Americus Sumter Chamber of Commerce’s Bylaws Rewritten
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In 2012, the Americus Sumter Chamber of Commerce and the Americus Sumter Payroll Development Authority (ASPDA) began discussing the idea of a merger to bring the two entities and their functions under one roof. The combination of the two organizations would create a singular structure and streamline responsibility for business recruitment and retention.

Though the streamlining process would promote efficiency and combine the public and private sector efforts of each entity to create a more focused economic development effort, it also meant that the Chamber of Commerce needed to visit its bylaws. Shortly thereafter, the Sumter Archway Executive Committee established a need to review the existing Chamber’s bylaws and analyze any duplication of effort during the process.

When the Chamber and PDA merged in 2013, the mission of the Chamber shifted. However, the bylaws still reflected positions and duties that had been dissolved by the change in structure. In addition, the existing bylaws had not been updated since 1996 and were not reflective of today’s technology and means of communication such as email, and conference calls when calling for a vote. The change in structure also meant that new positions and duties would be created, allowing the Chamber to address new community priorities. The Chamber decided it would define its focus by working in four areas: membership, health and wellness, workforce development, and agriculture.

In July 2013, Barbara Grogan, the executive director of the ASPDA, worked with Archway to address organizational needs including the complete bylaws overhaul. By September, the specifics for the overhaul were outlined and that point Taha Hameduddin, a Public Administration graduate student assisted with the process.

In October 2013, the bylaws were presented to the Chamber and on February 20, 2014, the bylaws were voted upon and accepted.

“Archway has once again proved why it is so great,” says Barbara Grogan. “Archway helped us to strengthen our capacity by developing a pathway to move forward and make decisions for the organization.”

Advancing Community Priorities: Rewriting the Americus Sumter Chamber of Commerce’s bylaws fits perfectly with Sumter County’s community priorities, which include community-wide economic development. The revision allows for better organization and relevance to address the needs of the business community.