County should ‘ramp up enthusiasm’ for Archway

By KIMBERLY BROWN

Habersham County Archway partners and the community should ‘ramp up enthusiasm’ for having Archway stay in their county.

This was the message from Archway Partnership Executive Facilitator Mike Mixon and Habersham County Commissioner Natalie Crawford during the Archway Executive Committee meeting held Wednesday, March 11. After asking other key Professional Rick Story and Archway Partnership Coordinator Sue Chapman to step back and talk about enthusiasm for Archway, Crawford added, “With the support of the Archway Partnership, it’s a game changer. Mixon said, “It’s been a journey to where we are today. Crawford said, “Every community in America is having Archway. In other communities, it’s ‘How long can we keep it?’”

Mixon said since the Isaac County expanded its partnership with the University of Georgia, this has happened in Habersham as well. He added that the partnership is now a success with the new University of Georgia’s College of Public Health. Crawford said, “We just had our summit in our meeting as I imagine they were in yours.”

Habersham Archway partners currently include each city, the Habersham County Board of Commissioners, the Habersham County Development Authority, the Habersham Count Board of Education, Habersham County Chamber of Commerce, Piedmont College, North Georgia Technical College (NGTC), Georgia Power Co. (NGPC), Habersham Electric Membership Corp (HEMC) and NGPC.

As a result, Mixon said, “Every community needs to grow to the next level, we need to have that success, because that’s what will break more assistance.”

Crawford said other communities have faced similar challenges in Habersham, “It’s sending a great message to Archway, that we’re stepping up our efforts, Doxson said.”

She suggested the committee have an annual retreat, “I think that’s an important part of this. Make sure you set goals, etc.”

She added, “If people take our spot, I don’t want to see Archway go away. If we’re going to ‘take off our individual hats’ and think for the good of the entire region, then we need to have that success, because that’s what will break more assistance.”

Crawford said, “I get asked an awful lot, what’s the future of Archway in Habersham? That’s not the conversation other communities are having about Archway. In other communities, it’s ‘How long can we keep this?’”

Crawford said Archway is “all about effort and enthusiasm.”

“We're doing all right on the effort end, but we might be a little short on the enthusiasm,” she said.

“Archway is a tool that communities can use,” Crawford said. “It’s a way to ‘tou Archway’s successes,’ similar to the way Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) projects are tagged by signs, said IMC CEO and executive committee member Brian Wren.

Baldwin Mayor Jerry Nesbit said he has “no problem” putting up signs indicating projects were developed by Archway and paid for by SPLOST. He said the Baldwin City Council “thinks Archway is the best thing that’s happened in Baldwin.”

Crawford said Archway “is about effort and enthusiasm.”

“The time this year is different,” she said.

“Do you want to see Archway go away?” she asked.

“Don’t you want to see Archway go away?”

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