

Slow process to abolish Godfrey Township has begun

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
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GODFREY - In a unanimous vote, the Godfrey Village Board decided to begin the process to abolish the Godfrey Township at its Tuesday, March 7, 2017, meeting.

Godfrey Mayor Mike McCormick said that vote was the first step in what could be a very long process. Currently, the township, which shares the exact same geographical

borders as the village, contains the tax assessor's office as well as taking care of the village's welfare. If the township was abolished, McCormick said he was not sure what would become of those offices, but assumed they could be absorbed by the city, Madison County or a combination of both.

Ultimately, however, those decisions are part of the process, which began with last night's unanimous vote. McCormick said he sent an email to the Illinois Municipal League's attorney asking for further directions. McCormick called that attorney nearly a month ago, asking what the first step would have to be.

Whatever the case for the future, McCormick assured taxpayers they would see a savings once the initiative has been completed. While the village and county may absorb some of the expenses of the township, the services and staffing of the township may remain.

"Overall, there would still be a savings for the taxpayers," McCormick said.

That savings, however, may have to wait until the next elected assessor and township supervisor complete their four-year terms.

"Even if we get this on the fast track and the action can be taken, it will have to wait for the next four-year term with the next assessor and township supervisor," McCormick said. "We have the elections just a month away. In reality, the process could have started six or seven months ago, and maybe we would not have had to wait for another four-year cycle.

"I think that's what happened in Belleville, when they abolished their township. They had to wait for the completion of a four-year cycle for their township to be abolished too."

McCormick said he was ready for a learning experience through the process.

"All elected officials are in favor of doing this, but it's all new territory," he said. "We haven't been down this road before."