

What municipalities need to know for web accessibility

BY SANDY REESER

VC3 Chief Executive Officer

With rising number of lawsuits and residents expecting online services, municipalities need accessible websites.

What is web accessibility?

In simple terms, web accessibility is providing website content and features without barriers to those with disabilities. If you want to dive deeper, it's important to know about Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 AA Standards of Accessibility.

Section 508 requires government agencies to provide disabled employees and members of the public access to information comparable to the access available to others.

The WCAG offers a clearer picture of what is needed for a compliant website. It was published by World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), the internet's primary international standards organization. WCAG outlines how your website should interact with a variety of assistive technology tools including screen readers, screen magnification, and alternative input devices.

Why is Accessibility Important?

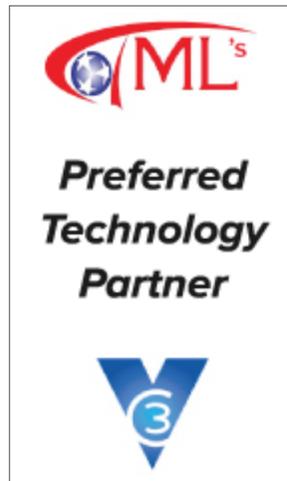
You want to better serve your residents and avoid a lawsuit.

Better Service

An accessible website that engages and serves ALL of your residents is a powerful tool. Your website should be a central hub of communication with your residents, pushing out notifications, encouraging participation, and simplifying payments. It serves a critical role for your municipality and you need to ensure everyone can use it efficiently and easily.

Avoid Lawsuits

In 2018, 2,258 ADA lawsuits were filed. This is a 177 percent increase in lawsuits over 2017. Average settlements were around \$15,000 with penalties up to \$75,000. That's on top of the cost to update your website and make it accessible. Save money and avoid



lawsuits by ensuring your website is accessible now. Not after a lawsuit.

What to Do Next?

Let's take a look at the two main components for web accessibility compliance.

First, you need a modern, properly developed website to meet many of the requirements from WCAG's 2017 update. If your website was developed prior to 2017, it's a good idea to ask your website partner about doing an audit to check for accessibility compliance. Some examples of common errors are:

- insufficient color contrast,
- text that is too small,
- website menu isn't keyboard accessible, and
- screen reader issues

Second, you need to consider the website content. Accessibility is an on-going effort that requires accessibility education for everyone adding content to the website.

Here are a few common items to check:

- proper HTML header tag order,
- alt tags applied to all photos,
- screen reader accessible PDFs,
- Text transcripts for audio files
- Avoiding images with text on them

Rep. Cameron Sexton selected by GOP caucus to be House Speaker

House Republicans elected current Caucus Chairman Cameron Sexton of Crossville as their nominee for speaker.

After four rounds of voting, he received 41 votes in his favor.

The entire House chamber will convene Aug. 23 for a special legislative session called by the governor. Given the Super Majority the Republicans currently maintain, he is all but guaranteed the position when the entire chamber votes.

Sexton said the next speaker needed to have a balance between policy and politics, and he pro-

vides both. He vowed to support members in their re-election efforts.

Sexton was one of six candidates vying for the position, including Deputy Speaker Matthew Hill of Jonesborough, Rep. Mike Carter of Ooltewah, Rep. Curtis Johnson of Clarksville, Rep. Ryan Williams of Cookeville and Rep. Jay Reedy of Erin.

Sexton, 48, works at Cumberland County Bank in Crossville. Last year he was elected to the position of caucus chair for the House Republicans. He is currently serving his fifth term in the state House.



Rep. Cameron Sexton

Development Districts provide resources, support for Tennessee municipalities

BY KATE COIL

TML Communications Specialist

Tourism enhancement and marketing, senior services, solid waste planning, and professional grant writing are just some of the programs and services Tennessee's Development District Association provide to cities and towns across the state.

Officials with three of the state's nine development districts addressed the Tennessee Municipal League at its annual conference in Memphis to showcase the various opportunities and programs available to communities through their local development district.

Matt von Lunen, chief economic development officer with the Greater Nashville Regional Council (GNRC), said many development districts play multiple roles in their communities, such as developing regional economic development plans as mandated by the federal government and working with local regional transportation organizations.

"We serve multiple purposes,"



he said. "We help with policymaking, coordinating state and federal investments, and helping secure and administer grant funds. We really consider ourselves an extension of local elected officials. We want you to consider us an extension of your city staff. If something pops up, if there is something you want to plan for, or some grant that you need, you should consider coming to us."

Seven of the nine development districts also serve as their area's designation agency for the Com-

mission on aging and disability. Joe Barker, executive director of the Southwest Tennessee Development District (SWTDD), said many programs are available through Aging and Disability sections of development districts and several new programs are being developed to deal with the increase in the number of seniors in the state.

"The aging program is very diverse," he said. "We work with our senior centers and have contracts with them to provide various ser-

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Opportunity zones could bring private investment to distressed areas

BY KATE COIL

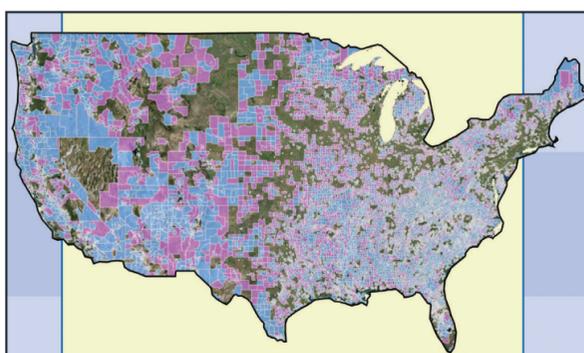
A new federal incentive program will soon be available to select communities across Tennessee, an economic development tool that encourages private investors to aid in economic recovery and revitalization.

Added to the U.S. Tax Code under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act on Dec. 22, 2017, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) defines opportunity zones as economically-distressed communities where new investments, under certain conditions, may be eligible for preferential tax treatment.

Localities qualify as Opportunity Zones if they have been nominated for that designation by the state and that nomination has been certified by the Secretary of the U.S. Treasury via his delegation of authority to the Internal Revenue Service. The first set of Opportunity Zones were designated on April 9, 2018, in 18 states and have since been expanded to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and five U.S. territories.

Lamont Price, the TNInvestCo Director with the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (TDECD), informed city officials at the Tennessee Municipal League annual conference in Memphis on ways communities can take advantage of the new program.

"The program was launched as a result of the downturn in the economy between 2008 and 2010," he said. "There are some communities that haven't recovered the jobs they lost during the downturn and in fact, are operating at a jobs deficit that dipped even further than that. We have 1.8 million Tennesseans - approximately 26 percent of our population - living in those distressed or at-risk communities. Another problem we face is that Tennessee is lagging behind the



Understanding OPPORTUNITY ZONES

Congress has created a new tax incentive designed to drive long-term capital to distressed communities.

Opportunity Zones are distressed census tracts that meet eligibility requirements.

Treasury will certify Opportunity Funds to make investments in Opportunity Zones.

Investors receive tax benefits for placing unrealized capital gains into Opportunity Funds.

Governors will nominate census tracts eligible for investment by **March 21**.

The state of Tennessee has 176 census tracts eligible for the Opportunity Zone program, which allows private citizens or groups to invest capital gains into approved projects within the tract.

national average when it comes to net new business starts."

One of the reasons contributing to this downturn is the lack of local banks now available to lend to small business startups. Price said one out of every four community banks closed as a result of the recession, and now most of the companies that do lend to new businesses are largely concentrated in New York, California, and Massachusetts. As a result, it can be harder to get investment in local projects.

In order to qualify, Price said projects have to be located within certain predetermined census tracts selected because of their level of economic distress. Approximately 176 low-income census tracts in 75 counties throughout the state qualify for the program. As a result, the zones can vary in

size based on the size of their tract and approximately 57 percent of the tracts are located in rural areas. These designations last until Dec. 31, 2028.

Investors can then choose to invest in projects located within these zones through a variety of means. The first allows those who have sold stock to invest the capital gain they made from the sale in an investment zone. The investor then gets a deferral on their capital gains tax.

If the investor continues to invest in the opportunity zone for five years or more then receive an adjusted discount on their capital gains tax when it comes due depending on how long they have kept money in the project. Those who keep an investment for a decade do not have to pay capital gains tax on their capital gains at

all.

Funds must be invested within 180 days of the sale or transfer of stock, and there is no penalty for investors who decide to pull their money out of an opportunity zone project early. However, those who pull out will then have to pay taxes on their original investment.

Price said large financial institutions will most likely be looking into opportunity zone investments but that it may be best for communities to look to local sources of wealth from people who already care about the community and are already invested in it to fund projects, especially as they may be willing to invest in smaller projects. Middle income residents who are also looking to invest may also be potential partners in projects.

"These projects can be big projects or they can be small proj-

ects," Price said. "These don't all have to be \$20 million projects. There is no floor on what a qualified opportunity zone project can be. As long as you have capital gains, you can do it. If you have a project that is \$200,000 for your community, you can do that."

Money can be invested in businesses or properties like real estate, active business, housing, healthcare facilities like hospitals, infrastructure, community and public assets, greenfield development, startups, industrial projects, and commercial projects within opportunity zones. Price said there are some limitations.

"The projects have to be tax-law compliant, have a qualified deal structure, and no sin businesses are allowed," he said. "Sin businesses include sun tan parlors

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NEWS ACROSS TENNESSEE



FRANKLIN

Enexor BioEnergy, LLC, will expand its operations and open a new manufacturing facility in Franklin, investing \$5 million and creating approximately 50 jobs in the next two years. The renewable energy company will locate its operations in a 40,000-square-foot facility at 1 Enterprise Court in Franklin, where it will conduct prototyping, testing and manufacturing. Enexor anticipates it will begin manufacturing its renewable bioenergy system in late 2019. The company plans to export its systems to countries in Europe, Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Founded in 2015, the Franklin-based startup has developed a small-scale, renewable energy system that converts organic and biomass waste into clean electricity as well as hot and chilled water. This combined heating and power system has broad applications for commercial, industrial and institutional use.

JACKSON

The city of Jackson now has its first splash pad with the opening of the Bemis Memorial Park. Located at the site of the historic Bemis Mill, the park was first announced in 2014 with an estimated \$500,000 allocated for the park's construction. The site had been home to a cotton mill that stood for 114 years before its closure in 1993. Many of the bricks used to build the historic cotton mill were reused in construction of the park, such as the two 20-foot-tall towers and the restrooms at the facility. A 10-foot-high mural commemorating the importance of the mill and South Jackson's history was also painted as part of the park. A memorial wall was also constructed highlighting the mill workers and the mill's history.

JOHNSON CITY

The Johnson City Police Department will soon have a new facility for classroom training with room for future expansion. The new 5,000-square-foot facility is equipped with modern technology including energy-saving LED lights, data connectivity, a kitchen area, public restrooms, restrooms for employees, and showers. The multi-use facility has a classroom with an automated projector screen, sound system, and data cables that can accommodate 60 people – nearly double the amount the department could fit into the old portable classroom buildings they had been using for training. The new facility is also ADA compliant and is designed for low maintenance upkeep.

LEXINGTON

Manufacturer Bravo will create more than 80 new jobs in the next three years and invest \$2.8 million as part of a new facility being built in Lexington. Bravo has purchased an existing building in Lexington. With this new location, the company will be better equipped to serve markets in the southeastern and eastern U.S. Bravo has been a leading manufacturer of premier secondary containment systems for more than 30 years. The company manufactures secondary containment system for the petroleum equipment industry and produces products including fiberglass tanks, sumps and fittings. Bravo is known for developing the first-ever, under-dispenser containment sump and shutdown system for gasoline dispensers. This single invention, originally called the "Bravo Box," launched what today

has become a billion-dollar industry. Recently, Bravo pursued and passed rigorous testing requirements to achieve the distinctive UL2447 certification, the only company with a complete line of products.

MANCHESTER

The city of Manchester has received a \$450,000 grant from Project Diabetes to renovate the former Riverview Alternative School property into a new park with an outdoor recreation center. The project will include the construction of a trailhead, greenhouse, outdoor recreation center, and other amenities. The school is owned jointly by Manchester City Schools and Coffee County Schools and the building still used for some meetings and events. After the completion of the upgrades, the city of Manchester will begin managing the grounds and upkeep of the Riverview area. The Riverview School was originally opened to serve African-American students prior to desegregation. Afterwards, it was used as an alternative school.

MEMPHIS

TDOC Commissioner Tony Parker and Mayor Jim Strickland have announced a new partnership bringing Manhood University to the Mark H. Luttrell Transition Center. Manhood University is a six-week program created to inspire men to build up their communities, find jobs and create stronger relationships. During this program, participants will develop goal-setting, time management, financial literacy, conflict resolution, job readiness, and communication skills. Reducing recidivism and helping ex-offenders get back on their feet with meaningful employment is a top priority. For the last three and half years, the city of Memphis has been operating Manhood University with more than 300 participants going through the program. This expansion will be working with individuals over the 60 days prior to their scheduled release date.

MILAN

Love's Travel Stops will invest \$8.8 million and establish a tire retread and distribution facility in Milan, creating 80 jobs. Located at 1091 Kefauver Drive, the new facility will be the largest of its kind for Love's, totaling 200,000 square feet. Through Love's Truck Tire Care and Speedco, Love's offers heavy-duty tire care, light mechanical services, commercial truck oil changes, and roadside assistance for professional drivers. Love's, operates more than 490 locations and 330 Love's Truck Tire Care centers and Speedco locations across the U.S.

MONTEREY

A \$20,000 grant will assist in the further development of Monterey's Meadow Creek Park. The Franklin P. and Arthur W. Perdue Foundation, the charitable giving arm of Perdue Farms presented the funds to the Friends of Meadow Creek Park to assist in building trails on the site with the purchase of tools, equipment, supplies, and professional services. These funds, along with funding from the Appalachian Regional Commission, the Access Fund, the Standing Stone Health Care Board, and the membership of the Friends of Meadow Creek Park, will pay for numerous upgrades to the park. The Friends of Meadow Creek Park is dedicated to preserving, protecting, and promoting the natural resources of the newly formed 387-acre park, while expanding the recreational opportunities for citizens and visitors.

NASHVILLE

The city of Nashville will acquire more than 700 acres of greenspace in Bells Bend, adding large tracts to the city's parks and greenway system. The acquisition includes two separate properties off Old Hickory Road in Bells Bend: a nearly 107-acre tract owned by Thomas Bros. Grass that has been used as a sod farm and 682 acres owned by the Graves family since around the Civil War. Prior to that, the farm was owned by David Lipscomb. The purchase prices for the properties are about \$1.5 million and \$7.8 million, respectively. The parcels will be paid for via Metro

Parks Department greenways acquisition funds.

NASHVILLE

The Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County Assessor's Office has received the prestigious Certificate of Excellence in Assessment Administration (CEAA) from the International Association of Assessing Officers (IAAO), a national and international organization which is made up of approximately 8,000 members in the assessment profession and seeks to maintain the highest standards of professionalism in property valuation. The certification lasts for six years and is awarded after a rigorous evaluation period lasting nearly four months, which included reviews of the office's efforts at community outreach, data collection and timely response to constituents.

SEVIERVILLE

The city of Sevierville is moving into the second phase of a downtown streetscapes project. Vaughan and Melton Engineering will be working on the project that covers the intersection of Bruce Street and Court Avenue not far from the Sevier County Courthouse. In addition to beautifying downtown Sevierville, the project has already uncovered some of Sevierville's history. Old license plates and railroad spikes from train tracks that once came through the area have been discovered by construction crews. Local residents are encouraged to keep track of the streetscape project and plan for alternative routes and parking using www.downtownstreetscape.com. Text alerts about the project have also been made available to local motorists.

WINCHESTER

The Winchester Municipal Airport will soon be home to a \$2 million aviation maintenance technology facility that will serve students from Franklin County's Tennessee College of Applied Technology. The \$2 million grant was awarded to the project by the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development. The grant allows for 36 months to build the 22,000-square-foot facility and have it in operation. Officials said Winchester is a great location for the program as students will be able to employ their skills in areas ranging from Huntsville, Ala., to Oak Ridge. Students will receive instruction in the electrical and aspects of the aviation industry as well as how to inspect, repair, service, and overhaul airframe and power plant systems.

UNICOI

The town of Unicoi is moving forward with establishing a police department. The Unicoi Board of Mayor and Alderman voted 4-1 at a July 15 meeting to create a police department. Officials said the creation of a police department will not only help enforce local ordinances and laws but also aid the Unicoi County Sheriff's Office, who presently does patrols for the area in addition to unincorporated areas of the county. The city is presently seeking applications for a police officer position and will soon begin the interviewing process for the position. The city also approved \$101,928 to fund a full-time police officer and purchase a new police cruiser for that officer in its 2019-20 budget.

28 municipalities receive dog park grants

The second round of Tennessee Dog Park Dash grants will help 30 communities across the state of Tennessee fund new or improve existing dog parks in their communities.

The Boyd Foundation awarded \$900,000 to 28 cities and two counties as part of a multi-year grant program designed to make Tennessee the most pet-friendly state in the nation. The first round of grants was awarded this time last year.

Communities will receive a \$25,000 grant to build a new dog park or make improvements to an existing dog park in their community.

Additionally, the cities of Co-

Shelbyville opens new fire station at local airport



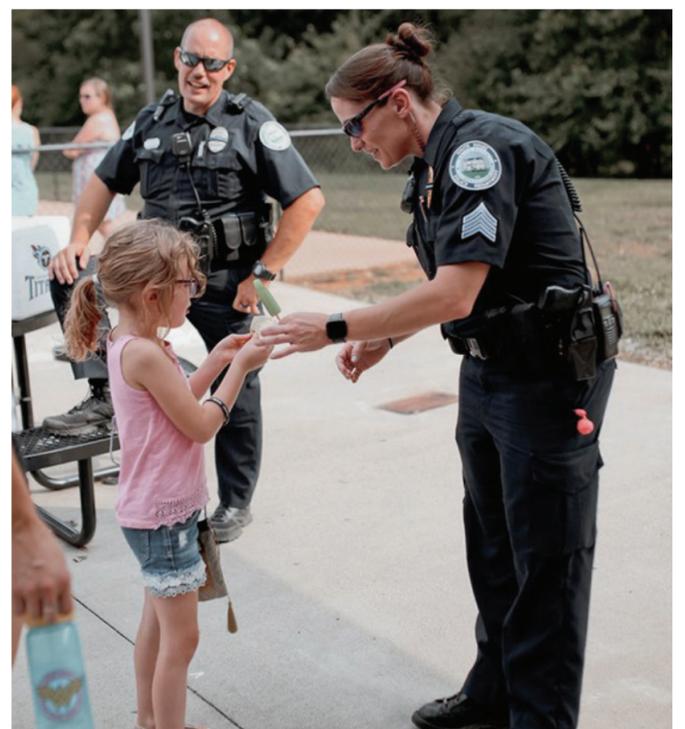
The Shelbyville Fire Department is putting the finishing touches on Fire Station No. 3 to be located at the Shelbyville Municipal Airport. A grand opening of the facility is planned for the fall and Fire Chief Matt Doak said he expects the station to be fully staffed by next year. The fire station will both serve the Shelbyville Municipal Airport and the surrounding area, which is one of the community's fastest growing segments. Some of that growth includes a new justice center and a new business park being built in the area. Many firefighters volunteered to help with construction of the facility, helping the project come \$50,000 under budget.

East Ridge receives grant for creek cleanup



Members of the East Ridge City Council receive a \$2,000 grant from Tennessee American Water for environmental rehabilitation to South Chickamauga Creek. The creek runs through Camp Jordan Park, the Concord Golf Club, and other locations and is a popular waterway for outdoor activities. However, bank destabilization combined with litter have led to downed trees and other obstacles that have blocked the passage of canoes and kayaks. The grant will help finance tools, refreshments, and watercraft for a major creek cleanup planned later this year.

White House officers beat the heat at city splash pad



Officers with the White House Police Department played games and provided popsicles to kids at the city's splash pad at Farris H. Bibb, Jr. Municipal Recreation Complex as part of the "Cool Off With a Cop" event.

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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Adam Dickson has been selected as the first supervisor of the Johnson City Parks and Recreation Department's Langston Centre.



Adam Dickson

Dickson also presently serves as vice mayor of Jonesborough and formerly worked as a regional community development coordinator with Appalachian Community Federal Credit Union. He holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Carson-Newman University and a master's degree in public administration from East Tennessee State University. He has also been employed as an adjunct political science professor with ETSU for more than 14 years. Created out of the area's former African-American high school, the Langston Centre is a two-story, nearly 13,000-square-foot facility that open this fall with the central goal of providing cultural arts and education to the public.

Randy Camp has been selected as the new city attorney for Humboldt after former city attorney Terri Crider left the post for a job in the private sector.



Randy Camp

Camp also serves as Crockett County's attorney and as a municipal attorney for Alamo and Gadsden in addition to working with the Gibson Electric Membership Corporation. Camp earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Tennessee at Martin and his law degree from Memphis State (now the University of Memphis). He has worked at various law firms and on political campaigns and also held various government positions including serving as state commissioner of claims and as commissioner for the Department of Personnel, an assistant district attorney for the 28th Judicial District, Crockett County General Sessions judge and juvenile judge, on the Crockett County Election Commission, and as chairman of the Crockett County Industrial Development Board.

Kenyatta K. Lovett has accepted the position of assistant commissioner of workforce services with the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development. Lovett previously served as executive director of Complete Tennessee, the statewide advocacy organization fo-

cus on raising college completion and degree attainment. He also served as assistant vice chancellor for community college initiatives for the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) and as chief of staff and executive assistant to the president of Volunteer State Community College. Lovett holds a doctorate in public policy and administration and a master's of business administration from Tennessee State University. He earned his bachelor's degree from Howard University.



Kenyatta Lovett

Janet Ross, a 22-year employee of the Bristol's Public Works Division, has been named a Bristol First Award recipient for both her outstanding work as a city employee and a random act of kindness to a grateful community member. Mayor Margaret Feierabend presented the award to Janet during the city council meeting on July 8. Ross was initially nominated after she helped local resident Patty Lee load groceries into her car after seeing Lee struggling with the bags. Ross had just finished a full day of mowing and trimming bushes in the hot sun but still stopped to help. A second nomination came a few days later when Bristol resident Nancy DeFriece observed Ross clearing overgrown shrubbery from the roadway and teaching her co-workers the proper way to handle the task.



Janet Ross

Dustin Smith has been named as the new development director for the city of Sevierville. Smith previously served as the city's geographic information systems (GIS) manager and as the interim director of development since Pam Caskie stepped down in March after five years in the role. Smith began his career in Sevierville in 2015 as an urban planner before being promoted to GIS manager in July 2018. Before that, he interned with the city of Johnson City. Smith holds a bachelor's degree in political science and government as well as a master's



Dustin Smith

in public administration from East Tennessee State University.

Caryville Mayor Bobby Stooksbury was recently honored with a resolution from the Tennessee General Assembly for saving the life of a local woman trapped in a house fire. State Sen. Ken Yager, R-Kingston, presented Stooksbury with the commendation from the General Assembly. Stooksbury rescued Cathy Chercourt from a Feb. 1 fire that killed her husband. Stooksbury also serves as a local firefighter and was a neighbor of the Chercourts, making him the first on the scene of the fire. Stooksbury also credited Caryville Police Officer James McCall, who also responded to the scene and helped to ensure Chercourt did not fall victim to smoke inhalation.



Bobby Stooksbury

Sanderson resigns House seat

Rep. Bill Sanderson, R-Kenton, has stepped down from his position in the state legislature.

Sanderson resigned his seat at noon on July 24 following a special called Republican party caucus meeting. He cited family health issues and the demands of his growing business.

"It truly has been an honor to serve along side of you," Sanderson said in an address to his fellow lawmakers. "Unfortunately, after nine years, my responsibilities to my family and my farm have risen to a level that makes it impossible to give representing the district the full attention it needs. Serving with you has been the highest honor of my life and I wish you the very best."

Sanderson owns White Squirrel Winery in Kenton and said his business has grown to the point he can no longer adequately maintain it on a part-time basis.

Sanderson also said his son-in-law was also recently diagnosed with throat cancer, and he wants to be able to spend more time with his family as a result of this diagnosis.

The timing of Sanderson's resignation means that a special



Bill Sanderson

election will be held rather than the county commission appointing a replacement to the seat until an election can be held.

Sanderson's House District 77 seat serves Dyer and Lake counties and a part of Obion County.

At the beginning of the year, Sanderson was appointed as chairman of the House Departments and Agencies Subcommittee.

Sanderson was elected to the General Assembly in November 2010 and was serving his fifth term in the legislature when he announced his resignation.

Development Districts provide resources, support for Tennessee municipalities

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vices. One of the huge programs we have is called the Choices Program. Through that program, we work with elderly people within certain income guidelines to provide certain services within the home so they don't have to go to a nursing home."

Barker said many of these services are an important lifeline to aging residents in rural communities who don't have children who live nearby, including financial conservatorship, legal aid, and community or home-based services.

"We have a lot of elderly people who don't have any children who live near them and have had something that happened to them financially," he said. "Sometimes, the court will step in and appoint our agency as the public guardian for these folks. We also contract out services like Meals on Wheels or transportation programs. The aging sector of our agency is growing faster than any other."

Rob Goad, a project administrator and grant writer with the Northwest Tennessee Development District (NWTDD), said many elected officials are already familiar with the economic and community development function of development districts.

"To go through every state and federal program available to

communities would probably take longer time to do than anyone wants to see," Goad said. "Through development districts and our partnership with federal EDA, communities are eligible for trade adjustment assistance grants, public works grants, and occasionally federal disaster declaration economic development grants. We also work with the state Department of Economic and Community Development on Tourism Enhancement Grants, Community Development Block Grants, and the Downtown Façade Grants. We are also handling Downtown WiFi Grants. On occasion, ECD will offer one-off grants or have one or two-year programs for community development. There are also several programs for housing and blight removal."

Goad said development districts can provide both grant writing on the front end as well as financial administration after a grant has been received. Development District officials work with cities to determine what will make their applications the strongest and can help determine what agencies are looking for when they award grants.

Von Lunen said regional and community planning is another big facet of what development districts provide, ranging from transportation groups to strategic and comprehen-

sive plans to capital improvement plans to solid waste plans.

"We can provide mobile planning services," he said. "We understand a lot of our cities don't have the budget for a full-time person on staff to handle land use, zoning, and all of those planning duties. We have planners you can contract with who will come in, run and organize your meetings, and help your commissions make educated decisions. We also work with communities that have their own planning commissions but need to bring in someone extra for a project."

Barker said municipalities are always welcome to come to their regional development district for their needs.

"When development districts were created, it was primarily to help rural communities with economic development," he said. "We know that most rural communities do not have large staffs. My office is located in Jackson, but even if you live in Bolivar, we're part of your staff. We have a vested interest in everything you do. We may not have all the answers, but we will put you in touch with someone who does."

For more information on Tennessee's Development Districts, visit www.tennesseedevelopment-districts.org.

No loan is too large or too small



Livingston recently closed a \$1.8 million capital outlay note with the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund (TMBF) issued to finance waterline improvements. Livingston has used TMBF's various loan programs 11 times since 1996. Pictured are Phyllis Looper, city clerk; Mayor Curtis Hayes; and Linda Mooningham, TMBF marketing director.



White House recently closed a \$10 million fixed-rate loan with the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund to finance the construction of a new community event center for the city, which will include an event center, senior center, and administrative offices. The loan will also be used to finance the cost of the demolition of the current facility and the renovation of the current gymnasium. Seated from left to right are Gerald Herman, city administrator; Mayor Michael Arnold; and Derek Waston, city recorder. Standing left to right are: Kevin Krushenski, TMBF marketing representative; and Linda Mooningham, TMBF marketing director.



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STATE BRIEFS

Tennessee overdose deaths rose to another record-breaking high despite the fact that the national overdose death rate has fallen for the first time in three decades. New information from the Centers for Disease Control reported that 68,000 drug overdose deaths were reported nationwide last year, down from the record-high of 70,000 in 2017. Despite the decline in national rates, Tennessee reported 1,939 opioid-related deaths in 2018, up 4.8 percent from its 2017 rate. Every single state bordering Tennessee saw its number of overdose deaths fall in the same time frame.

Tennessee students are among the most likely in the nation to consume drugs and alcohol in high school, according to a recent report from Project Know analyzing Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance data. More than 25 percent of Tennessee students admit to having consumed alcohol on school premises and 23.7 percent admitted to using illegal drugs on school grounds. Alcohol was the most likely substance for students to regularly use followed by marijuana.

Tennessee has one of the lowest rates of skin cancer in the country. The state ranked 42 out of 50 in the amount of new melanoma cases reported annually. Researchers found that in Tennessee and

other southern states, residents are hyper-aware of the dangers of prolonged sun exposure. Tennesseans are better at applying sunscreen and wearing suitable clothing than residents of states with milder temperatures. Overall, men are more likely to develop skin cancer because of their work environment. More men than women have outdoor professions, like construction and grounds maintenance.

Between 2006 and 2012 more than 2.5 billion prescription pain pills were distributed in Tennessee. The information was uncovered by *The Washington Post* after a court order ruled the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) had to give the media access to data it had collected on opioid and prescription pill consumption at a state-by-state and county-by-county level. The information revealed that Walgreens was the chain pharmacy most used to supply pills statewide with 504 pills prescribed while Reeves-Sain Extended Care Pharmacy in Mufreesboro was the top locally-owned distributor to patients, providing more than 45 million pills. Actavis Pharma was the largest manufacturer of these pills in Tennessee making more than 1.1 billion during the same period. While the data can track what pills were purchased, it was noted that this does not mean the pills were used by residents of that area.

TACIR wins national award for Outstanding Policy Achievement

The Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR) has been selected by the Governmental Research Association to receive their Outstanding Policy Achievement Award.

The award, which recognizes research that produces tangible, quantifiable improvements to government services or programs, is for TACIR's December 2018 report "Refining Tennessee's Criminal Statutes of Limitations."

Based on the recommendations in that report, Tennessee law was amended by Public Chapter 499, sponsored by State Rep. Bill Dunn, R-Knoxville, and Sen. Do-

lores Gresham, R-Somerville, and Public Chapter 410, sponsored by Rep. Mike Sparks, R-Smyrna, and Sen. Shane Reeves, R-Mufreesboro.

The amendment eliminated the statute of limitation on all felony child sexual abuse crimes committed against victims less than 13 years of age, and in most circumstances for those victims between 13 and 17 years of age.

The amendment fixed a drafting error that had the unintentional effect of shortening the statute of limitation for rape offenses committed against minors; and eliminated the statute of limitation on second degree murder.

Opportunity zones could bring private investment to distressed areas of TN

ZONES from Page 1
and golf courses. A lot of it comes down to the intent of the business as to what qualifies as a sin business."

Price said investments can also be made on vacant properties or land that has been vacant for a minimum of five years with no substantial improvements. Leased property can also be used as investments, but it must have been leased after Dec. 31, 2017, and the lease must be at market rate. Price said some exemptions for PILOT programs may be coming down the pipeline.

Additionally, properties that are not completely in an opportunity zone may qualify for projects so long as 50.01 percent of the project is located within the zone.

Moving forward, Price said it is important for communities to begin to develop a project pipeline, begin recruiting local investment, identify potential opportunity zone

projects, create a marketing strategy for their projects, and to develop a successful local ecosystem for investment.

Price said the state is working on a database that will allow communities to showcase their projects and connect with investors looking for projects in the state. Additionally, the state is also working to develop a playbook for communities on how to best take advantage of opportunity zones and an investment prospectus for the state to help with marketing projects.

"Use this as another tool in your economic development tool box," Price said. "This program could have a profound impact in local communities."

For more information on opportunity zones in Tennessee, visit <https://www.tn.gov/ecd/opportunity-zones.html>.

3 Tennessee cities receive national recognition for public art projects

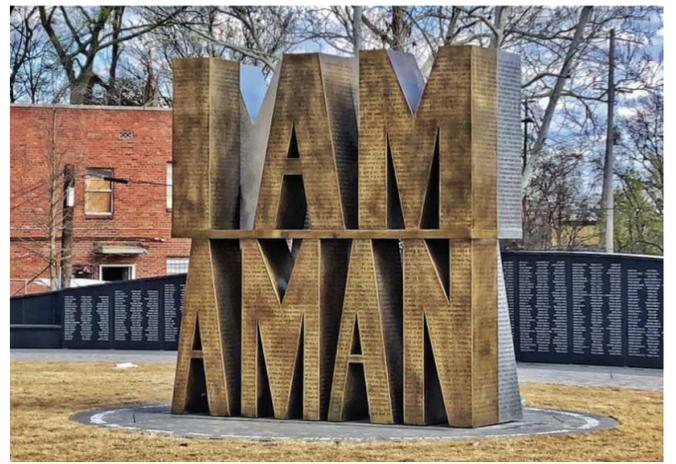
Public art projects in three Tennessee cities have been honored among the 50 best examples of public art displayed nationwide in 2018.

Two projects in Nashville, one in Memphis, and another in Chattanooga were all selected as part of Americans for the Arts Public Art Network Year in Review program. Chosen by public art experts, the roster of selected projects was unveiled at the Americans for the Arts' Annual Convention in Minneapolis. This is the 18th year that Americans for the Arts has recognized public art works

"The best of public art can challenge, delight, educate, and illuminate. Most of all, public art creates a sense of civic vitality in the cities, towns, and communities we inhabit and visit," said Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. "As these Public Art Network Year in Review selections illustrate, public art has the power to enhance our lives on a scale that little else can. I congratulate the artists and commissioning groups for these community treasures, and I look forward to honoring more great works in the years to come."

"Build Better Tables," the inaugural temporary public art exhibition from the Metro Nashville Arts Commission, was the first of the three projects honored in the city. From June to the end of August in 2018, Build Better Tables offered cooking workshops for moms, artist-led history lessons, film screenings at farmers' markets, church dinners, art activities for youth, and more.

Curated by Nicole J. Caruth, Build Better Tables featured proj-



Built to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the city sanitation workers strike, Memphis' "I Am A Man" plaza is one of four projects in three Tennessee cities to be recognized by the Arts Public Art Network Year in Review program as an outstanding public art project.

ects from nine artists and collectives, all focused around the common themes of food access, food justice, and their connection to community, housing and gentrification. The diverse group of projects included seed libraries, a community bread oven, a "food rights bike," and in-depth community conversations about how these issues impact Nashvillians.

The other public art project honored in Nashville was the Nashville International Airport's "Air/Traffic/Control," designed by Ivan Toth Depeña. The project was installed in each of the six elevator lobbies at the new Ground Transportation Center and Terminal Parking Garage.

The city of Memphis also won acclaim for its "I AM A MAN Plaza," erected to honor the 50th an-

iversary of the historic sanitation workers strike that brought Martin Luther King, Jr. to the city in 1968. Lead artist Cliff Garten's sculpture faces downtown Memphis, the direction from which most people will approach the Plaza adjoined to Clayborn Temple a National Historic Landmark.

Chattanooga's "Passageways 2.0: City Thread" was also honored. The project was born out of River City Company and the AIA Tennessee's initial 2016 alley activation program, which consisted of five small alleyways temporarily converted into pop-up art installations.

The complete presentation, which includes photos and descriptions of all 50 projects, will be available for purchase through Americans for the Arts' store.

New state health campaign to showcase faces of opioid addiction

The Tennessee Department of Health kicked off the new "Tennessee Faces of the Opioid Crisis" public education and awareness campaign July 16 at the Tennessee State Museum in Nashville.

This project will feature people from every county of Tennessee sharing personal stories of how they have been impacted by the opioid crisis. The campaign also provides resources and information on how everyone can be part of the solution to this problem.

"Our goal is to demonstrate the opioid epidemic is having an impact on people in every community and county in our state - our neighbors, friends, coworkers - and that together we can overcome this crisis," said TDH Commissioner Lisa Piercey. "We are so grateful to those sharing their stories as a way to give hope to others who may be struggling with substance abuse and connect people with resources in their communities."

Each county participant will be featured on a poster sharing his or her photo and story. In addition to on-air and digital placement of the videos, TDH will make the videos and posters available to community partners who wish to use the materials to help educate people about the impact of the opioid crisis and resources available in the community to help prevent drug abuse and misuse.

"I'm excited for this campaign to show that, while drug abuse has affected so many of our lives,



The Tennessee Department of Health is putting a face to the state's opioid epidemic, allowing those in recovery to tell their stories and encourage others to seek help.

it's not won. Glory to God for the successes and victories in my life and the lives of others" said Robbie Monahan, a pharmacist and Tennessee Faces of the Opioid Crisis participant. "I want to be an example for others to see that they too can overcome obstacles and achieve greater things."

Tennessee Faces of the Opioid Crisis includes four public service announcements which will air through cable providers and digital placements from July 17 through Sept. 29.

Visit TNFacesOfOpioids.com to read the stories shared by Tennesseans across the state and learn about community-based resources available to assist people impacted by substance abuse and misuse.

TDH will also share the stories on social media @TNDeptof-

Health with the hashtag #TNFaces or find the campaign on Instagram @TNFaces.

TDH is still seeking stories from people living or working in some Tennessee counties. Those who would like to share a story of how they have been impacted by the opioid crisis are invited to visit www.tn.gov/tnfacesofopioids/share-your-story.html and use the online form.

Tennessee Faces of the Opioid Crisis is a project funded through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Opioid Crisis Cooperative Agreement.

The mission of the Tennessee Department of Health is to protect, promote and improve the health and prosperity of people in Tennessee. Learn more about TDH at www.tn.gov/health.



Get **funding** to replace old diesel vehicles with cleaner, more cost-effective ones

Two diesel vehicle replacement funding opportunities will be available in the next six months, including funds from the VW Mitigation Trust. **Need information? We can help.** We've helped fleets in Tennessee secure over \$5 million in grant funding since 2005.

Contact funding@etcleanfuels.org or 865-974-3625 to learn more.



Tennessee Municipal League thanks 2019 Annual Conference exhibitors



A2H



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TDEC State Revolving Loan Fund



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TCRS/Retire Ready TN



Tennessee Fire Chiefs Association



Tennessee Healthworks



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Advertising: \$9.25 per column inch. No charge to TML members. Send advertising to: Carole Graves: cgraves@TML1.org.

ACCOUNTANT.

HENDERSONVILLE. The city of Hendersonville is currently accepting applications for an accountant in the finance department. Annual salary: \$47,332 or DOQ. This position could be designated as a 'Senior' Accountant depending on qualifications. Senior accountant pay begins at \$60,596 annually. This position assists in processing and managing financial information and documentation of the city's financial activities. Minimum qualifications include bachelor's degree in a course of study related to the occupational field with a minimum of 12 semester hours in accounting. Sufficient experience to understand the basic principles relevant to the major duties of the position usually associated with the completion of an apprenticeship/internship or having had a similar position for 1-2 years. Ability to be bonded. Ability to utilize basic computer applications. To apply: Go to www.hvilletn.org or come by the Personnel office at Hendersonville City Hall at 101 Maple Drive North, Hendersonville, TN 37075. Open until the position is filled. EOE

DRAINAGE ENGINEER

CLEVELAND. The city of Cleveland is accepting applications from qualified individuals for the position of staff/drainage engineer in the Development and Engineering Services Department. Qualified applicants will possess a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering or equivalent combination of training and experience. Engineer Intern (EI) Certification is preferred. Anticipated Starting Salary Range \$50,500-\$55,900. Responsibilities include collect storm drainage data and prepare drainage studies for stormwater culvert design. Investigate field drainage issues affecting property owners and assist Public Works maintenance operations with resolving drainage issues. Perform land topographic surveying and construction staking for capital improvement projects (CIP). Use computer aided design software under the charge of engineers. Candidate must have 1-year minimum experience in the design and preparation of civil engineering construction documents using AutoCAD/Civil 3D or Bentley Micro station/Bentley Open Roads. Research property owner deed information, prepare technical descriptions of easement and right of way boundaries for legal documents, assists with obtaining easements and properties for public use. Prepare plans and cost estimates for (CIP)s that include streets, storm drains, sidewalks, greenway, etc. Perform construction inspections to ensure conformance to construction plans and specifications on (CIP)s such as, storm sewer projects, street improvements projects, and TDOT locally managed projects. Coordinate Engineering Division activities with other City departments and outside agencies such as Tennessee Department of Transportation and Cleveland Utilities. Prepare special engineering studies, reports, and permitting applications. Interested applicants may apply online at the City of Cleveland's website: www.clevelandtn.gov or may submit a resume with cover letter to the City of Cleveland Human Resources Department Office, PO Box 1519, Cleveland, TN 37364-1519 or submit by email to Kimberly Spence, HR Director @ kspence@clevelandtn.gov who may be contacted at (423)472-4551 for questions. The city offers a competitive benefits package. The position will be open until filled. EOE

ENGINEERING SPECIALIST

SPRINGFIELD. Hiring Range: \$64,625 - \$73,881/YR. The city of Springfield is accepting applications for an engineering specialist with Springfield water/waste water department from July 15, 2019 until filled. Essential responsibilities include professional work in the design and maintenance of water treatment and water distribution systems and wastewater collection and wastewater treatment systems. Graduation from a four-year college with a bachelor's degree in Civil or Environmental Engineering or Engineering Technology (ABET); some practical experience in design and construction of

public water and wastewater systems; or any equivalent combination of education, experience and training which provides the required knowledge, skills and abilities. EIT Certificate required. Professional Engineering Registration in the State of Tennessee preferred. Applications may be submitted on-line at the following website: www.springfield-tn.org. Applicants who applied within the last six (6) months will be re-considered and need not re-apply. Send to City of Springfield Personnel Department, 405 North Main Street, P.O. Box 788, Springfield, TN, 3712. EOE

FIREFIGHTER/PARAMEDIC

COLLIERVILLE. The town of Collierville has an opening for a firefighter/paramedic. This position will perform entry level firefighting and advanced level pre-hospital emergency medical assistance work in combating, extinguishing, and preventing fires, and respond to medical emergencies that is designed to help the town's Fire Department respond effectively to fires, medical emergencies, natural disasters, and man-made emergency situations. Must possess high school diploma or GED with course concentration in the physical sciences or industrial arts; or any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience, which provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities for this job. Must possess and maintain Firefighter I Certification as issued by the Tennessee Commission on Firefighter Standards and Education; Firefighter II Certification preferred. Must possess and maintain paramedic license as issued by the Tennessee Department of Health and Environment. Must possess and maintain valid driver's license with appropriate endorsements as issued by the state of residency. Must successfully pass the town of Collierville pre-employment verification and the state of Tennessee paramedic requirements. Veterans must possess an 'honorable' discharge from any military service. Must establish and maintain their actual bona fide residence east of the Mississippi River within a distance no greater than 30 miles from the town's corporate limits. Must be 21 years of age at time of hire. Must attach copies of current certifications and licenses with your application. Applicants must meet 'minimum entry requirements' that are listed separately in each application packet. Valid motor vehicle operator's license (to drive Fire Apparatus) at the time of hire. Salary is \$51,923 annually with excellent benefits package. To apply for this position, you must submit a special Firefighter Paramedic Application. Firefighter Paramedic Applications are available to download at www.collierville.com or you may obtain one from our Human Resources Office located at 500 Poplar View Parkway, Collierville, TN, 38017, Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Completed applications must be submitted either by mail or in person to the above address.

HUMAN RESOURCES GENERALIST

FRANKLIN The city of Franklin is accepting applications for an HR Generalist. The position will assist in administering human resource functions including recruitment and selection, employee tracking, wellness programs, and disciplinary procedures ensuring compliance with all government requirements and regulations as well as city policies. Administers leave in accordance with FMLA, state requirements, and city policies. The required knowledge, skill, and abilities to satisfactorily perform job duties are normally acquired through obtaining a bachelor's degree (B.A. or B.S.) from a four-year college or university plus two to three years of related experience and/or training; or an equivalent combination of education and experience. PHR or SHRM-CP Certification within two years of hire. If interested, please apply at the following link: [HR Generalist Job Opening or https://wfa.kronostm.com/index.jsp?POSTING_ID=89186779506&locale=en_US&SEQ=jobDetails&applicationName=City-ofFranklinTNKTMdReqExt](https://wfa.kronostm.com/index.jsp?POSTING_ID=89186779506&locale=en_US&SEQ=jobDetails&applicationName=City-ofFranklinTNKTMdReqExt)

LIBRARY DIRECTOR

ELIZABETHTON/CARTER COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY. The city of Elizabethton is seeking a library director to

manage the Elizabethton/Carter County Public Library. This position is responsible for the management of the Elizabethton/Carter County Public Library collection and for provision of library services to patrons and community organizations. The successful applicant must possess an M.L.S. or equivalent from an ALA accredited institution with seven years experience in a public setting and three years supervisory experience or equivalent combination of education and experience. Applicants for this position must have excellent public relations, communication and organizational skills, as well as, extensive knowledge of library procedures and software. The salary range for this position is \$43,389 - \$53,110 annually plus excellent benefits. The Elizabethton/Carter County Public Library has a service population of 56,000, annual circulation of 144,000 and collection size of 75,000. You may apply online at elizabethnton.org - Job Openings or at the Human Resources Department - 136 S. Sycamore Street, Elizabethton, TN 37643. Resumes will be accepted until the position is filled. EOE

PLANNER

ARLINGTON. The town of Arlington is seeking a highly motivated individual for a full-time position at town hall. Applicants shall have excellent project management, oral and written communication skills. Applicant must have an bachelor's degree, master's degree preferred, from an accredited college or university in urban or regional planning, civil engineering, landscape architecture, or a closely related field. At least five years of public management and professional planning experience, preferably in a municipality. AICP certification is preferred. Applications should be sent to Human Resources P.O. Box 507 Arlington, TN 38002 or by email to jfussell@townofarlington.org

PLANNING DIRECTOR

SHELBYVILLE. The city of Shelbyville is accepting applications for the full-time position of planning & community development director. The planning director will be responsible for daily administration of all planning and zoning activities, including comprehensive planning, and the administration of subdivision regulations. The planning director will also implement and manage municipal projects related to the development of this growing community. The ideal candidate will have at least a bachelor's degree in urban planning or a related field (master's degree preferred), and a minimum of 3 years' city planning experience. Applications and a copy of job description may be picked up at city hall during normal business hours. Applications must be returned to City Hall Administration Office, 201 N. Spring Street no later than 4 p.m. on Aug. 9. EOE / drug free workplace. Successful applicants required to pass background check, physical and drug screen. Applications and job descriptions can be picked up at city hall or download from the city website: www.shelbyvilletn.org

POLICE OFFICER

BLUFF CITY. The city of Bluff City is hiring police officers. Benefits include medical, dental and vision insurance, TCRS retirement plan. Certified or have completed basic police training at the Police Academy. Must be able to pass a background check and psychological test. Interested, qualified individuals send resume to: City of Bluff City, P.O. Box 70, 4391 Bluff City Hwy, Bluff City, TN 37618 and/or email: Bemayor.citymanager@irenewells@gmail.com.

POLICE OFFICER AND POLICE OFFICER LATERAL ENTRY

KNOXVILLE. The city of Knoxville is currently accepting applications for Police Officer Recruit. We have opportunities for entry level officers as well as lateral entry for those currently working as POST certified law enforcement officers. Entry Salary is \$35,173 with an increase to \$37,137 upon graduation. Lateral entry officers will attend an accelerated academy and be eligible for up to an additional 12.5 percent increase upon graduation. A 7.5 percent educational incentive is also available upon graduation for officers with a bachelor's degree. Applicants must have reached their 21st birthday. Attach a copy of valid birth certificate, High school diploma or

GED to their application. Applicants must not have any background disqualifiers. Applicants are required to possess or be able to obtain a valid Tennessee driver's license. Applicant must be a U.S. Citizen, or a permanent legal resident of the U.S. who is an honorable discharged veteran of the U.S. armed forces and applies for or obtains U.S. citizenship within six years of hiring. To apply and for all other information regarding recruitment, go to: www.knoxvilletn.gov or call (865) 215-2106. This is a continuous posting announcement

POLICE OFFICER

PITTMAN CENTER. The town of Pittman Center is seeking candidates for the position of police officer. Starting salary is \$32,000 - \$40,000 DOQ. The town offers an excellent comprehensive benefit package including TCRS, the town covers 100 percent of an employee's medical, dental, and vision insurance. Applicants must be POST certified. Application packets are available at Pittman Center Townhall located at 2839 Webb Creek Road Sevierville, TN 37876 Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.; (865) 436-5499 (packets may also be emailed). Completed packets must be submitted either by mail, in person, or emailed to tkwatts@pittmancentertn.gov. Position is open until filled.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS COORDINATOR

SPRINGFIELD. The city of Springfield is accepting applications for a public affairs coordinator with the Springfield Administrative Services Department. Employee is responsible for promoting the advancement of the city of Springfield by performing professional, administrative, and clerical work in the fields of communications, economic development and public relations. Bachelor's degree in public relations, communications, or related field desired; 2-3 years of experience in public affairs/relations, media relations, or communications preferred; or a combination of education and experience equivalent to the required knowledge and abilities. Hiring range \$48,193 - \$55,099. Applications may be submitted on-line at the following website: www.springfieldtn.org. Deadline to apply is Aug. 19. City of Springfield Personnel Department, 405 North Main Street, P.O. Box 788, Springfield, TN 37172. The city of Springfield is an AA/EOE.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

HENDERSONVILLE. The city of Hendersonville is looking to hire a new public works director. Entry Level Salary: \$99,287 or higher DOQ. Internal candidate pay is based on city's promotion/demotion policy. FLSA status: Exempt. This position directs all operations of the public works, roads, and IT departments. As of July 2019, this position ultimately has roughly 40 full-time employees under their supervision between the public works, roads, and IT departments. Minimum Qualifications include bachelor's degree in a course of study related to the occupational field (master's degree preferred); 3-5+ years of related experience; possession of or ability to readily obtain a valid driver's license issued by the state of Tennessee for the type of vehicle or equipment operated; professional engineer certification/license in Tennessee required or the ability to obtain/transfer current license to Tennessee within 6 months of hire date. To apply visit <http://www.hvilletn.org/> and view the Job Openings page or come by the Personnel Department at Hendersonville City Hall located at 101 Maple Drive North in Hendersonville, TN. Be sure to read through ALL information carefully. Closing date for applications and other required materials has been extended to Friday, Aug. 9, 2019 at 4 p.m. CST. EOE.

TOWN RECORDER

ENGLEWOOD. The town of Englewood is looking for applicants to fill the position of town recorder. The position requires highly responsible administrative and supervisory work in planning and directing all financial management activities of the town. Responsible for all financial and accounting, purchasing and control to include AR, AP, payroll, taxing, and town court. Candidates must have a high school diploma. A bachelor's degree in finance, accounting, or public administration is preferred. Must be able to obtain

a CMFO certification within two years of employment. Minimum five years' experience in accounting and knowledge of GL, AR, AP, purchasing and payroll is a must. Applications available online at www.townofenglewood.com or by calling 423-887-7752. Compensation DOQ. EEOC and drug free employer.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT CHIEF OPERATOR

PORTLAND. The city of Portland is accepting applications for the position of Wastewater Treatment Plant Chief Operator until filled. The position reports to the Utilities Director and is responsible for the daily operation of the wastewater treatment plant including wastewater testing, monitoring and compliance responsibilities; maintenance of the plant; and department personal training and supervision. Competitive starting pay, depending on experience, education, and qualifications. This position is a Grade 10 on the City of Portland Pay grades and ranges (\$48,964 - \$73,446). Position is full time, with full benefit package available including vacation, sick days, paid holidays; health, dental, vision, life/AD&D, TCRS retirement and supplemental voluntary benefits. Candidate prepares a variety of standard managerial reports and special reports as required by state and federal regulations; supervises and participates in plant operations; performs the more skilled and technical work; performs laboratory tests relating to PH, dissolved oxygen, sediments, BOD, COD, ammonia, Fecal coliform and various other microscopic tests; conducts special tests and inspections requested by City management or State authorities; comprehensive knowledge of the principles, practices, methods, techniques, tools, and equipment used in wastewater treatment plant operations; and performs the public relations function including handling of complaints of customers and contractors. Required Qualifications include high school diploma/GED; 3+ years of experience in the operation of a wastewater treatment facility; 2+ years in supervision; additional formal training including state of Tennessee Grade IV; Wastewater Treatment Plant Operators license; and valid driver's license. Preferred Qualifications include bachelor's degree in chemistry, biology, sanitary and/or environmental engineering or related field as applicable to the wastewater treatment industry. An application and job description may be obtained from Portland City Hall, Monday through Friday, 8am to 4:30 pm. Completed applications and resume must be returned to City Hall Receptionist or faxed to 615-325-1481 or mailed to the address below. The position is open until filled. Portland City Hall; Attn: Human Resources; 100 South Russell Street; Portland, Tennessee, 37148. Pre-employment background screen, post-offer/pre-work drug screen and physical required. EOE.

UTILITY AND PUBLIC WORKS MANAGER

WARTRACE. The town of Wartrace is looking for a utility and public works manager to supervise the overall operations of Wartrace Waterworks and Sewer Systems and the Public Works Department. Responsible for proper operation, maintenance, reporting, collection, treatment, distribution and/or disposal of water and wastewater. Maintenance of city fleet, equipment, streets, storm water drains, city owned buildings, and parks. Supervises three employees. Prefer four or more years of experience and State of Tennessee Grade 1 Water Distribution, Grade 1 Wastewater Treatment and Grade 1 Wastewater Collection Certifications. Valid Tennessee driver's license and valid Tennessee CDL license or ability to obtain within 6 months. All licenses will be verified. Experience with Telemetry and SCADA Systems, administrative and supervisory skills, experience with operation of heavy equipment: backhoe, skid loader, etc. Knowledge of safety requirements and precautions. Finalist must pass a background check and drug test prior to employment. Work hours are Monday through Friday, 7:30 am. - 4 p.m. (subject to change). Some overtime required (on call hours), some weekends. Employment applications available online at www.townofwartrace.com or mail resume to Town of Wartrace, P.O. Box 158, Wartrace, TN 37183.



Let's Build BlueCross Healthy Places Together

The BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee Health Foundation is creating active, healthy spaces across our state that bring people and communities together. We'll reach urban and rural areas taking on projects of all sizes.

If you want to create a Healthy Place in your community, we'd like to hear from you.

We're accepting proposals the entire month of August 2019. Learn more and submit your proposal at bluecrosshealthyplaces.com.

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TN Chapter, American Planning
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TN Renewable Energy & Economic
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Having a library or cafe down the block could change your life

Living close to public amenities—from parks to grocery stores—increases trust, decreases loneliness, and restores faith in local government.

By DANIEL COX
Route Fifty

As our political discourse generates derision and dissension, our time in the virtual world crowds out our time in the actual one, and trust in our institutions and each other has plummeted, local places such as markets, libraries, and coffee shops can help.

A new study shows that living near community-oriented public and commercial spaces brings a host of social benefits such as increased trust, decreased loneliness, and stronger sense of attachment to where we live.

Americans who live in communities with a richer array of neighborhood amenities are twice as likely to talk daily with their neighbors as those whose neighborhoods have few amenities. More importantly, given widespread interest in the topic of loneliness in America, people living in amenity-rich communities are much less likely to feel isolated from others, regardless of whether they live in large cities, suburbs, or small towns.

Fifty-five percent of Americans living in low-amenity suburbs report a high degree of social isolation, while fewer than one-third of suburbanites in amenity-dense neighborhoods report feeling so isolated.

These new findings are based on a national survey that measured how closely Americans live to six different types of public and commercial spaces: grocery stores; restaurants, bars or coffee shops; gyms or fitness centers; movie theatres, bowling alleys or other entertainment venues; parks or recreation centers; and community centers or libraries. By combining these items into a single scale, we identified three distinct community types: high, moderate, and low-amenity neighborhoods.

Americans in high-amenity communities live on average within walking distance of four of the six types of neighborhood amenities. Americans in moderate-amenity communities are on average no more than a short car trip (5 to 15 minutes) away, while low-amenity residents live on average a 15 to 30 minute drive

from all six types of amenities.

We found that 23 percent of Americans live in high-amenity communities, close to half (44 percent) live in moderate-amenity communities and one-third (33 percent) live in low-amenity communities. But more notable is the effect that living near these amenities has on how we relate to our communities and to each other.

While high-amenity residents exhibit a range of more positive social behaviors and attitudes, it's also true that these communities are geographically and demographically distinct from moderate- and low-amenity communities. High-amenity neighborhoods tend to be more urban, and include a greater proportion of white non-Hispanic residents and residents with more formal years of schooling.

In order to fully capture the independent influence of neighborhood amenities, we constructed three statistical models that controlled for these important geographic and demographic differences. The results show that even after taking account of educational background, race and ethnicity, ideology, income, age, and urbanity, people who live closer to neighborhood amenities are more trusting, less socially isolated, and express greater satisfaction with their community.

For instance, residents in high-amenity urban neighborhoods are twice as likely to say people in their community are "very willing" to help their neighbors compared to urban dwellers in low-amenity areas. High-amenity suburban residents are three times as likely to say the same compared to those in low-amenity suburban areas. High-amenity urbanites and suburbanites are roughly twice as likely to say they trust their neighbors a great deal as their low-amenity counterparts. A similar pattern is evident when it comes to trusting coworkers.

Access to more community-oriented spaces is also associated with increased confidence in local government. Even though we are bitterly divided by politics and confidence in federal and state governments is in decline, people in vibrant neighborhoods have a greater level of confidence in their

local government than those living in amenity-poor places. Americans living closer to neighborhood restaurants, bars, parks and libraries are about twice as likely as those living in places where these things are largely absent to say they trust local government (39 percent vs. 22 percent). Having access to neighborhood amenities also correlates with how we think about our capacity to make a difference in politics.

Many of the things that are missing from our political and social life such as mutual concern, a sense of belonging, and helpfulness, are found in greater degrees in communities that have a sense of place and a well-rounded community.

Urbanists have consistently found that proximity to core community assets such as grocery stores raise property values. These new data show that proximity has an even wider range of benefits, such that it should increasingly play a role in policy deliberations. When Tracy Stannard and her business partner reopened the defunct Broad Branch Market in a quiet corner of northwest Washington, D.C., they were not certain how the neighborhood would respond. "We decided to stock only things we like so if we couldn't sell anything at least we could eat the food," said Stannard.

But in no time the market became a central part of community life, serving up hot foods, coffee, and ice-cream. On Thursday nights, the market hosts live music for children who are omnipresent—the local elementary school sits caddy-corner to the market.

To neighborhood residents, Broad Branch Market is much more than a place to pick up milk. And other communities need the benefits that it provides—whether they receive them from libraries or parks or grocery stores. We should factor these important findings about community design into how and where we build our schools, design our local workforce systems, and build more affordable housing. Communities that blend together a healthy mix of amenities, such as schools, community centers, and grocery stores, improve our social well-being in ways that our arguments over politics never will.

NATIONAL BRIEFS



Americans produce three times the global average of waste of any country in the world, according to a new study completed by global risk research firm Verisk Maplecroft. The company found that more than 2 billion tons of municipal solid waste are generated worldwide each year with Americans being the worst offenders. Only 16 percent of that waste is recycled and approximately 46 percent is disposed of improperly. The study found that the U.S. is the only nation where waste genera-

tion outstrips recycling. The study found that American politics and a lack of recycling infrastructure are the two biggest reasons why the U.S. outpaces other developed nations in waste generation. The recent banning of imported waste in China, Thailand, Vietnam, and Malaysia – the countries where the U.S. ships most of its waste – could lead to long-term consequences.

U.S. home sales fell more than anticipated in June as the result of a shortage of properties creating record-high prices. The

national Association of Realtors reported home sales dropped 1.7 percent nationwide to a seasonally-adjusted rate of 5.27 million units sold in June. Home sales have dropped despite the fact that mortgage rates are cheaper and the U.S. is seeing some of its lowest unemployment rates in 50 years. Officials said the rise on cost of land, building materials, and labor costs are contributing to the decline in home sales. Even existing home sales – traditionally the strongest market – have declined 2.2 percent over the past year.



Aug 23-24: Johnson City Meet the Mountains Festival
Outdoor enthusiasts can enjoy the numerous activities planned to help residents navigate the Northeast Tennessee's vast natural landscape. Activities include kayaking, paddle boarding, fly fishing, and mountain bike riding. Visit <https://www.mtm-fest.com/> for more information.

Aug. 24: Shelbyville MaupinFest
MaupinFest is a festival celebrating old-time dance and music honoring Thomas Maupin, National Endowment for the Arts National Heritage Fellow. The event will feature old-time workshops, buck dancing competitions, instrumental contests, performances, presentations, and a late night square dance. For more information, visit <https://sites.google.com/site/maupinfest/home>.

Aug. 29-Sept. 1: Cookeville Muddy Roots Music Fest 2019
Three days of music, camping, and vendors bringing together unique acts ranging from hardcore punk to hillbilly to classic country to blues and singer/songwriter genres, this festival aims to showcase the musical roots of Tennessee. For more information, visit http://muddyrootsrecords.com/mr_events/mr_musicfest/index.php

Sept. 2: Harrogate Annual Labor Day Celebration
The city of Harrogate will sponsor its free annual Labor day celebration featuring live music and entertainment, craft vendors, food vendors, kiddie rids, and inflatables. Bring a lawn chair to Harrogate City Park to enjoy the festivities, beginning at 3 p.m. and lasting until a fireworks display at 9 p.m. For more information, call 423-869-0211, or visit our website at www.harrogate-tn.com



Aug. 21-23, 2019 Public Entity Partners Fourth Annual Risk & Insurance Symposium
Franklin Marriott Cool Springs
This free, three-day event is open to all members and offers an exciting program on topics including drug and alcohol testing, the Open Records Act, ADA, internal investigations, cyber security, active shooter preparedness, OSHA recordkeeping, officer-involved shootings, and enterprise risk management in action. For more info, visit www.pepartners.org.

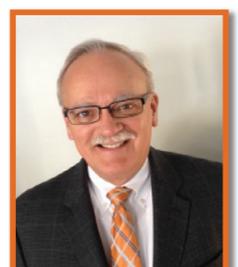
Oct. 20-23, 2019 ICMA 105th Annual Conference
Nashville Music City Center
The ICMA Annual Conference offers educational, information-sharing and networking tools to ensure professionals of all backgrounds and career stages are plugged into the most innovative ideas and practical strategies needed to manage the challenges facing local governments. For more information, visit icma.org.

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Ed Stewart, ChFC, CLU, CF
Financial Advisor

Under Hensley's leadership Erwin finds a new niche

By KATE COIL

TML Communications Specialist

After moving to Erwin at the age of five, Mayor Doris Hensley has spent nearly all of her life in the town nestled among the natural beauty of the Cherokee National Forest and Appalachian Mountains.

In addition to living in Erwin for most of her life, Hensley has spent a great deal of time working for the municipality as well. She spent 30 years as an administrative assistant and town recorder with Erwin before her initial retirement, then taking up jobs as a part-time consultant for UT-MTAS and as executive director of the Unicoi County Chamber of Commerce.

In 2015, Hensley was drawn into a different area of public service when she ran and was elected mayor of her hometown. That same year, Erwin faced one of its biggest challenges when the closure of the CSX Railyard and another major company in the town led to the loss of nearly 550 jobs in the community of only around 6,000 residents.

Erwin's response to the crisis under Hensley's leadership has resulted in a revitalization of the community, allowing Erwin to highlight its history in a positive light and find new ways of branding itself through outdoors tourism, festivals, farmers markets, and downtown renovation and rejuvenation.

The town has seen the development of new downtown businesses and residences, the redevelopment of historical buildings into homes and multi-use facilities, the location of a new 40,000-square-foot county hospital facility, improvements to the local industrial park, and the opening of new outdoor tourism-based businesses like kayak manufacturer Pyranha.

Erwin's rise has even caught national attention with the town's success stories being profiled by *Governing* magazine and *National Public Radio*.

TT&C: You have held various positions with the town of Erwin in the past. What first brought you work for the city?

Doris Hensley: I grew up here in Erwin and have lived here for the last 65 years. I was actually born across the mountain in North Carolina, and we came to Tennessee when I was five. I went to school in Erwin and graduated college from ETSU. I started my career in banking. After two years working in banking, I was hired by the town of Erwin as an administrative assistant. The mayor at the time came into the local bank where I was working and said they were looking for an administrative assistant to do bookkeeping. At the time, I was doing bookkeeping at the bank. On a whim, I put in an application and two days later I was given the call that I had been selected for the position.

I came to the town of Erwin and I loved it. It's just one big happy family. I knew most of the people in town from working with them at the bank, but after working with them as a town employee, they became like family to me.

I served as the administrative assistant for 19 years. I was then promoted to city recorder and served in that position for 11 years. I retired after 30 years. After my retirement, I did some part-time consulting work for MTAS and did some part-time economic development recruitment for Unicoi County.

TT&C: What made you decide to run for mayor? Was there a particular issue or concern that prompted you to run?

D.H.: During my stint with MTAS, I was able to go to other towns, to see what was working in those towns and what problems they were having. I was then able to bring that back to the town of Erwin. That and my 30 years' experience with the town made me feel I was better suited as the mayor of the town. Hopefully as mayor I have been able to improve the quality of life that our citizens in Erwin now enjoy.

I think having worked for the town gave me an advantage. I was the first person taxpayers saw when they came into the office. I got to communicate with them, to spend some time with them. I knew what they wanted and I felt I knew what they deserved. With that, I came in as mayor and was able to incorporate what I wanted to see for the town and what I felt the people would like to see for the town.

TT&C: The closing of CSX in 2015 and the ripple effect it had on the community could have easily led to major economic and community issues for Erwin, but instead it seems to have brought the community closer together. How did Erwin's response to these events strengthen the community?

D.H.: The railroad was such a big part of our town and really the region. We lost about 400 jobs in Erwin. With the help of the state and the region, everybody pulled together. They saw we were in dire straits. I always say we like to whine for a couple days and then we got down to business and decided we had to help ourselves.

The state was great in stepping up. They were in the office the next morning wanting to know how they could help. With everyone working together, the town pulling together we were able to survive. We are also in the middle of renovating our downtown. The streets were torn up and the businesses were already hurting. With the help of the chamber of commerce and the downtown merchants association, we made a plan to get people downtown. We did



TV ads and specials. We did a contest to get people to the downtown area.

TT&C: How did RISE Erwin come about? What have been the results of this initiative?

D.H.: During all of this, we reached out to a group of young professionals. We sat down with them and discussed what they would like to see Erwin become, what direction they wanted Erwin to go in so that they could stay here, raise their families, and work and play here. With their guidance, their advice, their planning, and their energy, we were able to set their vision of what they wanted Erwin to become in motion. We are still working on that plan and working to reach those goals.

One of the recommendations of the RISE group was some changes to downtown. We learned most of the Millennials today don't want houses with big yards. They would rather have condos or apartments downtown that are close to the schools, the businesses, their places of work, and churches. We changed our ordinances to allow residential use in our downtown district. We have living space available upstairs in many of our downtown businesses.

They also said they liked a quality of life where after they came home from work they could enjoy a craft beer or just relax with friends, so we passed an ordinance that allowed package stores. That had to go through a referendum, and that passed with about 72 percent of the votes. It was obvious people were ready for the liquor-by-the-drink.

Six years ago you could come downtown and you might see two or three cars at the post office or the courthouse. You come downtown now and the streets are lined with cars at any time. You come downtown and drive along Main Street, you see people walking on the sidewalks and people in the stores. Some of them are living upstairs and others are doing business downstairs. It's very refreshing to see so much happening in our downtown.

TT&C: What advice would you give to other city leaders who want to get younger members of the community involved in government and leadership? What can officials do to better cultivate young leaders?

D.H.: One thing that I have done is meet with the high school student council at least twice a year. I tell them what is going on in the community. I ask their advice and ask them what they would like to see happen in Erwin. As long as you do one thing or help them reach one of the goals they suggest, it helps them feel that their city leaders do listen and makes them more interested in what we are doing.

We unfortunately had two vacancies on our board of mayor and aldermen. When there are vacancies, I am allowed to appoint someone to fill the remainder of the term. I decided to appoint some younger folks to those positions. We have a 26-year-old and a 30-year-old on the board who are both en-

trepreneurs in the downtown. We have been getting young people involved by asking their advice, putting them on committees, letting them help promote our town, and let them do some of our projects. Most of the projects we have done have been with volunteers, and we use all the volunteers we can get.

TT&C: How has this revitalization helped Erwin find its identity as a community?

D.H.: We are still in the process of doing that. Every discussion that we have, every inventory we have taken of our strengths comes back to our natural beauty. We are heading more toward tourism, but we want some substantial and sustainable tourism. We are working toward more downtown businesses and restaurants. Instead of getting the big box businesses, we want to keep our downtown unique to Erwin. We want to grow, but we don't want to lose our down home flavor. We want to keep our character.

We are beginning to tell our stories, and we have some very interesting stories to tell. One of those is the Erwin Nine. We had nine high school classmates that went off to World War II in different military sections. They all ended up at the same time in the same prison camp in Germany. All nine of them were able to return home to Erwin after the war. The Erwin Nine, just like so many things about Erwin and Unicoi County, we have just kept a secret among us. Now we are trying to get that story out.

TT&C: City officials have been willing to partner with groups ranging from concerned citizens to USDA and TVA on various projects. How have these partnerships benefited the town?

D.H.: USDA was so helpful to our revitalization through grants and low-interest loans. We've also partnered with our local banks to offer low-interest loans to businesses downtown who want to expand or do some renovations to the business. The [First Tennessee] Development District with their revolving loan fund has helped some of our businesses grow and expand. The state has taken us from a Tier 3 to a Tier 4, which has decreased the matching portion of our grants. That has helped tremendously. We have been working with a regional economic development project. Johnson City, Washington County, Sullivan County, and Carter County have come together to help us in our recruitment efforts. Everyone from the local to the regional to the state level has been a tremendous help in our success.

TT&C: Erwin has undergone a project to expand fiber optic Internet service in the area. How will this benefit the community moving forward?

D.H.: We already have free wifi in town. Anyone can come into town and get free wifi whether they are sitting in a café or the taproom or on a park bench. There are only

Above: Hensley and other local officials cut the ribbon on the town's new Dunkin' Donuts store. After the closure of two of the town's biggest employers during her first year as mayor in 2015, Doris Hensley helped get Erwin back on track by reaching out to young people for ways to rejuvenate the local economy. The result has been the opening of several new businesses in Erwin, including several locally-owned and operated businesses in downtown.

Left: Mayor Doris Hensley receives a hug from the late George Hatcher, one of the members of the Erwin Nine, after unveiling new flags honoring the hometown heroes. The flags are displayed around Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and the Fourth of July to help spread the story of nine local World War II soldiers.

a few areas of the county that don't have the service. We have just gotten a grant to extend it into the north end and French Broad is working to install it in the south end. By the end of the year, we will have wifi and fiber optic Internet service all throughout Unicoi County. We think this is going to be a good tool for recruiting industry.

TT&C: Erwin is surrounded by the Cherokee National Forest. While this land is a natural asset, what challenges does it present to growth and development for the town? How are those challenges managed?

D.H.: As far as the big industries, we don't have that much property. We can't put together a 200-acre industrial site. About the biggest one we have is an 18-acre site we are getting pad ready. Hopefully that will be finished by the end of this month. We are doing serious recruitment for an industry, so if we can get that one industry with 100 or 200 employees, we will be very happy. We are also focused on building on our retail base and or tourism base.

TT&C: Is there anything you learned about Erwin in this process that you didn't know before?

D.H.: I have learned that people are eager to help; you just have to ask them. They like to be involved, and when they are involved, you are more united as a community. Listening to folks, just listening, is important. A lot of people say all you hear at city hall are complaints. I find that 99 percent of the complaints are just someone who wants to be listened to. If you can help them it's great; if you can't help them and explain the reason to them, they will understand. It helps everyone get along better.

The best part of my job is when I get to help people. I hear people all the time say 'oh I couldn't be a politician.' Well, I don't think of myself as a politician. I think of myself as a public servant. I am here to serve the people. One of the things that I say to myself every morning is that if I can make one person happy, I have been a success during that day. Whether it's giving somebody a hug or saying hello or making them smile, I think it improves someone's day and that is my goal.

I think the people in Erwin are proud of their town and their properties. They keep their properties neat and clean. I think we're one of the neatest towns in Tennessee. You drive through town and just see how much pride people take in the area.

TT&C: What are Erwin's next steps forward as a community? What are your hopes for Erwin's future?

D.H.: We still have a lot more renovations to do. We want to extend them to the north and south ends of our town. Right now the renovations have been limited to the downtown area. We have some sidewalks we want to improve. We are always recruiting businesses. We would like to see some hotels and more restaurants.

I want Erwin to be a place where young people come back, where they return to their hometown to raise a family. I want good-paying jobs so our young people won't have to leave to find a job and instead will stay here to raise their families.