



Municipal Technical Advisory Service
INSTITUTE *for* PUBLIC SERVICE

MUNICIPAL E-NEWS

March 2020 | Quarter 1 | Issue 95

IN THIS ISSUE

- 1** Message from MTAS Executive Director
- 2** New MTAS Employees Shine
- 3** Is Your City Checking All the Boxes with Withholding Retainage?
- 4** Cleveland (TN) Provides New Life-Saving Service
- 5** MTAS on the 10 Most Common Audit Findings for Tennessee Municipalities (Part 8 of 10-part series)
- 6** New Year, Sharper Focus: MTAS Training in 2020
- 7** MTAS Staff Earn Certified Public Manager Designation
- 8-9** TREEDC News

NEW RESOURCES

2019 State of the Water Industry: A Rising Tide? (Article) | [Request](#)

Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most (Book) | [Request](#)

How Many Fleet Technicians Do You Need? (Article) | [Request](#)

Use of Translators in Selected Tennessee Cities. (MTAS survey) | [Download](#)

All new materials added to MTAS' Knowledgebase can be found here: [View](#)

All new materials added to MRLn (MTAS Research Library Online) can be found here: [View](#)



UPCOMING TRAINING CLASSES

<http://www.mtas.tennessee.edu/training-calendar-0>

**Municipal Technical Advisory Service
Institute for Public Service**

1610 University Ave.
Knoxville, TN 37921
Phone: (865) 974-0411
Fax: (865) 974-0423



Message from MTAS Executive Director

Greeting MTAS Customers,

Welcome to the spring issue of the Municipal E-News. Spring is always an exciting time of year for me. Budget preparations are beginning, most of the winter weather is behind us, flowers and trees are blooming, and there is a feeling of freshness and newness in the air.

After the novelty of the new year has worn off, the resolutions may (or may not) be adhered to, and the hustle of the winter holidays has quieted, it is almost a time to really begin anew. What does your new fiscal year hold in store for your community? What initiative will you undertake that will improve the quality of life for your residents? What project will you wrap up and take pride in accomplishing? There is much to look forward to and for which to plan.



At MTAS, this time of year also means annual performance reviews for employees. I am so excited to read about what our team has accomplished over the last year and what staff plan to do in the year ahead. When looking at the totality of service that MTAS provided in 2019, I am truly amazed and honored to be in a position of leadership for such an amazing group of people who do tremendous work for Tennessee municipalities. Please call on us often for your municipal needs.

Finally, for us to continue to provide you the service you need, we are asking for your feedback on the job that we have done for you over the last two years. Please be on the lookout for the MTAS Biennial Customer Satisfaction Survey. You can help us help you by identifying what we are doing well and identifying areas for improvement. As my supervisor, Dr. Herb Byrd, is fond of saying, "You don't have to be sick to get better." With your help, we'll make sure we continually improve. Thank you!

Sincerely

Margaret Norris

Margaret Norris
MTAS Executive Director

New MTAS Employees Shine

MTAS is excited to introduce you to our newest consultants. They are here to serve Tennessee cities and have hit the ground running.



Human Resource Consultants Betsy Cunningham and Peter Voss

Betsy Cunningham will be in the Knoxville MTAS office and her territory will be east Tennessee. Betsy has served in management and leadership positions in human resources management in both the private and public sector including city of Alcoa and Blount County government, Trinity Benefit Advisors, US Foods, and Massey Electric (Alcoa).



Peter Voss will be in the Jackson office and his territory will be the west Tennessee grand division. Peter comes to MTAS most recently from the city of Hendersonville where he served as the HR director, and before that he served as director of personnel for the city of Bartlett for 33 years. Peter has served in leadership positions with the Tennessee Personnel Management Association including president, secretary, and treasurer.



New Municipal Court Specialist John Eskew

John Eskew will be in the Nashville MTAS office and will serve all municipal court clerks in Tennessee municipalities. John comes to MTAS from the city of Clarksville where served as Risk Manager/Assistant HR director and as an attorney in the city attorney's office.



New Training Consultant Yolanda Dillard

Yolanda Dillard will work out of the Memphis MTAS office and will serve the west Tennessee grand division. Yolanda most recently served as the associate director of employer partnerships for University of Memphis Career Services and before that as a key leader with the small minority/women-owned business incubator, MMBC Continuum. Yolanda is also a retired Air Force and Tennessee Air National Guard officer where she served as a Civil Engineer Officer, Information Systems Officer, Executive Officer and Systems and Network Engineer.

What an impressive group! MTAS continues to attract the best of the best to achieve our vision of all Tennessee municipalities being a national model of good governance.

Is Your City Checking All of the Required Boxes when Withholding Retainage?

Elisha Hodge, MTAS Legal Consultant



As a reminder, Tenn. Code Ann. § 66-34-103 and 104 requires the following with regard to retainage withheld on construction projects where the prime contract amount is \$500,000.00 or more:

1. The retainage amount cannot exceed 5%;
2. The retainage must be deposited in a separate, interest-bearing, escrow account with a third party that must be established when the retainage is withheld;
3. Notice of compliance with the language in the Tennessee Code that governs retainage must be provided to any prime contractor when each and every application for payment is made; and
4. Finally, when the contract has been completed in a satisfactory manner, the municipality must state such in writing, and thereafter release the funds in the escrow account and any interest earned to the prime contractor.



It is imperative that municipal staff adhere to the requirements in the statute related to retainage, because failure to do so could result in significant monetary penalties.

Questions? Please contact Elisha Hodge, MTAS Legal Consultant at elisha.hodge@tennessee.edu or your MTAS finance consultant. Listing of MTAS staff: <http://www.mtas.tennessee.edu/staff>

Cleveland (TN) Provides New Life-Saving Service

Honna Rogers, MTAS Municipal Management Consultant

The city of Cleveland has partnered with LIFE FORCE Air Medical, a part of AirMedCare Network, to provide life-saving emergency air lift services to city residents. Any member of a household is eligible under this program when transported by LifeForce inside of Bradley County. This service is a part of a contract that the city has entered into with LIFE FORCE Air Medical.

AirMedCare Network is an air medical membership network providing emergency air lift services coverage in 320 locations in 38 states. There is no out-of-pocket expense for Cleveland residents insured at the time of flight when the pick-up location is within Bradley County. There is also a discounted flight bill for Cleveland residents uninsured at the time of flight when pickup is in Bradley County.

Mayor Kevin Brooks said “I am so thankful our City Council voted to enter a partnership with AirMedCare so our city residents can fly at no cost or a reduced cost to themselves. I believe this is extremely important to our citizens.” Brooks added that Life Force One carries more patients than any other helicopter in the system due to its strategic location in the region.



MTAS on the 10 Most Common Audit Findings for Tennessee Municipalities (Part 8 of 10-part series)

Al Major, MTAS Finance and Accounting Consultant

Failure to Receive Authorization for the Issuance of Debt

Municipalities are statutorily required to request reviews, approvals, or reports for certain types of debt and from the Comptroller of the Treasury's Office of State and Local Finance before borrowing the money.

All municipalities are required to adopt debt management policies in compliance with the State Funding Board's statement on debt management prior to authorizing the issuance of debt. (T.C.A. § 9-21-151 (b)). These policies can be changed anytime.

After debt is issued, a report on debt obligation (form CT-0253) must be filed with the municipality's governing body and a copy filed with the Tennessee Office of State and Local Finance.



This series will review the 10 most common audit findings as reported by the Tennessee State Comptroller's Office. All published parts in this series can be read here: <https://www.mtas.tennessee.edu/knowledgebase/10-most-common-audit-findings-tennessee-municipalities>

If you have questions or need assistance, contact MTAS at 865-974-0411. Also, visit our website at www.mtas.tennessee.edu

MTAS Training 2020: New Year, Sharper Focus

Johanna Owenby, MTAS Training Consultant

MTAS understands that for you to effectively serve your customers, you need to be up to date with information relevant to what you do in your city. With that in mind, the MTAS training team is constantly at work keeping a sharper focus on your training needs. In 2020, we are excited to debut enhancements to three of our major program areas!

The Certified Municipal Finance Officer (CMFO) program, Elected Officials Academy (EOA), and Municipal Management Academy (MMA) have undergone significant content and design updates. The improvements and modifications to these programs ensure that training participants experience current information, focused skill-building, and a smoother classroom experience overall. Program enhancements were overseen by training staff along with MTAS subject matter experts, including management, finance and legal consultants. Keep an eye on CMFO and EOA offerings near you, and for those interested in MMA, contact us directly to learn more.



In addition to these three program areas, we enhanced our coordination of open enrollment training to provide topics that better fit your needs. Be sure to check out the offerings available through the Continuing Municipal Education program here on the MTAS website.

MTAS is committed to continuous improvement in what we do and how we serve our cities. In serving you, we help you serve. In this new year, let us help you keep your focus sharp by attending MTAS training!

[MTAS Training Catalog](#)

MTAS Staff Earn Certified Public Manager Designation

MTAS staff members Municipal Management Consultant Gary Jaeckel and Grants and Training Specialist Chris Shults, recently completed the Certified Public Manager (CPM) program. Participants of the program, based in the UT Institute for Public Service's Naifeh Center for Effective Leadership, graduated in late January at the Capitol Building in Nashville.

In addition to 300 hours of in-class and online work, participants must complete a capstone project. Jaeckel's project was "Use of Alternative Work Sites in the University of Tennessee Institute for Public Service and the Municipal Technical Advisory Service." Shults' project was "Are we Meeting the Training Needs of Tennessee Municipalities? Using Data to Develop a Strategic Approach to Providing Training Services to Tennessee Municipalities."



*Municipal Management Consultant
Gary Jaeckel*

Twenty-five participants from local, state, and federal government positions graduated as members of the program's 2019 class. In just its second year, the Tennessee CPM program had cohorts in both Knoxville and Nashville. The Knoxville class graduated nine participants while Nashville graduated 16.

The ceremony included an address from Tennessee Secretary of State Tre Hargett.



*Grants and Training Specialist
Chris Shults*

"I am confident the CPM graduates are not only going to make a positive difference on the future of our state but will inspire others to a higher level of performance as well," Hargett said. "I know this program will yield great dividends for Tennessee."

Participants in the yearlong program learn about current trends in public management by hearing from subject-matter experts with experience in the field.

The program helps participants gain proficiency in seven fundamental areas: personal and organizational integrity, self-development, work management, public service, leadership of people, change leadership, and systemic integration.

The Tennessee CPM program is accredited by the National Certified Public Manager Consortium and available to UT employees.

For more information on the CPM program visit leadership.tennessee.edu

TREEDC and Other Environmental Sustainability News

Warren Nevad, MTAS Municipal Management Consultant/TREEDC Executive Director

Attorney Bill Penny Wins TREEDC's Inaugural Environmental Legacy



Left to right: Warren Nevad, MTAS management consultant, Bill Penny, Attorney, Burr and Forman, and TREEDC President/Dunlap Mayor Dwain Land

Attorney Bill Penny with Burr and Forman recently received the Tennessee Renewable Energy Economic Development Council's (TREEDC) 2019 inaugural Environmental Legacy award for his over 40 years of service as an environmental attorney and advocate for renewable energy in the southeastern United States. Penny authored the books: *A Practical Guide to Tennessee Environmental Law* and *A Practical Guide to Tennessee Administrative Law*. The TREEDC Environmental Legacy Award established by TREEDC President/Dunlap Mayor Dwain Land honors an individual with at least 20 years of effective and significant service. Award winners automatically becomes lifetime members of TREEDC.

TREEDC Launches 2020 Membership Campaign

TREEDC Chairman/University of Tennessee at Martin Chancellor Dr. Keith Carver and TREEDC President/Dunlap Mayor Dwain Land have officially launched the organization's 2020 membership campaign. The TREEDC board has kept the 2020 membership dues levels unchanged from prior years. Memberships help pay for expenses related to TREEDC's outreach, educational and project facilitation for member local governments. Being a TREEDC member affords networking and developmental opportunities, sponsorships of various events and participation in the International exchange program. TREEDC is a 501 C 3 charitable organization. For more information regarding 2020 membership opportunities, visit <http://treedc.us/membership/index.html>



TREEDC Chairman/University of Tennessee at Martin Chancellor Dr. Keith Carver and TREEDC President/Dunlap Mayor Dwain Land

TREEDC and Other Environmental Sustainability News (continued)

City of Knoxville Receives Recognition for Propane Mower Fleet

The Propane Education and Research Council (PERC) recently honored the city of Knoxville with its 2019 Green Leadership City Award. PERC provides the award to one American city each year in recognition of that community's commitment to social and environmental health. PERC recognized Knoxville for its adoption of a clean, propane-powered mower fleet as well as other environmentally friendly programs that support the city's sustainability and emissions-reductions goals. By September 2019, the city converted 18 of its 25 commercial lawnmowers to run on propane, reducing the mowers' carbon dioxide emissions by 10 tons in 2018 alone. During the award ceremony, Knoxville Mayor Madeline Rogero accepted a \$5,000 donation from PERC, which will go toward the Beardsley Community Farm, a Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee nonprofit that promotes food security and sustainable agriculture.



Money to Pursue: REAP to Fund Rural Energy Projects



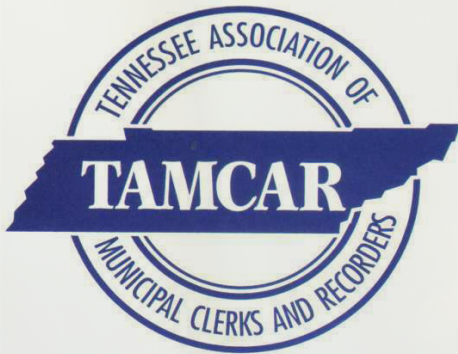
The Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) provides loan financing and grant funding to agricultural producers and rural small businesses for renewable energy systems and energy efficiency improvements. This program helps improve American energy independence by both increasing the private sector supply of renewable energy and decreasing the demand for energy through energy efficiency improvements. Over time, these investments can also help lower energy costs for small businesses and agricultural producers.

Funding for Fiscal Year 2020 is available in a variety of forms, each under its own application process and timeline. Grant applications are due by March 31. Applications for loan guarantees are accepted year-round.

More information and applications can be found here:

<https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-energy-america-program-renewable-energy-systems-energy-efficiency>

UPCOMING CONFERENCES



The **Tennessee Association of Municipal Clerks and Recorders (TAMCAR) Spring Conference** will be April 15-17, 2020, at the Murfreesboro Embassy Suites. TAMCAR is a professional organization dedicated to the advancement of the municipal clerk/recorder. TAMCAR assists clerks with personal and professional development through a curriculum that concentrates on public administration, social and interpersonal skill enhancement, and current issue sessions. Completion of these education sessions results in points needed to receive certification through the Tennessee Secretary of State's Office.

TAMCAR is very proud to be a part of the International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC). For more information on joining TAMCAR or attending the spring conference, visit <https://tamcar.wildapricot.org/>.

Tennessee City Management Association 2020 Spring Conference

April 1-3, 2020 | Franklin, TN

Tennessee Personnel Management Association 2020 Annual Membership and Training Conference

April 15-17, 2020 | Pigeon Forge, TN

Tennessee City Management Association 2020 Fall Conference

October 28-30, 2020 | Gatlinburg, TN

Tennessee Municipal League Annual Conference 2020

June 27-30, 2020 | Chattanooga, TN

Tennessee Government Finance Officers Association

October 7-9, 2020 | Murfreesboro, TN

Municipal Technical Advisory Service Institute for Public Service

1610 University Ave.
Knoxville, TN 37921
Phone: (865) 974-0411
Fax: (865) 974-0423



**Municipal Technical
Advisory Service**

INSTITUTE *for* PUBLIC SERVICE

