

JOHNSON COUNTY
JOINT ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
222 West Main Street
Mountain City, Tennessee 37683
423.727.9696



PUBLIC NOTICE

JOHNSON COUNTY
JOINT ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
WILL MEET

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2026

AT 12:00 P.M.

THE MEETING WILL BE HELD IN THE
MAYOR'S OFFICE
AT THE
JOHNSON COUNTY COURTHOUSE
222 WEST MAIN STREET
MOUNTAIN CITY, TENNESSEE

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JOINT ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
222 West Main Street
Mountain City, TN 37683



AGENDA

Monday, February 9, 2026

12:00pm

TO: Johnson County Joint Economic & Community Development: Jeff Fritts, Dick Grayson, Mayor Larry Potter, Angie Stout, Audra Gerty (Town of Mountain City), Eric Gorman (Town of Mountain City – Recreation Advisory Board), Thomas Sherill (Tomahawk)

FROM: Mayor Larry Potter

LOCATION: County Mayor Office | Johnson County Courthouse

AGENDA:

1. Public Comments
2. Roll Call
3. Minutes-Approve from November 10, 2025
4. Sink Mountain update.
5. National Guard Armory Update-Approximate Completion date of June 2026.
6. Meat Processing Facility Project update -On Schedule with opening date.
7. Transfer Station -Equipment Grant update.
8. Tourism Update- Sheila Caldwell
9. ThreeStar Update-
 1. Grant-Submitted to fund construction costs for the proposed pickleball/softball complex; economic impact/feasibility studies for the proposed wellness center and trail expansion projects.
 2. Workshops - working with Bridge Regional to schedule dates which will probably be in March at the earliest. Each ThreeStar Goal will have its own strategic planning workshop. The cost for this is being covered by Bridge Regional.
10. Hotel/Motel Recruitment
11. Industrial Development Update-Reach out monthly to realtor concerning Parkdale/Pheonix Medical Expansion

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12. FEMA, Roads, Long Term Recovery update-Mayor Jordan, Mayor Potter
13. Any other matters which may duly come before the committee for official action.

November 10.2025

JECD Board meeting

Johnson County Courthouse – County Mayor’s Office

Board Members present: Jeff Fritts, Dick Grayson, Mayor Larry Potter, Angie Stout

Others Present: Audra Gerty (Town of Mountain City), Eric Gorman (Town of Mountain City – Recreation Advisory Board), Thomas Sherill (Tomahawk)

1. There were no public comments
2. The August 19, 2025 meeting minutes were approved with one correction. Dick Grayson was left off of the attendee list and needs to be added since he was at that meeting.
3. Sink Mountain Boat Ramp: This project is complete with the ramp and access area getting significant use. There was some discussion about additional amenities in the future.
4. National Guard Armory: Completion is now anticipated to be around June 2026. For those who would like to have a tour of the space see Mayor Potter.
5. Meat Processing Facility Project: Anticipated opening around February 2026. To visit the site see Mayor Potter.
6. Transfer Station: New Expansion is complete. The station continues to take in more volume than it was originally built for. The county is currently working with TDEC to try to get a bailer for cardboard.
7. Tourism and ThreeStar: See separate documents prepared and provided by Sheila Caldwell with considerable updates related to both tourism and the ThreeStar projects.
8. Hotel/Motel Recruitment: County is working with state leaders to implement a feasibility study needed to support the recruitment of lodging businesses.
9. At the time of this meeting the Parkdale property had still not been priced. The company is still working with their insurance. Mayor Potter continues to reach out to the realtor. There needs to be a price so the state can help with marketing of the property.
10. Phoenix Medical bought 12 acres near the transfer station and will be investing millions to expand their business. It’s anticipated that the company will grow to 500 employees upon completion of their expansion.

11. Long-term recovery group continues to serve as the hub for those needing assistance due to Hurricane Helene.

12. other items of discussion

- Discussed the closure of Food Country and potential impact on the community. Mayor Potter reached out to multiple grocery chains to let them know and to assess interest in locating a store in Johnson County.
- Discussed the lack of flat land need by some small industries
- TN Hills Distillery – no currently time line for operation



Visit MOUNTAIN CITY - TENNESSEE -

Date: January 8, 2026

To: Johnson County Mayor, Johnson County Commission & Joint ECD Committee

From: Sheila Caldwell - Tourism / ThreeStar Coordinator

Subject: Tourism Office & ThreeStar Quarterly Update (*October–December 2025*)

TOURISM OFFICE QUARTERLY UPDATE

During the October–December reporting period, the Tourism Office coordinated paid advertising through the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development (TDTD) Tourism Marketing Grant for the following signature events:

- **100th Anniversary of the Mountain City Fiddlers' Convention** (October)
- **Shady Valley Cranberry Festival** (October)
- **Christmas on Main** (November–December)

In addition, the Tourism Office provided professional videography and photography services to capture key elements of the 100th Anniversary of the Mountain City Fiddlers' Convention. The Tourism Office also worked closely with **The Kody Norris Show** on event coordination to support the successful production of this two-day centennial celebration.

Projects in Progress

TDTD Tourism Marketing Grant

The following projects are currently underway and will continue into early 2026:

- **Johnson County Tri-Fold Visitor Guide**
A professionally designed visitor guide is in development, with distribution planned for Spring 2026 to regional welcome centers, rest areas, hotels, lodging providers, and local businesses.
- **Tennessee Vacation Guide Advertising**
Johnson County will be featured in the official Tennessee Vacation Guide, reaching more than 500,000 visitors annually through print and digital distribution. The guide is available at 16 Tennessee Welcome Centers and through online and e-guide platforms.
- **Shady Valley Festival of Quilts**
Paid advertising support will be provided for the April 2026 festival as part of the grant's ongoing event promotion strategy.

Tourism Enhancement Grant

The Tourism Office was awarded a Tourism Enhancement Grant to support installation of an LED Interactive Video Wall at the new event venue in the former armory building. The grant also funded a professional audio study to inform sound system design and installation for the venue.

Current Tourism Initiatives

- **Tennessee Songwriters Week – Qualifying Round**
Mountain City was selected by TD TD as a host site for a qualifying round of the 2026 Tennessee Songwriters Week. The Tourism Office is partnering with Doe Valley Farm, which will host the event on Saturday, January 31.
- **Tourism Website Expansion**
Expansion and enhancement of the tourism website is underway, with completion targeted for Spring 2026.
- **Short-Term Rental Technical Assistance Program**
An application is being prepared for TD TD's Short-Term Rental Technical Assistance Program.
- **America 250 Support**
The Tourism Office is working with community groups on promotion and planning for America 250-related events and programming.
- **Tennessee Arts Commission Grant**
A grant application will be submitted by January 20 to support museum and arts-related programming.

THREESTAR UPDATE

Johnson County's short-term and long-term ThreeStar goals have been approved by the State. Work continues with goal-specific subcommittees in coordination with the Joint ECD Committee. In partnership with **BRIDGE Regional**, free workshops will be scheduled soon to support strategic planning and implementation for each approved goal.

Permanent Farmers Market

Short-Term Goal

- A meeting was held with representatives from the **Appalachian RC&D Council** to discuss the permanent farmers market concept and agritourism opportunities in Johnson County.
- Follow-up discussions are needed with the Johnson County Farmers Market to further advance this project.

Enhanced Wellness & Recreation Opportunities

Short-Term and Long-Term Goals

In December, the County submitted a ThreeStar Grant Application through TNECD requesting funding for:

- Construction costs associated with the **walking trail** at the proposed Pickleball/Softball Complex located between the county hospital and the former armory property

- An **economic impact and feasibility study** for a proposed **wellness center** in Johnson County
- An **economic impact and feasibility study** for a proposed **13-mile greenway** connecting Ralph Stout Park to the Laurel Creek Trailhead

The Tourism Office continues to promote wellness-focused initiatives as a key component of quality of life, workforce attraction, and tourism development through the county website and social media platforms.

Lodging Development

Long-Term Goal

- An application for a hotel feasibility study through TDTD was submitted but not awarded.
- The County is applying for TDTD's **Short-Term Rental Technical Assistance Program**, which provides expert guidance, data analysis, and policy tools to help communities manage short-term rentals while supporting tourism and protecting housing availability and neighborhood quality of life. This no-cost program runs through **November 2026**.
- The “**Places to Stay**” section of the tourism website is being expanded to better showcase existing lodging partners.
- Once the new tri-fold visitor guide is completed, brochures will be distributed to AirBnBs, Boutique Motels, RV parks, and campgrounds for guest use.

Johnson County Business Association

Short-Term and Long-Term Goal

- While meetings and discussions have taken place, no significant progress has been achieved to date.
- Through upcoming BRIDGE Regional workshops, a strategic plan and playbook are anticipated to address the association's structure, mission, management, and long-term sustainability.

TENNESSEE SONGWRITERS WEEK

**Qualifying Rounds
Jan 25 - Feb 7, 2026**

Brought to you by:

TENNESSEE
SOUNDS PERFECT



NSAI
NASHVILLE
SONGWRITERS
ASSOCIATION
INTERNATIONAL

OFFICIAL QUALIFYING ROUND IN MOUNTAIN CITY!

SATURDAY, JANUARY 31, 2026 FROM 1:00PM-5:00PM

APPLICATIONS ARE OPEN NOW! ONLY 16 CONTESTANTS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

NO COMPETITION FEE. NO ADMISSION CHARGE.

VISIT MOUNTAINCITYTN.COM FOR DETAILS!

