



## **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Renewable Energy Forum by the City of Franklin, Columbia State Community College and TREEDC: June 24, 2011**

Warren Nevad, MTAS Municipal Management Consultant

The Tennessee Renewable Energy and Economic Development Council (TREEDC) held its 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Middle Tennessee forum at the new Franklin Police Conference Center on June 24, 2011. More than 90 attendees from 14 cities, 8 counties, 4 states and 21 clean energy businesses gathered together to examine ways to fast track clean energy development such as green diesel, solar, propane and electric car charging infrastructure in Tennessee. Representatives from the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), University of Tennessee Institute for Public Service (IPS), Tennessee Economic and Community Development (ECD) and Middle Tennessee Clean Cities Coalition also participated in this community wide forum. Franklin Mayor and TREEDC Middle Tennessee Coordinator Ken Moore, Franklin Sustainability Coordinator Andrew Orr, Columbia State Community College Dean of Extended Services Dr. Shanna Jackson and the University of Tennessee Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) Management Consultant/TREEDC Director Warren Nevad organized the workshop.

The University of Tennessee President Emeritus Dr. Joe Johnson praised the efforts of TREEDC President /Pikeville Mayor Greg Johnson and the leadership team in motivating, inspiring and educating local, state and federal political leaders in Tennessee about the benefits of energy efficiency and renewable energy development through job creation. He complimented the TREEDC mayors with taking the initiative to partner with the new state commissioners from the Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation and Department of Agriculture. He also revealed that the TREEDC mayors had recently met Deputy Governor Claude Ramsey and the new Tennessee congressional delegation.

Kerry Perkinson, Vice President of Tennessee Bank & Trust gave a stirring presentation regarding the diminishing availability of oil throughout the world. Mr. Perkinson urged the attendees to look at ways in adding to the mix of alternative transportation fuels. Amy Bunton, Senior Vice President with Pathway Lending discussed details regarding a low interest \$50 million revolving loan fund program to finance energy efficiency projects for businesses. Mark Schwartz, founder of greenMARK Collaborative explained his firm's role in building a network of architects, engineers, and builders to assist businesses with creation of energy efficiency and LED lighting projects. Jim Coker of Heritage Propane urged city officials to require maintenance contractors to use propane when mowing city's parks and fields. Henning Bollerslev of 49 Green gave a presentation about his technology to convert agricultural and municipal wastes into green diesel which can be easily transported compared to other alternative transportation fuels. Bollerslev, a native of Denmark, expressed his appreciation to TREEDC officials for extending an opportunity to develop and commercialize his technology in Tennessee.

The networking lunch consisted of presentations about the electric charging project status by ECOtality Stakeholder Manager Stephanie Cox and Columbia State Sustainability Initiatives by Dr. Shanna Jackson. TREEDC also discussed their work with the TVA Green Power Switch Program, Pew Foundation and review of the legislative testimony to the State General Assembly's Agricultural Committee. TREEDC also discussed the strong potential of compressed natural gas for municipal and county fleets. The annual TREEDC business meeting will be hosted by Ducktown Mayor/TREEDC East Tennessee Coordinator James Talley in August. Details will follow.

LL Browning, TVA Program Manager of End Use Generation Technical Support led a panel discussion involving the current and future trends of the solar industry in Tennessee. Susan Curtis, TVA Senior Manager of Generations Partner gave an update of the TVA Generations Partner program. This program supplies TVA's Green Power Switch program with renewable power, making more green power available to consumers and creating a market for green power generation. Generation Partners participants defray the cost of their renewable systems and lower their monthly energy bills through the revenue they receive from the sale of the green power. Ms. Curtis also invited attendees to register for the free TVA Solar Solutions Conference in Nashville on August 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>. Steve Johnson of Lightwave Solar and Steve Levy with Tennessee Solar Energy Association opined that Tennessee needed to be more consistent in solar policy in order to make solar more affordable and practical for everyone. They also stressed that Sharp Solar and AGC Flatglass are critical components of the solar energy supply chain in Tennessee. John Atkins with TerraShares briefed the audience about his company's innovative Shared Savings Solar program where municipalities can benefit with solar energy without capital investments. His white paper regarding this approach is available through TREEDC.

The meeting adjourned. The next TREEDC forums are set for July 29 at Tennessee Tech and September 23<sup>rd</sup> in Monroe County. Presentations will be available on the MTAS website. Contact [treedc08@yahoo.com](mailto:treedc08@yahoo.com) for membership information.