



CITY OF SAINT PAUL

ALASKA

NEWS RELEASE

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SUBJECT: Funding Emergency Medical Services (EMS) update

On February 23, 2023, the Central Bering Sea Fishermen's Association (CBSFA) Board of Directors approved a contribution of \$50,111 to fund a portion of the emergency medical services costs for 2023. As with many organizations, the recent closure of the crab fisheries has caused CBSFA to lose a significant amount of revenue income. "We are still trying to provide meaningful benefits and contributions to our Saint Paul Island community," stated President Phillip Lestenkof. "The funding provided by CBSFA will pay for 4 months of EMS services, and for that the City is very grateful," added City Manager Phillip Zavadil.

As a result of the closure of the crab fisheries and the complete loss of fisheries tax revenues of approximately \$2.5 million, the City of Saint Paul had to implement budgetary cuts, hiring freezes, and other painful measures to withstand the loss of revenues and continue to provide essential municipal services.

One of the difficult cuts the City was forced to make is to the Emergency Medical Services (EMS). Delta Medical Transport has provided 24/7 contracted services to the residents and the Bering Sea fishing fleet, including transport to the Saint Paul Health Center or to the airport for Medevacs, since November of 2021.

The City began a fundraising campaign in December 2022. Thanks to initial donations from the Aleut Community of Saint Paul Island and the Central Bering Sea Fisherman's Association, the City was able to fund EMS services by Delta Medical Transport for the month of January 2023. Additional donations by individuals raised on the City's Donorbox site (<https://stpaulak.com/donate-save-our-ems-services/>) has raised an additional \$2,540 to date.

The cost to bring one rotating EMT to the island for the whole year is \$165,000, or \$13,750 each month. CBSFA's recent contribution will fund EMS for nearly four more months of 2023.

Meanwhile, the City has been in discussions with and is submitting an application to the State of Alaska Department of Health for possible additional funding.