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**EMPIRE DISTRIBUTORS PROPOSES PURCHASE OF 15 ACRES AT PENDER COMMERCE PARK**

**Looks to Build Distribution Center**

*May 12, 2015 (Wilmington, N.C.)* – Just as Acme Smoked Fish Corporation ramps up production at its major new facility in Pender Commerce Park, a second tenant is now unveiling plans there for a 160,000-sq.ft. warehouse and distribution center. On Monday, the Pender County Board of Commissions approved the proposed sale of 15 acres at the park to Empire Distributors of North Carolina, Inc. The company distributes beer, wine and other beverages.

David Williams, chairman of the Pender County Board of Commission, says the proposed sale is evidence that the county’s investment at Pender Commerce Park is now yielding measurable dividends. “We’re excited to welcome the park’s second industrial resident and the new jobs and capital investment this company will bring Pender County,” Williams says.

Pursuant to North Carolina law, the county’s sale of the land must fulfill a 10-day “upset bid” period.

Located in the community of Currie on U.S. Highway 421, Pender Commerce Park is a 450-acre full-service, ready-to-build industrial park. Commissioners purchased the raw acreage for the park in 2006 and embarked on the engineering and infrastructure development work. That extensive process was completed in 2011. In October 2013, Brooklyn-based Acme Smoked Fish became the park’s first tenant, selecting a 20-acre tract for its $30 million, 120-worker facility.

“Our collaboration with Pender County has resulted in a world-class industrial park that is attracting world-class companies,” says Scott Satterfield, CEO of Wilmington Business Development (WBD). The organization, which contracts with Pender County for economic development services, supported county leaders over the past decade as they made their vision for the park a reality. WBD also worked quietly with representatives from Empire Distributors of North Carolina, Inc. in recent months to assist the company in its site search. “Empire is a great fit for Pender Commerce Park, which was developed with just these sort of state-of-the-art manufacturing and distribution operations in mind,” Satterfield says.

Empire Distributors, Inc., founded in 1940 in Atlanta, is a wholesale alcoholic beverage distributor. Over the following decades, Empire expanded into North Carolina and currently has operations in Asheville, Charlotte, Raleigh and Winston-Salem. McLane Company, Inc., acquired Empire Distributors, Inc. in 2010.

McLane Company, Inc., is a $46 billion supply chain services leader, providing grocery and foodservice supply chain solutions for convenience stores, mass merchants, drug stores, and chain restaurants throughout the United States.

Founded in 1956 as the Wilmington Committee of 100, Wilmington Business Development oversees business recruitment and industrial retention for the City of Wilmington, New Hanover County and Pender County. A private, non-profit organization [501(c)(6)], WBD supports its members, partners and allies through a broad array of technical expertise, leadership resources and value-added business services. For additional information, visit [www.wilmingtonbusinessdevelopment.com](http://www.wilmingtonbusinessdevelopment.com)

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