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Chenango County's Hometown Daily

Ambulance shortage solution unveiled

By: [Michael McGuire](#), Sun Staff Writer [READ MY BLOG](#)

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CHENANGO COUNTY – Local leaders were presented with a possible long-term solution to an expected ambulance

shortage Tuesday that would involve the county funding an emergency service for the first time.

County fire officials and town supervisors asked the county to take up the issue in September after Superior Ambulance – a Binghamton-based private service that handles around 2,000 emergency calls per year in several area townships – announced it would no longer be operating in Chenango County after Oct. 25.


The pull-out was precluded by the company cutting its ambulance numbers by two-thirds in January, citing a lack of profitable business. Since then, area emergency service squads, particularly the City of Norwich, are being stretched to meet the influx of added calls, city and county leaders say.


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
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The solution to the shortage, presented County Fire Coordinator Matt Beckwith to the full Board of Supervisors at its monthly meeting Tuesday, calls for the county to implement a “fly car” system.

Here’s how the system looks as presented:

- The county would employ three full-time, Advanced Life Support certified paramedics to help staff outlying volunteer ambulance squads.
- The paramedics would drive a car to 911 calls or meet volunteers on route to the hospital from two posts, most likely in the southern and northern halves of the county.
- Working in a rotating shift, two county paramedics would always be on call from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday.
- Without figuring in any revenue, Beckwith estimates the service would cost the county \$273,610 annually. That does not include \$77,000 to purchase vehicles and \$15,000 in other start-up costs.

The board moved that Beckwith’s fly car outline be sent to the Safety & Rules committee to be further examined.

Board Chairman Richard Decker told his fellow supervisors that the fly car system appears to be workable solution.

“ Matt’s (Beckwith) developed a concept I think we could live with,” said Decker. “It will benefit the districts that have ambulance services, but don’t have the personnel to man them.”

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pubbuster

October 10th, 2007 at 5:41 pm

Good Idea. Hope the rat patrol does not rip you up and down for County taking over.

Better to have control than worry about others.

This could be a start to county wide Paid/Volunteer Ambulance services.

issylu

October 10th, 2007 at 10:46 am

Thank you, thank you , thank you!!!!

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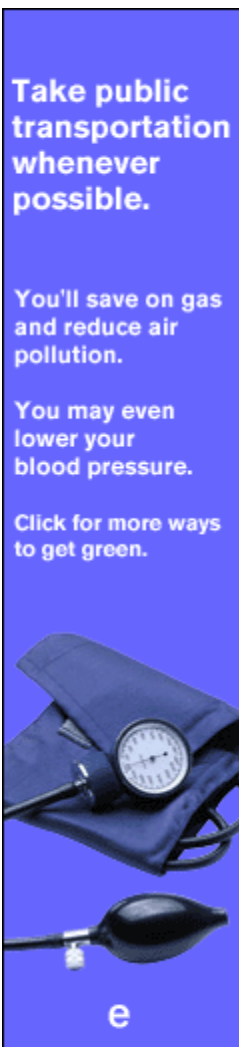


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