NEWS RELEASE

WAYNE TOWNSHIP BOARD APPROVES MERGER OF FIRE DEPARTMENT

INDIANAPOLIS – Following months of discussion, gathering public input, and listening to community leaders, tonight the Wayne Township Board unanimously approved a merger of the Wayne Township Fire Department with the Indianapolis Fire Department.

The resolution, which grants Wayne Township Trustee Jeb Bardon the responsibility to negotiate details of the merger with the City of Indianapolis, now moves to the Indianapolis City County Council for review, debate, and a vote. If approved by the City County Council, the resolution would go to the mayor for his signature or veto. Once completed, Wayne Township would be the sixth township in Marion County to merge with the Indianapolis Fire Department.

"Wayne Township can no longer afford to maintain a standalone fire department. And, while we cannot go back and change the decisions of the past, we can secure a future where every Wayne Township resident continues to receive world-class fire and emergency medical protections – and that's what happened tonight," said Bardon. "I want to thank the members of the board, the community as a whole and our team at Wayne Township for working through this difficult situation in a responsible, respectful way."

Out of concern for the financial future of the Wayne Township Fire Department and its ability to continue to provide fire and emergency protection for residents, late last year township leaders began exploring merging its fire and emergency medical services with the City of Indianapolis. With the rising costs of health care, retiree health coverage, regularly replacing and updating equipment and facilities, and other critical needs, it is projected that as early as 2025, the Wayne Township Fire Department would have cash flow problems, forcing it to borrow money or cut services and lay off employees. This merger, along with the merger of the EMS service that was approved last month addresses those concerns.

Details of the merger, including the effective date, will be negotiated and announced when available.

Located on Indianapolis' west side, Wayne Township is home to nearly 150,000 residents, vibrant neighborhoods, hundreds of businesses and important assets like the Indianapolis Motor Speedway and the Indianapolis International Airport. The Wayne Township Trustee's Office offers numerous programs and services to assist residents facing difficult situations and also oversees the Wayne Township Fire Department. For more information on the Wayne Township Trustee's Office, visit www.WayneTwp.org

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