

08-09 Budgets OK'd for WCIC,  
Hotel/Motel Tax funds  
By JOHN SPARKS

Meeting in regular session Thursday, July 3 in Mineola, the board of the Wood County Industrial Commission (WCIC) approved proposed 2008-2009 budgets for the Hotel Motel Tax Fund and the WCIC general fund. The board also approved continued financial and promotional support for the Wood County Extension Service Agricultural Tour and the Winnsboro Business Expo.

Directors approved both the proposed general budget for next fiscal year 2008-2009 for WICI as well as one for the Hotel/Motel Tax Fund.

The Wood County Extension Service Agricultural Tour highlights an important economic segment of the county. The tour is a very popular annual event. It traditionally is held on the final Tuesday in September.

Gary McKinley, executive director of the Wood County Industrial Commission led a discussion about the importance of the "creative class" in rural development using as an example Paul Parmer's purchase of 140 acres near Mineola and the planned \$20-million development for a tiger rehabilitation facility near Mineola. McKinley referenced an article in the April 14, 2008 New York Times entitled "Despite Tough Times, Ultrarich Keep Spending."

McKinley reported sales tax applications for new businesses in Wood County during June 2008 totaled 27 compared with 37 last year.

The next meeting of the Wood County Industrial Commission is scheduled for Thursday, August 7, 2008.