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City and County Sign Agreement Advancing Convention Center Expansion

Bloomington, Ind. – The Monroe County Board of Commissioners and Bloomington Mayor John Hamilton are pleased to announce their entrance into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) establishing the Convention Center Steering Committee for Accountability and outlining a sequence of steps necessary to implement the Convention Center expansion project.

The establishment of the MOU and this committee signifies a joint commitment on the part of both City and County to pursue a successful completion of the convention center on behalf of the community. President of the Board of Commissioners Amanda Barge states, “The new composition of steering committee members to manage the expansion was designed intentionally to ensure transparency and accountability to the public—we made sure that residents, not elected officials, outnumber the members of the committee so this amazing public project truly reflects the needs of our community. In order to ensure accountability to our constituents, however, the MOU does stipulate the selection of the architect be made by a majority vote of the elected officials on the committee.”

The new nine-member Steering Committee replaces the previous Board of Commissioners Convention Center Advisory Commission. Four of the five members of that advisory commission – Amanda Barge, Cheryl Munson, John Whitehart, and Jim Murphy – will transition to the Steering Committee. The fifth member of the advisory commission, Deputy Mayor Mick Renneisen, will oversee day-to-day coordination with the project manager and share information and confer with County Administrator Angela Purdie and the Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee for Accountability will include the following members:

Commissioner (Amanda Barge)

Mayor (John Hamilton)

County Council member (Cheryl Munson)

City Council member (Chris Sturbaum)

Board of Commissioners resident appointment (John Whikehart)

Board of Commissioners resident appointment (Susie Johnson)

Mayor's resident appointment (Valerie Pena)

Mayor's resident appointment (Adam Thies)

Jointly appointed resident (Jim Murphy)

"This project will be a new anchor in the cultural life of Bloomington, put us on the map as a national destination, and boost our local and regional economy," said Mayor Hamilton. Both Barge and Hamilton expressed their interest in working in close partnership with all interested parties "to build a convention/civic center fitting of Monroe County and the Bloomington we hope to see in ten, twenty, and fifty years, and beyond."