

Marshall delegation meets with KC mayor

By Carlos Restrepo. The Marshall Democrat-News: April 19, 2013.

A delegation of five Marshall public officials as well as representatives from other west central Missouri towns met with Kansas City Mayor Sly James Friday, April 19, to discuss ways for the Kansas City metropolitan area to cooperate with rural communities in improving the area economy.

Zimmer Companies, the group responsible for the recent Saline County Economic Development Plan, organized the invitation-only luncheon at Papa Lew's Soul Food Restaurant in Kansas City.

"The only way for us to survive and thrive is to collaborate," James said to a crowd of approximately 75 people, which included Marshall Mayor Mark Gooden, City Administrator Connie Latimer and Councilmembers Ron Duvall, Gabe Ramsey and Sam Moten.

Hugh J. Zimmer, chairman and CEO of Zimmer Cos., state representatives Dean Dohrman (R-La Monte) and Randy Dunn (D-Kansas City) as well as the mayors of Higginsville, Richmond, Lexington and Slater, were also at the event.

Marshall-Saline Development Corporation president Bill Riggins attended the event with his wife, Shermaine. Riggins was recognized for spearheading economic development and partnership in the region.

Riggins invited those in attendance to realize the unique economic strengths each town possesses.

"If we all pull together, it's amazing what we can do," Riggins said.

James had a similar message. He said all the towns, rural or urban, deal with the same issues and want the same for its citizens.

"We may have differences in our community, but we all want to see our economy work," James said.

James, however, noted the road for economic partnerships and developments would not be immediate.

"Don't be looking for immediate results," James said. "Look at those long term solutions."

He said it would take for all of those in attendance to continue to network with neighboring communities and coming up with a plan.

"But at least now you know where to focus," James said.