

# LOCAL

TIM WELLER  
City Editor  
797-9161

BOB WILBUR  
Assistant City Editor

PAM MARSHAK  
Assistant City Editor

## Town to form police force

### New Hartford board plans organized department by Aug. 1

By DEBBIE GROOM  
For The Daily Press

**NEW HARTFORD** — The Town Board late last night unanimously voted to form its own town police department.

Councilman David Valentine, who also is town public safety commissioner, said the full-time force will be in operation by Aug. 1. A new police force is needed because the village of New Hartford has canceled the town's contract with the village Police Department July 31.

Valentine said the town already owns a police radio, two police cars, uniforms and guns. All that is needed is "the personnel and the gasoline to put in the cars," he said. The town may spend up to \$54,000 left in its budget to start the program, Valentine said.

A chief would draw up a crime prevention and neighborhood protection program, and decide how many full-time and part-time officers are needed to patrol the town, he said. Valentine estimated that the force would consist of about four men, plus the chief.

The Village Board canceled the contract with the town, charging it was not living up to the terms of the contract. The contract calls for the town to pay \$115,506 a year for police protection.

Village Mayor John Kazanjian said town officials told him they cannot pay any more than \$90,000 a year because of the town's financial problems and \$75,000 deficit.

The Town Board decided to contract for police protection in October 1991. The town's police department was

eliminated and the village department was expanded to patrol and protect the village and the town 24-hours-a-day, seven days a week.

Some board members said they still don't understand why the village canceled the contract. They said they thought the three-month contract agreed upon in October was being renewed on a month-to-month basis. They said the town paid what the village asked for each month, and therefore they can't understand why the village says they were not living up to the financial agreement of the contract.

"I don't know what happened and was very surprised that they canceled," said Supervisor Gordon Newell. "It was a month-to-month thing, and we were never late with a payment and never complained about the service."