MINOA looks at eliminating village ambulance service

MINOA, NY (WSYR-TV) - The Minoa Mayor says a study is being done to find out if there would be any savings by contracting with a private ambulance company instead.

Right now, the village is facing a $300,000 shortfall, because of a loss in sales tax from the county and increasing pension costs.

The village has the only stand-alone municipal ambulance service in Onondaga County. But as a 24-hour operation, it's expensive to run and has a price tag of a half-a-million dollars a year.

"The equipment is expensive, the manpower is expensive, we're continually training," said Mayor Dick Donovan.

While the village gets about half of its money back through its service bills, the rest comes from the taxpayer.

The mayor says they're seeing an increase in the amount of calls they have to respond to outside the village's service area, like Madison County and Syracuse.

"It's really unfair for our taxpayers to be going into another county and not really getting anything for it if you will," said Donovan.

But some who live in Minoa don't like the idea of losing a vital service, which they fear could lead to another problem.

"Longer response times, they're right here most of the time so it makes it quick and easy," said John Meehan.

"There's probably other things they can do to take cuts away from somewhere else," said Donnie Bobec.

The mayor tells us response times will be looked at in the study and there's only one way they'll opt to go with a private company.

"They are going to have to do better, as well, if not better than we do. We are not going to go out of business and risk the quality of service," said Donovan.

The mayor tells us making cutbacks in the ambulance service isn't a possibility, because they're already operating with a skeleton crew.

This is only an idea being looked at. The mayor's budget proposal has yet to be presented. It must then be passed by the village board by the end of April.

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