

The Courier

Mount Pulaski benefits from Enel wind farm

By Jean Ann Miller / The Courier

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MOUNT PULASKI — The people of Mount Pulaski are putting the money from the Enel Green Power wind farm to good use.

Mount Pulaski Economic Development chairman Tom Martin outlined the progress his town has seen with the community funds Enel has contributed through its HillTopper wind farm. According to Martin, Economic Development gets \$110,000, and the Mount Pulaski Courthouse Foundation gets \$25,000 annually.

“It’s not only about the money. It’s bringing everyone together with the purpose of creating a better life. Our thoughts are to stabilize and grow the community,” said Martin.

Mount Pulaski Mayor Matt Bobell said the city was approached in March 2017 and everyone recognized the need to bring people together.

“We wanted to make our town better. It’s been a crazy ride but it is something I am proud to be a part of,” said Bobell.

Martin explained creating a new co-op food program located on the corner of Cooke and Lafayette streets on the square in Mount Pulaski.

He introduced Shaun Tyson, who will serve as the project manager for the co-op being named the Market on the Hill.

“This program will offer fresh fruits and vegetables and will also offer local sourced meat with a deli case. We hope to get this up and running by 2020,” said Tyson.

The dream for Market on the Hill is to use local producers but also use sources from other local retailers.

“We want this to be affordable, convenient and offer healthy alternatives. Given our climate I don’t know too many who grow bananas in this area so we will have to piggyback on others,” said Tyson.

Martin said plans include a community garden on 10 acres with the goal of building hoop houses to have fresh vegetables year round.

Tyson said he would also like to focus on the community needs with the use of technology.

“I foresee people texting us what they need and then we can have it ready for them for pickup, or for our elderly have it delivered,” said Tyson.

Martin added he is tired of seeing old buildings go to waste and feels it represents an opportunity to revitalize his hometown.

“We have had more young people become involved and that just stoked the fire. I see it as a way to capitalize on that interest,” said Martin.

The Mount Pulaski Courthouse Foundation, the group tasked to keep the historic icon standing, is also receiving money from Enel to continue to support the history of Mount Pulaski and the connection it had with Abraham Lincoln.

Zion Lutheran School and Mount Pulaski School District 23 are also benefiting from Enel. Zion will receive \$50,000 and District 23 \$140,000 annually for the life of the project, based on a projected 30-year lifespan.

Chris Hardy, community relations with Enel, said he feels the cash infusion is helping those who want to see their community thrive.

“Our company has set the goal of partnering with the communities. We start where the people are and fund the future. Our hopes with funding education initiatives is to grow our workforce,” he said.