Jan. 3, 2023 Meeting Notes –

LaFayette Rotarians Meet New Executive Director of LaFayette Main Street

By Deanna Hand

The LaFayette Rotary Club held its first meeting of 2023 on Tuesday, January 3, 2023. Sheriff Sid Lockhart was responsible for the program today and invited Deanna Hand, executive director of LaFayette Main Street, as the speaker. Hand, a LaFayette native, was announced as the executive director on December 28, 2022, and this was her first official day on the job! Sheriff Lockhart also announced this would be his last Rotary meeting due to his retirement as sheriff and his new position.

Hand presented information on the aspirations of LaFayette Main Street and highlighted goals set by LaFayette Main Street Board of Directors and organization. According to Hand, the non-profit organization of Main Street Alabama has brought in over 3,136 new jobs to Alabama and over 916 new businesses. Public and private funding dollars have exceeded millions and towns are being reenergized.

LaFayette Main Street will be part of this movement and was formed in June 2022 when designated as a Main Street town.

“I am excited to build partnerships and progress to make LaFayette even better,” said Hand. She shared the uniqueness and values of her hometown of LaFayette that allow the charming town to be successful with Main Street revitalization.

LaFayette Main Street is under Main Street Alabama and the Four-Point Approach® to help communities organize themselves for success, improve the design of their town, promote their districts, and enhance their economic base.

“LaFayette Main Street values and honors our town and all citizens. Our town is built on relationships and community. We support and love our small businesses and want them to stay. We also want new businesses to join downtown and hope to see various businesses locate here to serve our families and offer enjoyment downtown”, said Hand.

Main Street stresses public-private partnerships, broad community engagement and strategies that create jobs, spark new investment, attract visitors, and spur growth in downtown. Main Street builds on the authentic history, culture, and attributes of specific places, to bring sustainable change.

Hand discussed how vital the community and local support will be to the success of Main Street and urged all to be a part of the organization. Citizens, business owners, educational systems, churches, friends and families of LaFayette, current and previous, and any others can become members and even volunteer for outreach events. Hand thanked the members of LaFayette Rotary, of which half attending the Rotary meeting, had a part in LaFayette Main Street being chosen as a designated town. “So many people have been instrumental in the success thus far and we are forever grateful”, said Hand.

“The year of 2023 will be big for LaFayette Main Street and the future of the town. With DeAnna in this leadership role, I know LaFayette will benefit immensely.” said Rotarian, Sheriff Sid Lockhart.

Now that the foundation has been established, goals have been identified, and board members appointed, Hand said she is ready to share how LaFayette Main Street can benefit the community. Events planned include Main Steet Alabama Resource Meeting set for January 24-26 to be hosted in LaFayette, Community Coffee Hours monthly, seasonal events and more.

LaFayette Main Street offers one on one meetings and educational sessions. They can be reached via email at lafayettemainstreet@gmail,com, Facebook at facebook.com/lafayettemainstreet and by phone at 334-524-1992. All donations, memberships, and sponsorship are tax deductible and can be mailed to Post Office Box 116, LaFayette, AL 36862.

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