

 CITY OF DECATUR ILLINOIS

 #1 GARY K. ANDERSON PLAZA DECATUR, ILLINOIS 62523-1196

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Joint release on a solution for new ambulance services in Decatur**

Decatur, IL – The process is underway for securing new, high-quality ambulance services for the City of Decatur.

Leaders from the City, both local hospitals, and other local medical providers met Tuesday to move forward with a coordinated plan for securing new ambulance services. The group has finalized an “invitation to submit proposals” for ambulance services, and will begin having discussions with regional private ambulance companies to see what is available for our community.

“Everyone is committed to finding the best ambulance services that will ensure continuity for our citizens,” said Decatur City Manager Scot Wrighton. “This is a group effort and we are confident the end result won’t mean more burden on the taxpayers.”

HSHS St. Mary’s Hospital recently gave notice of their plans to discontinue operation of their subsidiary company, Decatur Ambulance Service (DAS). End of operations will not occur before September 1, 2022, and could be extended past this date depending on progress toward naming a new EMS provider.

The City of Decatur appreciates HSHS St. Mary’s and Decatur Memorial Hospital’s willingness to work closely with the City and other local medical providers to ensure there is no EMS interruption in Decatur.

“We want the smoothest transition possible and will work with our partners to make that happen,” said St. Mary’s CEO Theresa Rutherford. “We appreciate the collaborative effort and we look forward to examining proposals from interested private companies.”

“Decatur Memorial Hospital is happy to be at the table and working with our colleagues to find a solution for our community,” Decatur Memorial Hospital CEO Drew Early said. “We know there are well-qualified private companies providing this service in the region, and we will work diligently to secure that for Decatur & Macon County.”

The group believes that replacing the single current private-service provider with one or multiple providers is the speediest and least costly option to move forward. Having more than one provider is preferred, as it provides extra layers of coverage for our community and competition. Many central Illinois cities use this model where high-quality EMS/medical 911 services are provided by a private company or multiple companies. In this way, EMS does not have to be financially supported by government taxation.

A new ambulance company or companies will be encouraged to extend employment opportunities to current DAS employees that wish to continue serving Decatur & Macon County.

The City of Decatur will only issue the license to operate ambulance service in Decatur once a suitable company – or companies – has been found and recommended by the group for consideration and approval by the Decatur City Council.

The ambulance working group consists of leaders from City of Decatur Management and the Fire Chief, HSHS St. Mary’s Hospital, Decatur Memorial Hospital, Crossing Healthcare, and the Central Illinois Regional Dispatch Center.

A copy of the “invitation to submit proposals” will be available from the Office of the City Clerk beginning today, June 29, 2022.

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