

June 22, 2018

For more information, please contact

Yaël Ksander

Communications Director

City of Bloomington

ksandery@bloomington.in.gov

812-349-4357

Monroe County Commissioners' Office

commissionersoffice@co.monroe.in.us

812-349-2550

Newly Appointed Food and Beverage Commissioners to Meet June 25

Bloomington, Ind. – The Monroe County Board of Commissioners and Bloomington Mayor John Hamilton have appointed three restaurateur/merchant members to the seven-member Monroe County Food and Beverage Tax Advisory Commission. Indiana Code (§ 6-9-41-16) stipulates the appointment of three members representing food and beverage retail facilities subject to the tax. The appointments are Michael Cassady, chef and owner of the Uptown Cafe, Helen (Lennie) Busch, co-owner and CFO of One World Enterprises, and Anthony (Tony) Suttile, general manager of the Fourwinds Lakeside Inn & Marina. The new members' appointments were confirmed April 30, 2018.

The commission -- which comprises the three retail merchants, the president of the County executive body (Commissioner Amanda Barge), the City executive (Mayor John Hamilton), a member of the County fiscal body (Councilor Shelli Yoder) and a member of the City legislative body (Councilmember Steve Volan) -- will convene its first organizational meeting Monday, June 25 at 3 p.m. at the Monroe County Courthouse, Human Resources conference room. The commission is tasked with making written recommendations to both the City and County Councils regarding proposed expenditures of the Food and Beverage Tax revenue. Neither council may adopt an ordinance or resolution requiring expenditure of the tax collected without the written approval of the majority of the members of the commission. The use of the Food and Beverage Tax revenue is restricted solely to finance, refinance, construct, operate, or maintain a convention/conference center or related tourism or economic development project(s).

"We are grateful for the service of these veteran restaurateurs," said Bloomington Mayor John Hamilton. "They are sensitive to our particular market, while understanding that a convention center with greater capacity is going to be good for the local and regional economy."

The Food and Beverage Tax was passed by the Monroe County Council on December 13, 2017. The tax authorizes the assessment of a 1% tax on any transaction in which food or beverage is furnished, prepared, or served for consumption at a location, or on equipment provided by a retail merchant within Monroe County.

The tax -- which applies to restaurants, bars, food trucks, grocery stores, and catering companies, among other businesses selling prepared food -- went into effect February 1, 2018 and has been collected since April 2.

"The establishment of the Food and Beverage Tax was done with much thought and community input by the Monroe County Council," said Commissioner Barge.

"Imposing a new tax is never something anyone wants to do; however, the benefits that will result from the expansion of our Convention Center to our community were enough to warrant a positive vote for the tax."

##