

More cuts expected due to sluggish revenues

BY CAROLE GRAVES
TML Communications Director

Revenues collections have gone from bad to worse with some of Tennessee's top budget experts predicting that it will be years before the state digs its way back to current operation levels.

"After we complete this budget year, state government is going to be smaller and look very different than it does today," said Jim White, executive director of the legislature's Fiscal Review Committee.

White, along with Finance Commissioner Dave Goetz and David Thurman with the Office of Legislative Budget Analysis, briefed lawmakers on the state's dire financial situation in a special meeting held earlier this month called by House Speaker Kent Williams.

Even with conservative revenue projections adopted for the current 2009-10 fiscal year budget (less than 1 percent growth), collections continue to under perform with the first two months already

reporting \$70 million below estimates. Goetz told lawmakers that if the trend continues, it would mean \$350 million in additional cuts. That's on top of the \$753 million already cut from the budget last spring. "We must continue to closely monitor state expenditures, in order to keep the budget in balance," said Goetz.

Beginning in November 2008, sales tax collections experienced double-digit declines. Faced with a \$1.2 billion shortfall for FY 09-10, the legislature cut \$753 in recurring expenditures from the budget; used funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to spread some of the reductions over a three-year period; and took about \$200 million from the rainy day fund. Included in the cuts were 1,372 employee positions to be eliminated over the next two years and each agency was required to save some \$157 million.

"These are numbers that state agencies will have to make happen and not just normal over ap-
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State's public infrastructure needs top \$34.2 billion

According to a new report released by the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR), Tennessee needs at least \$34.2 billion of public infrastructure improvements to be in some stage of development during the five-year period of 2007-2012.

While this report was being produced, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 created a number of stimulus funding programs for public infrastructure. Estimates from the Office of the Tennessee Recovery Act Management put Tennessee's share of funds for infrastructure at around \$686 million. These programs were a response to continued concerns about funding infrastructure needs and are intended to help preserve and create jobs and promote economic recovery. Infrastructure investment offers big returns.

Mark Zandi, chief economist for Moody's Economy.com, estimated in a January 2009 report that a dollar spent on public infrastructure boosts gross domestic product (GDP) \$1.59.

Tennessee was uniquely poised to identify 'shovel ready' projects. TACIR's public infrastructure needs inventory was used by local officials to help identify projects that might qualify for stimulus funds and to show lawmakers what the need is in Tennessee. Sen. Mark Norris, TACIR's chairman, had this to say about stimulus funding: "As great as the influx of stimulus dollars is, when you look at the total need, it is still only a fraction of what the state needs."

The current report, which is

based on information provided by state and local officials, shows an increase in needs of \$20.5 billion since the 1999 report was published and an increase of about \$5.9 billion (20.7 percent) from the September 2007 report. These needs fall into six general categories:

- Transportation and Utilities: \$17.7 billion
- Education: \$6.8 billion
- Health, Safety, and Welfare: \$6.8 billion
- Recreation and Culture: \$1.8 billion
- Economic Development: \$617 million
- General Government: \$563 million

Dr. Harry Green, TACIR's executive director, notes that "TACIR now has the most comprehensive inventory of infrastructure needs in the project's 11-year history."

The largest increase is in the Transportation and Utilities category, which remains the single largest overall. This category increased from \$14.6 billion to \$17.7 billion. Transportation needs alone represent \$17.1 billion (50 percent) of the total infrastructure needs. Part of this increase results from including nearly \$660 million in bridge improvements that were not captured in previous inventories. Most of the rest of the increase from the previous inventory was in non K-12 education, needs at the state's colleges and universities, with an increase of \$963 million; law enforcement, an increase of \$786 million; and water and wastewater, an increase of \$656 million.

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Funding Board approves municipal financing reforms

The Tennessee State Funding Board has approved a sweeping set of changes implementing enhanced requirements to the guidelines that govern cities and counties that propose to enter into interest rate swaps and other exotic financial transactions.

The revised guidelines are aimed at eliminating potential conflicts of interest by prohibiting individuals or companies from representing more than one side in derivative transactions. These revisions require greater transparency in the way information is reported and communicated about the transactions and require comprehensive disclosure of fees paid.

Cities and counties will have to demonstrate that they employ people with sufficient expertise to understand these complex transactions, including a chief financial officer and an accountant. Cities and counties must also meet minimum out-

standing debt requirements and have an audit committee and a capital improvement plan.

Communities that do not meet all the requirements laid out in the guidelines have the option of appearing before state Comptroller Justin P. Wilson or his staff to explain that they fully understand all the risks involved and can comply with their debt and derivative management policy and the ongoing risk monitoring and reporting requirements.

"The goal here is not to prohibit cities and counties from entering into swaps, forward purchase agreements or similar transactions," Comptroller Wilson said. "Our goal is to make sure officials in these cities and counties really understand what they're doing. And the taxpayers who live in these cities and counties should know what risks are being undertaken and what fees are
See FUNDING on Page 6

Traffic camera use under review

BY CAROLE GRAVES

Municipalities currently utilizing traffic cameras were asked to testify before the House Transportation Committee to determine whether or not state laws should be revised to put more restrictions on photo enforcement.

"I foresee that a bill is coming next legislative session, asking us to regulate it all across the state," said Rep. Ben West.

Chattanooga, Knoxville, and Gallatin Police Departments all provided testimony on how the automated technology has proven to be an effective tool in reducing accidents, injuries, and fatal intersection crashes.

"It saves lives," said John Van Winkle, Chattanooga traffic engineer.

Van Winkle testified that the core purpose of the program is to modify bad driver behavior through stricter enforcement.

Chattanooga is the first city to use cameras for speed enforcement. In June 2007, more than 1,875 citations were issued on a dangerous one-mile stretch, known as the Hixson Pike "S" curves, where in 2002 there were four fatalities in one of the curves. By June 2009, citations had dropped to 565. The average speed of vehicles had also gone down by an average of 6 mph.

"Our goal is that we get to a point where we are issuing zero citations and zero fines because we did our job and enforced the law," said Chattanooga Police Chief Freeman Cooper.

The cameras also led to the arrest of a driver involved in drag racing along those curves that caused a fatal accident.

Rep. Vince Dean, vice chairman of the Transportation Committee and a retired Chattanooga policeman, was on duty when a driver was clocked speeding 103 mph throughout the S Curves. He com-



Photo By Victoria South

Lt. David Roddy testifies before the House Transportation Committee flanked by John Van Winkle, Chattanooga traffic engineer (left), and Police Chief Freeman Cooper.

mended the city for installing the automotive cameras.

"Police officers can't be there round the clock," said Dean. "I'm glad we have the technology to be there 24 hours a day."

Van Winkle assured the legislators that the use of traffic cameras was not about "a money grab" to balance the city's budget. "That is not our intent," he said. "We are in it to change driver behavior."

Van Winkle said that enforcement locations are established by using accident records, citizen input, and speed studies to verify speeding problems. Revenues from the program go to administrative cost and into safety efforts.

Knoxville has used traffic light cameras for four years at 15 of the city's busiest intersections. During that time, accidents have continued to decline and drivers are running red lights at a lower rate, said Police Capt. Gordon Catlett, who oversees Knoxville's red light camera system.

Since 2006, Catlett said that



Chattanooga uses cameras for speed enforcement on a dangerous one-mile stretch.

Knoxville's red light camera system has brought in more than \$2 million in fines to the city's general fund.

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Nashville opens state's first green street

BY VICTORIA SOUTH
TML Communications Coordinator

Some pathways are destined for greatness and Nashville's Deaderick Street, a former downtown alley and bus stop, has reached that notoriety by becoming the state's first green street. In the shadow of Legislative Plaza, Nashville Mayor Karl Dean and other metro officials celebrated the \$5 million transformation with a music-filled ribbon cutting.

"A year ago, we opened Music City Central, our new downtown transit station, just a block from here. It was a big step forward for mass transit in our city, but the move also gave us an opportunity to transform Deaderick Street from an outdated transit mall to a pedestrian friendly boulevard that connects our public square with Legislative Plaza," announced Dean. "I'm extremely pleased to say that Deaderick Street is the first certified green street in the state of Tennessee."

Designed by Kim Hawkins of Hawkins Partners and administered by the Nashville Public Works Department, construction on the streetscape improvement project began October 2008 with the removal of outdated MTA bus shelters and rows of distressed and dying trees.

The new Deaderick Street features colorful hanging flower baskets, a tree-lined landscaped median, new LED street and pedestrian lights that can be programmed to change colors, solar powered parking meters, recycle bins and other sustainable features. Pervious concrete sidewalks, new green spaces, along with planting beds, and an irrigation system and bioswales, or rain gardens capture, filter and infiltrate rainwater along the street. One hundred and two new shade trees, perennials and other plants have been added to reduce ground temperatures.

"Each feature will divert about 1.2 million gallons of storm water from the Cumberland River each



Mayor Karl Dean (center) cuts the green ribbon on Deaderick Street alongside (left to right) Jim Snyder with Metro Public Works, Kathleen O'Brien with TPAC, Kim Hawkins with Hawkins Partners, District 6 Councilman Mike Jameson, and TDOT Commissioner Gerald Nicely.

year," Dean said.

Information kiosks at various points along the way fully describe the sustainable aspects of the project as well as the history and evolution of Deaderick Street beginning when the property was first donated to the city by George Deaderick, a contemporary of Andrew Jackson.

According to an article by Lara Prickett, published by the Association of American Planners (AICP) "Green Streets and Parking Lots: Coming Soon to Cities Near You," green street projects in the Pacific Northwest have demonstrated how landscaped-based stormwater treatments designed to improve streetscape aesthetics and neighborhood livability, actually contributes to traffic calming and allows for alternative transportation options. Enhancing pedestrian environment and deepening residents' sense of connection with the natural environment, the improvements also boost property values.

Dean reinforced this concept by noting that Deaderick's facelift is only phase I of the project. The long term redevelopment plan includes improved building store fronts and



Solar powered parking meters are just one of the sustainable features of the new Deaderick Street in downtown Nashville.

more commercial retail activity.

"Before I stop being mayor, I want to sit at an outdoor café on Deaderick Street," Dean said.

NEWS
ACROSS
TENNESSEE



BY TML STAFF REPORTS

ATHENS

Athens opened its first environmentally-friendly parking lot during a ribbon-cutting ceremony. The new lot is located next to the Athens-McMinn Family YMCA building and looks more like a park than a parking lot. Cars entering the lot will drive on Geoblock, a network of high-grade plastic grates with grass sewn in between the openings, and park in spaces made of porous concrete. A rain garden sits in the middle of the lot. The purpose behind the design is to prevent groundwater runoff associated with asphalt that can lead to erosion and damage to the local watershed. The \$163,000 project was done in partnership with the YMCA, which contributed \$80,000. The remainder of the funds came from grants provided by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, the Tennessee Valley Authority and the Tennessee Stormwater Association; and \$45,000 in additional costs and man-hours from the city.

CHATTANOOGA

The Chattanooga Parks and Recreation Department has won three of the Tennessee Recreation and Parks Association’s highest honors at this year’s state convention held recently in Kingsport. The city received the state’s “4-Star Award for Best New Park and Recreation Facility” for the Summit of Softball Complex and the “4-Star Award for Best Recreation Program in the State” for the city’s Outdoor Chattanooga Program.

CLARKSVILLE

CNNMoney.com recently ranked Clarksville as the fourth best place to launch a business among all midsized cities in America. Clarksville was the only Tennessee city to appear on CNNMoney.com’s list of 50 best places for businesses. The list measures various small business indicators and is produced by CNN’s *Fortune Small Business* magazine. Clarksville also made CNN’s top 25 list of U.S. cities with the fastest local GDP (gross domestic product) for the five-year “boom” period from 2001 to 2006. GDP is a measure of economic health based on the total expenditure for final goods and services produced.

COLLIERVILLE

A free Web-based service — Nixle.com allows police to target citizens, business owners, the media and other subscribers with crime and traffic alerts and information with text messages to cell phones and the Internet. The city is among the first police departments in Tennessee and the Mid-South to use the service. Police can send alerts geographically, to particular neighborhoods, or to all of those subscribing to the service. Subscribers will be able to find more details about alerts, ranging from crimes to traffic problems and other police information. Unlike other social networking sites on the Web where messages can be generated by anyone, Nixle is secure and ensures that police agencies are sending the messages

COVINGTON

Unilever announced it will expand

its Slim-Fast plant in Covington to include Breyers ice cream, Klondike, and other frozen products. The \$100 million expansion will add 275 jobs. The plant currently employs 163 people.

DANDRIDGE

State and local officials and members of the business community in Jefferson County held a ribbon cutting to mark the opening of a 95,000-square-foot, \$6 to \$8 million furniture manufacturing plant, BJS North America East on Industrial Park Road. The plant will produce tables, headboards, chests, daybeds and other furniture items.

ELIZABETHTON

The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency is in the final steps of purchasing 24.9-acres of land from the city for a new fish hatchery, but it could be as long as five more years before the \$16.8 million project becomes a reality. The agreed-upon price for the property in the Cherokee Industrial Park is \$198,000. “I am afraid the economy will have an impact,” said John Gregory, manager of TWRA Region IV. He said the agency is seeking funding from federal and non profit organizations in addition to state revenue and may end up building the hatchery in phases. That could mean building the trout hatchery first and then adding the other features later.



State, local and industry officials break ground for the new \$12 million Permobil, Inc. Operations Center in Lebanon located in Park 840.

FAYETTEVILLE

Fayetteville Public Utilities was recently featured in the Fall 2009 issue of *Energy Today* highlighting how the utility is keeping communication channels open with employees and it’s customers to provide quality service to the city and Lincoln County. The article details the utility’s customer assistance programs, customer account management, work plans for each department and its consumer communication outlets. The city consolidated its electric, gas, and water utilities in 2002, creating a unified and more efficient administration division to oversee all three. Safety and emergency cross-training for all personnel allows employees to cover shifts in any department if the need arises. The organizations’ web site, Channel 6 local access cable TV broadcasts, monthly radio program, newspaper articles and *The Tennessee Magazine* work together to keep utility customers informed about rates, billing changes, construction work plans, conservation and youth programs. The organization recently installed remote-read ERT meters

for its water/wastewater system and is moving into phase II of its water upgrade plan, which includes a \$4 million investment in its treatment plant.

FRANKLIN

The American Planning Association

(APA) announced that the Downtown Franklin Historic District has been designated one of 10 Great Neighborhoods for 2009 by APA’s *Great Places in America* program. APA Great Places exemplify exceptional character and highlight the role planners and planning play in creating communities of lasting value. Franklin is the first city in Tennessee to be selected for a *Great Places in America* designation. The APA singled out the Downtown Franklin Historic District not only because of the neighborhood’s outstanding historic character and architecture, but for the planning and meaningful protection measures the city has adopted to ensure Franklin’s unique sense of place is not compromised by future growth and development. Through *Great Places in America*, APA recognizes unique and authentic characteristics found in three essential components of all communities — streets, neighborhoods, and public spaces.

FRANKLIN

Recently, the city installed “Entering the Battlefield of Franklin” signage. The new signage will identify the boundaries for the historic Battle of Franklin. Thousands of tourists travel to Franklin every year to visit the Carter House, Carnton Mansion, and other sites related to the Battle of Franklin. The new signs will give visitors a better indication of the boundaries of the entire battlefield area, including troop staging areas, battery positions, rear field hospitals, and combat areas. Installed by the city’s Streets Department, the signs were made possible by donations from private citi-

zens. The signs have a brown background with white lettering, which is the universal coloring for signage indicating historic districts.

GATLINBURG

The Cades Cove Loop Road in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park will be closed March 1 through May 21 for a complete makeover. In addition to resurfacing the 11-mile loop, crews will pave the dirt pull-offs that already are in use but have eroded. The road will remain single-lane and one-way, in keeping with its current specifications. Park officials hope visitors will take advantage of the road closure by visiting other scenic destinations such as Elkmont and Tremont that receive light use compared to Cades Cove. A number of road construction projects will be under way in the Smokies in 2010 as the park takes advantage of \$65 million it received in federal stimulus money earlier this year.

KINGSPORT

The city, in the upcoming 12 months, is planning a \$14 million road improvement blitz with projects ranging from resurfacing to reconstruction to completely new routings. With federal and state approval awarded, Kingsport is the first city in Tennessee authorized to move ahead with letting \$2.2 million in bids under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Due to mandates for “shovel-ready” projects, all of this work will fall into



Receiving the “4-Star Award for” Best Recreation Program in the State” for the city’s Outdoor Chattanooga Program are: Larry Zehnder, Phillip Pugliese, Phillip Grymes, Tiffany Herron, Ruthie Thompson, Marcus Hulsey and Minya James.

the resurfacing category, with work expected to begin this fall or early next year.

LEBANON

Permobil, Inc., an international company that is the world’s leading manufacturer of custom-made powered wheelchairs, will build its new \$12 million North American Operations Center in Lebanon on a 17-acre site located in Park 840. Permobil’s new 120,000 square foot building will be the company’s second largest and most technically-advanced manufacturing facility. It will include more than 80,000 square feet of manufacturing space and nearly 40,000 square feet of corporate office space. Construction of the new building will begin in late October 2009 and is slated for completion in summer 2010.

MEMPHIS

The National Civil Rights Museum is moving forward to enhance or replace parts of the museum that have remained much the same since it opened in 1991. Museum president Beverly Robertson said the overdue changes could take up to four years to complete at a cost of \$10 to \$15 million. We need more seating in the public galleries, the auditorium, and some of the history elements need to encompass technology,” she said. Design firm proposals to enlarge the museum’s 100-seat auditorium include building a mezzanine-level balcony above the existing auditorium to help accommodate large audiences, especially during King’s birthday and death anniversaries. Motel rooms in the old Lorraine Motel, now used largely for storage, might be opened for use as classroom-type spaces to reach out to young audiences.

MEMPHIS

GreenTech Automotive, a Chinese hybrid car manufacturer that plans to build a \$1 billion plant in Tunica



PEOPLE



BY TML STAFF REPORTS

Memphis elected A C Wharton recently as their new mayor.

Wharton, 65, who grew up in Lebanon, is currently



A.C. Wharton

mayor of Shelby County, but expects to resign as county mayor when he is sworn in on Oct. 26. Wharton also has served as Shelby County’s public defender as well as a past chairman of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission.

Betsy Rogers Hawkins of Gallatin has been appointed by Gov. Phil Bredesen to serve on the board of directors of the Regional Transpor-

tation Authority. Hawkins will serve a five-year term on the Board, which comprises city and county mayors and community leaders in a nine-county area in the greater Nashville region. Hawkins is a graduate of Centre College in Danville, Ky., where she earned a degree in English and secondary education.

Sarah Lingo has been named director of the Office of Communications for the Tenn. Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities in Gov. Bredesen’s administration. As communications director, she will oversee the daily operation of the support staff responsible for publication development and production, answering public information requests and managing the department’s Web site. She also will serve as public information officer for the department.

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HAUNTED CITIES IN TENNESSEE



BY VICTORIA SOUTH
TML Communications Coordinator

Southern hospitality extends well beyond the grave in Tennessee for those who find tales of the unexpected the perfect Halloween treat. Rich in historic sites and colorful ancestry, cities across the state have no shortage of “haunted” buildings, legends and ghost stories along with guided tours and activities to explore them.

“We are completely booked for the month of October,” confirmed Tara Danley, tour guide and education director at Carnton Plantation in Franklin, reportedly “the most haunted building in Tennessee.”

To this day, the blood stained floors mark the tragedy of the brutal Battle of Franklin, Nov. 30, 1864, where nearly 10,000 American soldiers were killed, wounded or went missing. When the five-hours of fighting ended, the nearby home of John and Carrie McGavock became a makeshift Confederate field hospital for hundreds of wounded and dying men. In 1866, the McGavocks donated two acres surrounding the

house, they heard the sound of a fiddle playing. They peered into the parlor window and saw a lone confederate soldier sitting at the fireplace playing a mournful tune. At the time, the family thought perhaps he was the caretaker. As they continued to watch, the soldier stopped playing, got up and slowly walked to another room. The family went to the front door again, peered inside and knocked, but everything was dark and locked up for the night. No other cars were in the driveway, including the director’s, who had gone home. I can vouch that Carnton did not have a caretaker.”

“The Fiddler in the Parlor” is now part of Danley’s story line up during Carnton’s candlelight tours.

Red Boiling Springs

The Thomas House Bed & Breakfast is a mysterious hideaway resting high atop a gently rolling hillside on the outer edge of Red Boiling Springs’ city limits. One of the city’s oldest and most beautiful landmarks, it has been a vital part of the community since 1890.

Recently, A&E Network’s na-

claimed he saw a little girl in his room doubled over in pain. Although he was frightened, he told the child not to fear and that he wanted to help her. When he reached out his hand, he said she reached out to him as well, but before their hands could touch she vanished into thin air.

“The only stories featured are those that can be physically verified,” said Cole. “Research confirms that there was a little girl named Sarah who lived here and that she died of a stomach ailment.”

The Thomas House is offering a dinner theatre production, “Haunted Hotel,” Oct. 30 and 31 that is based upon the sightings reported by their guests. Patrons will be led through the house by candlelight where actors will recreate scenes from the events. Reservations can be made at www.thomashouse@nctc.com

“We feel very safe,” adds Cole. Most of our reports are about ghosts causing mischief. The visiting psychics say that the ghosts feel very protective of our family. They’re just people who checked in and refuse to check out.”

Mt. Olivet Confederate Cemetery Walking Tour

Many students and faculty claim to have seen the ghostly figure of an antebellum era woman resembling Adelecia Acklen walking the halls or staring out the window of Belmont Mansion at night. Belmont University, former home to Acklen, was built by her wealthy second husband, Colonel Joseph Acklen. Ironically, the Brentwood woman who has portrayed Adelicia for 16 years as part of the Annual Mount Olivet

Cemetery Illuminated Walking Tour in Nashville has never encountered Adelicia personally. Mount Olivet, established in 1856, serves as the final resting place for many of Middle Tennessee’s political and business leaders, including several former governors, U.S. Senators, and U.S. Congressional Representatives.

“I usually go in (the crypt) and talk to her and I have a feeling we are welcome,” said Suzanne Burns who plays the role opposite Wendell Edison, who portrays Colonel Acklen.

The walls of the crypt contain 13 family members, according to Burns, including the remains of Adelicia and two of her three husbands, along with her six children, who died tragically of diseases such as scarlet fever. Adelicia’s favorite angel sculpture, which once graced the hall at Belmont, watches over all.

While nothing has ever happened to Burns at Mt. Olivet, she did have a strange encounter at a historic home at Christmas time.

“Wendell and I were scheduled to perform that evening and came early before anyone had arrived to open the house. The place was lit up and gorgeously decorated and while I was looking up at the house, I saw a dark figure walk across an upstairs window very slowly. I asked Wendell “Who’s upstairs? And Wendell replied “No one.” I said “Oh, yes there is.”

Bartlett, Singleton Comm. Center

One of the most hair-raising



tales reportedly occurred at Singleton Community Center in Bartlett. The center is on the radar for several paranormal groups, according to Bartlett Mayor Keith McDonald. “We have paranormal groups hang out there overnight,” said McDonald. The Memphis Mid South Ghost Hunters, the oldest paranormal investigation team in western Tennessee, have been the most recent, as through the years they have tried to unravel the mystery. Several community center employees have reported strange sightings, sounds and occurrences to director Shan Criswell, but none compare to the apparition that appeared to former Singleton employee Dana Blackwood as related by Criswell.

It was an ordinary night in 1985, when Singleton Community Center office worker Dana Blackwood found herself working the late shift alone and getting ready to lock up for the night. Dana was busy at the office desk balancing the money when she heard a young girl’s voice at the counter “May I use your phone? I need to call my mother.” Blackwood looked up to

night. “Little girl. Are you out here? Do you still need to use the phone?” There was no response. There was no sign of life or anyone around. Blackwood reported that she felt a tingling sensation as she began to realize she never saw the little girl come into the office or heard the office door, which had a spring on it, open or close. “The child wasn’t dressed in today’s clothes and no one else is here,” she thought. “Oh my God!” Blackwood murmured, as she scrambled to get out of there. Blackwood stopped working at the center shortly thereafter.

Other strange occurrences including voices, lights flipping on and doors opening and closing by themselves prompted the staff to blame it on the ghost they call Mary, according to Criswell, until an elderly teacher visiting the community center shed more light on the situation.

“A teacher that taught in our school system years ago was in here one day and said there used to be a painting of a little girl in the auditorium,” recalls Michelle Gwyn, a clerk at the community center. “The child, Lisa Jo Caruthers, passed



Carnton Plantation in Franklin was a makeshift field hospital for wounded soldiers in the Battle of Franklin. Ghost sightings have been reported by those visiting there.

home as a final resting place for 1,481 soldiers.

Dressed in period costume, Danley leads visitors on a candlelight tour of the house as she recounts haunted tales connected to the mansion. “While I’ve never had my own ghostly encounter, some of our visitors and staff have. Many of the tales I tell were related in interviews with Margie Thessin, author of the book “Ghosts of Franklin” which is sold in our gift shop,” said Danley.

tionally broadcast television show “Paranormal State” taped a feature at the Thomas House for this season’s line-up. The title of the episode is “Room 37,” which had its national premier on April 13. The Paranormal Research Society (PRS), founded by Penn State student Ryan Buell in 2001, conducted a four-night investigation with the use of High-Tech Thermal, EVP (Electronic Voice Phenomena), Electro-Magnetic Field (EMF) Detectors and Audio Recorders, all



Photo by Victoria South

Suzanne Burns and Wendell Edison have portrayed the ghosts of Adelicia and Col. Joseph Acklen for Nashville’s Mt. Olivet Cemetery Confederate solidiers illuminated walking tour for the past 16 years.

“Franklin is a great place to live,” said Thessin, “so great that many of our citizens have decided they never want to leave... even after they die.” Thessin is co-owner and guide for Franklin on Foot, which covers some of the city’s most haunted places along Franklin’s historic Main Street.

“We just have a good story to tell,” Thessin continues. “A lot of shows are all about ghost hunters, but we don’t hunt them, we just report them.” Both Danley and Thessin agree that the individuals who experienced ghostly encounters at Carnton were just everyday people, not connected with the paranormal.

A family of four got more than they bargained for, according to Thessin, when they visited Carnton one night after hours:

The tours were over for the night and the director said that no one was there, but the family was welcome to wander the grounds. When the family walked around the front of the

seeking out the truth behind the many eerie experiences reported by guests and visitors of the hotel since its establishment in 1890.

“Our best known ghost is Sarah,” said David Cole, co-owner and cook for the family run B&B. “The psychics that have visited here all say she is the dominate spirit.” The Thomas House has also been featured on “Southern Haunts” a TV show created by award-winning filmmaker Zac Adams, and narrated by TV and radio personality Charlie Chase. The show, dedicated to the legends of the south, concentrates on the most interesting and compelling stories that not only have ghosts, but also provides a unique historical insight to each account. Cole said Adams decided to investigate following a guest’s encounter with Sarah.

A former Hendersonville police officer staying at the Thomas House for a church retreat came down to breakfast one morning with tears streaming down his face. The man



The Memphis Mid South Ghost Hunters instruct participants on how to use electro-magnetic field detectors at Singleton Community Center in Bartlett.

see a little girl standing there. She was dressed similarly to the 1950s. Her brown hair was pulled into a pony tail and she wore a blue plaid dress with a white sweater around her shoulders and was carrying a purse. “Sure,” Blackwood said, swinging around to get the phone from the desk to place on the counter. However, when she turned back around with the phone, the little girl was no longer there. Thinking she may have gone into the hallway, Blackwood stepped around the counter and opened the office door. Looking up and down the hall she called “Little girl!” Her voice echoed down the empty hallway. “Little girl!” she called again. “Do you still need to use the phone?” Blackwood then took a couple of steps, pushed open the outside door and peered out into the

away one summer while she was on vacation with her family. She and her older sister were walking sideways along the railings of a bridge, when the youngest slipped through the slats and fell into the water and drowned. Apparently what people saw and described fits the image of Lisa Jo.”

According to Gwyn, she was present when a medium and the Mid-South Ghost Hunters came to investigate. “They said they think she was waiting here for her father to pick her up, but they were able to convince her to cross over,” Gwyn said. “I was totally skeptic, but suddenly, out of the corner of my eye, I saw a ball of light shoot down the hallway. I turned to tell the guy standing next to me and realized I couldn’t hear my own voice.” For whatever reason, Lisa Jo has never been seen again.

Walkable Tennessee Ghost Tours

- Ghost and Haunt Tour Sheraton Hotel Lobby-A walking ghost tour of downtown will take visitors to the most haunted and paranormal filled locations in Nashville. Tours offered 7 nights a week at 9 p.m. through Oct. 31. Reservations required. Call 469-5825 or visit the website www.nashvilleghostandhaunt.com
- Appalachian Ghost Walks-Meet the real ghosts of Southern Appalachia in the cities of Erwin, Jonesborough, Tipton-Haynes, Greenville, Rogersville, Blountville, Johnson City, and Dandridge. Fascinating facts and historic downtowns. Open January-December. Call (423) 743-WALK (9255) for reservations.
- Franklin on Foot-Two tours offered, “Haunted Franklin” and “Murder and Mahem.” For more information, reservations and dates and times, call 408-3808 or visit www.franklinonfoot.com
- Gallatin Ghost Walk-Learn the diverse history of Sumner County, her spirits and spine tingling haunts. Runs through Oct.

31. For information and reservations, call 512-5299 or visit www.gallatinghostwalk.blogspot.com

- Halloween at the Bell Witch Cave and Farm- Adams Tenn. Halloween tours run through November 1. For information, pricing and reservations, call (615) 696-3055 or visit www.bellwitchcave.com
- Sam Davis Home Ghost Tour- Tour the grounds on a haunted hayride. For reservations, call 459-2341 or visit www.samdavishome.org

STATE BRIEFS



BY TML STAFF REPORTS

Gov. Bredesen proclaimed Oct. 11-17 as “Show Your Pride - Adopt-A-Highway” week in Tennessee to recognize the hundreds of Adopt-A-Highway volunteers who work each year to keep litter off state roadways. The Tennessee Department of Transportation’s Adopt-A-Highway program turned 20 on Oct. 11. Originally established on Oct. 11, 1989, volunteers with the program have logged thousands of hours working to keep Tennessee litter free. The Adopt-A-Highway Program allows Tennesseans to volunteer from a business, civic group, service organization, community club, church group, environmentally-conscious group, as an individual or an entire family to help keep Tennessee roadways litter free. Volunteers “adopt” a two-mile stretch of a state route and commit to conducting four litter pick-up events during the course of one year.

Tennesseans have the second-highest energy use per home in the country, but a statewide building code aims to change that. The code that goes into effect July 1 would set building standards in the state’s counties and cities that currently have none. In Tennessee, 60 of the state’s 95 counties have no residential building codes at all, which can lead to residential construction that doesn’t incorporate energy-efficient building practices. The statewide code was a recommendation from a task-force appointed by Gov. Bredesen and is part of his plan to encourage conservation and green energy in the state. The concept for the code was passed by the state legislature in June, but the new rules have not yet been written. Counties and cities that have their own codes are exempt from the new law. Local governments can also opt out of the standards by a two-thirds vote.

Two Tennessee roadways are now nationally recognized as National Scenic Byways. The Federal Highway Administration designated the Great River Road Tennessee and the East Tennessee Crossing as National Scenic Byways during an official ceremony in Washington, D.C. The two byways have been added to the collection of 151 distinctive and diverse roads designated by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation. The National Scenic Byways designa-

tions recognize those roads across America that exhibit one or more of six core intrinsic qualities: archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational, or scenic qualities that contribute to a visitor’s unique traveling experience. The Tennessee Byways Program facilitates local grassroots collaborative efforts by helping communities discover the story of their local area and sharing its treasured people and places.

The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) has developed a plan to prevent a repeat of the Sept. 18 airborne release of materials at the Kingston Fossil Plant, according to a preliminary report given to the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC). TVA said it will add procedures to monitor temperatures inside the smokestacks at the plant, revisit its procedures for burning different kinds of coal and take other measures. TDEC has made the report available on its web site www.state.tn.us/environment and said it will wait until TVA completely analyses the root cause of the event before deciding what actions should be taken. TDEC said it will post the full report when it is available. TDEC, which serves as advisory body to the state’s Air Pollution Control Board, directed TVA to make the study after flakes of material started raining on the community when the federal utility performed a test-fire at the plant in Harriman.

If a deal reached by Senate Democrats passes the full U.S. Senate, long-term unemployed Tennesseans could get an additional 20 weeks of unemployment insurance benefits. Nearly two million jobless workers across the country are in danger of running out of assistance by the end of the year. The agreement would give an additional 14 weeks of benefits to jobless workers in all 50 states. Workers in states with unemployment rate at 8.5 percent or above would receive six weeks on top of that. Tennessee would fall in the second category.

Tennessee was ranked 39th among the 50 U.S. states in a state-by-state comparison study referencing the access and quality of health care. Leading the league of low-performing states, Tennessee was ranked, 49th in healthy living

indicators and slightly better on access to health care, prevention and treatment. “When it comes to access to care when you need it, the quality of care you receive, and the likelihood of living a healthier life, where you live matters,” the report says. “Wide variations in care and outcomes persist, with top-performing states continuing to surpass their peers on multiple dimensions.” The Commonwealth Fund, a private fund, carries independent research on health care issues and released its second report on state scorecard on health system performance in 2009.

With October designated as Fire Prevention Month, the State Fire Marshal’s Office reminds Tennesseans to regularly check their homes for hazards that could lead to fires. “Tennessee occupies an undesirable ranking in the country for fire deaths. Falling asleep while smoking in bed or in a comfortable chair remains a significant cause of fire deaths in Tennessee,” says Department of Commerce and Insurance Commissioner and State Fire Marshal Leslie Newman. “If you smoke, make sure your home’s smoke detectors are functioning properly.” Newman urges Tennessees families to practice their home escape plan this month.

The death of manufacturing jobs in the state is leading many former factory workers to the health-care field, one of the few sectors expected to add jobs during the next few years. The state, already heavily dependent on manufacturing, has lost nearly 100,000 factory jobs during the past five years, a 23 percent drop. Training dollars reserved for high-demand professions are encouraging many of those laborers to learn how to draw blood or treat sick people. About one-third of the more than 22,000 laid-off Tennesseans getting federal training dollars last year were enrolled in health-care programs, according to the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development. This is true for former manufacturing workers as well. Researchers say the loss of manufacturing jobs could shift more people into the cities, where health care and other growing sectors, such as education, tend to congregate.

Tennessee, as part of a coalition of states, is seeking \$300 million in federal stimulus funds to improve rail lines and terminals in an effort to reduce truck traffic on congested Interstate 81. The Transportation Secretary says that increased movement of freight by rail is the key to reducing congestion on the 855-mile highway that runs north to south through six states. The federal grant, if approved, would go toward \$2.1 billion in needed improvements to the existing network of intermodal terminals where freight is transferred between trucks and rail cars.

The Tennessee Valley Authority announced that its electric rates will drop 1.5 percent on November 1 because of lower costs for fuel, saving customers 50 cents to \$2 on their monthly residential bills. The adjustment reflects a decline in the price of natural gas, coal and other related expenses that TVA must pay. Recent rains have allowed the authority to use cheaper water-generated power. Customers in Nashville could see a savings of \$7 to \$10 on their October bills.

State's first ARRA reporting complete – details funding, jobs

Tennessee has successfully met its first federal reporting requirements for funds that have flowed to or through the state under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The Recovery Act is providing states with more than \$246 billion of a total \$787 billion made available to create and retain jobs, invest in infrastructure and speed economic recovery.

Tennessee was allocated a total of \$5.6 billion; the state reported on \$214.9 million spent by the state through Recovery Act grants through Sept. 30, 2009.

“Our Recovery Act team and state agencies worked literally hundreds of hours toward an unprecedented accomplishment, with no additional staff hired to handle the reporting process,” Deputy Governor John Morgan said. “It’s important to remember the Recovery Act is a two-year program and this is just the first reporting period. Additional reporting on the use of Recovery Act funds will occur quarterly going forward.”

The state transmitted a total of 310 project reports for the period ending Sept. 30, 2009, via FederalReporting.gov, the central government-wide data collection system. Of those, 258 were for transportation projects alone. The reports represent grants totaling \$214.9 million received by 15 state agencies. The reports reflect 7,710.9 jobs created and retained through September 30 through these funds.

A major component of the Recovery Act is the requirement for an unprecedented level of transparency and accountability so people can see how the funds are being spent. Specific reporting requirements have been set for government agencies and recipients of Recovery funds to measure progress.

Federal agencies, prime recipients and sub-recipients are required to submit data within 10 days after the end of each calendar quarter for grants, loans, and federally awarded contracts under the Recovery Act. The first reporting period ended on Sept. 30 and reports were submitted by recipients, including states, between Oct. 1 and Oct. 10, 2009. The next reports will be submitted in January 2010.

The Section 1512 reporting process includes 99 different data elements. The number of data elements reported per program depends on the fields applicable to the program and varies based on the number of sub-awards and vendors, if any, under that program. Tennessee chose to centralize its reporting to minimize the likelihood of duplications in the data or non-compliance with federal requirements.

The FederalReporting.gov Web site works in conjunction with the Recovery.gov Web site. The data submitted to FederalReporting.gov will be reviewed and validated by the funding/awarding agencies from Oct. 11-29 and then those reports and visual representations of the information will be available to the public via Recovery.gov.

Recipient contract data will be published on Recovery.gov October 15 and recipient grant and loan data will be published on the site on Oct.30. The data can be viewed online or downloaded in XML format – a standard structure for the transfer of data – for those who want to create their own reports.

The reporting by Tennessee and other states represents only part of the recovery picture. Funds awarded directly to non-state agencies will have been reported by those recipients and their data will also be published on Recovery.gov.

Tennessee infrastructure needs top \$34.2 billion

TACIR from Page 1

This project is the only source of statewide information on the condition of public school buildings and what it would take to get them all in good or better condition, and the news here is good: According to local school officials, 91 percent of local public schools are now in good or excellent condition. However, they estimate the cost to put the remaining 9 percent in good or better condition at \$1.5 billion, which is a \$312 million increase from the cost reported in the previous report. They also report that 96 percent of all schools have sufficient space to house the teachers and classrooms required by the smaller class-size standards imposed by the Education Improvement Act (EIA) in the fall of 2001. The rest use portable classrooms, non-classroom spaces such as libraries and cafeterias for teaching classes, and classrooms that are empty when other teachers have planning periods. TACIR estimates the cost of the remaining classrooms needed to house these teachers at almost \$74 million statewide, which is a \$27 million increase from the cost estimate in TACIR’s last report.

Other Highlights from the Report

- Water and wastewater, transportation, and local public educa-

tion combined represent more than 70 percent of total reported needs.

- Total education infrastructure needs increased from \$5.6 billion to \$6.8 billion (about 20 percent) since the last report. This was the second largest increase among the six categories. Most of this increase (about 47 percent) can be attributed to \$963 million in new needs at the state’s public post-secondary schools.
- Health, Safety, and Welfare at \$6.8 billion is the third largest cost category and accounts for 19.7 percent of the state’s public infrastructure needs. Water and wastewater needs alone total almost \$3.9 billion or more than 11 percent of the grand total and 57 percent of this one category. The General Government category, which includes public buildings, other facilities and property acquisition, had the largest percentage change as needs increased by \$137 million (32 percent) from the previous report. Needs for new and improved public buildings increased by \$117 million in 2007.

The full report can be found at <http://www.state.tn.us/tacir/infrastructure.html>.

NATIONAL BRIEFS



BY TML STAFF REPORTS

Across the USA, states are falling short of their goals to increase the use of renewable energy as Congress weighs a national renewable-energy standard. Thirty-five states have set goals to use more electricity from solar panels, wind-mills and other renewable forms of energy, according to a database funded by the Energy Department. There is no central clearinghouse of states’ compliance records, but research and interviews with state and power company officials found nine states that have failed or expect to fail to meet their energy goals. The House of Representatives passed a

bill in June that called for 15 percent of the nation’s electricity to come from alternative sources in 2020.

Six states have sued the federal government to get \$16.7 billion worth of bond certificates that were either forgotten or thrown out in the trash following World War II. Contending that the Treasury Department has done nothing to find the original bondholders or their descendants, the states say they have laws that empower them to take unclaimed property for themselves. If the states win, they could continue to tap unclaimed U.S. bonds in the future, establishing a new stream of funding from Washington.

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TML Board ponders 2010 legislative issues



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Humboldt Mayor Alan Barker and Bartlett Mayor Keith McDonald



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Alamo Mayor Tommy Green



Murfreesboro Councilman David Edwards



Crossville Mayor J.H. Graham III



Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund President and CEO Charles "Bones" Seivers and Portland Mayor Ken Wilber



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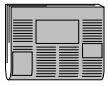


Tullahoma City Administrator Jody Baltz



Morristown Councilmember Kay Senter and Farragut Vice Mayor Dot LaMarche

Photos by Victoria South



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CHIEF OF STAFF

CLARKSVILLE. The city is seeking applicants for the position of Chief of Staff. The Chief of Staff acts as principle advisor to the mayor on governmental matters, public policy and special projects and assists the mayor with administrative duties and operational planning for the city. Also facilitates business improvement, productivity and staff administration. Must be an effective communicator and have a minimum of four years related experience and a four year degree in Public Administration, Political Science or related field, or equivalent combination of education and training. Salary: up to \$103,000. A complete job application will be required for those applicants who are identified for interview. Email resume to Will Wyatt at will.wyatt@cityofclarks ville.com or mail to Clarksville-Montgomery County Career Center, 350 Pageant Ln., Suite 406, Clarksville TN 37040 931-648-5530. EOE.

CONTROLLER

COLUMBIA. Columbia Power and Water Systems, a municipal utility located in Maury County in Middle Tennessee, is seeking a Controller (exempt position) who is accountable for financial controls and activities of CPWS, general oversight for departments Billing and Collecting, General Office, Meter Services, Purchasing and Stores, and Information Systems. Requires B.S. in Business Administration with major in accounting, five years experience in accounting (utility accounting preferred) and CPA certification in state of Tennessee. Please visit our website at www.cpws.com , “General Information”, “Careers at CPWS”, and “Click here for current job opportunities” for Application for Employment and job description. CPWS will only consider fully completed, original applications that are mailed or hand delivered to Columbia Power and Water Systems, 201 Pickens Lane, Columbia, TN 38401, ATTN: Personnel Department. Position is open until filled. Salary commensurate with experience and qualifications and will be discussed only at interview. Excellent benefit package. Minorities and females encouraged to apply. EOE/Drug Free Workplace.

DIRECTOR OF GRANTS / PLANNING

COLUMBIA. The city is seeking qualified applicants for the position of Director of Grants and Planning. Salary range: \$50,000 - \$75,000. Requirements: Master’s degree in Planning with AICP certification preferred and five+ years responsible experience in land planning, interpreting zoning ordinances as well as historic preservation and redevelopment. Physical examination and drug screening will be required prior to employment. Submit resume with salary requirements and list of references to: Personnel Director, City of Columbia, 707 N. Main St., Columbia, Tennessee 38401.; kcollier@columbiatn.com. Resumes accepted until Nov. 20,

2009. Visit our web site at www.columbiatn.com. Additional information may be obtained by telephone at 931-560-1570. EOE .

FINANCE DIRECTOR

RED BANK.The city is seeking applicants for the position of Finance Director. This position is the city’s authority on all aspects of financial management and requires a comprehensive understanding of city government finance. Director manages the budgeting, accounting, accounts payable, debt service management functions of government and participates in the cash management, pension, investments and certain aspects of the payroll process and purchasing. A bachelor’s degree in Accounting, Finance, Public Administration, or closely related field supplemented by three (3) years previous experience and/or training that includes progressive management experience preferably in the area of governmental accounting and budgeting. Preference will be given to candidates with professional certification such as Certified Municipal Finance Officer (CMFO); Certified Governmental Financial Manager (CGFM); or Certified Public Accountant (CPA). If not certified, must be able to attain compliance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Officer Certification and Education Act of 2007 within 18 months of hire. Salary: DOQ; comprehensive benefit package including TCRS Pension. Applications will be accepted until position is filled. Submit a letter of interest, current resume, salary history and a list of three professional references to: City Manager, City of Red Bank, 3117 Dayton Blvd., Red Bank, TN 37415. Email: citymanager@redbanktn.gov EOE.

SENIOR ACCOUNTANT

KINGSPORT. The city is seeking qualified candidates for the position of Senior Accountant. The position reports to the Comptroller and has primary responsibilities for revenue accounting, billing, collections and customer service functions of the Finance Department. Work includes research, analysis and recommendations for revenue streams and revenue enhancement strategies. Minimum requirements include a degree in Accounting, Finance or closely related field and five years full time work experience in accounting and finance with at least two years in a supervisory capacity. Applications may be accessed at www.kingsporttn.gov. Mail completed applications to: City of Kingsport, Human Resources Dept., 225 W Center St., Kingsport, TN 37660. Position opened until filled.

Traffic cameras under legislative review

CAMERAS from Page 1

Among the proposed changes in state law is to require that at least a portion of revenue generated by camera enforcement be spent on public safety or driver education.

“Those dollars are creating a revenue stream,” said Rep. Richard Floyd. “The only way to increase that revenue stream is to increase the number of cameras, and once you get into that mode, you are not going to see cameras coming down.”

And despite a 2008 state attorney general’s legal opinion that says cameras don’t violate due process and privacy rights, some committee members expressed concerns over the Constitutionality of using traffic cameras for law enforcement.

The violation is considered a civil penalty, not a moving violation. The driver faces a \$50 fine, whether the citation is for speeding or running a red light.

Rep. Matthew Hill believes the red light citations treat people like they are guilty before proven innocent. “The constitution says \$50 or more, you get a trial by jury,” said Hill. “It sounds dangerously close to sounding like they are guilty before proven innocent.”

All of the police departments testified that drivers could view the video and could fight the charge in court.

“The violator has access to the court system,” said Sgt. William Storment with Gallatin Police Department. “It’s the same as if he was issued a ticket by an officer. He can pay the fine or take it to court.”

Storment said that Gallatin began using traffic cameras in August 2006. Since then, the technology has dramatically impacted the number of traffic incidents throughout the entire city. “It has that halo affect, where we have seen a constant trend in safer driving.”

He said that in a two-year period, that crashes are down by 21 percent; incidents resulting in property damage are down by 22 percent; and fatalities are down by 50 percent.

Research conducted by the National Highway Safety Institute shows that when drivers perceive that there is a risk of getting a ticket, it strongly influences motorists’ choices and that automotive enforcement is a good method for reducing fatalities.

The Gallatin Police Department also credited the city’s red light camera system with contributing to the arrest of two men responsible for a number of thefts of heavy equipment from construction sites in the area.

Committee members also expressed concern over the timing of the yellow light and are considering extending the yellow light for at least four seconds before changing from green to red at intersections with traffic cameras.

Winkle explained that the traffic lights needed consistence, using



Rep. Vince Dean, vice chair of the House Transportation Committee, listens to testimony in support of red light cameras.

national standards for uniformity. If not, it would violate a driver’s expectancy and could cause additional accidents elsewhere.

“A longer yellow light will make drivers think it will be yellow forever and they can beat the light,” said Winkle.

In 2008, the Tennessee General Assembly passed two bills regulating traffic cameras. Public Chapter No. 964 requires that once a red light surveillance camera is installed, the duration of the caution light may not be altered for the sole purpose of increasing revenues. Public Chapter No. 962 requires local governments to notify traffic offenders caught by surveillance cameras at least two times prior to assessing late fees or any other penalties for non-payment of citations.

More cuts expected to state budget

CUTS from Page 1

propriations,” explained Thurman.

Goetz said that every agency has been asked to make the same reductions, “but some turnips can produce more than others.”

He said probably the hardest hit agencies are the Department of Mental Health and Development Disabilities, who are reducing beds as well as staff to meet the budget cuts.

Gov. Phil Bredesen has sched-

uled departmental hearings for the week of Nov. 16 in preparation for the FY 2010-11 budget.

“Even if the revenues get better,” said White, “these reductions will likely be permanent.”

White said to avoid additional reductions, revenues would need to grow by 4.4 percent for FY 2010-11. If revenues only grow by 2.2 percent, state departments will need to reduce their budgets by 26 percent.

If revenues remain flat with no

growth, departments will need to reduce their budgets by more than 33 percent. In order to restore 50 percent of the reductions, revenues would need to grow by 11 percent; 100 percent restoration would require 16.7 percent growth.

“Until the employment picture improves, until the savings rate goes down, and until consumption goes up, it is unlikely to expect that there will be any dramatic changes,” said White. “This is not something that the state is going to grow out of.”

Funding Board approves financing reforms

FUNDING from Page 1

being paid on their behalf.”

Comptroller Wilson became concerned after a number of cities and counties ran into financial trouble after using swaps and other derivative transactions to lower interest rates on their bond debt with-

out fully understanding the risks involved.

On May 1, he presented the State Funding Board with a set of proposed changes to the guidelines. The guidelines approved by the State Funding Board this month include revisions that were made after

receiving public input throughout the spring, summer and early fall.

Other members of the State Funding Board are: Secretary of State Tre Hargett, Treasurer David H. Lillard Jr., Finance and Administration Commissioner David Goetz and Governor Phil Bredesen.

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Renaissance woman Brentwood Mayor Betsy Crossley perks with city

BY GAEL STAHL

Brentwood Mayor Betsy Crossley, after two and a half years on the city commission, says she has an inner need for involvement with elective municipal government. Both of her diverse high energy career jobs seem to have evolved toward public service. So far, it's been a win/win.

Elizabeth “Betsy” Schubring was born in 1955 in Atlanta at Piedmont Hospital, where the old Atlanta Braves stadium used to stand. She likes to tell everyone she was born on second base, which seems appropriate for someone who has spent a lifetime enjoying sports—especially baseball.

Some of her fondest childhood memories center around watching baseball games with her father. A Michigan native, he pulled for the Detroit Tigers, she for the Braves. Both loved listening to Dizzy Dean announce games. She and her two brothers invented their own baseball bunt 'em game and, since the neighborhood she grew up in was mostly boys, she was always climbing trees and building boats to float in creeks and having a great time outdoors. Her love of nature led to her becoming a biology teacher and being involved in protecting open spaces and parks.

Her father, Kenneth Karl Schubring, an 18-year-old survivor of the attack on Pearl Harbor, was working for Armstrong Corp. in 1951 when he moved to Macon, Ga., from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. He met Crossley's mother, Ruth Hardeman, a Macon native, on a blind date and proposed to her on Valentine's Day 1952. They married that June.

When Crossley was nine, the family moved to Athens, Ga. In high school, she especially enjoyed languages and music and decided she'd like to be either an interpreter for the UN, the piccolo player at the Boston Pops, or maybe a dentist. As a worldly wise 13-year-old she proclaimed: “I'll tell you what I don't want to do. I'm not going to be a teacher. I'm not going to be a politician.” “God, of course, laughed,” she says. She became both.

Her father was president of the Clarke County Board of Education during segregation. Their windows were broken several times and their mailbox knocked down. In high school she was slammed against lockers a couple of times. “It made me really sit back and think,” she says, “what are we doing and is it this important?” Watching her father go through that doing what he knew was the right thing to do ingrained in her an understanding that there are going to be some tough times in life. But if it's worth doing, it's worth the tough times sure to come. Ironically, it fed her willingness to play a public role in many community groups over the years, most recently more than eight as a Brentwood Planning commissioner and two as a city commissioner – both arenas where you have to take the heat for the decision that you make.

She graduated from Clarke Central High School in Athens, Ga., in 1973, and earned her bachelor's in 1977 and master's in 1980 in microbiology at the University of Georgia (UGA). In 1980, she married a virology classmate at UGA, George Crossley. While George went to medical school, she taught microbiology at Athens, was an electron microscopist, biologist and teacher in Atlanta, tutored and did medical research in hematology, pharmacology and anatomy in Augusta.

When George was on the Wake Forest Faculty 1991-1999, Crossley was an affiliate faculty member and won honors teaching high school anatomy, physiology, and biology at Mt. Tabor High School.

In 1999, they moved to Brentwood. Almost immediately, a neighbor invited Crossley to a Brentwood Women's Club meeting. The club is involved in so many areas that one could make it a full-time job. Crossley chose to play a major role in historic preservation and later served on the Brentwood Historic Commission and Brentwood Tree Board. When an opportunity arose to become a member of the Brentwood Planning Commission, she worked with municipal development issues for eight years.

Crossley's husband is a cardiac electro physiologist (the doctors who insert pacemakers and defibrillators). He is one of the writers of the national exams



Betsy Crossley
Brentwood Mayor

cardiologists take to get certified in that field. He represents the American College of Cardiology for Tennessee, is involved in Washington with health care issues, and is a leader at St. Thomas Heart in Nashville, which has more than 60 cardiologists at Baptist and St. Thomas hospitals.

In 2007, when the city decided to expand the five-member commission to seven commissioners, she pondered how she'd been around for awhile and had come to love Brentwood. She knew the city staff and how the city works from following city commission meetings. She gave it a try and went door to door stopping at 800 residences for three months hoping to win one of four open seats. She tied for the fourth seat and won the runoff election with a two-thirds majority.

Crossley has fallen in love with two things. One is not politics so much as community awareness of what the current situation is. The other is asking how we reinvest ourselves for the future. For her that means helping all the entities in the community move from the now to the future by working together to know where they want to go and then do it. She's says that means “it's not a me-thing or a government-thing but about our being the kind of in-touch community that we want to be.”

TT&C: I am told that you know several languages and play many musical instruments?

BC: I guess you could call me a jack of many trades, master of few. I'm fluent in Spanish and English and on speaking terms with French and German. I'm trying to learn Japanese now and hope to get into Italian. I play flute, piccolo, trumpet, guitar, piano, harmonica, and bagpipes. I figure my yen to learn more about everything helps explain my enjoying helping and leading many community endeavors. I just seem to like the challenge of trying things I've never tried before.

Entering city government a little over two years ago was a brand new challenge. Being a scientist by training, I research everything thoroughly before making decisions. Then, I stand by them, making sure people know my word is my bond, that when I say something, I'm going to do what I say. At the same time I'm willing to listen.

TT&C: What were some of your teaching methods in science?

BC: I liked to keep my classrooms awake, alive, and aware. If it took standing on the desk to wake them up, I did it. I always wore a lab coat when I taught just for the fun of its commanding atmosphere. I had people donate lab coats so every kid in that classroom had a lab coat to wear whenever they did vivisection. I got permission to let students examine cadavers in the med school and see just what tar does to the lungs of longtime smokers. I'd demonstrate a brain by making one with prepared oatmeal and Jell-O in a rubbery brain mold and let a student I coached beforehand touch it gingerly, then pick up courage to stick his finger in it and lick his finger with delight as the students gagged. I prepared scientific canisters and aged them with ice tea, donned my lab coat and gloves and set it down amid much cautionary whispering to make sure the door was closed. As students edge forward to see the little 'alien' inside



Betsy with her 101-year-old grandmother, who Betsy refers to as her best friend.



“I just seem to like the challenge of trying things I've never tried before”

I'd keep asking, “Are you sure that door's closed?” When all had become ‘believers’ I'd close the canister, remove my gloves, and explain how I'd just demonstrated why science-trained people must ‘believe’ absolutely no one including me, after the ruse, without doing their own scientific research.

TT&C: When you were elected city commissioner, what did you hope to accomplish?

BC: I ran mostly on making sure we continue to manage growth and sustain our conservative financial positions and look to the future. I ask myself and others, where are we going to be 20 years from now? This year is our 40th birthday as a city. We've been fortunate in going from a town of 300 to 37,000 and growing 4 percent per year. One concern ahead of us is that most of the land left in our city limits will be pretty much built out by 2020 or 2021. What do we do in the next 10 years to maintain the life style we've got?

TT&C: Brentwood can't expand its acreage?

BC: No, we are a landlocked city of 41 square miles with seven square miles left to expand into. The majority of that is hilly terrain so we're probably not going to get many more houses and not any more businesses built in that annexable area.

What we do have is a town center that was built in the 1950s. It's where the first grocery stores, gas stations, and shops started out. It's now an older section of town that we're looking to revitalize as a “Town Center” development. We already have a few incoming businesses, a new bank and a new office building are going in there as part of an innovative zoning design called a C-4 Development District that specifically makes the area a walkable, workable, mixed-use development with residential and offices, as well as retail all in one place. When people can live, work, and play all in one area, they won't have to drive much at all.

Another opportunity is the property where Murray Bicycle and Lawn Mower used to be. It's a large abandoned building next door to the Baptist Convention Center, which I think, is also looking to relocate one day. If so, that whole corner at Maryland Way and Franklin Road could become another opportunity for a mixed-use complex where people can live, work, and play all in one place.

A lot of people want to stay in Brentwood but want to downsize. We don't have enough of that kind of smaller residential homes. We

have passed new zoning to allow for townhouses to be built, but so far, we haven't had many takers.

TT&C: Has the downturn in the economy affected the new town center?

BC: That's been slowing it down some, but it has also given us a chance to take a step back and see what we most want to happen. It gives us more time to discuss with folks in the worlds of business and development.

TT&C: Does Brentwood have a defined identity or brand?

BC: I think the city's identity speaks for itself. It was called Midway before it changed its name to Brentwood because it was midway between Nashville and Franklin. Brentwood is a quality residential community where folks enjoy living and growing up, where they feel they get a great education and have great opportunities for families to enjoy an enriching life. We have some of the best parks, bikeways, and green space anywhere. That's pretty much who we are.

At the same time, we have to have a vibrant business community. Our city hall is in the middle of Maryland Farms, a Mecca of business and professional activities. Our city land area is 95 percent residential and 5 percent commercial. Commercial pays 54 percent of our property taxes. Additionally, we take in business and sales tax. That's how dependent we are on commercial.

TT&C: Is the city is as devoted to planning as you are personally?

BC: Very much so. Some are concerned that not enough people come out to vote but I think it is because people are happy with the low tax rate, the way the services are kept up, and with our five-year capital improvements plan that anticipates what needs to be done in timely fashion such as upkeep of our streets and our spending \$30 million to rehab sewer lines over three years to keep them up to snuff for the next 20 years. We also have the 2020 Plan that started in 1999 looking ahead to 2020. Citizens got involved in looking at where we were then, and where we wanted to be in 2020. We update that plan every five years based on citizens' and business community's input. By 2020 I'm sure we'll have a 2040 Plan.

TT&C: Does Brentwood outsource some of its services?

BC: Not unlike other suburban residential communities, we don't have our own sewer system any more. The one we had couldn't keep

up with the growth of the city. It's become an arboretum. As for water, our first water supply came from Meadow Lake about a mile from city hall. It was owned by Eddy Arnold, which made him the city's first water distributor, so to speak. That water wasn't even treated, just piped directly out. We now depend on Metro Nashville for our sewage treatment and on four or five different water systems for water including Brentwood, Mallory Valley, Harpeth, and Nolensville-College Grove. Not having a sanitation department, we use Williamson County's landfill, and individuals contract out to private companies for pick up. Some recycle, others don't, some provide back door pickup, and others curbside pick up. We're one of 14 cities in the entire state that doesn't have a sanitation department.

TT&C: Does your city work on regional initiatives with other cities and counties?

BC: That's something I'd like to see us do a better job of – being good neighbors. We're beginning to do more. Brentwood and Franklin already had mutual fire service agreements. This year we developed an automatic aid agreement. Mutual agreements mean having to call for help. Automatic aid means every time there is a fire or emergency in specific districts, we both respond immediately without being asked. It's wonderful and the first time anybody has done that in this state. We won an award for that from Greater Nashville Regional Council. It's just common sense to use resources for the common good. I'm sure Nashville Mayor Karl Dean is trying to do that with our Mayors' Caucus. Williamson Mayor Rogers Anderson and I were talking about how important it is that we all look at our common good. Nobody driving along the streets says, “Oh, I've just gone from Brentwood to Franklin or from Brentwood to Metro.” We're all part of Greater Nashville making us all eligible to share common resources.

Another instance of regionalism was our hosting the Susan G. Komen Greater Nashville Race for the Cure to benefit cancer research this month. It had always been held in Nashville. When they asked if we would like to host it, we jumped at it. Everybody basically clears out of Maryland Farms on Saturday, so it's a great idea that works for both of us. I'm on the steering committee of the board. This first year here, they raised more money than ever, over \$1.4 million for breast cancer research. Brentwood partnered with them logistically to help make it happen. We had 16,000 running down Maryland Way, and next year I think you'll see the town completely pink.

We are also working together on regional transportation. The mayors from north to south in Middle Tennessee, from Portland to Murfreesboro are meeting to work on expanding that.

TT&C: Would public transportation benefit a city like Brentwood?

BC: We are working on a Park and Ride Bus stop in Brentwood at this time. We get an influx of about 20,000 a day. Our city of 37,000 almost functions as a city of 50,000 on week days. I don't know how many go out from Brentwood in all the various directions. The attraction for the big influx is all the businesses and offices in Maryland Farms, the medical research, insurance, and banking that are located here.

TT&C: You now serve as District 6 Director on the TML board.

BC: Yes. I was elected district board member during the TML Conference at Memphis two years ago. I've enjoyed being on the board and learning all about TML and working with legislative issues that concern cities. It's fascinating. We just held, on Oct. 15, the meeting where municipal officials decide which legislative issues TML will initiate next session. Since it's my nature to get involved immediately, I'm jumping right in and am looking forward to this legislative session.

TML provides a great service. If we municipalities as a group didn't have representation in the legislature, we would have so many more problems. TML does a good job going to bat for us. And our Risk Management Pool and our Bond Fund, and the MTAS consultants for cities are all great benefits and do good service.