

# Godfrey negotiating new contract with sheriff's department

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer  
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**GODFREY** - When Godfrey became an incorporated municipality of Madison County in 1992, it opted to contract its police protection to the Madison County Sheriff's Office instead of establishing its own department.

At a meeting of the village trustees Wednesday night, Madison County Sheriff John Lakin and Captain Eric Decker were in attendance to discuss the contract and answer questions. Godfrey Mayor Mike McCormick said only one trustee asked about contract language, inquiring if property taxes paid by village residents could cover the expenses of police protection, which may possibly increase from \$2.38 million to \$2.4 million when the contract is renewed at the end of November 2017.

"They said their main responsibility is covering unincorporated Madison County, but when we became incorporated in 1992, the decision was made to contract it out," McCormick said. "Now we are going into the next cycle, and it's going to take a while to get it worked out. Our accountant is looking at the dollar figures, and then our village attorney will look over it."

When asked if Godfrey was considering establishing its own police department, McCormick said no. He believes contracting police protection to Madison County offers "quite a bit" of savings to taxpayers within the village.

"If we had our own police department, we would have to have a jail, a holding area for prisoners and we would have responsibilities to the retirement plan," he said.

Currently, the Madison County Sheriff's Office receives as much as 26 percent of its calls to dispatch from the Village of Godfrey. McCormick said if those calls were answered by a hypothetical Godfrey Police Department, the taxpayers would be beholden to future costs for retirement.

"An Alton resident commented that the Village of Godfrey is lucky to have this, because of good part of our neighbor's budget is spent on police protection," McCormick said.

The Village of Godfrey is also served by the Godfrey Fire Protection District, which is also not directly funded by the village. McCormick said the fire protection district has its own board and budget.

"We appreciate what they do," he said of the fire protection district. "But, we have no control or say of what they do. They do a terrific job for us."