



FOURTH FLOOR RENOVATION

GET TO KNOW DONALD JENKINS

DEPARTMENT NEWS

EMPLOYEE ANNIVERSARIES



CITYWORKS

NEWSLETTER FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF KNOXVILLE

City County Building Renovation is Largest Ever

Ninety-three City employees have been in their new work space only a few months, but the impressive renovation is already starting to transform the way the City does business.

It's the largest redesign in the City County Building since it opened its doors in 1979.

In late December 2018, three departments moved into their new spaces on the fourth floor: Engineering, Plans Review and Inspections, and Planning. This completed Phase 2 of the new project and followed Phase 1, which restored the public hallway on the floor. Phase 3 involves relocation of some Fire Department employees, and renovation is now underway.

With customer service and creativity in mind, the 24,000-square-foot renovation has combined these teams that for many years worked on different floors.

The City's goal in launching the renovation project? A better public customer experience. And from early public and employee response, the redesigned floor



Building renovation continued on page 2

Mayor's Message



Mayor Madeline Rogero

Welcome to the spring edition of City Works!

This edition focuses on the redesign of the Engineering, Plans Review and Inspections, and Planning offices in the City County Building in order to become more customer-focused. This renovation is more than cosmetic; it improves and streamlines the public's experience with key Development Services departments.

We are often reminded that the public depends on our responsiveness – on an everyday basis and during times of crisis.

Last month, when our region was devastated by historic flooding, our community and City staff responded quickly and compassionately. I want to again thank our employees who made a difference during some trying and dangerous weeks.

At the end of the wettest February on record, an average of more than 5 inches of rain fell on Feb. 23. The Knoxville-Knox County Emergency Operations Center was activated and City staff immediately jumped into action.

Personnel from Knoxville Police Department, the Knoxville Fire Department, the 311 Center for Service Innovation, Engineering and Public Service teamed up to perform rescues, divert traffic away from 143 closed roads, and then get the city back on its feet.

After the initial response was addressed, City departments, such as Engineering, Parks and Recreation, Risk Management, Facilities, Finance and others assessed short-term and long-term issues and impacts.

I am grateful for City employees' speed and professionalism during the crisis.

 [Facebook.com/MayorRogero](https://www.facebook.com/MayorRogero)

 [Twitter.com/MayorRogero](https://twitter.com/MayorRogero)

Renovation: continued from page 1

has already made it easier for the City and its customers to do business.

Easy collaboration among departments in the renovated space that is both efficient and intentional is also a priority.

Deputy to the Mayor and Chief Operating Officer David Brace calls the redesign the start of an even bigger process.

"It's a journey," says Brace. "This project is the start of making our developing process easier. It is one big step in making our customer experience better and empowering our employees as they make decisions and work efficiently with other departments."

"We know future improvements are important. So we want to be responsive to Development Services' needs, and we'll also be

Renovation: continued on page 4

Employee Anniversaries

10 years

Wendy Michelle Bowman
Amanda Bradley
Justin Edward Davis
Lisa Hatfield
James Richard King
John Robert Little, Jr.
Eric Jason McDowell
Evangeline Alexandria Moore
Vernal Jacky Smith II
Jenny Ann Stuart
William Sturgis
Chad Weth
Alan Whitson

15 Years

Mark Karnes
Haley Elizabeth Starr

20 years

Peggy Auel
Donna L. Best
William D. Hopper
Chris A. Johnson
Christopher W. Jones
Roberta Painter
Danny Seiber

25 years

Christopher Stewart Baldwin
Bernhard Curt Braeuner
Gerald Thomas George II
Joel Huffaker
Aaron John Loeffler
Bobby Joe Maxwell
Janis Maynard
Ronnie Newman
Jeff Pappas
James Edward Quick Jr.
James Jeffrey Settlemyer
Sammy Shaffer
Marvin Lee Shaw
Tommy Eugene Walker

Employee Anniversaries

30 years

James Kenneth Arnold
Dennis Beckley
Danny Beeler
Jaquetta Brooks
Christopher Ray Dyer
Christopher Allen Foster
Jay Jenkins Jr.
Jeffrey Levy
Neal Ricky Maney
Mark Morris

40 years

Thomas P. Armstrong
Carol Mahler
Deborah C. Moore
Paula Troutt

45 years

Rodney E. Wilson

Departmental News & Notes

Knoxville Police Department Graduation

Congratulations to the nine new KPD officers who were sworn in March 14 after completing 22 weeks of training.

The members of 2018-B Basic Recruit Class bring a wide range of experiences to the force. Their training and commitment will make them valuable members of our law enforcement team.

Thanks to the training staff and the strong leadership of our Knoxville Police Department for preparing these officers for their new roles.



Above: KPD 2018 B Basic Recruit Class



Right: Mayor Rogero and KPD Chief Eve Thomas are joined by 2018-B Basic Recruit Class President Joseph F. Adams.



Deputy Finance Director Boyce Evans Named Manager of the Year

Deputy Finance Director Boyce Evans was named Manager of the Year by the East Tennessee Purchasing Association (ETPA) at its annual awards ceremony in February.

Evans has served the City of Knoxville as its Purchasing Agent for many years before being promoted to his current role.

Nominated for the award by his co-workers, Evans received well-deserved praise in the introduction that named him winner: “He has progressively accepted the call of meeting his employer’s needs.... He has improved the overall climate of his organization through sound procurement principles, integrity and teamwork. When asked by outsiders about his success, he selflessly points to his team and they in turn point to his leadership.”

Congratulations, Boyce!

Departmental News & Notes

Kevin Perry Receives Robert Booker Service Award

Save Our Sons Community Outreach Coordinator Kevin A. Perry was among six pastors to receive the Robert Booker Service Award at Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Inc.'s Image Awards and Founders' Day Luncheon on Jan. 12.

In addition to his day-to-day work closing opportunity gaps for young men of color, Kevin is Bishop of Word of Life Ministries in the Burlington neighborhood.

The Image Awards honor individuals throughout the community who project a positive image through their daily lives. Kevin's enthusiasm and unwavering spirit continually inspires the Save Our Sons partner organizations he engages with as well as his coworkers.

Congratulations, Kevin!



Renovation: continued from page 2

measuring our progress in customer service.”

Instead of the property owners heading for different parts of the building for a building permit, they now walk a short 20 steps from the fourth floor elevator. Under the umbrella of Development Services, customers can get the engineering and plans and review assistance needed to move their home gazebo project or commercial neighborhood development forward. Just a few more steps through the lobby, and customers can work with Knoxville-Knox County Planning (formerly Metropolitan Planning Commission).

“Now our people are coming to the customer, rather than the customer coming to us,” said Kristin Grove, Public Building Authority Director of Property Development.

Digital smart screens and staff welcome customers as they approach the service area they need. Once inside the work spaces of the departments, customers walk into naturally lit, fresh offices and spacious work stations.

The new modern design called for taking down walls and putting up new ones in strategic areas to ensure the massive windows' natural light and breathtaking views

of the Tennessee River reached far into the new, open spaces.

This mood-boosting byproduct of the redesign for both customer and employee is not the only benefit.

“The open areas and close proximity to other departments make it easy and quicker to work together,” says Micah Herren, PBA Property Development Operations Manager.

“It's an open concept of flow that makes it easy to collaborate, reach out to colleagues and ask for a project review. Before this phase was completed, work was spread out over the fourth and fifth floors, and so were our customers,” Herren said.

“Before this renovation, people were working with colleagues in other departments that many had never met,” said Chris Howley, City Engineering Planning Chief. “It's easy now to discuss questions with people who are working on the same project from another department.”

“At the end of the day, we're already seeing improved customer services. You simply walk to the Development Services desk, and you don't even have to know what



“The open areas and close proximity to other departments make it easy and quicker to work together,” says Micah Herren, PBA Property Development Operations Manager.

Renovation: continued on page 5

Renovation: continued from page 4

kind of permit you need. The help is right there.”

Brandon Littlejohn, City Development Services Coordinator, also says customers are already noticing and commenting that they like the clean, lit space and having everything on one floor.

“Our permit technicians now have their own work spaces with customers,” he said. “Whether you want to build a restaurant or a chicken coop in the city, you come here. Our technicians are the front face of this office.”

With new conference rooms that include interactive 65-inch screens, customers can see their project with Engineering and Plans Review staff. “Our customers see what we see,” Littlejohn said. “This is huge for them.”

For Plans Review and Building Inspections, customer service is a mindset today, and the redesign of the fourth floor is making it easier to build a team that sees the bigger picture.

“We don’t swing the hammer, but in our review of commercial and residential developments and in our inspections, we make sure these structures stand the test of time and are energy efficient,” said Peter Ahrens, Director of Plans Review and Inspections.

“We’re better stewards today of the customer’s needs, and that’s in part due to the new floor redesign. Everyone who is working on the same project now from several departments is working just feet away from their other colleagues.” This natural collaboration makes the work more efficient, he says.

Ahrens also believes when customer service is a top priority, it helps drive economic development.

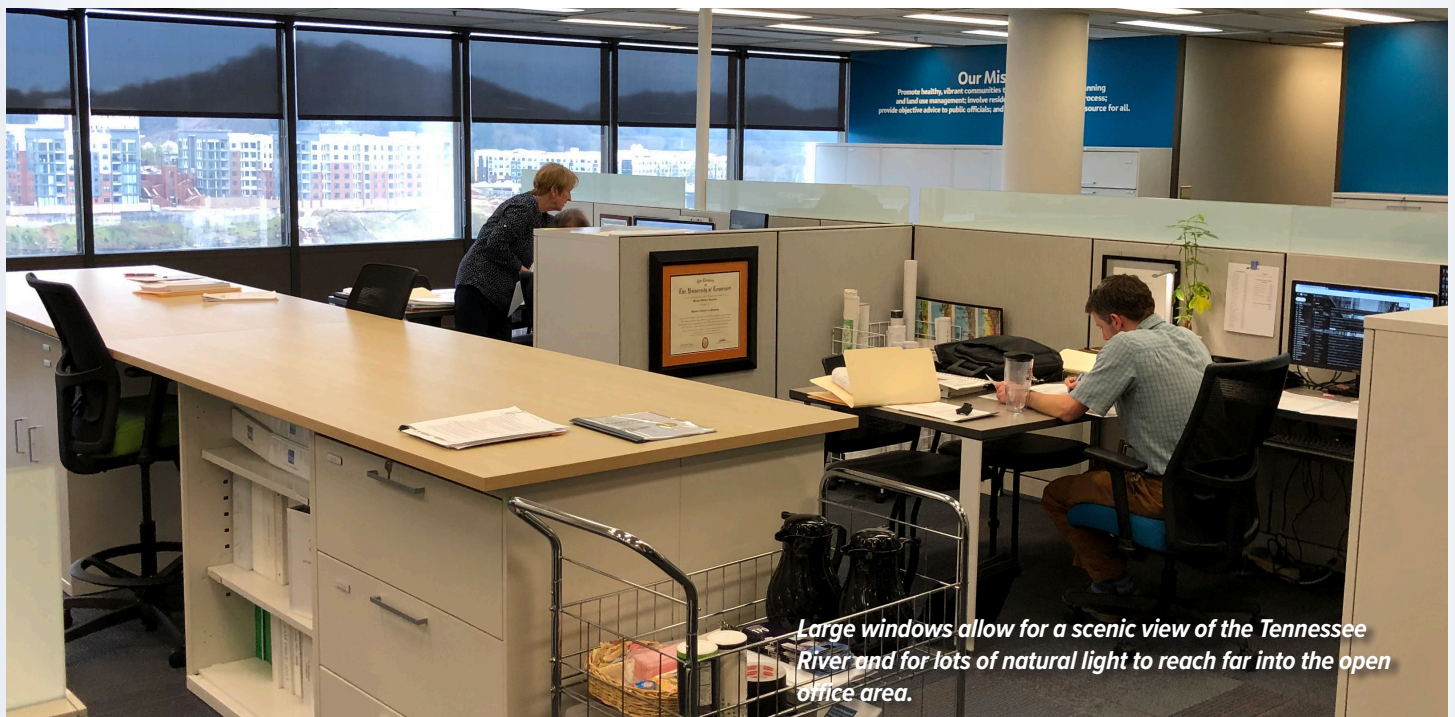
He is so sure of this, he recently invited Knoxville Chamber leaders to talk with his staff about how Development Services’ work is part of the city’s economic growth.

“We have planned this project for a long time,” Brace says. “We want the change to continue to be as smooth as possible. Co-locating all our Development Services is a good first step and the start of a great customer experience as well as an improved co-working experience.”

The architect for the renovation is Johnson Architecture Inc., and the contractor is Johnson & Galyon Construction. — *Mary Leidig*



The open concept flow makes it easy for colleagues to work together.



Large windows allow for a scenic view of the Tennessee River and for lots of natural light to reach far into the open office area.

10 Questions with Donald Jenkins



Above: Donald Jenkins, shown at the Will Baxter Cabin. Will Baxter was Jenkins' great great grandfather and a settler in the area before the creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Below right: Donald on the trail at historic Meigs Post on Mount Collins.

1. Tell us about yourself, Donald. Where are you from?

I grew up in Cosby, Tennessee. We lived just outside of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. My grandparents originally lived within the Great Smoky Mountains Park property and were moved out for the creation of the park. I graduated from Cosby High School and graduated from East Tennessee State University.

2. How long have you been working with the City of Knoxville, and what is your role here?

I've worked here over 32 years. My first day was July 14, 1986. I work in the Civil Engineering Division of the Engineering Department. My job title is Chief Professional Surveyor, and I manage the surveying work for the City as it relates to surveying for design and construction of the City's Capital Improvement Projects.

3. How many employees work with you? Tell us about the staff.

The Civil Engineering Division has 25 employees, eight of those work specifically within the surveying section. I haven't met all of the employees who work for the City, but I can tell you that my co-workers are among the best and brightest who work for the City. They would be the elite group of employees at any workplace.

4. What do you enjoy most about your work with the City?

The positive can-do attitude and complete competence of my co-workers makes it an enjoyable and friendly working atmosphere.

5. Tell us about your family.

My wife, Lisa, and I have three sons and two grandsons. Josh is the oldest. He and his wife Hanah have our grandson Declan. Scott is in the

middle. He and his wife Leah have our grandson Fletcher. Logan is the youngest.

6. You are quite the avid hiker! Tell us more about your impressive hiking experiences in the Great Smoky Mountains, and what does it mean to be a "900 miler"?

In October of 2018, I completed hiking all of the officially maintained hiking trails in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, both in Tennessee and North Carolina. Individuals who complete all the trails in the Smokies are commonly referred to as "900 milers." If you have "hiked 'em all," you can apply for membership in the 900 MILER CLUB, (<http://900miler.smhclub.org/>). I was the 580th member to join. The oddity about the "900" in the 900 miler club is that no hiker can actually hike all of the trails in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in just 900 miles. Even though I hiked regularly for years, I didn't decide to specifically hike all the trails until 2017. For the calendar year 2017, I hiked 860 total trail miles in the Park. I actually hiked several thousand miles overall, in order to "hike 'em all." And I'm well on my way now to "hiking 'em all" twice.





Donald Jenkins, an official member of the "900 Miler Club," shown here at the Thomas Divide Trail.

7. How long have you been hiking?

I've been hiking more than 55 years. My earliest memory of hiking in the Smokies was in the early 1960s on what is now called Goshen Prong Trail with my dad and his friends. He would hike with me and my brothers to Fish Camp Prong, where we would usually camp and fish for a week or two during each stay.

8. What other pastimes do you enjoy?

Of course camping and fishing go right along with the hiking, but I really enjoy spending time and being involved with all the activities of my kids and grandkids.

9. In preparation, do you participate in any special training for your longer hikes? What is the longest hike you've completed and where?

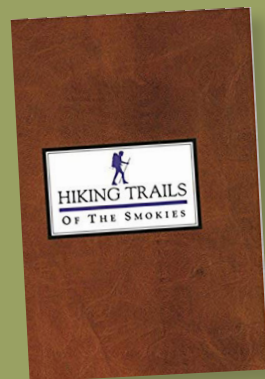
I've not really completed any really long hikes. I did a few day hikes over 28 miles on different parts of the Appalachian Trail and several day hikes over 20 miles. No special training, but I get my steps in daily to keep the physical activity log.

10. Finally, what has surprised you the most during your many hikes?

Even though the Great Smoky Mountains National Park is over a half million acres, it seems to get smaller with each hike. Once you have started a day at the bottom of one side of the mountain range in Tennessee and finished the day at the bottom of the other side of the mountain range in North Carolina, you realize that a one-day hike is all it takes to cross the entire park.

—Mary Leidig

Donald's must-have book for any hiker: "Hiking Trails of the Smokies" by the Great Smoky Mountains Natural History



Association. Hikers commonly call it "The Little Brown Book."

Newsletter Contact Information

If you have a story idea or an employee you would like to see interviewed for 10 Questions please contact:

Eric Vreeland

Sr. Director of Communications & Government Relations
865-215-3480

evreeland@knoxvilletn.gov

Fiona McAnally

Deputy Director of Communications
865-215-3710

fmcanally@knoxvilletn.gov

Traci McDonell

Webmaster & Photographer
865-215-2177

tmcdonell@knoxvilletn.gov

Mary Leidig

Public Information Specialist
865-215-2946

mleidig@knoxvilletn.gov

Paige Travis

Public Information Specialist
865-215-3659

ptravis@knoxvilletn.gov

Dan Frye

Graphic Designer
865-215-2163

dfrye@knoxvilletn.gov