

Smith Reynolds gets new director

He now runs airport in Craven County

By Richard Craver

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The long search for a new director for Smith Reynolds Airport has ended with the hiring of Larry Scantlin, the director of Craven County Regional Airport in New Bern.

Scantlin said yesterday that he expects to begin his new job by late April after completing his obligations at the New Bern airport. He offered his resignation Feb. 21 after serving as airport director there for about 3½ years.

Scantlin replaces Ed Cox, who stepped down after five years in October 2004 to pursue work as an independent contractor for the airline industry. Christopher Veal remains the acting airport director until Scantlin's arrival.

"I'm looking forward to new challenges in running a bigger and more active airport," Scantlin said. "From what I've seen, the facilities are outstanding.

"It's also a chance to move closer to family who live in the western part of the state."

Bill Whiteheart, the chairman of the Airport Commission of Forsyth County, could not be reached for comment about the hiring of Scantlin. The commission oversees Smith Reynolds.

Two of the challenges awaiting Scantlin will be trying to attract commercial-airline service back to Smith Reynolds and replacing rent revenue lost when US Airways Group Inc. closed three machinist shops on airport property in March 2005 to outsource the work.

Smith Reynolds has not had scheduled passenger service since January 2000 when CC Air, a regional carrier of US Airways, stopped flying into Winston-Salem.

Scantlin has experience with handling general aviation and commercial line service, with US Airways flying out of the New Bern airport.

He said he plans "to leave no stone unturned" in his efforts to add corporate and commercial service at Smith

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having Piedmont Triad International Airport in Greensboro will make it difficult to land scheduled passenger service.

"The task at hand will be finding ways to attract more business and provide the most convenient aviation and transportation service we can for the region and for the region's corporations," Scantlin said.

Scantlin's task was made a little easier Jan. 17 when the commission reported that the airport had been accredited for commercial-passenger operations by the Transportation Se-

curity Administration. Pace Airlines, which operates a charter service and recently expanded its maintenance operations at Smith Reynolds, has said it is contemplating offering scheduled-flight service at the airport.

Charles Creech, the president of Pace Airlines, said in January that Hooters Air, a sister company of Pace, has been evaluating its options at Smith Reynolds since the airport received the accreditation. He could not be reached for comment yesterday.

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