

Hartford PD granted accreditation by group

News comes after September on-site assessment, interviews

By Joe VanDeLaarschot

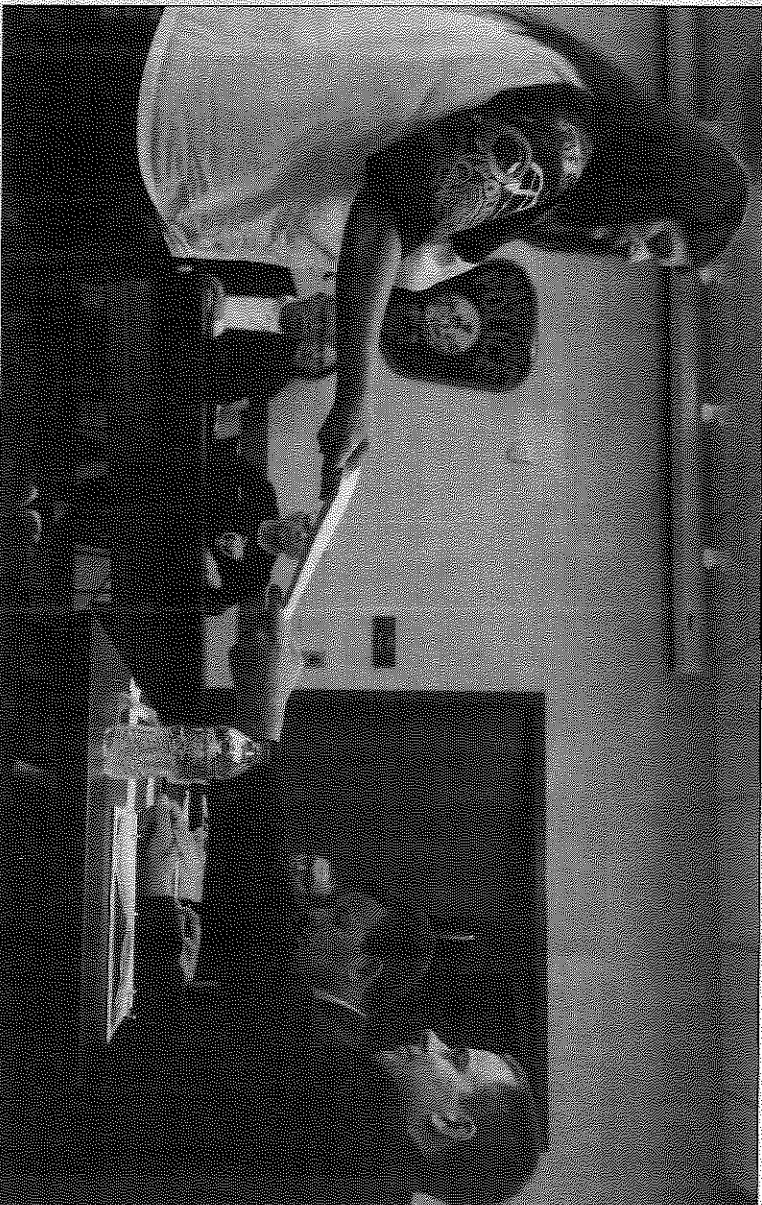
jvan@conley.net.com
262-306-5054

HARTFORD — The goal has been achieved. The Hartford Police Department received a letter this week announcing the HPD will receive accreditation from the Wisconsin Law Enforcement Accreditation Group.

"Following a review of the of the on-site assessment report and a verbal presentation by the assessment team leader, the Governing Board voted unanimously to accredit the Hartford Police Department for a three-year period, effective Oct. 26," WILEAG Executive Director Robert Rosch said in the letter.

Police Chief David Groves said the department has worked hard to receive the recognition.

"It's the mission of the Hartford Police Department to enhance the quality of life through community based policing that provides police services in a fair, conscientious and professional manner," Groves said. "We believe that this accomplishment demonstrates our commitment to making the ideals expressed in our mission statement a reality here in Hartford in a very real, objective and tangible way. "There are several hundred law



Pamela Watkins hands her statement concerning the Hartford Police Department to Pat Cummings of the Reedsburg Police Department during an accreditation meeting Sept. 19 at the Hartford Police Department.

Daily News

enforcement agencies in Wisconsin, but less than 40 have earned this accreditation status," Groves said.

HPD representatives will be attending recognition events this December and in February. A member of the WILEAG Board will be making a formal accreditation presentation to the Hartford Police Department at the Dec. 11 meeting of the Hartford Common Council.

"We hope that all of our community partners will consider attending to celebrate this accomplishment with us," Groves said. "We are very grateful for the countless hours that made this achievement by our staff possible, and for the feedback and support we received from our community in this endeavor."

The on-site assessment process included talking to area residents,

reviewing HPD officers on the job and holding a public meeting seeking more public comments.

"This was our first attempt at the full accreditation process," Groves said.

The accreditation program requires agencies to comply with state-of-the-art standards in four basic areas: policy and procedures, administration, operations and support services. The three

members of the WILEAG team that toured Hartford in September included Shorewood Police Chief Pete Nimmer, Waukesha Police Specialist Erin Christensen and Lt. Patrick Cummings of the Reedsburg Police Department.

Nimmer said when the team was in Hartford they went through all of the standards the accreditation has and made sure the Hartford Police Department has met all of their policies and review all of their proofs for those standards accounted for and in their files.

Nimmer said the team also conducted ride-alongs with officers. They also interviewed command staff and the chief.

Christensen said the WILEAG standards help departments to know what they are supposed to do and how they are supposed to do it. "Every department does things just a little bit differently, but as long as you are meeting the end goal that's what is important," Christensen said.

Nimmer said the accreditation process makes departments review policies and procedures because what WILEAG often finds is that police and procedures go up on a shelf and collect dust.

"Then they are removed once in a while, but this is a living, breathing document and because of that they have to be reviewed every three years and every year they have to touch the policies to make sure they are updated," Nimmer said.

Groves said members of his department have worked to not only commit themselves to professionalism but have sought ways to demonstrate that commitment to the people they serve.