

Winchester in running for major drug manufacturer

By Randy Patrick
WinCity Voices

The following article first appeared on WinCity Voices' website. They can be found at <https://www.wincityvoices.org/>.

Winchester Mayor JoEllen Reed was out walking her dog last Saturday when a neighbor asked whether she had heard the news. President Donald Trump had announced a \$100 million investment for her town, but only "if Republicans win" the mid-term elections on Nov. 3.

"That was a surprise to all of us," Reed told WinCity Voices. Reed has since confirmed that the company the president referred to during a campaign rally in Highland Heights, Kentucky, on Oct. 17 is considering Winchester as a location for a large pharmaceutical manufacturing facility.

"I will tell you that I have met with a potential company, and if it comes about, it will be a tremendous asset for Winchester," the mayor said. "I think we're going to try to meet again in about a week or so and see where both sides are, and go from there."

"I feel like it's something that

may happen fairly soon if it happens for us," she said.

Mason Guy, chairman of the Winchester-Clark County Industrial Development Authority's board of directors, said Thursday that he, too, has talked with the company, Antheia, of Menlo Park, California.

"I think we're in the running," he said.

Guy said his understanding is that Winchester is one of three cities being considered for the facility. The other two are in other states.

He said he was told that "the president kind of jumped the gun" in making the announcement.

"They certainly have not made a final determination," he said.

Antheia is considering property in the Winchester Industrial Park and possibly elsewhere in the community. Guy dismissed the idea that the development is conditioned on whether Republicans win elections.

"Those are not related," he said.

It's an economic development decision, not anything to do with partisan politics, he explained. However, Antheia issued a press

release that said it had secured up to \$80 million in conditional funding from the Department of War's Office of Strategic Capital.

The release did not specify the conditions attached to the funding.

The announcement came one day after the president's speech in Kentucky.

"The conditional financing, alongside additional private capital, would support Antheia's U.S. manufacturing strategy, bolstering the company's efforts to onshore production of critical pharmaceutical ingredients that are vital to public health and national security," the company said.

It said the United States relies on foreign sources for approximately 90 percent of its supply of ingredients, leaving Americans "highly vulnerable to drug shortages" caused by public health emergencies, natural disasters, international tensions and supply chain failures.

Dr. Christina Smolke, chief executive officer and co-founder of Antheia, said in the release that advanced bio manufacturing offers the U.S. "a direct path to securing these supply chains

while regaining global leadership in a strategic technology sector."

"Access to a long-term loan through OSC would give Antheia meaningful flexibility as we build our next phase of commercial growth," Eric d'Esparbes, chief financial officer, said.

In his campaign speech for Senate candidate Andy Barr and other Republicans in Highland Heights, Trump said: "If the Republicans win, the Department of War will be investing \$100 million in the pharmaceutical company Antheia to revitalize a gigantic drug manufacturing facility in Winchester, Kentucky."

Scottie Ellis, a spokesperson for Gov. Andy Beshear, a Democrat, said after the announcement, the administration had been given "no information on this."

According to the Courier Journal, she added that, if "investments from the Department of Defense — or Trump's 'Department of War' (DOW) — are conditioned on the outcome of the election, it's time for the Department of Justice to investigate the DOW."

Beshear said the next day that conditioning a department investment on one party winning

an election would be illegal and amount to "a bribe."

Politics aside, local leaders are excited about the possibility that Winchester and Clark County may get a major economic investment.

Guy said Antheia's project would be a new company, not a revitalization or expansion of an existing manufacturer. It could possibly employ as many as 50–60 workers, he said, and if it uses an existing building, those would be new jobs, not jobs moved here from somewhere else. The new jobs would pay in the range of \$90,000 to \$92,000 per year, he said.

"I think it would be wonderful" if the company were to come to Winchester, Guy said.

Not only would the company provide good jobs and generate revenue for the community from the occupational tax, but it would be a good corporate citizen, Guy indicated.

"They really did express a very strong desire to be a community partner," he said. "They talked about the quality of life and how they would like to be an active participant in the community."

"I'm just praying that it happens for Winchester," Reed said.

Kentucky voters urged to prep sample ballots before Nov. 3

By Tom Latek
Kentucky Today

LEXINGTON – With no-excuse early voting available from Oct. 29 to Oct. 31 and Election Day itself on Nov. 3, state election officials encourage voters to review their sample ballots before heading to the polls, to save

time for themselves and others.

"We have a long ballot this year with lots of races at the federal, state and local levels," said Fayette County Clerk Susan Lamb. "Reviewing your sample ballot before you head to the polls will save you and everyone time in line."

Beyond all of the races for elected office, this year's ballot includes a lengthy state constitutional amendment restricting dates when a governor has unfettered pardon power. Voters will likely need time to digest all the choices, so reviewing a sample ballot ahead of time gives voters a chance to do

their homework and come prepared when it's time to vote.

"Nobody should feel rushed when they go vote. We want everyone to make informed decisions that reflect their thoughts and values," Lamb said. "By reviewing your sample ballot ahead of time, you'll be able

to plan and know exactly how you want to vote before you arrive at your polling place."

Among the races on the ballot in November is the U.S. Senate seat currently held by Republican Mitch McConnell of Louisville, who is not seeking re-election.

In addition to the U.S.

Senate race, Kentucky's six Congressional seats, all 100 in the Kentucky House and the even-numbered state Senate districts, will also appear on the ballot, along with district judge races. There will also be many local city and county races up for grabs.

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