



**For Immediate Release
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MCCA committee recommends Levy Restaurants as new food and beverage contractor for Hynes and Boston Convention & Exhibition centers

Contract emphasizes local purchases; new vendor agrees to accept current union workforce and agreement

BOSTON - Levy Restaurants is set to become the new food and beverage partner for the Massachusetts Convention Center Authority, based on a recommendation made today by the Authority's food and beverage selection committee.

The MCCA board of directors is expected to approve the recommendation this Thursday, with the stipulation that the new firm purchase 50 percent of its food, beverages and supplies from local sources. Levy also agreed to accept the terms of the collective bargaining agreement with Local 26, UNITE HERE! as currently executed with Aramark, and the employees governed by its terms. The jobs, wages and benefits associated with the current labor contract will remain in place. This will maintain labor harmony and preserve the jobs of workers at MCCA facilities. The new food and beverage contract goes into effect June 1.

"This is a win for the MCCA, Boston and the Commonwealth," said James E. Rooney, MCCA executive director. "Our selection process was exhaustive, and we are confident that Levy Restaurants will both create memorable experiences for our clients while being a good corporate steward. We are also pleased that we have been able to work out an agreement with Levy to accept the current labor agreement, allowing for a smooth transition as well as the preservation of valuable local jobs."

Chicago-based Levy Restaurants is a leader in premium dining concessions and catering. The firm serves six major convention centers throughout the nation, including America's Center in St. Louis, the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta, and McCormick Place in Chicago. Levy Restaurants has also hosted numerous major sporting and entertainment events, including the Kentucky Derby, the World Series, Major League Baseball's All-Star Game, the Super Bowl, and the Grammy Awards.

“To have been chosen to deliver the industry-distinct and Boston-rich food and hospitality experience envisioned by the MCCA is a landmark occasion for us,” said Andy Lansing, Levy Restaurants’ CEO and president. “Our similar passions for creating memorable, restaurant-quality food and hospitality experiences - what we call ‘The Levy Difference’ - will excite and wow clients with authentic local flavor and a unique flair. We are energized and eager to partner with the MCCA and Local 26 to quickly and efficiently deliver our shared vision.”

The seven-year contract, with the option of a three-year extension, will pay Levy \$350,000 annually, with the ability to earn incentive payments based on sales volume and performance.

The MCCA published a request for proposals for the food and beverage contract on October 1, 2009. All bidders were required to create a strategy that would encourage the use of local products and services, a vital component of the MCCA’s mission to encourage and promote economic development in the Commonwealth.

The selection committee also placed emphasis on a firm’s ability to prepare fresh meals on a large scale. In 2006, the BCEC hosted a Microsoft event that turned out to be its largest food event ever – serving 10,000 people hot buffet breakfasts and lunches for five days in a row.

Five companies submitted bids, and three finalists were chosen in December. After site visits to some of the finalists’ key operations, as well as a series of local presentations, the food and beverage selection committee recommended Levy. Levy offered the highest estimated margin of return of all three bidders, as well as the lowest menu pricing and management fee.

“They get it. Levy’s presentation was unique throughout the selection process,” said Rooney. “From the creation of a standout culinary experience to the use of local products and being steadfastly green, Levy and their local management team will help the MCCA leap well ahead of our competition.”

About the Massachusetts Convention Center Authority (MCCA)

The Massachusetts Convention Center Authority owns and oversees the operations of the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center, the John B. Hynes Veterans Memorial Convention Center, the MassMutual Center in Springfield, MA and the Boston Common Parking Garage. In 2008, the MCCA hosted 239 events at the BCEC and the Hynes with 914,549 attendees, generating 627,544 hotel room nights and \$522 million in economic impact for Greater Boston. The authority is currently examining a possible expansion, with more information available at www.t5boston.com.