



OFFICE OF  
**MONROE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**  
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*Julie L. Thomas, President*

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Mayor John Hamilton  
301 N. Morton St  
Bloomington, IN 47404

August 7, 2018

RE: Convention Center MOU

Dear Mayor Hamilton,

On July 24, 2018, we entered into a memorandum of understanding regarding Convention Center development that included the following expressions of mutual intent: "The City and the County agree to collaborate on a Project;" and, "The parties have executed this MOU to signify their joint commitment to pursuing and funding the Project in full collaboration on behalf of the entire community and region." The collaborative approach is reflected in the work of the Convention Center Advisory Commission, which spent months reviewing responses to publicly noticed requests for proposals and interviewing the respondents. That process resulted in the selection of Mr. Patel as the Project hotel developer. Notably, your Deputy Mayor was a member of that Commission, provided the template for and collaborated on the document for the RFQ and voted in favor of Mr. Patel's proposal. It is also noted that you wanted to see the hotel and convention center project separated and that your Deputy Mayor voted for that decision, and the current hotel project lies within county jurisdiction.

The MOU provided a framework for moving forward with the Project as recommended by the Commission. We gladly signed the MOU because we believe our community is better served when its officials work together to overcome the limitations of jurisdictional boundaries and to leverage governmental resources.

Yet, within a mere two weeks, it appears you had abandoned the fundamental premise of our MOU. You contacted Mr. Patel and informed him that you would be seeking proposals from other hoteliers to implement the Project. Your unilateral decision to privately invite new proposals from only a few, hand selected vendors not only subverts the intent of the MOU, but also suggests an approach tantamount to back room dealing. It is an approach we do not condone.

It is clear that you are not committed to participating in the productive and collaborative relationship expressly called for by the agreement you voluntarily signed. Because of your actions, and because we believe in open government and full, open communication, we hereby notify you in writing that we regard the July 24, 2018 Memorandum of Understanding null and void. We will provide you with a revised MOU and will notify the members of the Steering Committee of this action and we thank them for their willingness to serve.

Amanda Barge, President  
Monroe County Board of  
Commissioners

Patrick Stoffers, Vice President  
Monroe County Board of  
Commissioners

Julie Thomas  
Monroe County Board of  
Commissioners