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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**APRIL 2, 2020**

**ST. JOSEPH COUNTY AND CITY OF SOUTH BEND ANNOUNCE COVID-19 RESPONSE COORDINATOR**

Elected leaders of St. Joseph County and the City of South Bend announced the establishment of a new role to aid intergovernmental communication and coordination as we navigate the community's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Jeff Rea, president and CEO of the South Bend Regional Chamber of Commerce and former Mayor of Mishawaka, will step into the new role as COVID-19 Response Coordinator. He will help connect and coordinate relevant public and private sector entities in our community's collective response to COVID-19.

"Having Jeff in this role is huge for our community," said St. Joseph County Board of Commissioners President Andy Kostielney. "His ability to serve as a single point of contact for the County and South Bend is invaluable, and helps us to speak and operate in a unified way."

By stepping in to help facilitate the response, Rea will help the County and City of South Bend provide mutual support and coordinate strategies to address different logistical needs during the crisis. Rea will not receive compensation from the County or City for his services. He will remain an employee of the South Bend Regional Chamber of Commerce.

"I'm excited to team up with the City and County to help coordinate community response efforts. I believe my background in the public and private sectors has prepared me well for this opportunity and we look forward to working closely with our partners to make sure the community is adequately prepared for whatever comes next," said COVID-19 Response Coordinator Jeff Rea. "There are a lot of really talented people already part of this critical response team, we look forward to joining those efforts."

In this role Rea will serve as a single point of contact and cross-governmental representative for COVID-19 response efforts. He will also provide a daily briefing to the executives of each local government regarding each of their efforts, as well as any such efforts by private entities.

"We need all of our governmental entities to coordinate and communicate seamlessly to address the unprecedented challenges that we face," said South Bend Mayor James Mueller. "This new role will help synchronize the County and City responses to COVID-19 and build vital partnerships in the private sector."

A copy of the memorandum of understanding establishing this role can be found at <http://sjcindiana.com/covidmou>.

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