



## Legislation Text

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**Item:**

**Budget Ordinance Amendment No. 19BCC000063 to Recognize \$400,000 from North Carolina Biotechnology Center for Local Economic Development Awards**

**Date of BOCC Meeting: June 10, 2019**

**Request for Board Action:**

The Board is requested to approve Budget Ordinance Amendment No. 19BCC000063 to recognize \$400,000 from the North Carolina Biotechnology Center for Local Economic Development Awards (EDA) to be disbursed by the County. The funds are to be recognized by Durham County as the local unit of government and then awarded to Pairwise (\$200,000), Locus Biosciences, Inc. (\$100,000) and AveXis (\$100,000). The NC Biotechnology Center has agreed to provide an economic development grant award through the County to incentivize companies to expand and maintain new business operations in Durham County while the disbursements of funds to the local government allows the County to maintain a direct relationship with the identified companies.

As part of their individual agreements Locus Biosciences will create and maintain at least thirty (30) new FTEs, Pairwise will create and maintain ninety (90) new FTEs and AveXis will create at least two hundred (200) new FTEs over a four (4) year period. Also included in their respective agreements are the following community benefits:

- AveXis will:
  - Transfer equipment purchased with grant funds to Durham Tech's North Durham Campus for educational and training purposes
  - Serve on the Advisory Board for Durham Tech's Biotechnology program
  - Work with Durham Tech faculty to help them prepare students for potential jobs in the industry
- Pairwise will:
  - Host four (4) DPS interns over the course of the four-year award
  - Explore curriculum development opportunities and outreach with DPS educators to facilitate sessions with agricultural/food/nutrition focus
- Locus Biosciences will:
  - Host three (3) high school interns over the course of the four-year award

Pairwise, using CRISPR technology, will research gene editing techniques to create non-GMO farm products with the goal to create and produce crops that use fewer resources and are more productive as well as making healthier foods more accessible. Locus Biosciences, Inc, using their CRISPR-Phage platform combines the antibacterial power of CRISPR-Cas3 with the efficient, safe delivery of bacterial viruses called bacteriophage. This process selectively removes unwanted bacteria while leaving the many species of good bacteria intact, crPhage™ can address the growing set of diseases shown to be related to the human microbiome. AveXis works to develop and commercialize gene therapies for patients and families that are suffering from rare and life-threatening neurological genetic diseases.

The North Carolina Biotechnology Center collaborates with North Carolina communities to attract life science economic development projects. Its Bioscience Industrial Development team provides industry-specific expertise and resources. The Center also supports community efforts through its Economic Development Award (EDA) Program. The EDA Program provides performance-based grants to local units of government in support of life science company projects. Grants are linked to job creation and retention milestones for specific company projects in the locality of interest. The local government administers the grant and allocates funds to the company to be used for project-related investments providing sustainable benefit to the company and community. The Center partners with both community and company to determine the appropriate use of EDA funds. In the case of the three agreements receiving the awards, funds will be used to contribute to the cost of real and tangible personal property investments with portions to be either spent on machinery and/or equipment or operations and/or research and development.

**Alignment with Strategic Plan:** This item aligns with Goal 4: Environmental Stewardship and Community Prosperity to promote and support the community and economic vitality for all residents.

**Resource Persons:** Andy Miracle, Economic Development Officer and Jay Gibson, General Manager Goal 4

**County Manager's Recommendation:** The County Manager recommends that the Board approve Budget Ordinance Amendment No. 19BCC000063 to recognize \$400,000 from the North Carolina Biotechnology Center for Local Economic Development awards.

County Manager: \_\_\_\_\_