



TML Annual Conference, August 2 – 4

CMFO Workshops

Aug. 2, 2025

1 – 2 p.m.

Who's Watching the City's Wallet? (Hopefully, Not the Guy Who Just Stole It) (1 hour)

Speaker: Tonya Travis, MTAS Finance Consultant

Nobody wants their city to be the next headline for all the wrong reasons. In this session, we'll dig into the real ways fraud, waste, and mismanagement happen—and more importantly, how to stop them. From red flags to reporting requirements, you'll leave with the knowledge and tools to protect your city's reputation and budget.

2:15 – 3:15 p.m.

The Budget Process (1 hour)

Speaker: Brad Harris, MTAS Finance Consultant

The process of preparing and passing an annual budget involves purpose, communication, timeliness and planning. This session will explore how the budget is developed, the various players involved, the budget calendar and subsequent passage by the governing body. Almost everyone has some role to play and governments must be vigilant and focused in order to meet the State's required deadline. Participants will gain an understanding of what it takes to work as a team to pass a budget.

3:30 – 4:30 p.m.

Critical Operating Policies (1 hour)

Speaker: Kay Stegall, MTAS Finance Consultant

Policies provide structure and consistency in municipal government operations. This session will cover required policies and best practices for municipalities.

Aug. 4, 2025

8:30 – 9:30 a.m.

Beyond the Census: Preparing for Tennessee's New Population Certification Law (1 hour)

Speakers: Tim Kuhn, Director, Tennessee State Data Center

Cassie Stinson, ECD Director of Research

A new state law will require annual updates to municipal population figures, replacing the current reliance on the decennial census and optional special censuses. Beginning January 1, 2026, the University of Tennessee's Boyd Center will provide yearly population estimates to be certified and used to determine per capita tax allocations and eligibility for population-based state grants and programs. This workshop will explain how the new process works, what it means for growing and shrinking communities, and how local governments can prepare for the changes taking effect in the 2026-2027 fiscal year.

9:45 – 10:45 a.m.

Tariffs, Inflation, and Sluggish Revenues—Oh My! Understanding Today's Economic Outlook

Speaker: Dr. Marianne Wanamaker, dean, Howard H. Baker Jr. School of Public Policy (1 hour)

Dean Wanamaker will kick off the Second General Session with a timely and insightful update on the economic landscape. This session will explore current trends and forecasts at the state, national, and global levels, helping local leaders better understand the factors shaping their revenue outlooks and economic planning.

4 – 5 p.m.

Citizen-Centric Reporting: Enhancing Transparency Through Effective Communication (1 hour)

Speaker: Jon Stehle, Director, AGA (Association Government Accounts)

Citizen-Centric Reporting (CCR) is a powerful tool for increasing transparency, accountability, and trust between governments and the communities they serve. This workshop will explore how CCR aligns with core functions such as data management, financial reporting, and budgeting to effectively tell the story of government performance and priorities. Participants will learn the value of CCR, explore guidelines for crafting impactful reports, and discover how to integrate CCR practices with broader data and financial strategies.

Utility Board Training

Aug. 2, 2025

1 – 4:30 p.m.

Effective Governance of Water Utility Systems (3 hours)

Speaker: James Lewellen, MTAS Management Consultant

With newly updated content, this session focuses on the key roles and responsibilities, best practices and practical insights utility board members should know to make informed decisions and contribute effectively to the success and sustainability of their community's water system. MTAS Management Consultant and former Collierville Town Administrator, James Lewellen will be the presenter. James currently serves on the Memphis Light, Gas & Water Board of Commissioners.

Aug. 4.

8:30 – 9:30 p.m.

Mapping Tomorrow: Leveraging GIS for Rural Growth & Development (1 hour)

Speaker: Brad Peters, MTAS Public Works Consultant

Rural communities in Tennessee are experiencing rapid change—and with that progress comes complex planning, infrastructure, and land-use challenges. This session dives into Geographic Information Systems (GIS) as a strategic tool for supporting sustainable growth and smart development. You'll explore how GIS technology captures, stores, analyzes, and visualizes spatial data to inform decision-making around zoning, transportation, utilities, environmental risk, and economic opportunity. Whether you're a GIS newcomer or looking to deepen your mapping expertise, this session will equip you with practical skills to turn geographic data into actionable development strategies.