

Julie Worley takes over as executive director for economic development

Written by Kyle Arnoldy

Julie Worley is still getting her feet wet as she just finished up her first month as the new Phillips County Economic Development executive director.

Worley is replacing Jeff Weaver, who occupied the position from September to November.

“I really do enjoy economic development, especially economic development in a small, rural community,” Worley explained. “Sometimes it is unknown to the people in the community, but there is so much the community has going for them. Sometimes you need those outside eyes to come in and see it.”



Worley expressed that one of her first orders of business is to work with the Holyoke and Haxtun Chambers of Commerce to promote buying locally. She noted that people tend to think that they have to go to a big city and large retail chains to get what they need but fail to realize what their small community has to offer.

While she is familiarizing herself with the people and businesses of Phillips County, Worley has benefitted from the guidance of Phillips County Economic Development board president Nici Bishop. Bishop served as the executive director from January 2006 until August of 2011 when she took over as board president. Worley and Bishop’s mother grew up together in Oshkosh, Neb.

“I have been able to tap into Nici’s knowledge and her expertise and past experiences with economic development to pick up some things I need to know about the job,” Worley said. “She has been a tremendous help.”

Currently Worley is in town a few days a week as she has been living in Oshkosh, helping take care of her 88-year-old father. In the near future, Worley plans to move to the community and settle in to her full-time position.

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Although she has had little time to fully introduce herself to the county, Worley is not unfamiliar with the area.

“I have always liked Holyoke. Through the past 40 years, coming and going to Nebraska, I always went right through Holyoke. I have always liked the town and am very much enjoying it,” Worley said.

“The people are friendly and there is a lot here. Maybe some of the local people don’t realize what there is here, but Holyoke has a lot going for it.”

Worley earned her undergraduate degree in business management from Colorado State University. She previously worked in economic development for a decade in Rocky Ford. Before she entered into economic development, Worley had worked as a director of human resources and as a legal secretary in her 30-plus years in the workforce.

In her free time, Worley is a big basketball enthusiast. All three of her sons played basketball at the collegiate level, and she hasn’t stopped following the sport since their graduations. She noted that her favorite part of the year is approaching as March Madness is about to kick off.

Some of her other hobbies include reading, cooking, yard-work and sewing.

For economic development questions, Worley can be reached at 970-854-4386.

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