

# MUNICIPAL E-NEWS

December 2018 | Issue 90

## MTAS Training Classes

See what is coming up!

[bit.ly/MTAS\\_trainingcalendar](https://bit.ly/MTAS_trainingcalendar)

## New Information Resources from MTAS

City Planner Salary, Contracted Grant Writers, Retirement Plans and Supplemental Bridge Benefits Survey (MTAS Survey) | [Download](#)

Sample Water Rescue Standard Operating Procedures | [Download](#)

Use of Force During A Medical Emergency: A New Standard From The Sixth Circuit (Article) | [Request](#)

Brain Rules: 12 Principles for Surviving and Thriving at Work, Home and School (Book) | [Request](#)

Pavement Management Program Helps Hendersonville Get On Track (Article) | [Request](#)

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MTAS offices will be closed December 24-28 for Winter Holiday.

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## Message from MTAS Executive Director Margaret Norris

### Did You Know You and Your City Are Members of the Alliance for Innovation?

MTAS provides membership for all municipalities and staff in Tennessee to the Alliance for Innovation (AFI). AFI is an organization that promotes innovation in local government to advance communities. They are the premier resource for emerging practices in local government. The MTAS-sponsored organizational membership in the AFI provides all city staff in Tennessee cities free access to all of the AFI resources such as case studies, documents, articles, white papers, and more. Webinars are also available to Tennessee Alliance members for free or at the member rate.



MTAS encourages you to take advantage of this rich resource today! Just create an account on the AFI website at <https://transformgov.org>. The system will recognize that you're a member by your city email address. If you need assistance, please contact Sallie Ann Burnett, the East Regional Director, at [saburnett@transformgov.org](mailto:saburnett@transformgov.org) or 888-496-0944 X 104.

The AFI holds an annual conference, the Transforming Local Government (TLG) Conference, where the highlight is the case studies presentations. Next year it will be in Reno, Nevada, April 9-12. Read more about the conference [here](#).

## COMING SOON!

New Year, New Tool in Your Information Toolbox!

What's in your toolbox? A new information tool from MTAS, that's what!

MOLLY (MTAS OnLine LibrarY) has been providing access to books, documents and journal articles in the Research and Information Center's collection since 2001. Yes, you read that right - 2001! MOLLY is due for an update and we're excited to tell you that a new and updated search tool is on its way.

Visitors to the virtual MTAS library will be able to create their own accounts, see what they have checked out, save searches, be notified of new items added to the collections, and place items on hold or make a suggestion for new materials to help us build a relevant and targeted collection.

Stay tuned and look for more announcements soon via MTAS's website, Facebook and Twitter.

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## City of Athens Making Technology a Priority

*By Angie Carrier, MTAS Municipal Management Consultant*

The city of Athens city council held their annual strategic summit earlier this year and determined that upgrading technology to make their city's operations more efficient was a definitive priority in the coming years. The city then approved the FY 2019 budget and added a technology manager position. The approval and hiring of this position is just one of the first steps the city is taking to improve its technology platform.

MTAS was asked to create a hiring assessment center to find the right candidate for this new position for the city. Also, to ensure that the new employee could hit the ground running, Athens City Manager C. Seth Sumner requested that Justin O'Hara, UT MTAS IT administrator, conduct a review of the city's information technology resources including infrastructure, process and policies of the city.

The most widespread use of a hiring assessment center is to assist in the selection of managers and supervisors. The assessment center process places candidates in situations similar to those encountered on the job, yielding better measures of his/her managerial skills. It puts candidates through a series of group and individual exercises, interviews, and tests designed to simulate the conditions of a supervisory or managerial job and determines if they have the skills and abilities necessary to perform the job. O'Hara and Angie Carrier, municipal management consultant for MTAS, conducted interviews with city staff to determine current IT needs and to help develop competencies measures for the new position.

These position competencies were used to identify what should be evaluated through the assessment center process. Carrier developed instruments to evaluate selected candidates. A panel of professionals in the field of IT were invited to assist in evaluating the candidates; Terry McCoy, director of IT, city of Maryville, Joe Littleton, information



*Pictured left to right: Terry McCoy, Maryville Director of IT, Athens City Manager C. Seth Sumner, Joe Littleton, Information Security Officer Southeast Bank (Athens), Rob Ogle, IT Director City of Pigeon Forge, and Justin O'Hara, MTAS IT administrator.*

security officer at Southeast Bank in Athens and Rob Ogle, IT director, city of Pigeon Forge.

Following the assessment center, Sumner interviewed two candidates that had been evaluated and determined acceptable in meeting the needs of the city. Fortunately, the city is moving forward with one of the candidates and has considered this assessment center a great success.

"The team at MTAS – Angie and Justin in particular – once again exceeded my expectations," Sumner said regarding the assessment center "When I asked if they would be able to build an assessment center for an IT professional to help the city of Athens make this first-time hire, they not only created the center from the ground up, but also delivered a transition plan and assessment of current needs. This has facilitated us being able to find the right person to start as our first full-time technology manager while also providing the path for an easy transition for this vital support role for all city departments. This new position will be a force multiplier for Team Athens."

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## Kingston receives GFOA's Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting

MTAS Finance and Accounting Consultant Brad Harris recently worked with the city of Kingston to complete, apply for and ultimately receive the coveted Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting award. The award is the highest level of recognition for a Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) which includes the audited financial statements. Kingston is the 31st city in Tennessee to receive the award.

Harris presented the award as a five-year member of the Government Finance Officer Association Committee on Budgeting and Fiscal Policy, as well as a board member of the Tennessee Government Finance Officers Association.

“This is a significant achievement for Kingston. Carolyn Brewer is a pleasure to work with, and the city of Kingston is fortunate to have her. A city is not required to do a CAFR, but Carolyn saw the opportunity to improve on the city’s annual reporting and made the decision to not just do the minimum requirements, but rather to take the city beyond that level. The result is a much more informative report and the GFOA team of reviewers around the country have recognized her for her initiative and desire to give the citizens of Kingston the best report she can,” Harris said.



*Pictured left to right are Mayor Tim Neal, City Manager David Bolling, Finance Director Carolyn Brewer and Brad Harris.*

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## Utility Board Member Training

In spring of 2017 a law was passed by the Tennessee General Assembly requiring the governing body of all municipal water and wastewater systems in Tennessee to complete 12 hours of training. The General Assembly mandated that the training cover three areas:

- 1) Board Governance
- 2) Financial Oversight
- 3) Policy-making responsibilities

By fall of 2017 MTAS developed three modules for these topics to deliver in separate four-hour classes. Since that time MTAS consultants delivered this training to almost 200 participants across the state. Initially these modules were delivered as part of the Municipal Administration Program (MAP) offerings and were scheduled across the state. However, to meet the needs of city boards the MTAS training team began scheduling customized classes to fit the schedules of individual cities.

MTAS will continue to offer utility training in each grand division that will be open to all participants. Check the 2019 Training Calendar for upcoming training opportunities.

For large groups from one or more municipalities, we will be glad to customize a training schedule to meet your needs.

For more information contact: Sarah Curtis, MTAS Training Coordinator at [sarah.curtis@tennessee.edu](mailto:sarah.curtis@tennessee.edu) or (615) 733-0603

## MTAS Salary Survey Needs You!

The 2019 MTAS Salary and Benefit Survey is ready for your city's new salary and benefits data.

All Tennessee cities, large and small, are encouraged to submit their salary and benefits information for this survey. You and all participating cities in Tennessee will then have access to this mission-critical information. Log in today and share your data with other cities, just like yours, who value this information when reviewing their compensation offerings for staff. The more cities that provide data, the more useful the database will be to all.

If you have questions, feel free to contact your MTAS HR consultants.

MTAS Human Resources Consultant Richard Stokes,  
[richard.stokes@tennessee.edu](mailto:richard.stokes@tennessee.edu)

MTAS Human Resources Consultant John Grubbs,  
[john.grubbs@tennessee.edu](mailto:john.grubbs@tennessee.edu)

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## Foreign Language Interpreters and Translators Available to Your City

The UT Institute for Public Service's Tennessee Language Center (TLC) is offering a reduced rate to municipal courts for foreign language services, which includes interpretation and translation services. The center provides face-to-face interpretation in more than 50 languages, telephonic interpretation services in over 200 languages and translation services in over 70 languages.

On-site interpreter services that are booked in advance will be \$70/hour with a two-hour minimum fee. If these services are provided on weekends or after business hours, the rate is \$80/hour, with a two-hour minimum.

Telephonic interpreter services are best for routine and immediate communication needs. The rate is \$1.95/minute with a 20-minute minimum fee. Also, telephonic conference calls are available for a rate of \$110/hour with a 30-minute minimum fee.

Additionally, an interpreter is available to pre-record a message for telephone systems or through media to communicate routine messages. The rate for this service is \$100/hour with a one-hour minimum fee.

Generally, translation service fees are determined by word count on the document. If a shorter document requires translation, a minimum fee will be charged. For example, the rate for Spanish is \$.18/per word and French, German and Italian is \$.25/per word. Please contact TLC directly for translation rates.

Interpretation and translation services are provided after a customer service agreement is established. Requests for interpretation and translation services may be requested by phone, fax, or email. TLC may be contacted at:

**Telephone:** 615-741-7579

**Fax:** 615-253-5488

**Email:** [its.languagecenter@tennessee.edu](mailto:its.languagecenter@tennessee.edu)

During the Municipal Court Clerks Foundations & Updates Seminars this fall, MTAS encouraged municipal court clerks and municipal judges to take advantage of TLC's excellent services.

Additional questions may be directed to MTAS Municipal Court Specialist Paige Edwards, [paige.edwards@tennessee.edu](mailto:paige.edwards@tennessee.edu).

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## MTAS, TREEDC Participate in Northeast Tennessee Renewable Energy Workshop in Unicoi

MTAS and the Tennessee Renewable Energy & Economic Development Council (TREEDC) organized an informational lunch workshop for Northeast Tennessee communities sponsored by Johnson Controls. City and utility officials representing Bulls Gap, Bristol, Elizabethton, Erwin, Greeneville and Unicoi were in attendance. The East Tennessee Development District also participated in the program. MTAS Municipal Management Program Manager Pat Hardy and MTAS Municipal Management Consultant Warren Nevad organized the workshop.

Nevad discussed recent energy developments in Northeast Tennessee and gave a historical perspective of the growth in renewable energy in Tennessee since 2008. TREEDC provides technical assistance to Tennessee cities and counties who desire to embark on clean energy technologies such as solar, compressed natural gas and energy efficiency. Various energy related case studies were presented to the attendees.

For more information, visit the TREEDC website at <http://www.treedc.us/>



*Workshop attendee Elizabethton City Manager Daniel Estes and MTAS Management Consultant Warren Nevad get acquainted at the forum in Unicoi.*

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## UPCOMING CONFERENCES

Tennessee Municipal League  
Legislative Conference

March 18-19, 2019 | Nashville

Tennessee City Management Association  
Spring Conference

April 3-5, 2019 | Knoxville



## Fact Sheet

### Tennessee City Management: By the Numbers

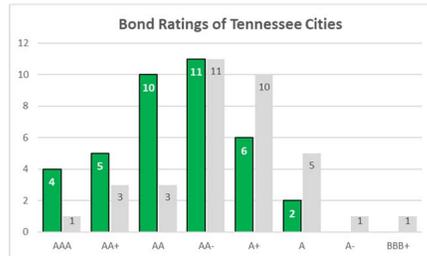
Tennessee Cities which employ professional City Managers have faster rates of growth than the State as a whole, higher bond ratings than non-City Manager Cities, and low property tax rates and stable general fund balances. Don't believe us? Look at the numbers:



**Population Growth (2010-2016 – U.S. Census):**  
State of Tennessee: 5.8%  
City Manager Cities: 9.5%



**Bond Ratings: (S&P as of March 2018)**  
CM Cities in Green



City Manager cities have more AAA, AA+ and AA bond ratings than Non-City Manager cities.

#### What is the TCMA?

The Tennessee City Management Association believes cities and towns in Tennessee operate best in a system where qualified, trained professional managers work together with local elected officials to accomplish community goal and objectives. TCMA provides professional development opportunities for its members through educational conferences and the timely transfer of knowledge, information, data and the best municipal government practices to its members.



The Average City Manager Community in Tennessee:



Population 2016: 16,702



Average Property Tax Rate: \$1.1465/\$100 value  
G/F Fund Balance (2016): \$ 10,089,114

89 cities and towns in Tennessee have chosen to have City Manager forms of government.

**Why City Management? Because it Works!**

Contact a City Manager today to find out more about how local government builds and sustain great Tennessee communities! Find one and more at [www.tcma.org](http://www.tcma.org).

For more questions regarding the MTAS Municipal E-News, contact Frances Adams-O'Brien at frances.adams-obrien@tennessee.edu or 865-974-9842.