

Town urged to take over police force

By DEBBIE GROOM
For The Daily Press

NEW HARTFORD — The police commission set up by the village and town of New Hartford has recommended that operation of the police department be turned over to the town, Town Councilman David Valentine said last night.

The police department now is owned and operated by the village, although the department provides coverage to the entire town. The commission, consisting of five town and village residents, studied the issue for about six months and found that cheaper and better coverage could be provided if the town ran the department.

The Town Board last night accepted the report and the recommendation. Village Mayor John Kazanjian said the report and recommendation "look great on the surface" but said the Village Board will have to study the report before deciding to agree with the recommendation.

Kazanjian said the Village Board will not make a decision on the report and recommendation at tonight's meeting.

Kazanjian said the Village Board also will have to conduct a public hearing to collect comments from village residents about giving up control of the police department. If the Village Board then decides to accept the commission recommendation, a public referendum must be held.

"I hope that if we find that the recommendation is good, that the referendum could be held before the first of the year," the mayor said.