

Godfrey Tables Survival Flight Lease For Now

by Dalton Brown, News Reporter
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GODFREY - Godfrey trustees have tabled an agreement with Survival Flight to lease Godfrey Fire Station #1 as their new “home base of operations” once the Fire Protection District moves into their new fire station in mid-January 2024. Details of the lease agreement are currently being worked out by village trustees.

Survival Flight, which currently provides emergency medical services (EMS) by air from their medical helicopter base in Jerseyville, is planning to bring ground ambulances to the region citing requests from multiple local agencies and a need for additional ambulance services. Survival Flight will work with and initially focus on St. Anthony's Hospital in Alton, and is aiming to have their on-ground ambulance service operational by Nov. 6, 2023.

Godfrey Mayor Mike McCormick said trustees should feel "elated" that Survival Flight wants to move their home base to Godfrey.

"As far as the service they're going to supply to the village of Godfrey, it's needed," McCormick said. "The Fire District talks to me - they call for ambulances, they've got to wait for one from Edwardsville. I think us, as a board, should be elated that we've got an ambulance service wanting to come to our community right here."

Survival Flight Base Clinical Manager Chip Ashford said local EMS crews have been "struggling" for decades, and hopes to help them through partnerships.

"At the end of the day, we're trying to do a partnership with the village and with people in the surrounding area," Ashford said. "EMS since the '80s here in this area has been struggling ... at some point, if we are going to fix the problem with what's been going on, we have to have some partnerships between the hospitals, the villages, the cities."

If the finalized lease agreement includes the same rate for rent as the version discussed by trustees on Tuesday, Survival Flight would pay the village \$2,000 per month to rent the building for one year after it becomes available. In the meantime, Survival Flight plans to use a temporary, currently undisclosed location until the lease agreement has been finalized.

While trustees were largely in favor of the agreement, they decided to table the item until their next meeting to gather more information about real estate taxes and other aspects of the agreement. More discussion and/or action is likely in future meetings - the board meets next on Sept. 19.

A full recording of the board's Sept. 5 meeting can be watched at the top of this story or on [Riverbender.com/video](https://www.riverbender.com/video).