The Hiawatha History Committee met on February 8, 2016, at Hiawatha City Hall in Conference Room D with Edie Wheeler as Chair calling the meeting to order at 1:30 P.M. Members present: Pat Semelroth, Sandy Brewer, Bev Daws, Dick Larson, Tom Theis and Jerry Seifried. Guest: Sara Melsa.

Edie Wheeler welcomed former Mayor Tom Theis as a new committee member.

The History Committee interviewed Sara Melsa of the Hiawatha Police Department. Highlights of the interview include the following information:

* Sara Melsa works at the front desk of the police department for security purposes, answers phones as dispatch for non-emergency calls, and handles the public that comes in and out. Sara also goes out on bigger calls or if extra coverage is needed.
* Sara has 13 years of service on the police department; every stripe on the uniforms counts as three years of service.
* Most memorable moments include when she was hired and being the first female K-9 officer in 2004.
* Mod was Sara’s K-9 dog and he retired after seven years of service.
* Erik Naaktboren is the current K-9 officer, dog is Reso and lives with Erik.
* Sara has seen big changes in Hiawatha; the City has grown a lot.
* Sara was born and raised in Hiawatha.
* Sara remembers when 14th Avenue was a cornfield and before the interstate went through.
* Sara attended Hiawatha Elementary School and graduated from Kennedy High School in 1993.
* Sara is the youngest of five girls in her family.
* Gary Manhart, Rod Fiser and Rick Pierce are the reasons why Sara wanted to be a cop.
* Sara attended a 13-week police academy to become an officer.
* Sara served as a reserve officer for Cedar Rapids and transferred to Hiawatha as a reserve officer before being hired on full-time.
* Sara enjoys making a difference, the little things.
* Each officer has their own car.
* There are usually two to three officers on shift at all times.
* There are four bicycle officers in the community with three on duty at one time.
* The K-9 vehicle is the next one up for replacement. It has been in service since 2004.
* Gun belts the officers wear weigh about 25-40 pounds
* Officers have to wear bulletproof vests every day.
* Officers go through in-house training every third Wednesday of the month.
* There are currently 14 employees in the police department including the chief.
* Hiawatha curfew for kids is 10:00 p.m.
* There is a prescription drug drop off box outside the police department where the public can drop off prescription pills and creams in the bottles/containers.
* Hiawatha Police Department patrols I-380 from Blairs Ferry Road to Midway Road.

Business:

Pat Semelroth moved the approval of the agenda, seconded by Dick Larson. Motion carried. Jerry Seifried moved the approval of the January 11, 2016 meeting minutes, seconded by Bev Daws. Motion carried*.*

**Update on Interviews**

Future Interviews:

* Buffalo Cemetery, Morrison Cemetery and Shiloh Cemetery
* Sandy Brewer brought in a list of people to interview

**Hiawatha Insight Articles**

* March newsletter article – Asking residents for historical information on Buffalo Cemetery.

***The History Committee discussed putting together newsletter articles giving the history on the street names in Hiawatha. City Clerk Kornegor said she would provide a list of all the street names. This information can also be included in the history book.***

**Other Business**

City Clerk Kornegor provided an update on the history book. Kornegor met with Reanne from the Central City Newspaper located at 38 4th Street North in Central City. Kornegor said the Central City Newspaper would put together a book for the History Committee at a very reasonable price. Kornegor said she would get the typed interview transcripts from Metro Studios and if the History Committee would be willing to go through the interviews and pictures and write the stories for the book, Kornegor would transcribe all the material and get it ready for printing. By doing most of the legwork in-house, this will cut back on the cost of the creating the book. History Committee members agreed to use the monthly meetings to work on the book and discontinue interviews until later in the year.

Kornegor informed the History Committee there is a history folder in the City scanning system so the group can scan in their pictures, newspaper articles and other materials.

Edie Wheeler informed the group she went to Buffalo Cemetery to look around and there is a new house built right where the road is going through. Wheeler said there was a New Buffalo town and country school west of Pecks. Wheeler said she is going to try to find some additional information on how the town started.

The next History Committee meeting is March 14, 2016 at 1:30 p.m.

Dick Larson moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:58 p.m., seconded by Bev Daws. Motion carried.

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Edie Wheeler, Chair