

## Nuclea leases OK'd for PEDA site

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PITTSFIELD -- Following several years of hoping and trying, the Pittsfield Economic Development Authority has finally become involved in a project that is related to the state's life sciences industry.

This new project is also the start of something bigger.

PEDA's board on Wednesday approved two leases that will allow the quasi-public agency to rent space in its 3,200-square-foot building on Kellogg Street to Nuclea Biotechnologies Inc. for a computer cluster that analyzes genetic material. The new space will be known as the Nuclea Bioinformatic and Imaging Center.

Moving the computer cluster to PEDA's administration building from Nuclea's facility on South Street is actually the first phase of a larger project, said company President and CEO Patrick J. Muraca. He declined to provide additional details, but said more information will be available after the computer cluster has been installed.

"We're hoping by the first week in November," Muraca said.

Toehold long sought

PEDA, the quasi-public agency charged with developing the 52-acre William Stanley Business Park of the Berkshires, has been seeking a toehold in the life sciences industry since 2008, when the Legislature approved a \$6.5 million earmark toward the construction of an incubator building for small startup life sciences companies in the business park.

For a variety of reasons, PEDA has never received that funding, but the agency is currently developing a proposal to secure the funds from the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center.

In September, PEDA's Executive Director Cory Thurston described the board's decision to lease space to Nuclea as a way to "kick off this opportunity."

"This is the beginning of the life sciences in Pittsfield," said PEDA's acting chairman Mick Callahan on Wednesday.

Unanimous vote

On Wednesday, the board voted unanimously to sublease part of its administration building to Nuclea for two years, and amend its current lease with General Electric so the project will move forward. Only seven of the board's 11 members were in attendance.

Due to its complicated relationship with GE, PEDA is allowed to sublease part of its 46-year-old administration building to another entity, but only with GE's approval. PEDA is charged with developing the 52-acre William Stanley Business Park of the Berkshires. But unlike the park itself, the agency's administration building is located on a 3.1-acre parcel that GE still owns.

GE and PEDA originally had a five-year lease on the Kellogg Street property that went to a month-to-month basis after the original term expired. The amendment extends the lease for three years. The corporate giant has already

approved its part of the agreement.

"GE didn't want to rewrite the lease," Thurston said, "so the easiest way to do it was with an amendment."

### Consolidating servers

Nuclea, which develops and commercializes diagnostic tests for colon, breast, leukemia, lung and prostate cancer, plans to move all of its computer servers that store bioinformatic clusters to Kellogg Street. The servers will be located on 1,000 square feet of space that Nuclea will lease from PEDDA on the east side of its administration building.

Bioinformatics is a scientific discipline that involves the analysis of DNA and protein sequences from computer analysis of biological data, according to two scientific websites.

"We're actually upgrading the cluster to handle about three times [more information] at the site than we do now," Muraca said.

Muraca said Nuclea decided to move the computer cluster to PEDDA property because the company didn't have enough space.

"We don't have the room really," Muraca said. "One of the things that we're going to be talking about is an upgrade through the whole company itself."

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