

GREENE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROUP

April 25, 2006 Minutes by Kelly Smith

Greene County is known as an area able to promote growth but maintain its small town atmosphere.

Those in attendance at the GCEDG luncheon sponsored by IREC: **Melanie Nash** (First Bank), **Willie Rees** (Farmers State Bank & GCEDG), **Tom Meehan** (Illinois REC Board Member), **Terry Denison** (JREDC), **Ernie Downey** (JREDC), **Chuck Frost** (JREDC), **Carl Moran** (White Hall Natl. Bank), **Scott Rhodes** (Carrollton Bank), **Paul White** (Premier Bank), **Greg Nieman** (Soyland Power), **Don Roberts** (Greene County Board, GCEDG), **Sandra Schmidt** (GCEDG), **Jason Walker** (GCEDG), **Kirby Ballard** (GCEDG), **Gail Schutz** (GCEDG), **Wilma Chappée** (GCEDG), **Shawn Begalka** (GCEDG), **Maxine Longmeyer** (Greene County Board), **Ron Coultas** (IREC, GCEDG). The purpose of the meeting was to encourage Greene County banks to join the Jacksonville Regional Economic Development Committee. JREDC has the experience and resources to bring business to Greene County, while our own GCEDG can continue to develop projects within the county.

Sandra Schmidt attended the Corridor 67, Inc Annual Meeting and was appointed to the Executive Committee. She was the only Greene County representative in attendance. Economic development groups, state representatives, senators, the DCEO and IDOT, attended the meeting. We were brought up to date on road progress as well as the budget to finish corridor 67 and other works in progress. Our group was praised for its response to the letter writing campaign.

Wilma Chappée and **Sandra Schmidt** met with Senator Demuzio regarding the Greene County Almshouse. The senator is very interested in working with the county to save the house. Subsequent to their visit GCEDG sent a letter requesting monies to put a new roof on the Almshouse and secure it from further damage.

Wilma Chappée gave a presentation on the Almshouse. She worked there from 1989-1991 with the youth. They maintained the yard and out buildings. "It looked like someone lived there," she recalls. The building has been left to waste away since. In its day the Almshouse was recognized as one of the best poor farms by the state. The idea of repairing the house has been in the papers lately and will encourage others to join the "save the house" campaign. A name was given to Wilma, David Wieshart, if you know this person please let Wilma know.

Rick Keim from the U of I Extension shared with us some of the tools the Extension can provide for our group:

- Education for local elected officials- improving Illinois leaders' effectiveness
- Improve the Community Business Climate- Business planning & marketing, workforce development
- Land-use planning- managing growth through citizen collaboration

This is just a few of the services U of I can provide. Please read the pamphlet for more information.

Group Reports

Business Survey -Robin Hannah from Illinois Business of Current Affairs is reviewing our survey

Organization - Greene County Economic Development Committee, Inc. that was active decades ago can be resurrected. We will be able to use its non-for-profit status to procure grants and get this group going. Paperwork is being processed to fulfill this goal.

Funding -When we are a legal entity we will be able to form memberships and move forward from there.

Value added Ag: news of the oil refinery's progress in our county is encouraging, also Willie Rees brought in articles re: ethanol and its expanding uses.

Project: Greene County Alms House Rehab Work with Historical groups, County Board, Government... Can this house be saved? Let's try!

Home Work: Clip news article of interest to share with the group.

In Attendance at tonight's meeting: Rick Keim, Jason Walker, Sylvia Kallal, Don Roberts, Chad Schutz, Willie Rees, Kirby Ballard, Wilma Chappee, Joe Clark, Ron Coultas, Kelly Smith, Bob Morrow and Sandra Schmidt.

Next Meeting: Tuesday May 23, 7:00 Rockbridge Township Building, Greenfield.