

Police merger considered - *Paperwork submitted to state by Columbia and Mountville boroughs and Manor Township.*

BY TERESA BONO, Correspondent

Questionnaires completed by the police departments of Columbia Borough, Manor Township and Mountville Borough have been submitted to the state Department of Community and Economic Development for review.

DCED is expected to create a report on the feasibility of the three departments merging based on the data submitted, Columbia Mayor Leo Lutz said Aug. 9.

He said that while the departments are awaiting the results, officials in the three municipalities have been meeting to look at ways they can reduce duplication of services and costs.

Lutz said buying police cars and ammunition in larger quantities is one way to save money.

If the merger goes through, it is likely that the best contract of the three departments will be adopted, unless a new one is drafted with collective bargaining.

Lutz said it is also typical that all employees will be retained, but it may not be at the current level and duplicate staff would not be replaced once an employee retires or quits.

A larger staff also would allow for increased training and specialization opportunities.

"I bet this is the future of policing in Lancaster County," Lutz said.