

Minutes of the PCEDC Meeting
Person County Economic Development Boardroom
303 S. Morgan St., Roxboro, NC 27573
June 22, 2021

Voting Board Members Present:

Mr. Dale Reynolds-Vice Chairman
The Honorable Marilyn Newell-Secretary
Mr. Phillip Allen-Chairman
Mr. Danny Talbert

Mr. Kenneth Perry
The Honorable Gordon Powell
Mr. Donald Long
Mr. Ernie Wood

Ex Officios Present:

Ms. Heidi York, County Manager
Dr. Pamela Senegal, PCC Representative
Dr. Claudia Berryhill, Agricultural Representative

Ex Officios Absent:

Dr. Rodney Peterson, PCS Superintendent
Mr. Brooks Lockhart, City Manager

ED Staff Present:

Mrs. Sherry Wilborn, ED Director
Mrs. Brandy Lynch, ED Senior
Administrative Support
(Minutes)

Others Present:

Mr. Chad Chancellor, Next Move Group,
via Zoom
Mr. Jason Christie, Publisher, TBJ,
via Zoom
Ms. Courtney Bode, Marketing Director, TBJ
via Zoom
Ms. Anderson Clayton
Mr. John Seepe
Mr. George Willoughby
Mr. Bo Freeman

EDC Welcome and Invocation:

1. At 4:00 p.m., Chairman Allen called the meeting to order.
2. Dale Reynolds gave the invocation.

Approval of the April 2021 Meeting Minutes

3. Mr. Reynolds turns the floor over to The Honorable Merilyn Newell for review and approval of the April 2021 meeting minutes.

A motion was made, seconded and unanimously passed for approval of the April 2021 EDC Minutes.

Motion: Danny Talbert

Second: Dale Reynolds

Presentation of Virtual Building Tool:

4. Chairman Allen turns the floor over to Ms. Wilborn to introduce Mr. Chad Chancellor, CEO, of Next Move Group, who joins the meeting remotely for his presentation item only. Mr. Chancellor provides a presentation to the board on Next Move Group and a Virtual Building Tool. His presentation will be included into the minutes.

The board was able to ask questions in reference to the Virtual Building Tool; responses are below:

- Next Move Group hosts the tool on their website. This allows for a \$7K savings and gives clients access to Lead Forensic findings.
- Lead Forensic allows clients to know who is clicking on the website.
- There is no annual hosting cost.
- The drawings are stamped and sealed. If there are changes by the customers to the drawings, that will come at an additional charge.
- Most costumers like using local engineers and some do use their own engineers for the virtual building tool, but that is an additional charge.

Presentation of Promotional Opportunities:

5. Wilborn introduces Ms. Courtney Bode, Director of Advertising, and Mr. Jason Christie, Publisher, with Triangle Business Journal, who join the meeting remotely for this presentation item only. Wilborn explains that in April of 2021, Courtney presented a marketing opportunity to all the developers in the Research Triangle Partnership for a six-month advertising opportunity that would include the Triangle Business Journal partners as well.

Jason Christie started the presentation by explaining the target audience of the Triangle Business Journal was business decision makers. He stated the Triangle Business Journal has started to grow their news room to cover more area.

Courtney Bode explains The Triangle Business Journal is a part of American Cities Business Journal that is in 44 different markets, with 18 million readers across all the markets. She went on to describe the reach of Triangle Business Journals.

Next Bode turned over the advertising proposal. Included in the proposal is four pieces that would allow the EDC to tell its own story. There is different placement available for the stories but they will all link back to the EDC website. The proposal also includes EDC placement in the Book of Lists Publication that is published every December. There are multiple social media opportunities as well as a featured story by the Economic Development Director. This proposal has been offered to other EDC's and their advertisement will run during the same time frame. The cost will be \$20,000 for six months. The launch date will be October, all costs will be due by August 2.

The floor was open to questions. (Highlights are noted below)

- Content can be in different formats
- Proposal does not include any print ads
- Proposal does not include content in the Triangle Business Journal's Space publication
- Triangle Business Journal offers monthly performance reports and heat mapping

Jason Christie concludes with noting this is a branding campaign, this will not make the "phone ring right away", but educating a likeminded audience across the country with what Person County has to offer.

Courtney Bode will following up with a rate card.

Directors Report:

6. Wilborn's presentation will be included in the minutes.

Wilborn also requested feedback from the board on the Virtual Building Tool software and the Triangle Business Journal's proposal.

Dr. Berryhill states, if the EDC is planning on doing the Virtual Building Tool she believes that should be incorporated in the advertising campaign.

Dale Reynolds does not think the Virtual Building Tool is a good investment at this time. He notes the Triangle Business Journal is a good investment, however he was disappointed there was no advertising included in the Space publication and it was more of an electronic ad campaign. He would like to see the rate sheet to see what other opportunities that are offered.

Danny Talbert notes the Triangle Business Journal does a great job and Person County does not get much press. He also agrees he would like to see what other opportunities the Triangle Business Journal offers.

Dale Reynolds is hesitant to advertise at the same time as other counties.

The Honorable Marilyn Newell states the Triangle Business Journal seems to be a "pay to play". This proposal is nice but she would like to see a multi-faceted approach. She would like to see a proposal more unique to Person County's needs and not one that is being offered to other counties. She notes if the EDC is going to invest that amount of money, she would like to see more "pieces".

Wilborn informs the board RTRP advertises regionally so Person County is represented on the West Coast and Boston area business journals.

Reynolds turns the conversation back to the Virtual Building Tool, noting he would rather see plans from a local engineer and other options should be explored before going forward with a contract with the Next Move Group.

Wilborn advised the board she has already done a carryforward for the funding intended for the Virtual Site Plan if they choose to move forward with entering in the contract with Next Move Group. She also explains staff has researched other Virtual Building Tools and has not found any other stand-alone options.

York likes the idea of having another way to market the available site. Especially since costs are so high at this time and we are in a holding pattern.

Allen suggest holding off until more options can be explored.

Member and Ex-Officio Comments:

7. Dr. Senegal begins by addressing all the negative press against Piedmont Community College, proposed Advanced Technology Center, and especially toward herself. Dr. Senegal feels like it is an attack. She notes the college's disappointment in the attacks especially in the area of economic development. Dr. Senegal asks why anyone would seek to tear down one of the county's greatest tools for economic development. Piedmont Community College is a forty-year-old facility that is trying to train for industry 5.0. She asks for everyone's support and notes the college's plans to keep moving forward. Dr. Senegal announced Piedmont Community College just got approval for a new degree and \$10 million dollars coming for an Advanced Technology Center. Dr. Senegal recognized the need for an Advanced Technology Center and said the Piedmont Community College Board plans to come together and find a way to address the need. Her hope is the community will come together as well.

Dale Reynolds states he is glad Dr. Senegal is the President of Piedmont Community College. He was on the selection committee and noted Dr. Senegal stood out among the rest. He feels the right choice was made.

Phillip Allen said it was a great honor to be on the board that hired Dr. Senegal. He stated his pride in Dr. Senegal and of Piedmont Community College. Allen thanks Dr. Senegal for her courage and leadership.

The Honorable Gordon Powell poses the question, "How long have we talked about a 21st century education?" He noted there is a need and we have not done what we need to do for our children as far as a 21st century education. He states we are working in the 20th century not the 21st century. The college took a step when it was built, therefore do we want to take the next step by a new technology center? Powell said that is the question that needs to be answered and thanks Dr. Senegal for all she has done. Dr. Senegal responded by saying people had taken too much time tearing her down and not trying to find a solution.

Ernie Wood addressed the negativity by saying it appeared to be a personal vendetta by an individual. Wood notes that is not Person County and it does not make the community look good. He also asks if people were truly worried about Person County why do they want to tear us apart?

Dale Reynolds agrees and noted it is an embarrassment to the community, and he was sorry to see it and is sad.

Heidi York explains how the negativity has affected business recruitment and county employment as well. There are a lot of job postings but no applicants. The Honorable Marilyn Newell agrees, noting it is affecting board fulfillment as well.

Wood reminds everyone the EDC board is made up of volunteers that do not receive compensation who are trying to do something good and are getting torn down.

Dr. Berryhill reminds the EDC of the good work Dr. Senegal has done for Piedmont Community College's agricultural program located in Caswell County. Dr. Senegal informs the board that the facility for that program was mostly privately funded, which Piedmont Community College had planned to do with the Advanced Technology Center. She did not come to the county for all the money. She has been working on other funding sources. Dr. Senegal questions, "If a community is not willing to help, then how do we move forward?"

Dr. Berryhill asks if the presentation Dr. Senegal presented at Good Morning Coffee Hour was available online. Dr. Senegal said it should be soon, the college was working on putting it on their website to try to control the narrative and mis-information.

Donald Long commends Dr. Senegal; he was impressed at the professional manner that she has handled things. Noting being the "tip of the spear" is difficult, but she has handled it well. Long stated it was Dr. Senegal's job to ask for money, and he could not understand why there was an issue with that. Long continued by informing Dr. Senegal not to think the community does not support the college and doesn't support her. He knows it is tough, but the community does support both.

Allen stated the EDC board had done great things in the last four years and Wilborn had been with the board every step of the way. He continued by noting the board had done things for the right reasons, and he was proud of the accomplishments. He requests that the board support each other and go the extra mile.

Dr. Berryhill noted several positives, hotels in the area were sold out in May, Air B&B rentals are up, Cycle NC is coming through Person County in the fall, and the farm city breakfast is back on for this year.

The Honorable Gordon Powell complimented the board for the work they have done. There has been recruitment and the EDC work has been worthwhile. He knows that the negativity makes things tough, especially the Director's position, but he thinks the EDC needs to operate on the

positives, not the negatives and continue to put the story out. When representatives from Senator Thom Tillis and Congressman Ted Budd came to the area, their first topic was the Person County Mega Park and second was broadband. The promotion of Person County Mega Park is ongoing even with Representative Larry Yarborough. The Honorable Gordon Powell had a chance to meet with Phil Berger. Their topics of conversation included Person County Mega Park, and the promotion of Person County Mega Park, broadband, and the airport runway extension. In closing, he reminds the board negativity doesn't help, it is discouraging, and not to give up.

Chairman's Report:

8. Chairman Allen had no further report.

Closed Session:

9. Chairman Allen requested a motion to enter into Closed Session pursuant to NC General Statutes 143-318.11 (a)(5), To establish or to instruct the public body's staff or negotiating agents concerning the position to be taken by or on behalf of the public body in negotiating (i) the price and other materials terms of a contract or proposed contract for the acquisition of real property by purchase option, exchange, or lease. To include: Sherry Wilborn, ED Director; Brandy Lynch, ED Administrative Support; Heidi York, County Manager; Claudia Berryhill, EDC Farmland Representative; Pamela Senegal, PCC President

A motion was made, seconded and unanimously passed to enter into closed session.

Motion: Dale Reynolds

Second: Danny Talbert

Closed Session was entered into at 5:43 p.m.

(A short break was requested after the motion; the board reconvened in closed session at 5:54 p.m.)

A motion was made, seconded and unanimously passed to come out of closed session.

Motion: The Honorable Marilyn Newell

Second: Dale Reynolds

Closed Session was exited at 6:25 p.m.

Next Meeting:

10. The next meeting was announced as July 27, 2021 at 4:00 p.m. in the Person County EDC Board Room 303 S. Morgan St. Roxboro, NC.

Adjournment:

11. A motion was made, seconded and unanimously passed to adjourn the meeting at approximately 6:26 p.m.

Motion: Ernie Wood

Second: Dale Reynolds

8/24/2021
Date Approved


Secretary

Virtual Spec Building Proposal



Next Move Group
We Are Jobs

JOIN OUR MOVEMENT TO GROW THE AMERICAN ECONOMY

Which Focuses on Creating Economic Growth for **Small to Mid-Sized** Companies, Communities, and Nonprofit Organizations

LEARN MORE



We are Driven to Create Economic Growth for Small to Mid-Sized Companies, Communities, and Nonprofit Organizations Because We Believe They are Vital to the American Economy

So, We Choose to Be a Leader in Helping Small to Mid-Sized Companies Secure the Same Tax Incentives Large Companies Leverage to Create Jobs

And, We Recognize the Importance Small to Mid-Sized Communities and Small to Mid-Sized Nonprofits, Including Those in Large Metro Areas, Play in Creating Economic Growth

Our Team



Next Move Group
We Are Jobs



Our Team



CHAD CHANCELLOR
Co-Founder, CEO



ALEX METZGER
Co-Founder, President



BRANDON NETTLES
Chief Operating Officer



JOHN SISSON
Managing Director of Site
Selection



GABBY MOULIS
Chief Marketing Officer



BRITTANY MCCOY
Vice President

- 2 Staff Members Have ***Master's Degrees in Economic Development***
- 1 Staff Member Graduated with a ***4.0 in Economics***
- 1 Staff Member Completed the Prestigious ***Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses Accelerator Program***
- 1 Staff Member is a member of the ***Site Selectors Guild***
- 1 Staff Member Joined Us Having Come from ***TV Media***



Our Director of Site Selection



John Sisson
Next Move Group, Director
of Site Selection
Greenville, SC
john@thenextmovegroup.com
864-313-6424



Companies Sisson has completed projects with in his career.

Sisson is a founding member of the Site Selectors Guild:



Next Move Group
We Are Jobs



Our Construction Partner Which Designs the Buildings



JESCO, Inc.

Construction

Offices

- Fulton & Tupelo, Mississippi
- Mobile & Montgomery, Alabama
- Memphis, Tennessee

Construction Capacity

- Annual Sales: \$180-200 Million
- Bonding Capacity: In excess of \$2.5 billion
- Employment: Seasonally variable
750+ employees



Volvo Cars America »



Mercedes Benz Sprinter Van Facility »



Shape Corp. »



Grammer, Inc. »



PACCAR Engine Manufacturing Plant »



Nissan North America »



Vuteq U.S.A. »



TASUS Corporation »



North American Lighting, Inc. »



Risk Free, Virtual Spec Building



Next Move Group
We Are Jobs



Risk Free Virtual Spec Building



Dynamic Building Calculator England Airpark

50,000 SQ. FT. GENERAL MANUFACTURING

62,000 SQ. FT. HANGAR

200,000 SQ. FT. REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION

Estimated Budget
\$17,250,000
Time to Build
12 Months

Exterior Finish Options (Metal/CMU) Employee Parking
Concrete Masonry Asphalt Applied to Stone Base

Fire Protection
Yes (Base)

+/- Hangar Overall SF 62000 Add Office/Bathroom SF 9800

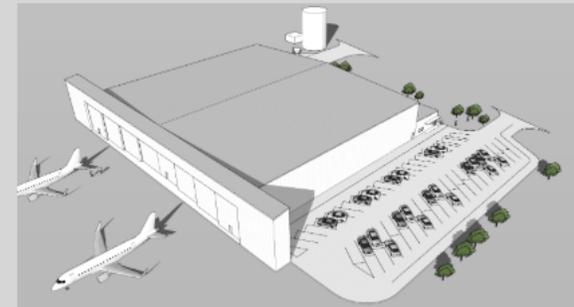
Add Kitchen/Shop SF 0 Add Fabrication Shop SF 0

Add Painting Shop SF 0 Add Airframe/Engine/Aero Repair SF 0

Add Battery Service SF 0 Add Interior Repair SF 0

Add Nondestructive Testing Lab SF 0

62,000 SQ. FT. HANGAR



Download Pre-Designed Base Drawings and Building Plans

<https://thenextmovegroup.com/alexandriavb>

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Dynamic Building Calculator England Airpark

50,000 SQ. FT. GENERAL MANUFACTURING

62,000 SQ. FT. HANGAR

200,000 SQ. FT. REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION

Estimated Budget

\$17,250,000

Time to Build

12 Months

Exterior Finish Options (Metal/CMU)

Concrete Masonry

Employee Parking

Asphalt Applied to Stone Base

Fire Protection

Yes (Base)

+/- Hangar Overall SF 62000



Add Office/Bathroom SF 9800



Add Kitchen/Shop SF 0



Add Fabrication Shop SF 0



Add Painting Shop SF 0



Add Airframe/Engine/Aero Repair SF 0



Add Battery Service SF 0



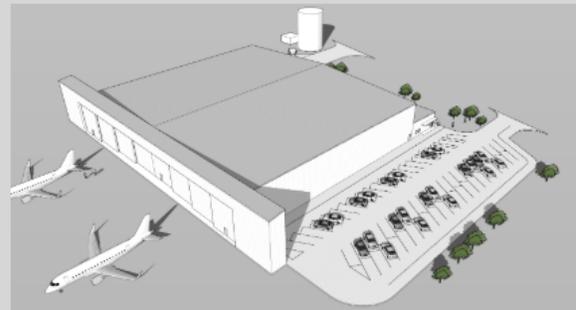
Add Interior Repair SF 0



Add Nondestructive Testing Lab SF 0



62,000 SQ. FT. HANGAR



Download Pre-Designed Base Drawings and Building Plans

3 totally different type buildings: manufacturing, airport hangar, distribution

Can I use this if I already have an empty spec building?

Yes



Dynamic Building Calculator One Harlan County

52,500 SQ. FT. AUTOMOTIVE/GENERAL MANUFACTURING

79,725 SQ. FT. STEEL FABRICATION/AVIATION COMPOSITE

100,000 SQ. FT. HEADQUARTERS / DISTRIBUTION / MANUFACTURING

Estimated Budget

\$3,450,000

Time to Build

8 Months

Ceiling Height	Floor Thickness
32' Clear Eave Height (Base) ▼	6" Reinforced (Base) ▼
Column Spacing	Exterior Finish Options (Metal/CMU)
25'x50' (Base) ▼	Concrete Masonry (Base) ▼
Air Cond. In Production Area	15 Ton Crane Structure 30'x200'
No (Base) ▼	No (Base) ▼

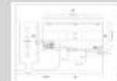
Employee and Trailer Parking

Stone (Base) ▼

Dock Doors - 8

Add Office SF in Production Area - 4000

52,500 SQ. FT. AUTOMOTIVE/GENERAL MANUFACTURING



Download Pre-Designed Base Drawings and Building Plans

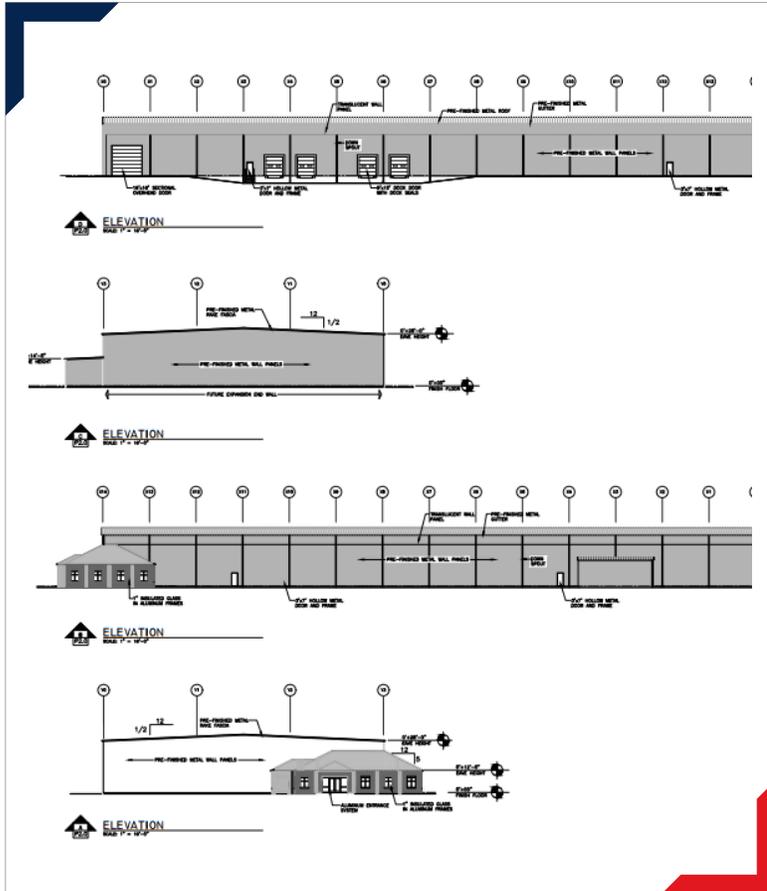
3 totally different type buildings:
automotive, steel fab, distribution

Over 2,000 potential combinations of options lets your prospect see the cost and timeframe to build the building they want.

<https://thenextmovegroup.com/harlanvb>



Actual Building Plans and Drawings

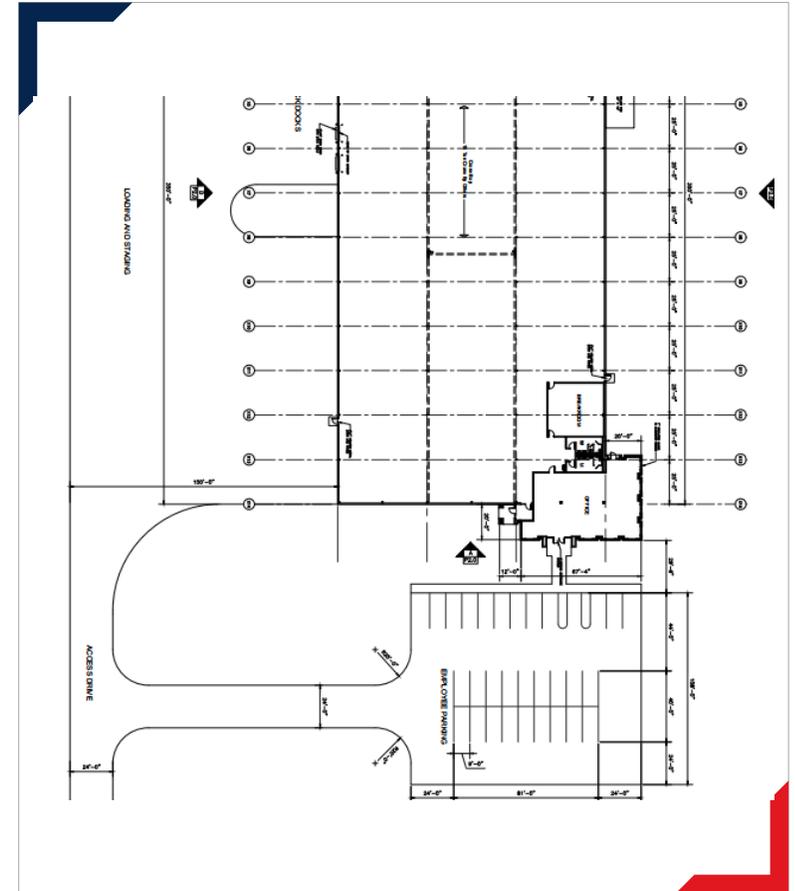


Budget – 52,500 SF Building

JESCO, Inc. proposes to furnish the necessary labor, materials, equipment and project supervision to design and construct a 52,500 SF Building for the budget amount of Two million, one hundred sixty thousand and no/100 dollars (\$2,160,000.00). Our budget pricing is based on the attached clarifications and our best understanding of your needs at this time. We have also attached some voluntary alternates for your consideration.

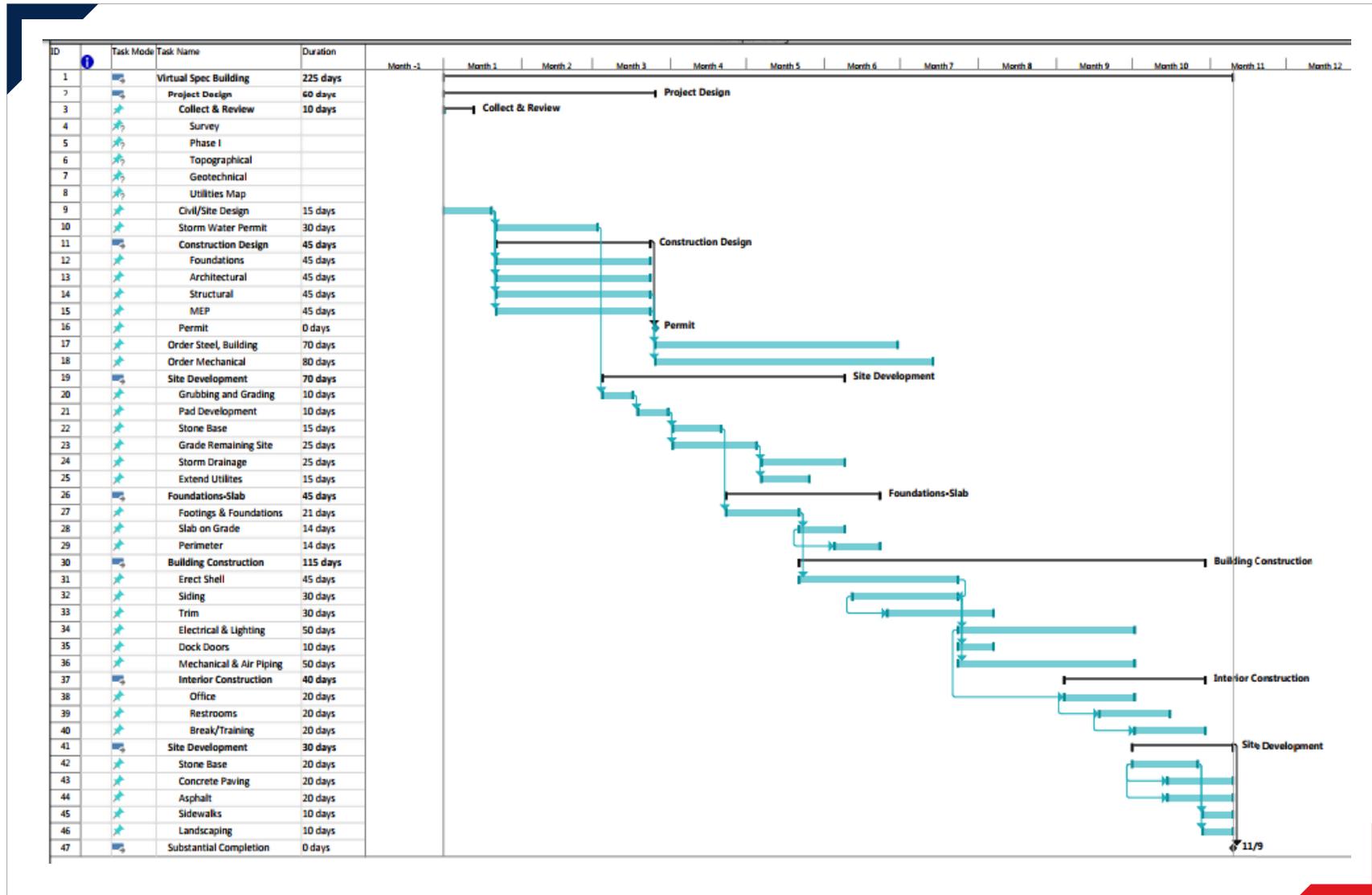
Thank you for allowing JESCO, Inc. the opportunity to offer pricing for this work.

1. We have included 3 1/4% gross receipts tax in our pricing.
2. We have included furnishing and installing the following in our budget pricing:
 - 350'-0"x 150'-0" pre-engineered metal building with 30' clear eave height
 - 2,000 SF office area allowance of \$125/SF
 - 900 SF breakroom area allowance of \$125/SF
 - 450 SF bathrooms/storm shelter area allowance of \$350/SF
 - 400 SF electrical room allowance of \$100/SF
 - 400 SF compressor room allowance of \$100/SF
 - 6" thick 3500 psi concrete slab reinforced with 6x6-6/6 mesh
 - 24 gauge Standing Seam galvalume metal roof
 - 26 gauge metal wall panels (color from standard color chart)
 - Gutters and downspouts
 - 4" vinyl roof insulation
 - 4" vinyl wall insulation
 - 5' wide projection canopy above overhead doors
 - 5' width translucent panels along top of 2 walls (700 lineal feet)
 - Shallow Concrete foundation system for metal building column footings
 - (10) steel bollards at overhead doors
 - (1) set of steel dock steps 4' height
 - One (1) 16'x16' automatic overhead door & (4) 8' x 10' automatic overhead doors
 - Edge of Dock levelers, dock seals, and rubber bumpers at (4) locations
 - Four (4) 3'x7' hollow metal doors and frames with panics and closers
 - Eight (8) 6' x 6' storefront windows and one (1) storefront 3'x7' man door
 - Six (6) 5'x5' wall mounted exhaust fans
 - Six (6) 5'x5' wall mounted louvers





Includes Construction Timeline and Schedule



Most Recent Happy Client



Next Move Group
We Are Jobs



Most Recent Happy Client

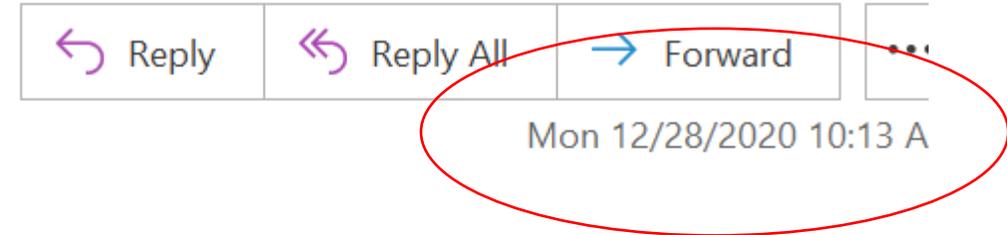
Re: Virtual Building



tpurdon@actioncouncil.com

To  Chad Chancellor

 You forwarded this message on 12/28/2020 12:12 PM.



This looks amazing Chad! Now I want to push my board to do the other 2 options! I'll see what I can do. This is really impressive. Thank you so much!! I've already been pushing out this picture to some potential prospects and told them that I'll have this virtual customization tool ready for them soon. I'm so excited!

Trisha Purdon
Executive Director
Montgomery County Action Council
Cell: (620) 779-1922
Office: (620) 331-3830

Pricing Options



Next Move Group
We Are Jobs



Pricing Options

- **\$25,000 for 1 Targeted Industry Virtual Building (such as designed for metalworking or food processing or distribution or plastics); 35,000 for 2 Virtual Buildings (such as designed for metalworking or food processing or distribution or plastics); \$45,000 for 3 Virtual Buildings with all these options (such as designed for metalworking or food processing or distribution or plastics);**
 - Sq. ft. Slider Option
 - 2 Floor Thickness Options
 - 2 Column Spacing Options
 - 3 Ceiling Height Options
 - Crane Option
 - 2 Exterior Finish Options
 - A/C in Production Area Option
 - # of Dock Door Options
 - # of Parking Place Options

Note, client has approval authority over all logos added to the virtual building information.



Let's Work Together



Next Move Group
We Are Jobs

Chad Chancellor
Co-Founder

504-648-7716

chad@thenextmovegroup.com

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EDC Meeting
June 22, 2021

Advertising/Earned Media

Why megasite in Greater Triangle could land next blockbuster manufacturer

Jun 20, 2021, 8:22pm EDT

A global shortage of semiconductor chips caused by the coronavirus pandemic continues to hit hard for multiple industries – from vehicles to electronics.

Sherry Wilborn, economic development director of Person County, has a solution: A megasite that after years of planning has “already been permitted for that purpose.”



NCDEQ
Site plan for Person County megasite.

Image Excerpt Source: <https://www.bizjournals.com/triangle/news/2021/06/20/person-county-megasite-semiconductor-manufacturing.html>

IT'S ALMOST UNFAIR TO THE OTHER 49 STATES.

Work. Life. And everything that makes both fulfilling. You'll find it in the nearly 54,000 square miles of open minds, open spaces and open opportunities in North Carolina. Ranked #1 for business three years running. **Go to EDPNC.com/ALLinNC**

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP of NORTH CAROLINA

In partnership with:

ASHEVILLE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE | PERSON COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT | PittCounty

PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW PRESENTER MEREDITH SUMMEY



You only get to make a first impression once!
Starts before you walk through the door.
For the interviewee (you) it should begin as soon as the interview is scheduled:

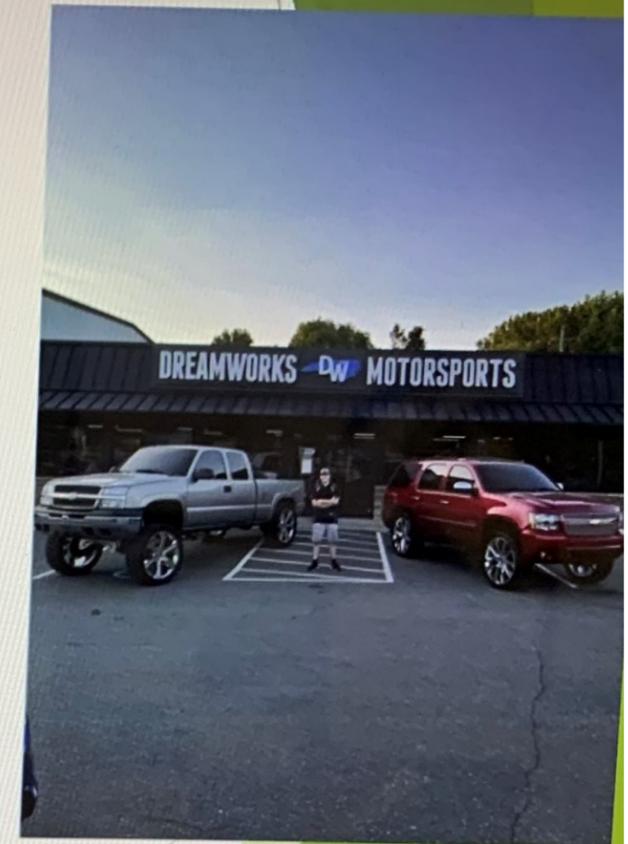
- Research a little about the company you are applying for, what they do, what are their locations, how long have they been in business, and it will show you are the type of person who is interested in the company.
- Come up with questions that the interviewer asks you.
- Examples of good questions:
 - o What are the expectations for this position?
 - o Is there an opportunity for advancement?
 - o What are the biggest challenges facing the company?
 - o What do you like most about working here?
 - o What is your timeline for hiring?
- Bring a copy of your resume (print one out).
- Social Media- hiring manager

The day of the interview:

- What to wear?
 - o Dress neatly and conservatively.
 - o Dress for the interview, something a little more professional than you would wear to work.
 - o Business casual is a safe bet, but under-dressed, than under-dressed.
 - o Always wear closed-toed shoes.
 - o Never wear: sweat suits, flip-flops, sandals, or anything that says "I'm a student."
 - o Cold???
- What to bring?
 - o Your resume/cover letter
 - o Questions
 - o 2 Valid forms of ID
 - o Any questionnaires
 - o Instructions on where to go
- What NOT to bring?
 - o Anyone else!
 - o Do NOT bring your phone.
 - o If you need a phone, use a payphone.

PHS Career Development

- Senior, Robert Davis, participated in an internship with DreamWorks and has accepted a full time, permanent position.
- Career Interest Assessments and activities for 9th graders. -9th Graders completed assessments during English I class (virtual as well as in person)
- Started collaborating with North Central CDCs and we meet monthly to share ideas and information.
- We are now collaborating with surrounding counties and working to include our students in career development activities in other districts as well as what we offer here.



Budget Highlights

- FY 2022 Budget adopted at June 21 BOC Meeting
 - Assistant Director Position Included
 - \$942,093 Approved for EDC

New Tools for Data Tracking/Dissemination

- Regional Labor Market Data from NC Commerce LEAD Division
- KTCOG Regional Dashboard
- Person County Dashboard

New Grant Opportunity – “Build Ready Sites”, NCRP

- Goal is help close the gap with current grant sources only available for active projects
- Basic Program Info:
 - 50-100 contiguous, developable acres
 - Located within .5 mile of rail with potential service confirmed by operating railroad
 - Uses: land prep, shell bldg., infrastructure
 - Amount – Up to \$500,000 or 60% of total proposed project cost

HAPPY SUMMMER



THANK YOU!!



From the Triangle Business Journal:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/triangle/news/2021/06/20/person-county-megasite-semiconductor-manufacturing.html>

Why megasite in Greater Triangle could land next blockbuster manufacturer

Jun 20, 2021, 8:22pm EDT

A global shortage of semiconductor chips caused by the coronavirus pandemic continues to hit hard for multiple industries – from vehicles to electronics.

Sherry Wilborn, economic development director of Person County, has a solution: A megasite that after years of planning has “already been permitted for that purpose.”



NCDEQ

Site plan for Person County megasite.

Could a North Carolina semiconductor manufacturing facility help stave off future shortages?

Wilborn thinks so – as does the state of North Carolina, whose economic developers have worked with the county north of Durham for years to create a shovel-ready site for the next blockbuster semiconductor company to come calling.

Last year, Person County obtained a permit from the Army Corps of Engineers for grading and site preparation for the massive, 1,350-

acre Person County Mega Park just north of Roxboro. It was a long time coming, as years ago officials had marketed the site for potential manufacturers, saying could house a 4,000-job facility.

But Wilborn said the interest has exceeded that vision.

“This year we’ve seen projects that would range anywhere from 3,500 to more than 10,000 [jobs],” she told *TBJ*. “This year we’ve had more projects for our megasite already than we had all year last year and in previous years.”

While not all of the interest is from semiconductor manufacturers – the site was pitched to electric car maker Tesla (Nasdaq: TSLA) – a lot of it is. Wilborn wouldn’t give specific details, citing confidentiality concerns. But her team is regularly in conversations with the North Carolina Economic Development Partnership on projects that could be interested.

Even before the site obtained all its shovel-ready permits, it was seriously considered by chip firms such as GlobalFoundries and Samsung, records show. Nearly 10 years ago, GlobalFoundries had contacted Duke Energy (NYSE: DUK) about the site, which is located between two Duke Energy power plants. But the site just wasn’t ready, and the company’s interest moved elsewhere.

In 2018, then-chairman of the county commission David Newell said he had been told by site selectors that the Roxboro site was “the best site in the United States to put a chip manufacturing facility.”

The county worked with the state to craft a plan – one where permits could be in hand to expedite a would-be chip manufacturer’s move-in. Initially, economic developers had considered pitching three other megasites in the state for a semiconductor plant – in Chatham-Siler City, Greensboro-Randolph and Moncure. But citing the Person County site’s “robust” fiber network and power infrastructure, it checked all the boxes.

Should Person County ink a win, it would be a true “game-changer” for the rural community, Wilborn said. According to the latest numbers out of the North Carolina Department of Commerce, Person County had a 4.5 percent unemployment rate in April, slightly below the 4.8 percent reported for March. A year ago, at

the height of the pandemic's economic blow, the April unemployment figure was 13.4 percent.

Wilborn said the county has worked hard to attract national players, scoring a Big Lots for a vacant retail space and a recent investment in a warehouse that will work with Frito-Lay. But scoring a semiconductor site could reverberate past the region, and not just in terms of economic development.

The semiconductor shortage is an oft-talked about crisis on earnings calls at a slew of big companies. It's causing so much disruption that last week a bipartisan group of senators introduced legislation that would establish an investment tax credit to incentivize greater semiconductor manufacturing in the United States.

According to the Semiconductor Industry Association, the United States' share of semiconductor manufacturing has decreased from 37 percent in 1990 to 12 percent today, "largely due to substantial subsidies offered by the governments of our global competitors."

With the pandemic temporarily shutting down manufacturing lines across the globe, supply issues are still being felt by a slew of firms. On a conference call with analysts last week, Ford (NYSE: F) President and CEO Jim Farley said it was still a "scramble" to get modules in vehicles.

"You're looking at 2022 ... before we'll get to a normal level of availability," he said during the Deutsche Bank Global Auto Industry Conference on Thursday.

It's a similar take as that of Gianfranco Lanci, president and chief operating officer at computer maker Lenovo, which houses its "dual headquarters" in Morrisville.

"For sure we continue to face the shortage for the next 12 to 18 months," Lanci said on Lenovo's earnings call in May.

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