

MTAS Municipal E-News

DECEMBER 2012 • ISSUE 43

CITY SPOTLIGHT: LYNNVILLE

Giles County

Incorporated in 1838

2012 Population: 287

Municipal Management Consultant

Dana.Deem@tennessee.edu

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Publications updated with the latest state and federal laws, new and revised acts, training resources and other significant material available for municipal employees. [READ](#)

CLASS LISTINGS AND INTERACTIVE TRAINING CALENDAR

Mark your calendar! MTAS training events and conferences are listed here along with information and how to register for upcoming training events on your Solution Point account. [READ](#)

RESEARCH/INFORMATION CENTER NEW MATERIALS

MTAS' Research and Information Center is always adding new materials to its collection. See what's new for this month. [READ](#)

PAST ISSUES OF THE MUNICIPAL E-NEWSLETTER

[READ](#)

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By Jim Thomas, Executive Director

Really good organizations do things every day to keep their missions clearly in front of them and the customers they serve. [READ](#)

2013 CERTIFIED MUNICIPAL FINANCE OFFICER PROGRAM NOW OPEN ENROLLMENT

The Certified Municipal Finance Officer Program (CMFO) program will now be open to any interested party. [READ](#)

RECOGNITION LUNCHEON HELD FOR CITY OF CHATTANOOGA TRAIN THE TRAINER PARTICIPANTS

On October 18, the city of Chattanooga mayor's office held a recognition luncheon for 16 of its employees. [READ](#)

MTAS ADVISORY COMMITTEE ATTENDS FALL 2012 RETREAT

On October 25-26, the MTAS Advisory Committee held its third meeting of the year to hear updates and consider issues regarding MTAS. [READ](#)

LAKELAND JOINS MTAS' BENCHMARKING PROJECT

As a part of its ongoing expansion efforts, the Tennessee Municipal Benchmarking Project (TMBP), a project of the UT Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS), has added a fourth new city this year to its list of participants. [READ](#)

ALL TENNESSEE CITIES CAN TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE ALLIANCE'S "OnDemand" STORE

As part of the MTAS-sponsored statewide membership in the Alliance for Innovation (AFI), you have access to their latest service to members — OnDemand. [READ](#)

GERMAN ENERGY AGENCY MEETS WITH TREEDC TO SEEK INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

The German Energy Agency, Tennessee Renewable Energy and Economic Development Council Founding Member Vis-Solis and German solar tracking manufacturer, Deger Energie met with TREEDC President/Ducktown Mayor James Talley, TREEDC East Tennessee Coordinator/Kingston Mayor Troy Beets, MTAS Program Manager Pat Hardy, IPS Assistant Vice President Steve Thompson and other TREEDC members to learn more about the region's solar assets and to develop international partnerships. [READ](#)

MEMPHIS AND SHELBY COUNTY OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY MAKES SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT AT TREEDC-MEMPHIS FORUM

During the TREEDC-Memphis Forum held recently, TREEDC member Pathway Lending announced a commitment of \$10 million through the Sustainable Communities initiative to provide financing for energy efficiency improvements for businesses located in Memphis and Shelby County. [READ](#)

From the Executive Director

Really good organizations do things every day to keep their missions clearly in front of them and the customers they serve. MTAS is certainly no different. Along with the other IPS agencies, MTAS entered into the Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence (TNCPE) performance evaluation program and was successful in achieving designation as a Level 1 – Interest Recognition award winner, the first step in a four-step process. Based on that success, MTAS has continued in the assessment process and has recently been informed that it has now achieved the Level 2 – Commitment Award.



Jim Thomas

TNCPE defines a Level 2 organization as one that “is beginning to demonstrate serious commitment to, and implementation of, performance improvement principles.” From my perspective, MTAS fits the definition very well. Internally, we benefit from it; but more importantly, those city governments we serve every day do also. MTAS will be recognized for its TNCPE achievement in February.

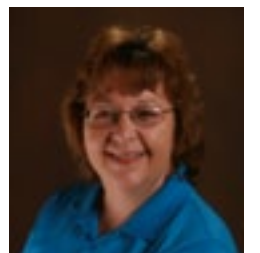
Really good organizations work hard to fill vacancies when they exist, and we are planning to fill three current vacancies. With Ron Darden’s recent retirement and Rick Whitehead’s promotion to assistant director, two management consultant vacancies exist. Also, with Gary Petree’s resignation, we are working to fill the critical training program manager position. Searches for all of these vacancies will be launched within the next few weeks.

Lastly, really good organizations react to increasing needs in their internal operations, and we have done so recently with the addition of Sherri Brown in the MTAS business office. Her arrival helps keep MTAS sound operationally so that we can focus on our mission of service to our customers — the city governments across the state.

We are well into the holiday season. Yes, the time of the year when year-end projects at work and trying to fulfill those many family and friend commitment obligations bear down on us. In spite of those things, know that the MTAS staff ends our year with thanks and appreciation for what you do every day, serving your communities and look forward to beginning a new year in even closer partnership with you. Happy holidays!

2013 Certified Municipal Finance Officer Program Now Open Enrollment

The Certified Municipal Finance Officer Program (CMFO) program will now be open to any interested party. If you know of anyone who is interested in obtaining the certification or attending individual classes, share the following web link ([CLICK HERE](#)) with them.



Kay Stegall

Each CMFO class will qualify as eight hours of continuing professional education (CPE) for certified public accountants or seven hours if no exam is taken. MTAS has also received approval from the Tennessee State Board of Accountancy to award five hours of CPE for taking the CMFO exams. The state law allows participants to test out on all classes except Government Environment for which attendance is required.

Refer to the CMFO brochure at this website ([CLICK HERE](#)) to explain the program and its content.

Please be aware that all individuals pursuing certification are required to submit an online application for approval by the Comptroller’s Office.

Contact [Kay Stegall](#) if you need further information regarding the CMFO Program.



Recognition Luncheon Held for Train the Trainer Participants

On October 18, the city of Chattanooga mayor’s office held a recognition luncheon for 16 of its employees. These employees completed an intensive training program delivered by MTAS called “Train the Trainer.” The program was developed and delivered by Kurt Frederick, Gary Petree, P. J. Snodgrass and Sally Thierbach of MTAS.

Each honoree completed five training sessions and four workshops held over a three-month period in Chattanooga on the topics of analysis and assessment of need for training, design, development, implementation and evaluation of training. Each employee also worked in a team setting to design, develop and deliver a pilot topic assigned by the Human Resource office. Topics included Selection and Recruitment; Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA); Ethics; and the Americans with Disability Act and Injured on Duty. The city of Chattanooga now has a well-trained group of city employees who can continue to address the training needs of the city.

Those who completed the program but were not able to attend the luncheon were Michael Anthony, James Cooper, Jason Rains, Kelvin Strickland, Mary Watkins and Ronald Zirk. Congratulations to this hard-working group! Thanks to Mayor Ron Littlefield, Donna Kelly and Dan Johnson for their support for this program and hosting the luncheon.



Front row, left to right: Christine Venice, Nadine Koski, Janice Suttles, Julie Brown, Michele Bostwick and Mark Smeltzer. Back row, left to right: Donna Kelly, Carol Sivley, Iris Neal and Kimberly McClurkin.

Lakeland Joins MTAS’ Benchmarking Project

As a part of its ongoing expansion efforts, the Tennessee Municipal Benchmarking Project (TMBP), a project of the UT Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) has added a fourth new city this year to its list of participants. With the entry of the city of Lakeland, TMBP is bigger than it has ever been in its 11-year history. It now boasts a membership of 14 participating municipalities.



Sarah Young

TMBP Project Coordinator Sarah Young conducted an on-boarding session in Lakeland to orient the city’s staff to the project. She briefed participants on the project timeline, measures collected in the project and forms used to collect the data. MTAS staff plan to arrange additional follow-up calls to assist Lakeland’s staff with its first year of TMBP data collection.

Lakeland is no stranger to performance measurement initiatives, having participated in the nationwide International City Managers Association (ICMA) project earlier this year. Joining the TMBP will give the city a chance to compare its performance to Tennessee cities, specifically.

“In our mission to deliver Lakeland residents the highest quality services at the best possible value, the city is participating in the MTAS Benchmarking program,” said Executive Coordinator Thad Jablonski. “This continues the city’s ongoing efforts to identify key performance benchmarks and measure performance over time. We look forward to working with MTAS and other cities in the project to share information on service area performance and local practices.”

TENNESSEE MUNICIPAL BENCHMARKING PROJECT

MTAS Advisory Committee Attends Fall 2012 Retreat

On October 25-26, the MTAS Advisory Committee held its third meeting of the year to hear updates and consider issues regarding MTAS. The MTAS advisory committee is composed of representatives from cities and related associations. The committee provides guidance and feedback from the customer perspective on both short-term and long-term strategic initiatives of the agency and answering the question, "Are MTAS services meeting the current and emerging needs of Tennessee towns and cities?"

The meeting was led by Committee Chair Mike Walker, city manager in Brentwood, and MTAS Executive Director Jim Thomas. Jim presented updates to the committee on ongoing work as well as new things on the horizon for MTAS. MTAS staff provided brief updates from each program within the agency such as IT, consulting, research and information and training. Also on the agenda for this meeting were presentations from each of the other IPS agencies (Naifeh Center, CTAS, CIS and LEIC.) Advisory committee members commented that this portion of the agenda opened their eyes to the depth and breadth of the resources available from the IPS agencies. One city manager mentioned an interest in LEAN management practices and that he would be following up with CIS on that methodology.

The committee was also treated to a presentation by Dr. David Folz, director of the master's of public policy and administration program at UTK and longtime collaborator with MTAS on many services to cities. Dr. Folz presented a profile of the current student, and overview of the MPPS curriculum, competencies for future public administrators, as well as a look at the possible career interests of these students. Dr. Folz also discussed the MTAS contributions to the MPPA program through the Public Financial Management course. MTAS consultants modeled the curriculum after the Certified Municipal Financial Manager course. The course has been a success and will be repeated in the upcoming spring semester 2013.

The meeting was held at Fall Creek Falls State Park near Pikeville. The fall colors, brisk temperatures and blue skies provided a perfect backdrop for this collegial group to conduct its business and get to know each other, and the business of MTAS, better.

The committee chose Mitchell Moore as chair for the upcoming year and Pete Peterson as vice-chair. Members of the current MTAS Advisory Committee are: Mitch Moore, city manager, Athens; Keith McDonald, mayor, Bartlett; Mike Walker (chair), city manager, Brentwood; Jerry Crawford, fire chief, Collierville; Kim Wallace, police chief, Dover; John Anderson, city attorney, East Ridge; Allen Barker, mayor, Humboldt; Pete Peterson, city manager, Johnson City; Jim Demming, city recorder/CFO, Kingsport; Curtis Hayes, mayor, Livingston; Jim Crumley, assistant city manager, Murfreesboro; Mark Miller, public works director, Pigeon Forge; Chad Jenkins, deputy director, Tennessee Municipal League; Margaret Mahery, executive director, Tennessee Municipal League; and Dawn Crawford, president, TML Risk Management Pool.



Front row, left to right: Jerry Crawford, Keith McDonald, Mitchell Moore, Mike Walker and Jim Demming. Back row, left to right: Mark Miller, Chad Jenkins, Pete Peterson, Jim Crumley and MTAS Executive Director Jim Thomas.

All Tennessee Cities Can Take Advantage of the Alliance's "OnDemand" Store



As part of the MTAS-sponsored statewide membership in the Alliance for Innovation (AFI), you have access to their latest service to members – OnDemand.

OnDemand is a web based store where you have access to webinars, white papers, innovation bundles, digital documents and other materials provided by AFI. Many of these materials are FREE to Alliance members. And if you are a city official or staff member in Tennessee, you are a member of the Alliance for Innovation.

Check out the OnDemand store at

<http://ondemand.transformgov.org/store/provider/provider09.php>.

If you have any questions about the Tennessee membership, contact Frances Adams-O'Brien, librarian, at frances.adams-obrien@tennessee.edu.

If you have questions on the use of the OnDemand service, contact Toni Shope, eastern regional director of the Alliance, at tshope@transformgov.org.

German Energy Agency Meets with TREEDC to Seek International Partners

The German Energy Agency, Tennessee Renewable Energy and Economic Development Council Founding Member Vis-Solis and German solar tracking manufacturer, Deger Energie met with TREEDC President/Ducktown Mayor James Talley, TREEDC East Tennessee Coordinator/Kingston Mayor Troy Beets, MTAS Program Manager Pat Hardy, IPS Assistant Vice President Steve Thompson and other TREEDC members to learn more about the region's solar assets and to develop international partnerships. The German Energy Agency develops flagship projects for German renewable energy in the field of photovoltaics, solar cooling and solar thermal energy. All of the solar roofs developed by the German Energy Agency are designed as public private partnerships and co-financed by the German Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology. Since 2004, 40 projects have been developed in Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France and South Korea and many other countries.

Attendees heard presentations from Vis-Solis and their dual axis solar technology. TREEDC also gave an overview of the TREEDC International Exchange program that is designed to cultivate technology and informational exchange among TREEDC's business, colleges, local government and state agency members with international renewable energy related counterparts. Many Tennessee renewable energy firms conduct business overseas and the mayors of TREEDC desire to help advance their business plans by engaging other countries to help start similar grassroots outreach endeavors.

Jessica Klein, renewable energy manager for the German Energy Agency, gave a detailed presentation regarding the developmental goals in the United States. They hope to have a solar inauguration in Washington, D.C., sometime in 2013. Cortney Piper, president of Piper Communications, helped organized the statewide tour to help promote more efficient solar technology.



Left to right: Cortney Piper, Piper Communications; Mayor James Talley; Steve Levy, Tennessee Solar Energy Association; Mayor Troy Beets; Warren Nevad, MTAS; Jessica Klein, German Energy Agency; Tim Hayes, Vis-Solis; Larry Stephens, Michael Brady, Inc; Carlos Meyer, Vis-Solis; and Pat Hardy, MTAS.

Memphis and Shelby County Office of Sustainability Makes Special Announcement at TREEDC–Memphis Forum



During the TREEDC-Memphis Forum held recently, TREEDC member Pathway Lending announced a commitment of \$10 million through the Sustainable Communities initiative to provide financing for energy efficiency improvements for businesses located in Memphis and Shelby County. This initiative will help more area businesses be able to implement energy efficiency projects and achieve long-term energy cost savings. This loan program is a public-private partnership between TREEDC Mayors AC Wharton, Jr. and Mark Luttrell, the Joint Offices of Sustainability, and Pathway Lending. According to Memphis and Shelby County Sustainability Director Paul Young, this partnership is also designed to provide the necessary tools and resources to motivate individuals in the community to make their homes and businesses more energy efficient.

Christian Brothers University (CBU), TREEDC Schools Coordinator/Memphis Councilman Dr. Edmund Ford, Jr., Mirimichi Green and the University of Tennessee Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) partnered with TREEDC to organize the third annual Memphis community-wide forum. Clean energy topics explored included compressed natural gas, solar energy, solid wastes to clean energy and hydrokinetic energy. Eighty-one attendees also heard from PHG Energy regarding their wastewater sludge gasification project with TREEDC Member City of Covington. CBU Associate Professor Dr. Ben Jordan discussed sustainability initiatives.

TREEDC Founding Member Mirimichi Green is a sister company to Mirimichi Golf Course owned by entertainer and film star Justin Timberlake. Mirimichi Green has developed and implemented comprehensive and advanced sustainability programming and is one of the most recognized and award-winning golf courses in the world for these efforts.

TREEDC is a statewide grassroots organization of 88 cities and counties promoting the economic benefits of renewable energy for Tennessee communities. TREEDC was formed by the University of Tennessee President Emeritus Dr. Joe Johnson in 2008. The organization recently received the Governor’s Award on Energy Resources and Leadership.

MTAS Hosts Budgetary Cash Flow Classes

Take your balanced annual budget for the general fund, and create a monthly budget. With a little effort, you can create a monthly cash flow spreadsheet that is based on your city’s actual historical trends of revenues and expenditures. You will use a spreadsheet in this class with your own budget data, so you will leave with your own cash flow forecasting data. Bring a laptop computer with Excel on it, if you have one available. This advanced knowledge enables the finance officer to better manage cash shortages through borrowing or perhaps utilize an available fund balance. On the investment side, idle funds may be invested longer because it can be accurately predicted when they will be needed.

MTAS Finance and Accounting Consultant Al Major will instruct the class which is recommended for municipal finance officers and those who are seeking CMFO continuing education credit. All classes are from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

- Jan. 16: Jackson** . . . West Tennessee Research & Education Ctr., 605 Airways Blvd.
- Jan. 17: Columbia** Local Government Corp. Office, 14 Armstrong Lane
- Jan. 23: Morristown** Tusculum College, 420 W. Morris Blvd.
- Jan. 24: Collegedale** City Hall, College City Hall, 4910 Swinyar Drive

[CLICK HERE](#) to register for a class or to view to the MTAS Training Calendar.

MMA Level I 2013 Open Enrollment Now Available

The Municipal Management Academy (MMA) is an MTAS training program for city employees who want to improve their leadership and management skills. Overwhelmingly, people come away from the sessions having a better understanding of their responsibilities, themselves and of the people they supervise. MTAS is offering eight sessions of the MMA program in the Spring Hill area in 2013 beginning on January 8. **Upon completion of all eight courses, participants are awarded the MMA Level I certificate.**

[CLICK HERE](#) for class topics, dates and locations of for the information brochure.

[CLICK HERE](#) to register for a class or to view to the MTAS Training Calendar.

New MTAS Publications



▶ **THE FIVE BASIC STEPS FOR REGISTERING A DOMAIN NAME FOR YOUR MUNICIPALITY (2012)**

Justin O'Hara, MTAS IT Consultant

This publication provides an explanation of how a city may register a domain name for a website. [READ](#)

▶ **FLEET MANAGEMENT TIPS FOR MUNICIPAL DECISION MAKERS**

Sharon Rollins, MTAS Technical Consulting Program Manager

This publication informs municipal decision makers on how to manage and fund fleet operations; includes a sample vehicle replacement plan. [READ](#)

▶ **GOOD SERVICE REQUEST SYSTEMS KEEP CUSTOMERS HAPPY (2012)**

Justin O'Hara, MTAS IT Consultant, and Steve Wyatt, MTAS Utility Operations Consultant

Automated service request systems are proven to be cost-effective, labor-saving devices that greatly enhance management efficiency. By using the chief components outlined in this report, your city can develop an efficient automated request system. [READ](#)

▶ **MUNICIPAL COURT APPEALS IN TENNESSEE (2012)**

Melissa Ashburn, MTAS Legal Consultant

This publication answers several questions about city court appeals and includes a sample appeal bond form. [READ](#)

▶ **STATE TAX RATE ON UTILITY SALES TO MANUFACTURERS (2012)**

Al Major, MTAS Finance and Accounting Consultant

State law limits both state and local sales taxes on water, gas, electricity, and other energy sources used by manufacturers. Your city needs to ensure that your utility billing system reflects these different rates. The streamlined sales tax act is scheduled to take effect on July 1, 2013. [READ](#)

Mark Your Calendar!

TENNESSEE ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE CONFERENCE

December 5-7 • Nashville • Maxwell House Hotel

[CLICK HERE](#) for information.

DECEMBER 2012						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING OFFICER TRAINING

The Administrative Hearing Officer training is a means for municipalities to acquire training for designated officials who are seeking to become administrative hearing officers. After this training, these officers will have jurisdiction to hear violations of certain locally adopted codes, including building and property maintenance.

December 6 • Nashville

[CLICK HERE](#) for information or to register.

UT NATIONAL FORENSIC ACADEMY™ BEST PRACTICES SYMPOSIUM

December 12-14 • Nashville • Downtown Hilton

[CLICK HERE](#) for information