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North Carolina's Southeast elects new leadership *Longtime Chairman, Vice-Chairman to serve in Emeritus roles*

ELIZABETHTOWN, N.C. – North Carolina's Southeast, the 20-county economic development regional partnership, will be led by new officers. Meeting in Whiteville on October 26, the organization's Board of Directors voted unanimously to elect the following leaders:

- **Spence Broadhurst, Chairman** – Broadhurst is Eastern North Carolina Regional President at First National Bank, the largest subsidiary of FNB Bank. He is based in Wilmington, where he served as mayor from 2003 to 2006. Broadhurst, a former member of the state Banking Commission, is also a board member of the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina (EDPNC).
- **Jason McLeod, Vice-Chairman** – McLeod has been Business Development Manager for ECS since 2013. He was previously a commercial real estate broker for Maus, Warwick, Matthews & Company. McLeod is a member of the Board of Trustees at Cape Fear Community College and previously chaired the board of Brunswick Business & Industry Development.
- **Jimmy Smith, Secretary-Treasurer** – Smith, Director of Economic and Community Development at Four County Electric Membership Cooperative in Burgaw, was re-elected to his current position. Smith's service with North Carolina's Southeast dates to an initial one-year appointment as a founding board member in 1994. He is a longtime leader in state and regional economic development circles. Smith is Past President of the North Carolina Economic Development Association.

Board member Chuck Horne, who served on the Nominating Committee, described the panel's work as "somewhat unusual," given that longtime Chairman Jeff Etheridge and Vice-Chairman David Burns had served in their leadership positions since the organization's 2014 transition from a state-created commission to an independent public-private partnership. Shortly after electing the new officers, the board voted unanimously to elect Etheridge and Burns as Emeritus members. As such, both are welcome to continue serving on the board for as long as they like.

“It’s an honor to follow Jeff Etheridge,” said Broadhurst after the vote. “Jeff and David provided the building blocks for all the success we’re now seeing.”

Since 2014, NC’s Southeast has expanded its service footprint from 13 to 20 counties. Working with state, local and private partners, it has helped facilitate the arrival of \$1.8 billion in economic investment to the region, along with 8,426 new jobs. With financial support from the North Carolina General Assembly, the organization has created a product development initiative that is readying quality industrial sites and buildings for occupancy by arriving employers.

“Guided by Jeff and David, NC’s Southeast has made great progress in recent years,” Broadhurst added. “We look forward to building on that momentum to encourage growth and success in our region for generations to come.”

“I am confident NC’s Southeast will be in good hands,” said outgoing chairman Jeff Etheridge. “Spence, Jason and Jimmy bring many decades of combined leadership experience and technical expertise, as well as a proven legacy of service to Southeastern North Carolina,” Etheridge said. “I remain committed to serving the organization and the region however I can and will vigorously support the success of our new leadership, and I believe David feels the same way.”

A public-private partnership headquartered in Elizabethtown, N.C., North Carolina’s Southeast’s mission is to provide strong economic development leadership in southeastern North Carolina through innovative marketing and collaborative regional initiatives that will support the creation of new jobs, generate capital investment and secure new business locations. Member counties include Anson, Bladen, Brunswick, Columbus, Craven, Cumberland, Duplin, Hoke, Jones, Lenoir, Montgomery, Moore, New Hanover, Onslow, Pender, Richmond, Robeson, Sampson, Scotland and Wayne. For additional information, visit www.ncse.org



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