someone is accused of violating the ethics code, that officer is the one who handles the complaint and investigates if there has been a violation," Young said. "If we get a complaint, we usually refer it to the local attorney. We get more complaints than you would think. We have a very limited jurisdiction on ethics to a certain set of state officials. We even have a limited jurisdiction over the General Assembly and Executive Branch. We have no jurisdiction over the locals, which is intentional. You would want that handled by the locals and not us."

Overall, Young said having this information will help build trust between the public and government entities in a time when that trust seems to be eroding.

"Particularly in smaller places, they have no idea that they are responsible for the code of ethics," he said. "It gets to be a big issue when someone makes a complaint under it. We want that handled on the local level. We are all held to ethical standards. We

all have ethical codes we follow to ensure we are doing the job we are required to do, and that there is nothing unethical going on. It also gives our citizens the opportunity to make those complaints. The Tennessee Supreme Court has a very sophisticated review system. The governor does too. The House and Senate have their own ethics officers. The message to our citizens is that we are all doing appropriately the job we are required to do, and if someone is doing something inappropriately there is a mechanism for that to hit the light of day and be dealt with."

Young said this also allows local entities to deal with any complaints at the local level, so they don't reach the Comptroller's Office or state attention.

"We want everyone in compliance; we don't want this to be a 'gotcha,'" he said. "We want to show the citizens of this state that we take ethics seriously. We take people doing the right things seriously. When people are in compliance, it shows people we are serious about what we do and hopefully have confidence in our government. This is an attempt to make sure we are all in compliance with our ethical and legal responsibility, providing full transparency to our citizens, and that we take our ethical obligations seriously. We want people to understand if they have a complaint there is somewhere they can go to have their complaint heard."

BCEF will be sending out a mailer with information on the new requirements and any questions about the deadlines, ethics codes, or ethics officers can contact Lauren Topping, BCEF general counsel, at lauren.topping@tn.gov or (615)-741-7959.

TDOT, KEEP TENNESSEE BEAUTIFUL WILL CELEBRATE 40 YEARS AT BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

U.S. District Court Judge Mark Norris to Bring Keynote Address

Keep Tennessee Beautiful, a distinguished leader in litter prevention, community greening and recycling education, will celebrate 40 years of service during this year's KTnB Biennial Conference, Sept. 27-28, 2023. Federal Judge Mark Norris, a recipient of the Sierra Club's Award for Environmental Achievement, the Shelby County Soil Conservation District's Distinguished Service Award, and the Council of State Governments' Distinguished Service to the States Medal, is set to bring the keynote address. Executive Director Missy Marshall will host the conference, to be held in Chattanooga.

"For the past 40 years the staff and affiliates of Keep Tennessee Beautiful have worked faithfully to fulfill our mission – to educate and inspire Tennesseans to take action to improve and beautify our communities," said Marshall said. "It's exciting to celebrate this milestone in one of the state's most beautiful cities, Chattanooga, and with one of Tennessee's most passionate leaders, The Honorable Mark Norris."

During his legal career, Norris simultaneously served as a Shelby County commissioner for six years followed by 18 years as a state

senator, the last 11 of which were as the senate majority leader. As county commissioner, he served as chair of Shelby County's Conservation Committee, and also the Land Use, Zoning and Transportation Committee, a board member of Agricenter International, and a member of the National Association of Counties Environment, Energy and Land Use Steering Committee. Norris was appointed to the United States District Court for the Western District of Tennessee in 2018. The 40th milestone will be

officially celebrated at Thursday's Awards of Excellence luncheon, when KTnB will be "Honoring the Past, Celebrating the Progress, and Building the Future." Executive Director Missy Marshall, marking 10 years of service, is one of only three executive directors of KTnB, sharing the title with founder Edith Heller and Marshall's predecessor Sutton Mora Hayes. TDOT representatives, KTnB affiliates, and state and local leaders are expected to attend.

A highlight of the conference will be TDOT's announcement of the 2023 Awards of Excellence grant recipients, presenting \$47,000 in grant funding to Tennessee's top environmental



U.S. District Court Judge Mark Norris

leaders. The six categories to be awarded are: Public Education, Public Participation, Leadership, TDOT County Litter Grant Programs, Keep America Beautiful TN Affiliate Award, and Keep Tennessee Beautiful State Level Affiliate Award.

The conference will bring together environmental leaders and community advocates to learn best practices for keeping Tennessee beautiful. In addition, the event will celebrate the success of recent litter initiatives, including TDOT's "Nobody Trashes Tennessee" and KTnB's "Trashercise" campaign.

Registration is free and open to the public. REGISTERHERE

STATE BRIEFS

Tennessee recorded its lowest unemployment rate ever in July 2023 with a seasonally-adjusted **rate of 3.1%.** The rate is 0.1% lower than the previous historic, all-time low of 3.2%, a figure the state had reached again in June. The 3.1% rate is the lowest recorded since the federal government began tracking the statistic in 1976. The rate is also 0.2% lower than the rate for July 2022 and continues a streak of unemployment being at 3.5% or below since January 2022. The professional and business services sector saw the greatest month-to-month gain in July followed by the trade, transportation and utilities sector and the leisure and hospitality sector. Information on the state's unemployment data is available here.

Tennessee has received the highest form of recognition awarded for government accounting and financial reporting for its Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the 43rd year. The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) has awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to the Division of Accounts in the Department of Finance and Administration for the report on the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022. The report is judged by an impartial panel to meet the high standards of the GFOA, which includes demonstrating a constructive "spirit of full disclosure" to clearly communicate its financial story. The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by the Division of Accounts. Tennessee has received the award more than any other state. Annual financial reports dating back to 1997 are available electronically on the state's website.

Seven Tennessee state parks will be receiving learning playscapes, a new year-round outdoor recreation feature. Cove Lake State Park near Caryville and Jacksboro, David Crockett Birthplace State Park near Greeneville and Tusculum, David Crockett State Park near Lawrenceburg, Harrison Bay State Park near Chattanooga and Lakesite, Norris Dam State Park near Norris and Rocky Top, and Warriors Path State Park near Kingsport will all see playscapes replace swimming pools that closed in 2021. The nature-based playscape will combine the fun of a play area with the opportunity to learn and appreciate the outdoors and natural environment.

Research shows that children thrive on many levels when they are provided outdoor education. The playscapes will help children connect with nature with a hands-on experience and will be available year-round. Work is expected to begin this year on the site, including equipment, surfacing, and ADA-compliant design. The project has been approved by the State Building Commission.

Tennessee experienced the highest number of business filings for a second quarter in the 25-year history of data, according to the new Quarterly Business and Economic Indicators report issued by Secretary of State Tre Hargett's office. In the second quarter of 2023, 19,996 new entities filed in Tennessee. The 1.4% year-over-year growth in new business filings shows that businesses continue to establish in Tennessee at high rates, building on the elevated rates of filings that began in 2020. Over the past year, 77,044 new businesses filed, and employment rose by 84,600 jobs. State unemployment in June matched its all-time low at 3.2%, below the national rate of 3.6%. A high level of business filings typically leads to jobs, personal income and state revenue growth. The largest number of filings in the second quarter were in Davidson and Shelby counties, followed by Knox and Hamilton counties. To review the complete Q2 2023 Tennessee Quarterly Business and Economic Indicators report and past reports, visit sos.tn.gov.

National parks in Tennessee have a \$2.11 billion economic impact to the state, bringing in 10,407,084 visitors and creating 19,652 jobs in the state. A recent report from the National Park Service highlighted the economic impact park properties have to the states where they are located. Visitors to national parks spent an estimated \$1.37 billion in the state alone. National park properties in Tennessee include Andrew Johnson National Historic Site, Appalachian National Scenic Trail, Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park, Cumberland Gap National Historical Park, Fort Donelson National Battlefield. Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Manhattan Project National Historical Park, Natchez Trace Parkway, Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail, Obed Wild and Scenic River, Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail, Shiloh National Military Park, Stones River National Battlefield, and Trail of Tears National Historic

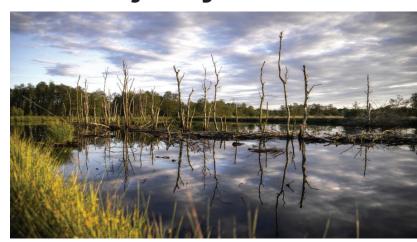
EPA says WOTUS ruling removes protections from majority of wetlands

A joint announcement on the final rule amending the definition of protected "waters of the United States" came from the EPA and U.S. Department of the Army in light of the Sackett v. EPA decision handed down in May. The decision narrowed the scope of the Clean Water Act and the federal government's power to regulate waterways and wetlands.

EPA officials said the ruling could impact up to 63% of U.S. wetlands by acreage and between 1.2 million and 4.9 million miles of ephemeral streams, or streams that only have water flowing following rain events. The new decision excluded wetlands and smaller tributaries previously under federal protection for the past 45 years.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers can also resume issuing jurisdictional determinations, which had been paused following the Supreme Court decision. The new rules increase the area near wetlands eligible for unpermitted development and reduce the acreage eligible for federal funding, including federal programs aimed to clean certain bodies of water.

"While I am disappointed by



the Supreme Court's decision in the Sackett case, EPA and Army have an obligation to apply this decision alongside our state co-regulators, Tribes, and partners," EPA Administrator Michael Regan said in a statement. "We've moved quickly to finalize amendments to the definition of 'waters of the United States' to provide a clear path forward that adheres to the Supreme Court's ruling. EPA will never waver from our responsibility to ensure clean water for all."

The 5-4 Sackett decision was handed down in May and ruled wetlands must have "continuous surface connection" within a pro-

tected body of water that makes the two areas "indistinguishable" in order for the EPA to regulate discharges in these bodies of water. While all nine justices agreed that the case should be overturned, opinions differed on the direction the ruling should take.

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

TN tax revenues \$2.3 Billion more than end of year budget estimates

Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration Commissioner Jim Bryson announced that Tennessee July revenues were \$1.65 billion, which is \$153.5 million more than the budgeted estimate and \$46.3 million more than the state received in July 2022. The growth rate for July was 2.89%.

"July total tax revenues exceeded our budgeted estimates and grew at a modest pace compared to this same time last year," Bryson said. "Monthly gains were led by sales tax receipts reflecting June consumer activity and corporate tax payments. When combined, all other tax revenues declined compared to July 2022.

"Annual revenues for fiscal year 2022-2023 exceeded our original budgeted estimates, but totals fell short of the funding board's revised estimate from last fall. Although collections were lower, this presents no issue in closing the fiscal year. A combination of expenditure savings and unanticipated surpluses from other state revenue sources will balance the year. Any further concerns will be addressed in our next budget proposal."

On an accrual basis, July is the final month in the 2022-2023 fiscal year. Final reported revenues will be subject to accrual accounting adjustments that may increase or decrease the recorded cash amounts on an audited basis.

General fund revenues were more than the budgeted estimates in the amount of \$141.3 million and the four other funds that share in state tax revenues were \$12.2 million more than the estimates.

Sales tax revenues were \$129.3 million more than the estimate for July and 3.97% more than July 2022. For the year, revenues are \$1.5 billion higher than estimated with an annual growth rate of 6.88%.

Franchise and excise tax revenues combined were \$22.5 million greater than the budgeted estimate in July, and the growth rate compared to July 2022 was 14.49%. For the year, revenues are \$849.7 million more than the estimate and the year-to-date growth rate is 6.10%.

Gasoline and motor fuel revenues for July decreased by 3.04% compared to July 2022 and were \$5.1 million less than the budgeted estimate of \$111.9 million. For the year, revenues are less than estimates by \$9.1 million.

Motor vehicle registration revenues were \$4.4 million more than the July estimate, and on a year-to-date basis, revenues are \$39.5 million more than the estimate.

Tobacco tax revenues were \$1.2 million less than the July budgeted estimate of \$19 million. For the year, they are \$16.7 million less than the budgeted estimate.

Privilege tax revenues were \$11 million less than the July estimate, and on a year-to-date basis, August through July, revenues are \$79.6 million less than the estimate.

Business tax revenues were \$1.1 million more than the July estimate of \$11.5 million. For the year, revenues are \$75.3 million more than the budgeted estimate.

Mixed drink, or Liquor-by-

the-drink, taxes were \$6.4 million more than the July estimate. For the year, revenues are \$68.5 million more than the budgeted estimate.

All other tax revenues were more than estimates by a net of \$7.1 million.

For the year, revenues are \$2.5 billion more than the budgeted estimate. The general fund recorded \$2.3 billion more than the budgeted estimate and the four other funds were \$201 million more than estimated

The budgeted revenue estimates for 2022-2023 are based upon the State Funding Board's consensus recommendation from November 23, 2021 and adopted by the second session of the 112th General Assembly in April 2022.

Also incorporated in the estimates are any changes in revenue enacted during the 2022 session of the General Assembly. These estimates are available on the <u>state's website</u>.

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.



Tennessee Municipal League thanks 2023 Annual Conference exhibitors



A2H



Allen & Hoshall



American Fidelity Assurance Co.



Apptegy



ASA Engineering



AT&T



BCA Environmental Consultants



BCI Burke



Blue Cross Blue Shield



Brick Industry Association



BuyBoard



Catalyst Design Group



Christmas Decor and More



CMI Equipment Sales



Collier Engineering



Cooper/Ephesus Lighting



CSpire



Cunningham Recreation/Game Time



Davenport & Company



Deckard Technologies



Environmental Products Group



Everywhere.care



First Horizon Bank



Fortiline



GovCard



GovDeals



Great Southern Recreation



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Keep Tennessee Beautiful



Ladd's



Local Government Corporation



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Municipal Inspection Partners



Musco Sports Lighting



National Sign Plazas



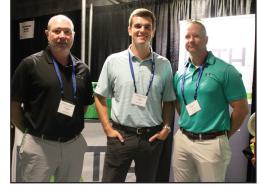
Neel-Schaffer Inc.



NORESCO



OHM Advisors



PATH Company



Pavement Restoration Inc.



Performance Contracting



Performance Services



Public Entity Partners



RadarSign



RaganSmith



REACH Alert



Recreational Concepts



Rehrig Pacific



Retire Ready TN/TCRS



SERVPRO



Sherill Morgan



Siemens



Simmons Wealth Management





Stringfellow





Sustainability Partners



Sweeping Corporation



TDEC PARTAS



TEK Connect Gov

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TACIR



TBOA



TCAPWA



TN Dept. of F&A Partners for Health



Tennessee Development District Assoc



TEAC



. Tennessee Health Works



Tennessee Language Center



TMBF



TPMA-HR



TRPA



TREEDC



TNSA



TLM Associates



Trane Commercial Systems



USG Water Solutions



UT-MTAS



VC3



VDCI



Verkada



Vortex Aquatic Structures



Voya Financial Advisors



Waste Connections of TN



Waste Pro, USA, Inc.



Water Leak Relief



Wold Architects.

*Conference Vendors Not Pictured: Community Development Partners, ESGR, Parman Tractor & Equipment, and Workday



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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

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Pavement Restorations, Inc. Performance Services

Recreational Concepts Rehrig Pacific Sherill Morgan

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Simmons Wealth Management Tennessee Development District Assn

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Treasury expands the uses of ARPA funding

State and local governments allowed to spend coronavirus relief money on natural disasters, additional transportation projects and housing, among other uses.

BY KERY MURAKAMI Route Fifty

With states and cities still trying to figure out how to use some of the \$350 billion in American Rescue Plan Act dollars they've received, the Treasury Department is giving them more spending options.

While the rule is not yet final, it does allow governments to spend the funds from the 2021 coronavirus relief package in a variety of new ways. The costs, though, have to have been incurred on or after Dec. 29, 2022, a Treasury official said.

Those options include:

Allowing governments to use money under the ARPA State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds program to deal with natural disasters, whether it be preparing for an impending storm or recovering from one. Those costs could include providing temporary housing or food assistance and fighting fires or flooding.

Allowing governments to use unspent ARPA dollars to add to funding they're already getting for projects like the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program, the Highway Safety Improvement Program and the Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Discretionary Grant Program. The money, for example, can't be used to replace state funding for a project.

Allowing state and local governments to use ARPA money for projects that are not receiving federal funding, but fit the requirements for the RAISE program. Among the projects the program is currently funding are the building of a new bridge over a rail line in Tucson, Arizona; the construction of a bike and pedestrian bridge between Virginia and Washington, D.C.; the revitalization of a waterfront in the Virgin Islands; and the replacement of a 60-year-old ferry in Washington state.

ARPA funds could be used to repay the federal government money owed under the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act loan program.

Severe weather during the

first half of the year has led

to an unprecedented \$34

million in losses, according

to officials within the res-

idential and commercial

and commercial insurance

industry. Thunderstorms with

hail, lightning, heavy rain,

and high winds accounted for

nearly 70% of \$50 billion in

global damages this year with

10 storms in the U.S. creating at

least \$1 billion in damage each.

Some residential and commer-

cial insurance agencies are also

retreating from states being hit

the hardest by weather-caused

damage, such as Texas, Flor-

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NATIONAL BRIEFS



James Dowell, a manager of street sanitation for Covington and a custodian at the school, walks by the destroyed gym at Crestview Elementary in Covington, Tenn., on April 1, 2023, when a tornado hit the area. Photo by Chris Day/The Commercial Appeal

 And state and local governments could use the money for projects that meet the requirements for Community Block Development Grants, or CBDG, including acquiring certain properties for a public purpose, or rehabilitating or building new public facilities and private utilities.

While states and cities would have more ways to spend the money under the proposed rule, they would have a little less time

Under ARPA, governments have until Dec. 31, 2024, to decide if they want to spend the money on the relief packages' original purposes. They have to spend that money by Dec. 31, 2026.

But if governments want to use the funds for surface transportation, to deal with natural disasters or CDBG projects, they have to spend the funds by Sept. 30, 2026.

Brookings Metro, which has been tracking how local governments have been using ARPA funds, found that 39% are spending it on government operations. Local governments are spending about 11% of their funds each on infrastructure, housing and public

According to the Treasury Department, it has already sent 99.99% of the funding to about 30,000 state, local, and Tribal governments.

Though figures for all governments were not available, the Treasury Department noted that states and larger cities have already

premiums having skyrocketed

in those markets for years. Some

agencies have opted to not renew

or write new policies relating to

wildfires, hurricanes, and other

weather events, citing the fact

that these states are more costly

The national economy grew

more slowly in the second quar-

ter than previously estimated,

good news for the Federal Re-

serve in their attempts to bring

down prices. Gross domestic

product (GDP), the broadest mea-

sure of economic output, rose at

an annualized rate of 2.1% in the

second quarter, down from the ini-

to operate in.

decided how to spend the vast amount of the money, about 80%, as of March 31. That leaves about a fifth of the money undedicated.

burdensome strings to using the money."

Indeed, the agency said that

Governments hoping to use the the rule.

A particular hardship, Glee-Environmental Policy Act.

funding, projects "may still be subject to limitations or prohibitions as a result of the application of other environmental statutes," he wrote.

Commerce Department. The re-

vised estimated included greater

consumer spending, government

outlays, and exports. Business

investment and inventories were

also revised lower and residential

fixed investments – reflecting the

housing market - dragged down

growth less than previously esti-

mated. Economists are hopeful

that slower growth will bring

demand in line with production

capacity and better tame inflation.

GDP is on track to grow at a rate

of 2.5% in the third quarter, which

brings growth further toward the

central bank's ultimate growth

of an annualized rate of 2% each

and more to provide a great time for

But while the new rule gives more options, Michael Gleeson, the National League of Cities' legislative director of finance, administration and Intergovernmental relations, noted in a recent blog post that the Treasury Department is also laying out some "potentially

each of the new ways that the ARPA dollars can be used has its own

"Recipients should first determine which eligible use category a potential use of funds fits within, then assess whether the potential use of funds meets the eligibility standard or criteria for that category," the department advised.

ARPA funds to augment the funds they are already receiving for a transportation project, for example, have to check with the transportation department before spending the money, according to

son wrote, is that transportation and CDBG projects have to meet requirements under the National

Despite being eligible for

TENNESSEE

FESTIVALS Sept. 15-17: Cowan

10th Annual Fall Heritage Fest This celebration of life in the Cumberland Plateau benefits the Cowan Railroad Museum.

Sept. 16: Newbern

31st Annual Depot Days

The longest, continually-held festival in Dyer County, this celebration helps support the continued restoration of the historic Newbern depot as well as the legacy of transportation in the community.

Sept. 16-17: Collierville

Collierville Balloon Festival This festival brings together more than 20 stunning hot air balloons, live entertainment, food, arts & crafts vendors,

the whole family. Sept. 22-23: Smyrna

<u>Smyrna Depot Days</u>

Honoring the legacy of the historic train depot, this festival will feature car show, with live entertainment, food trucks, a beer garden, and more.

Sept. 22-24: Brownsville

<u>Tina Turner Heritage Days</u>

Celebrating the life of a local icon and the 50th anniversary of the song "Nutbush City Limits."

Covered Bridge Days Covered Bridge Days is an Eliza-

Sept. 22-24: Elizabethton

family to enjoy. Sept. 23-24: Franklin

<u>Pilgrimage Festival</u> The Park at Harlinsdale hosts this music festival.

bethton tradition featuring a variety

of music and activities for the whole

Sept. 23: Jackson International Food and Art Festival

This festival aims to showcase and share the diverse cuisine, art, and traditions of the various cultures who call West Tennessee home.

MaupinFest is an annual old-time music and dance festival honoring Thom-

Sept. 23: Shelbyville

as Maupin, National Endowment for

MaupinFest 2023

Sept. 29-30: Fayetteville Camp Blount Volunteer Days This free event provides historic demonstrations, period music, dress, and more to highlight the legacy of the

the Arts National Heritage Fellow.

Tennessee Volunteers. Sept. 30: Dandridge

Scots-Irish Heritage Festival Celebrating the legacy of the Scots Irish in East Tennessee.

Oct. 6-8: Jonesborough

International Storytelling Festival Enjoy world-class storytelling from the storytelling capital of the world.

Oct. 6-7: Oak Ridge Secret City Improv Festival Some of the most talented improvisers from all over the Southeast and Amer-

ica come together to celebrate the art

of improvisational comedy.

Oct. 7: Gallatin

Oct. 14: Athens

Pumpkintown

Main Street Festival For nearly 40 years, thousands of visitors have been coming to downtown Gallatin for this annual fall festival.

Pumpkintown celebrates the rich cul-

tural history of East Tennessee.

ida, and California, despite tial 2.4% increase reported by the Retirement is a journey

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Financial Advisor

3D Scanners finding use in crime scenes, court rooms

By KATE COIL

TML Communications Specialist

Crime scene photography has been an instrumental tool both in investigation and prosecution, but new technology is helping both law enforcement and prosecutors document crime scenes in meaningful ways.

3D laser scanners are now being used by departments across the country and in Tennessee to better document crime scenes in ways that cannot be captured in a simple photograph or video of the scene.

While 3D scanning technology was initially invented for surveying, the uses of these scanners are being found in various disciplines from the way the Memphis Fire Department works to document local buildings for training exercises to the rebuilding of the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris.

Wes Moster, director of communications for the Tennessee Highway Patrol, said law enforcement are discovering ways these scanners can benefit them as well, especially in documenting environments important to solving crimes.

"3D scanners capture highly accurate measurements of an environment as well as capturing photographs," Moster said. "Some scanners are capable of capturing both visible light (normal photographs) as well as infrared or ultraviolet images, enabling technicians to see more than they could with their own eyes. In the survey and engineering world, the term 'digital twin' describes the reality of the ability of 3D scanners to capture the entire scene, allowing investigators to return to the scene as it existed as many times as needed and for as long as needed without the need to hold a room, house, building, or roadway closed indefinitely."

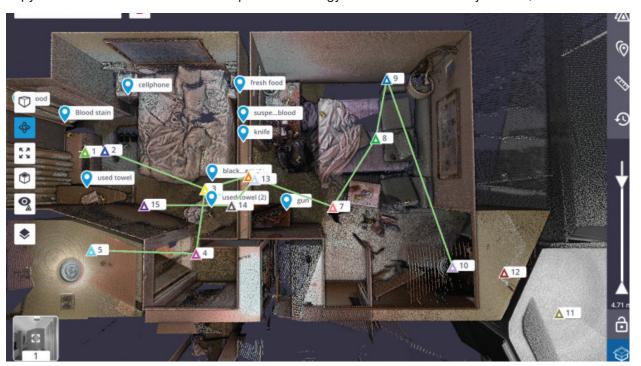
Moster said traditional still photography is still used initially to document crime scenes, particularly any items of interest investigators have found.

A field sketch will be generated by those investigators so they can later review how those items of interest were positioned in the scene. Then, the work of the 3D scanner begins.

The scanner is positioned to capture as much of the scene as possible with a known measurement device placed visible to the



Officers use a 3D scanner to investigate a vehicle accident. The scanners can be employed on crime scenes both indoors and outdoors to collect important data for both investigations and prosecutions. By capturing the data in this way, investigators can keep a preserved copy of the crime scene and use computer technology to better calculate trajectories, distance of travel, and other factors.



An example of an indoor crime scene captured via 3D scanning technology, complete with the labeling technology used as part of the scanner software. Similar to how these scanners are used for GIS and engineering, officers can label important aspects of the crime scene, categorize aspects of the crime scene to make them easier to search for, and use computerized measurements. Unlike photography or video, the 3D technology offers a 360-degree view of the original crime scene that can be visited again and again.

scanner. Once this scan is done, the technician moves the scanner to the next position until the scene is fully documented. At that time, the technician will download and review the data collected and validate it through known mea-

surements recorded.

"The registration process will then be performed in the appropriate 3D point cloud software,"

Moster said "The technician is

"The technician is then able to remove errant data or noise from the point cloud, add labels, add hyperlinks to either the still photographs or specific views from within the scan point cloud, and generate a viewer file that can be delivered to prosecutors or other investigators. The completed scan project can be used as demonstrative evidence allowing the investigators to describe the scene to a jury with the context of the environment as it was observed at the time."

The scan can also be used as a

reference point for investigators still working the scene without having to be at the scene itself.

"Because the measurements can be validated, the investigators can use the scan project as a 3D scaled diagram of the incident scene," Moster said. "This enables the investigators to conduct mathematical analyses directly from the scan data. In some cases, the investigators may be able to use information captured by 3D scanners to conduct technical reconstructions of actions that occurred within the incident scene. The 'snapshot' is a digital twin of the scene as it was observed by the investigators at the time of the investigation. This digital twin enables the investigators to return to the scene as many times as needed without the requirement to hold a scene in custody for the months or years of the investigation. Additionally, the digital twin can be used to demonstrate to a jury the context of the scene exactly as it was viewed by the investigators during the investigation."

Moster said 3D scanners can capture millions of data points per second, allowing investigators to more accurately measure distance, angels, 360-views of the scene, and data that isn't visible to the human eye. The ability of technicians to highlight, illuminate, and color various aspects of the scene also helps investigators better organize the data they have

collected.

Outside of investigators,
3D scanners are also being used
by prosecutors. In 2016, the
Forensic Anthropology Center
at the University of Tennessee
was instrumental in a Department of Justice research project
determining the effectiveness of
3D crime scene scanners for use
by law enforcement and prosecution

The study found law enforcement, legal professionals, and potential jurors found information collected by 3D crime scene scanners more reliable than simple photography or 2D modeling, especially once they understood how the 3D process worked.

Researchers noted many of those laypeople surveyed as part of the research project felt the 3D process "brought the [crime] scene to life" for them.

Moster said this can be a valuable tool when trying to secure a conviction. Moster said this type of evidence has already been used in a courtroom setting in Tennessee with 3D scans going before a jury in Clarksville.

"The prosecutor can have investigators to take the jury to the crime scene 'virtually' while also enabling the prosecutors to limit the jury's ability to see information that may be prejudicial in nature," Moster said. "Additionally, because the scan project is a true representation of the scene as it was at the time of the investigation, defendants that would, otherwise, be hesitant to plea to a crime may recognize the level of irrefutable evidence against them and enter a plea prior to a lengthy and costly trial."

Forensic measurement tools have been used by law enforcement for years, and Moster said he sees 3D scanners becoming more commonplace for law enforcement.

While "not the right tool for every job," Moster said the 3D scanner has the potential to become an important tool in the toolbox for agencies.

"The limitations we have encountered in bringing information generated through 3D scanners to court are primarily the technological capabilities of the court rooms and the interest in technology on the part of the judge," he said. "When scans have been used in an investigation, it may be possible to use snapshots from within the scan environment or simply the measurements that have been extracted from the scans. It may not be necessary for the jury to see the scans. Therefore, there is no current limitation to using these devices in criminal investigations or prosecutions. 3D scanners have been accepted along with all other common survey equipment by the federal courts and there should be no issue admitting information derived from them in the state court system."

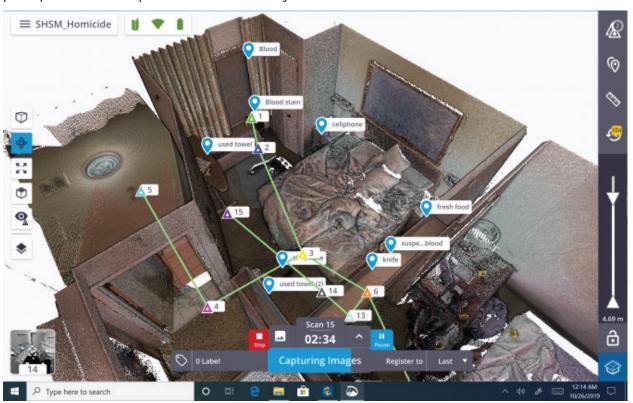
Like any piece of new technology, Moster said law enforcement agencies should

"Do not assume that the 3D scanner will effectively replace the Total Station Survey System as the sole means of documenting a crash or crime scene," he said. "The 3D scanner is not the right tool for every job but is a tool that can be deployed when the job at hand dictates it. In the area of training, agencies should expect a long learning curve for the software that supports the 3D scanners. Additionally, the investigators or technicians assigned to operate the scanners need to ensure that they are working with the machines and software frequently in order to maintain proficiency."

To read more about the UT research project's findings on the implementation and cost-effectiveness of 3D scanning technology for crime scene use, click here.



University of Tennessee anthropology students and researchers took part in a Department of Justice study to showcase how 3D scanners could be used in identify human remains in both recent and cold cases. The technology has the ability to pick up on details not present to the human eye at a crime scene.



In addition to use by investigators, 3D scans of crime scenes have the potential for use by prosecutors. The scans allow juries to see the scene of a crime exactly as investigators found it, bringing the scene to life in a new way. The technology has already been used in a Clarksville courtroom.