

## President



### Okeechobee County Economic Development Corporation Okeechobee, Florida

**Overview.** The Chason Group, Inc. has been selected to conduct an executive search for a professional to serve as President of the Okeechobee County Economic Development Corporation (OCEDC). The newly formed point-of-contact for economic development projects in the South Central Florida county is a public-private partnership supported by local governments and businesses.

**About Okeechobee County Economic Development Corporation.** In 2018, business and government leaders organized the corporation as a structured means to enhance the tax base of Okeechobee County through economic development. With a budget of over \$350,000 and a committed Board of Directors, the newly formed organization has initiated the framework to create new jobs and investments in the area. An economic development plan, prepared for the Okeechobee County Board of Commissioners by Policom Corporation of Palm City, Florida, establishes benchmarks for the program, the Board of Directors and President. The OCEDC offices will be located on the campus of Indian River State College in Okeechobee.

**Okeechobee, Florida.** Okeechobee County is located in Florida's Heartland region and approximately 70 miles from West Palm Beach. Easy access to the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico provide an excellent quality of life for citizens and thriving markets for businesses. The population of the area is approximately 40,000 based on the US Census Bureau estimates. The number of residents

increases during the fall and winter months to nearly 75,000 with the influx of outdoor enthusiasts who enjoy the mild climate.

Lake Okeechobee, known as the Bass Fishing Capital of the World, serves as the southern border of the county. The lake is the largest fresh water body of water in Florida and second largest in the US.

Agribusiness is the primary industry in Okeechobee County with beef cattle at the top of the list. The community has the 10<sup>th</sup> largest number of beef cattle in the US and is also a leading dairy producer in Florida with over 25,000 head of dairy cows. The total gross agriculture receipts for the county is \$257 million, according to the USDA.

Manufacturers in the area include Charles Composites, an advanced composite manufacturer of bathtubs and related products, and NexAir, a supplier of industrial gases. Florida Power & Light is building a \$1.3 billion power plant in north Okeechobee County.

**Local Governments.** Both governments have invested financially in the Corporation.

The Okeechobee County Board of Commissioners is composed of five representatives elected on staggered terms. A County Administrator is charged with leading the day-to-day operations of the government. The City of Okeechobee is led by a Mayor and Council, also elected by the citizens on staggered terms, and led by a City Administrator.

## Position Announcement -President Okeechobee County Economic Development Corporation



**“There are three basic economic development programs, which focus directly on creating primary industry jobs: 1) existing industry program, 2) attraction-recruitment program, and 3) start-up program.”**

***Okeechobee County  
Economic Development Plan  
Policom Corporation  
September 2018***

### **Why A New Economic Development Organization?**

The leadership of Okeechobee County recognizes the need for new growth in terms of jobs and tax base. Along with government and private sectors, resources and partnerships have been established to build the OCEDC. Financial institutions, existing industries and small businesses have come to the table to make a difference in the future of the area.

The OCEDC Board is prepared for a long journey to generate new revenues flowing into the county. Through stakeholder interviews, The Chason Group found strong support from elected and appointed officials and key business entrepreneurs. The community accepts the current state of the economy but is ready to change the economic quality of life in Okeechobee.

**The President’s Position.** The President of the corporation will have an opportunity to build an economic program from ground-up. The first year’s focus will be directed toward developing a community industrial park, working with site selection consultants, educating the general public about the mission of the corporation, and implementing a multi-discipline program to include workforce development initiatives.

**Qualifications.** Applicants for the President’s position should possess a Bachelor’s degree, ideally with an MBA or other post-graduate work, from an accredited college; or equivalent experience. Candidates should have at least five years of management, executive and/or strategic leadership experience in the economic development, community development, real estate, marketing or a similar field(s).

**Key Attributes.** A proven track record in developing and successfully building and leading a successful economic development or similar program is extremely important for candidates applying. Attention to detail, presentation skills, knowledge of budgets and an excellent communicator in terms of listening, writing, speaking and social media are also important attributes.

**How To Apply.** Candidates interested in the President’s position may upload a cover letter and resume at [www.thechasongroup.com](http://www.thechasongroup.com). The deadline for submittal is January 18, 2019. Candidates may contact Randy Cardoza at 404.661.9438 or Tim Chason at 404.735.0540 for more information.