

# Aid on incentives sought from Forsyth board

Potential anchor tenant at airport seeks help from commission

BY RICHARD CRAVER  
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The startup aviation-maintenance company aiming to serve as an anchor tenant at Smith Reynolds Airport will have its incentive request addressed by the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners this month.

NS Aviation LLC, led by a management team with ties to

Pace Airlines Inc., plans to create up to 177 full-time jobs at Smith Reynolds Airport in its first year of operations and an additional 112 within three years.

The project would give the airport a new anchor tenant and restore most of the 300 local jobs lost when Pace collapsed in September 2009.

Neither the county nor Winston-Salem is offering incentive money to the company, County Manager Dudley Watts said.

Instead, the reason for the Jan. 27 hearing is the county's

role as a conduit for an estimated \$300,000 One North Carolina grant to the Airport Commission of Forsyth County. The One North Carolina fund is something the governor can tap to provide to companies expanding or opening business in North Carolina. It must be matched by local funds.

Up to half of the local contribution could come from a \$500,000 grant being provided for the project by the Golden Leaf Foundation. The commission plans to use that grant to buy tooling equipment for NS

Aviation that's required to work on Boeing 737 aircraft.

The company would lease the equipment from the commission over seven years, in effect returning up to \$150,000, which would count toward the \$300,000 match required by the One North Carolina grant. The commission plans to spend the lease payments on capital- and economic-development projects at the airport, said Mark Davidson, the airport's director.

The commission would provide the other money toward

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## Incentives

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the local match. The company's monthly lease payments would be used primarily on improvements to the NS Aviation operations.

The funding is based on NS Aviation achieving employment criteria.

NS Aviation was formed in August, according to state documents. It is operating on a monthly lease for 80,000 square feet, including 50,000 in hangar

space, at 4001 N. Liberty St., the former headquarters of Pace.

According to documents submitted to the Federal Aviation Administration, Charlie Creech is listed as chief executive of NS Aviation and Russell Kota as vice president of maintenance. Both were members of Pace's management team when it was owned by the estate of Bob Brooks, the chairman of Hooters of America Inc.

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