

## City Spotlight: Mt. Pleasant



Mt. Pleasant was once a significant mining center, known as “The Phosphate Capital of the World.” It is now a progressive small city, surrounded by natural beauty, with a diverse mix of industry and an ideal environment for family living. Far enough from Nashville to be “out of the rat race”, but close enough to enjoy the cultural, entertainment and sports advantages of the big city, Mt. Pleasant has a lot to offer right here at home.

**Date of Incorporation:**  
1824

**Population:**  
4,561

**County:**  
Maury

**Grand Division:**  
Middle Tennessee

Municipal Management Consultant  
Dana Deem  
[dana.deem@tennessee.edu](mailto:dana.deem@tennessee.edu)

**MUNICIPAL TECHNICAL  
ADVISORY SERVICE**

600 Henley Street, Suite 120  
Knoxville, TN 37996-4105  
Phone: (865) 974-0411  
Fax: (865) 974-0423  
[www.mtas.tennessee.edu](http://www.mtas.tennessee.edu)

## Tennessee Fire Mortality Study Released

The Tennessee Fire Mortality Study was released on Tuesday, July 12, 2011, at the Tennessee Fire Chief’s Association Annual Conference in Nashville. The study was produced by MTAS with the cooperation of the Tennessee Fire Chief’s Association, Tennessee Fire Safety Inspector Association and the Tennessee State Fire Marshal’s Office.

Below is the link to the study recently released at the Tennessee Fire Chief’s Association Conference as well as a link to the summary presentation given at the conference.

Tennessee Fire Mortality Report — An Analysis of Civilian Residential Fire Deaths in Tennessee, 2002-2010 | [Read](#)

Tennessee Fire Mortality Presentation at the TFCA Conference — July 12, 2011 | [Read](#)

We have also provided a link to the Tennessee GIS map showing the statewide risk analysis related to fire mortality. This risk analysis is based on the Tennessee Fire Incident Reports System (TFIRS) reports to the State Fire Marshal’s Office from 2002 thru 2010.

The mapping tool provides the target areas for future fire prevention efforts as these are where the research shows a high probability of mortality risk. The map is interactive and you can actually zoom down to street levels. Small triangles and dates show where fire deaths have occurred in our state along with the year.

Tennessee Fire Mortality State Map | [Read](#)

Please take time to review the report, GIS map and presentation. The mapping Web site will be continually updated as more information is produced.

## Local Government Debt Policies

The Tennessee State Funding Board has approved regulations requiring that local governments adopt a debt management policy by Jan. 1, 2012, if they expect to issue debt in the future.

This requirement encourages municipalities to plan capital purchases and to consider a debt strategy in the larger context of what types of debt may be incurred, ways debt may be paid, how finance professionals in a debt issuance are selected and compensated, and under what circumstances debt is to be considered. In collaboration with the Tennessee Comptroller’s

*(continued on page 2)*

## Local Government Debt Policies

*(continued from page 1)*

Office and the Tennessee Municipal League (TML), MTAS has developed a model debt policy that cities can use to meet these requirements, and the MTAS staff is ready to brief individual cities on the requirements and the model policy.

The key decision required of most cities in the adoption of this policy will be to define how much debt is appropriate for that city, using a measure that the city or town selects.

The model policy is available on the MTAS Web site for download or reading online. [Click here.](#)

MTAS management and financial consultants are available to facilitate this discussion and help tailor the policy to the individual needs of your city.

## MTAS Says “So Long” to Dick Phebus

After some 36 years of traveling the across the state of Tennessee providing consulting services to local governments, Dick Phebus has decided to retire from MTAS.

Since 1985, Phebus has worked with MTAS assisting approximately 60 cities in West Tennessee with finance and accounting issues. Prior to that, he served as a field consultant and assistant director for the UT County Technical Assistance Service (CTAS) from 1973 to 1983. During time away from the university, he served as controller for a precious metals corporation in Fort Collins, Colo.



*Dick Phebus*

Phebus has enjoyed a varied career. He received his education from Vanderbilt University, graduating in 1972 with both a bachelor's and master's in

engineering. He worked for the Tennessee Department of Transportation in its engineering division prior to joining CTAS as a highway consultant. Post graduate education enabled him to sit for and pass the Certified Public Accountant examination. From that point forward, his interests have been in finance and accounting.

In addition to consulting, Phebus has authored various MTAS publications and resource materials over the years. More recently, he played a pivotal role in the development and delivery of the comptroller's ongoing Certified Municipal Finance Officer program. In acknowledgement of his contributions to the program, Phebus was awarded the first honorary CMFO certificate by the comptroller's office. During his tenure with MTAS, he has served on the boards of the Tennessee Government Finance Officers Association and the Local Government Corporation.

“Dick leaves MTAS having made a valuable and irreversible positive impact on municipal finance statewide. He will be remembered by his customers and peers for his wise counsel and hard work. His knowledge and professionalism will be missed,” said Sharon Rollins, IPS program manager.

“Dick Phebus is a most articulate and thoughtful person who truly cares about city and county government. He has been very helpful in assisting the employees of the city of Dresden in their duties and compliance issues. Dick's departure from MTAS is the city of Bartlett's gain and the city of Dresden's loss.”

*Mayor Danny Forrester, City of Dresden*

“I was very sad to hear that Dick was leaving MTAS but also very happy he has a new opportunity. I started my job as city recorder in 1999. I immediately called Dick for his assistance, and he was a great asset and helped me so much. With his teaching, the city was nominated and won the City of Progress Award in 2001. That was just the beginning. He has continued to help me for the last 12 years. He will be missed!”

*Donna Stricklin, City Recorder, Town of Sharon*  
*(continued on page 3)*

## MTAS Says “So Long” to Dick Phebus (cont’d)

*(continued from page 2)*

“Since the 1980’s Dick Phebus has been coming to Tiptonville to assist us in developing our budgets and helping with many other city issues. He was always available at a moment’s notice. We grew to depend on his knowledge and expertise. We value Dick’s friendship and wish him the very best, and when he gets a chance to get back to Tiptonville, we will treat him to a Reelfoot Lake fish dinner.”

*Fran Hearn, City Clerk, Tiptonville*

“Dick Phebus has served on the board of directors for Local Government Corporation for over 12 years as a board member and chairman of the finance committee. During that time he served municipalities with a high level of integrity and support. I have known Dick for

over 20 years and consider him a friend and co-worker. He was a great asset to the University of Tennessee, the Local Government Corporation and Tennessee municipalities. That service will be missed. I wish Dick all the best in his retirement.”

*Mickey Wilson, President  
of Local Government Corporation*

Phebus leaves MTAS to take the position of assistant finance director in the city of Bartlett. In his spare time, he plans to play some golf and read books on his new Apple iPad. Phebus and his wife Nita plan to stay young playing with their five grandchildren.

*We wish Dick all the best in his new adventures!*

## Former Germantown Fire Chief Joins MTAS Staff

Dennis Wolf, the Tennessee Fire Chiefs Association’s 2010 Fire Chief of the Year, retired on July 29 after almost 35 years with the Germantown Fire Department, 16 of those serving as chief.



*Dennis Wolf*

Pursuing his dream to impact fire service statewide, Wolf began work as MTAS’s fire and emergency management consultant August 1. Wolf will be stationed in the West Tennessee regional office but will travel the state providing management and technical assistance to Tennessee’s 275 full-time and volunteer fire departments.

Steve Thompson, MTAS executive director, said, “I’m looking forward to Dennis joining the MTAS team – he’s a tremendous professional and continues the tradition of quality consultants with this organization.”

## Cities Still Awaiting Attorney General Opinion on Red Light Camera Provisions

*Josh Jones, Legal Consultant*

Since the passage of Public Chapter No. 425 of the 2011 Tennessee General Assembly, considerable debate has occurred regarding the enforceability of the bill’s provisions as to current contracts between municipalities and unmanned traffic surveillance camera vendors. Among these provisions are a traffic study as a prerequisite to the installation of any new camera; a prohibition on citations for right on red without proper signage; and a requirement that citations be reviewed by a POST-certified officer. The bill took effect July 1, 2011; however, the argument has been made that these provisions should not be enforced where a current contract exists as such would be in violation of the impairment of contracts clauses of the U.S. and Tennessee constitutions. One of the bill’s sponsors has requested an opinion from the Tennessee Attorney General to address this very issue; however, as of the time of this writing no such opinion has been published.

MTAS will continue to monitor the release of opinions from the Attorney General’s office and will update cities accordingly. Further information about the Public Chapter No. 425 and a link to its text can be found [here](#).

# MTAS Staff Members Recognized

At the 2011 Institute for Public Service Annual Conference in July, several MTAS employees were honored with these much-deserved institute-wide awards:



**BECKY SMELTZER, Technical Services Librarian: Beacon Award** – The Beacon Award recognizes an individual, either non-exempt or exempt employee, who has demonstrated a continued capacity for providing top-notch services behind the scenes usually by having first-hand knowledge of projects and by helping support agency outcomes ... in other words, as an employee who comes to work day after day supporting the outcomes of their agency but in a manner which is largely unknown to many customers or even other members of IPS agencies.



**PAT HARDY, MTAS Management Consultant: Five Franklins Award** – The Five Franklins Award, formerly the Triple C-Noter Award, is presented to an individual who has made a significant contribution on at least one major project during the last year, resulting in high customer impact and high customer value. recipient must demonstrate a positive attitude, show initiative, be a team player and exemplify excellence in performance.



**EMILY KEYSER, Administrative Support Assistant (Codes Production): Horizon Award** – The Horizon Award is presented to a regular full-time or part-time non-exempt employee with less than three years of service with an IPS agency. The recipient must demonstrate a positive attitude, show initiative, be a team player and exemplify excellence in performance.



Tess Davis



Michelle Buckner



Elaine Morrisey



Ralph Cross



Bonnie Jones



Josh Jones

Also, at the MTAS annual meeting held in conjunction with the IPS Annual Conference, MTAS Executive Director Steve Thompson recognized the work of six staff members with these MTAS specific awards: Tess Davis, administrative specialist (Business Office) – Customer Service Award; Michelle Buckner, Administrative Specialist (CMFO) – Customer Service Award; Elaine Morrisey, Administrative Support Assistant (Training Program) – Customer Service Award; Ralph Cross, Finance and Accounting Consultant – Victor Hobday Award; Bonnie Jones, Human Resource Consultant – Trailblazer Award; and Josh Jones, Human Resource Consultant – Trailblazer Award.

Congratulations to all of the award winners for a job well-done!

## The Significance of CEUs

Gary Petree, *Municipal Program Manager*

Courses offered by MTAS include the award of Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for participants. What is a CEU? Why does it matter?

A CEU is a standard measure of educational units. The basic measure of a CEU is simply a ratio of 10:1 that represents the total number of hours in training for each CEU awarded. In other words, 10 hours in a CEU-approved training session equates to one CEU. To award CEUs, the hours of participation must be in an organized education and training session delivered “under responsible, qualified direction and instruction.” So, more importantly, approval to award CEU is a standard measure of quality.

As subject matter experts, MTAS consultants design, develop and deliver courses in accordance with the professional standards of the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET). The criterion include provisions for

- Needs based learning events;
- Content focused on learning objectives;
- Instructional and assessment methods based on principles of adult learning;
- Training evaluations to support continuous improvement efforts; and
- Records administration to support and maintain IACET accreditation.

Each course developed for CEU credit must have review and prior approval by the UT IPS CEU Approval Committee. The efforts of our subject matter experts to meet IACET standards help ensure that methods of instruction, facilities, training materials and learning outcomes reflect an appropriate level of planning, preparation and professionalism behind every CEU approved MTAS training session.

Professional associations usually require their members to regularly participate in training and development opportunities related to the profession, and each association usually has its own set of rules about quality standards and record keeping. Many MTAS customers have membership in professional associations and may find an advantage in CEU approved training sessions available through MTAS.



## Parliamentary Procedure:

### Robert’s Rules of Order – Improper Use of the Motion “To Table”

Margaret Norris, *Municipal Management Consultant*

One of the most often misused procedures from Robert’s Rules of Order is the motion “to table.”

According to *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised 10th Edition*, the motion “to lay on the table” means “to interrupt the pending business so as to permit doing something else immediately” (§ 17, p. 201). Here is an example: Alderman Jones needs to present background information on a request to rename a street and this item is fourth on the agenda. He has to pick up his daughter at the babysitter’s house by 9 p.m. and it is now 8:30 p.m., and the discussion on ordinance 11-08 is still going strong. His motion would be “to move that ordinance 11-08 be laid on the table.” If the motion is seconded and is successful then discussion on ordinance 11-08 stops, and it can be picked back up later in the meeting after Alderman Jones leaves.

However, the common practice of this motion in cities is used to delay a vote on an issue until another meeting. For example, someone wants more time to think about an agenda item or needs more information before being able to vote. The proper motion is to either “postpone to a certain time” or “postpone indefinitely.” If the intent is to talk more about a topic, just not at that meeting, then the motion would be to “postpone until the next regularly scheduled meeting” or “postpone until the engineer submits his/her report.” If the intent is to defeat something without actually taking an up-or-down vote on it, then the motion would be to “postpone indefinitely.”

## TREEDC Holds 2nd Annual Franklin Forum

The Tennessee Renewable Energy and Economic Development Council (TREEDC) held its 2nd annual Middle Tennessee forum at the new Franklin Police Conference Center on June 24. More than 90 attendees from 14 cities, eight counties, four states and 21 clean energy businesses gathered 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.



*Left to right: UT IPS Assistant Vice President Mike Tallent; Ducktown Mayor James Talley; and UT President Emeritus Dr. Joe Johnson.*

UT 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 and 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 and Trust, gave a presentation regarding the diminishing availability of oil throughout the world. 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.

## TREEDC Partners with Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm and Pew Foundation

More than 40 guests attended a clean energy forum lunch in Knoxville sponsored by TREEDC, the Pew Foundation and Cooley Public Strategies.

Former Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm, Pew senior energy advisor, stated that a well-rounded clean energy policy has a “big job potential,” and by 2020, there will be \$2.3 trillion in private investments and 37 million clean-energy jobs globally. The United States is third in private-sector investment for clean energy, behind China and Germany.

Dr. Rudy Shankar, TVA vice president for technology innovation, gave the audience an update regarding TVA’s Green Power Switch (GPS) program and status of the electric vehicle industry. TREEDC is working with TVA on the redesign of the GPS program.



*TREEDC President Greg Johnson and Former Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm.*

## 2011 Health Care Consumer Guide Ready to Order

The 2011 Health Care Consumer Guide, available in early fall, will focus on disease prevention with a special emphasis on specific screening tips for men and women and is available to cities (employers) at **no charge**. The guides are intended to help educate your workforce on health care issues such as quality and disease prevention.

While the themes vary, you will find the same valuable general quality information (patient safety) in each edition such as Tennessee hospital specialties and quality ratings including Johnson City, Nashville, Knoxville and Memphis. It is important that all employees and consumers have access to information about medical mistakes and quality health care, and this guide aims to do that.

This free, valuable resource, courtesy of Health Care 21 ([www.hc21.org](http://www.hc21.org)), will be available on the MTAS Web site in pdf format at <http://www.mtas.tennessee.edu/public/web.nsf/Web/Human+Resources>. To receive your copy, contact Bonnie Jones at [bonnie.jones@tennessee.edu](mailto:bonnie.jones@tennessee.edu).

### NEW MTAS PUBLICATIONS:

#### Federal Mileage Rate Effective July 1, 2011

*Dick Phebus, Finance and Accounting Consultant*

The optional standard mileage rate increased to 55.5 cents per mile for all business miles driven on or after July 1, 2011, through December 31, 2011. | [Read](#)

#### Open Records: A Guide for Municipal Officials (2011) – Revised

*Josh Jones, Legal Consultant*

This guide summarizes Tennessee's open records laws as of the end of the 2010 legislative session and includes practical applications for municipal officials and employees. | [Read](#)

#### Public Chapter No. 425 and Its Effect on Unmanned Traffic Enforcement Cameras

*Josh Jones, Legal Consultant*

Effective July 1, 2011, cities must conduct a traffic engineering study prior to the installation of a new unmanned traffic enforcement camera and adhere to posting and ticketing provisions. (See page 3 for more information on this legislation.) | [Read](#)

#### State Street Aid Fund Revenues and Expenditures: On the Road to Understanding (2011)

*Ron Darden, Municipal Management Consultant*

The Tennessee Legislature authorized the state to distribute a portion of the proceeds from the state gasoline fuel taxes to incorporated cities and towns for use on municipal streets. The current allocation to cities is based on \$26.65 per capita. | [Read](#)

## MTAS Training Events and Conferences

### MUNICIPAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

This course will provide a summary of legislation of municipal impact passed during the 2011 session of the Tennessee General Assembly.

Aug. 10 Knoxville

Aug. 16 Jackson

Aug. 30 Franklin

### ACCOUNTING BASICS

This course will cover the basic accounting functions and concept of debits, credits, trial balances and more.

Aug. 24 Jackson

Aug. 24 Knoxville

Aug. 31 Franklin

### BASIC PRINCIPLES OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

This course is for those working on economic development in local government and focuses on a global perspective by defining economic development, explaining why it is important and discussing current trends.

Aug. 23 Knoxville

Aug. 24 Franklin

Aug. 25 Jackson

For more information on these classes, contact Elaine Morrisey at [elaine.morrisey@tennessee.edu](mailto:elaine.morrisey@tennessee.edu).

The Municipal E-News is produced by the Municipal Technical Advisory Service, an agency of the University of Tennessee Institute for Public Service, in an effort to meet the challenge of providing timely, valuable information and assistance to Tennessee cities to build better communities. The University of Tennessee is an EEO/AA/Title VI/Title IX/Section 504/ADA/ADEA institution in the provision of its education and employment programs and services. MTAS1605 • E4-1050-000-007-12