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MCCA ANNOUNCES NEW SPRINGFIELD FALCONS CONTRACT
MassMutual Center Construction Progresses; Team Moves in to New Facilities

The Massachusetts Convention Center Authority (MCCA) today announced that it will sign a new five-year contract with the Springfield Falcons American Hockey League Team, whose home rink is the Springfield Civic Center, soon to be MassMutual Center. The contract lays the groundwork for a successful partnership that will allow the team and the MCCA to benefit from the improved and expanded Civic Center.

The Falcons, which are affiliated with the NHL Stanley Cup Champion Tampa Bay Lightning, have called the Springfield Civic Center home since 1994 but since then, two significant events related to the operations of the team and the facility have taken place. In 1998, the MCCA took control of the Civic Center and is currently renovating and expanding it and in 2002, new local owners bought the team, including MassMutual, who owns the naming rights to the Civic Center.

“We often talk about how the new MassMutual Center will expand Springfield’s ability to attract top-notch events,” said James Rooney, MCCA Executive Director. “But one of the biggest winners in the renovation is the Springfield Falcons because of all of the new amenities related to the arena portion of the building. This new contract ensures that the Falcons stay in their home, where thousands of fans enjoy their games every year, and it allows the MCCA to share in their success.”

The new contract outlines, for the first time, a true partnership between the MCCA and the Falcons and provides increased benefits for both parties.

“We look forward to our new partnership with the MCCA and are very excited about the great improvements that have already been made to our facility,” said Bruce Landon, President and General Manager of the Springfield Falcons. “When the project is completed our fans will enjoy a state of the art facility with all of the amenities that will make attending a Falcon’s game even more enjoyable.”

The \$71 million construction project, which is scheduled to be complete in fall 2005, is expanding and improving the existing civic center, which in addition to Springfield Falcons games is a top Central New England venue for children and family shows, like Sesame Street Live and Disney on Ice, sporting events, local college graduations and concerts. The construction includes approximately 147,000 square feet of new building for convention, exhibition and meeting space and the renovation of approximately 215,000 square feet of the existing facility. When completed, the facility will include an exhibit hall, meeting rooms, a ballroom, pre-function space, a kitchen, and corporate hospitality and support spaces.

As part of the overall construction project, the facilities for the Falcons have been and will continue to be upgraded. The former ice system has been replaced with a state-of-the-art system and home and visiting team locker rooms; administration and support spaces have all be replaced with new facilities. In fact, the Falcons moved into their administration area in September and the team has been using their facilities since the 2004 season opened. Additionally, 6, 677 brand new seats, including 222 new club seats, a new club room and brand new bar and lounge have been constructed. Concession stands are being renovated and along with a new, modern center-hung scoreboard will be ready for next season.

The facility has and will continue to be open throughout the renovation and Falcons games as well as other scheduled events will continue to be held.

The site immediately surrounding the arena and civic center will be redesigned as part of the new arena entry and convention center. New brick sidewalks will be created along with trees, pedestrian lighting and views into the convention center lobby and pre-function space.

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