The Hiawatha History Commission met at the Hiawatha City Hall in Conference Room D with the Edith Wheeler as Chair calling the meeting to order at 1:30 P.M. Members present: Dick Larson, Bev Daws, Pat Semelroth, and Jerry Seifried. Members absent: Don Gabel and Roberta Hamdorf. Guest: Police Chief, Dennis Marks.

The History Commission interviewed Hiawatha Police Chief, Dennis Marks before the business meeting. Highlights of the interview are as follows:

* Dennis’ grandfather was a vigilante in Lowden, Iowa.
* When Dennis was born, his family lived on 8th Avenue in Hiawatha.
* Dennis grew up in Hiawatha.
* Dennis remembers Barkers being by the railroad tracks.
* When he was little, Dennis was not allowed to play by Guthridge Park because of the blasting.
* Dennis remembers Hiawatha before the interstate was constructed. Hiawatha Elementary school and the fire station were in Hiawatha when he was growing up and he remembers the noon fire whistle.
* Dennis used to play baseball at Guthridge Park and the winning team got a free root beer at the A&W. Dennis remembers playing on the Farmers State Bank team.
* Dennis got his hair cut at the A-1 Barber Shop growing up.
* Dennis remembers when the library used to be in city hall.
* Dennis looked up to his cousin Renee who was a police officer during his teen years.
* Dennis is the same age as Dave Saari’s kids.
* During the early 70’s Dennis lived on Raney Street in Hiawatha when he was in high school. There was not a lot on Raney Street at that time. It looked a whole lot different.
* Dennis graduated high school in 1984 and moved to Texas two weeks after he graduated.
* Dennis started in law enforcement in 1987 in Polk County.
* Dennis was first sworn in as a police officer in 1990.
* From 1996-2006 Dennis and his family lived on a farm outside Sheraton, Iowa.
* Dennis was gone for 23 years before he moved back home in 2007 with his wife, two kids in high school and one foster kid.
* Dennis waited until the Hiawatha Police Department grew to the size he wanted before he applied for the Chief position.
* Dennis looked at longevity of the police department when deciding to move back to Hiawatha. Rick Pierce and Dave Saari worked in the department for a long time.
* Dennis didn’t look at any other community but Hiawatha when he applied for the chief job.
* Dennis’ kids have graduated and moved on.
* Dennis Marks is currently single.
* Dennis has been the Hiawatha Police Chief for six years.
* Hiawatha does have a curfew for teenagers age 15 and below. If they do find kids out past the curfew the police take them home to a responsible adult.
* Dennis told an interesting story about the police department finding 350 pounds of marijuana that came across the border in tires. They also found a lot of cash and guns at the house and had to call the DEA taskforce to come and help.
* Dennis said the police department arrested a man for hiring a hit man shortly after he took over as police chief.
* Dennis said the police find a lot of marijuana in Hiawatha and he wouldn’t be surprised if it is legalized in the next five years.
* Another drug that was being sold locally at service stations is Synthetic or Incense. This is bad stuff because it is laced differently every time it is made. It is hard to charge anyone until the state runs their tests to ban the compounds. Test results can take three to six months to get back.
* Using grant funds and help from Alliant Energy, the police department purchased a mobile command trailer to process meth and make it neutral so they can ship it out. Four police officers are certified in Clandestine.
* In the summer of 2012, the police investigated four meth labs found in a mobile home park. There have also been a couple meth labs found in the apartment buildings in Hiawatha.
* Officer Chuck Allaire visits Hiawatha Elementary and Nixon Elementary in the spring to talk to the kids about strangers and safety.
* The police department does not have a specific bullying program.
* The police department issues citations at a steady level, approximately 200 cars a month for speeding. 60% receive warnings and 40% are issued tickets.
* A couple of years ago, the police department purchased a speed spy with a radar unit to log vehicle traffic. If the police department receives a complaint about speeding on a certain street they will put up the speed spy to monitor and then they go in an issue tickets if necessary. The police department can see what time the bulk of the speeding occurs and then put a unit in the area during those hours.
* Beggars are not allowed to be on the corners in Hiawatha.
* There are two active neighborhood watch groups in Hiawatha in Heritage Green and Bali Hai.
* The police department will do house checks at no charge if residents fill out a form at city hall.
* The police department has come across homeless people pitching a tent in Tucker Park and in the Heritage Green area.
* The 2013 Hog Wild Days fair was a quiet one. The police set up the mobile command center and do bike patrol. The older teenage group poses the most problems during Hog Wild Days.
* The police department has four officers who are bike certified.
* Erik Naaktboren is the K-9 officer. Reso has been the K-9 unit since June of 2012 when Maud retired. Maud passed away in September 2013 after being retired from the police department for a year.
* The police department uses the K-9 unit to obtain search warrants and the K-9 is also trained in drugs, tracking people and officer protection.
* K-9 unit Reso found an armed individual hiding in a garage and he also helped to find drugs in Palo.
* Dennis did not foresee the police department rapidly expanding because they have enough bodies to provide service.
* The police department needs a garage or building to house their vehicles, trailer and patrol bikes.
* The city workers at the maintenance shop do service on the police vehicles including oil changes. If anything mechanical needs to be done, the vehicles have to go to an auto body shop.
* The police department takes vehicles out of service every three years. They do this to trade in the vehicles before they require major work that would be very costly.
* The police department currently has seven vehicles including six marked, one unmarked, two Tahoes and one K-9 vehicle.
* There are currently 14 employees in the police department.
* The police department has a stable workforce and the longevity of the officers is a benefit to the citizens.
* One of Dennis’ new police officers is currently attending the ILEA Academy in Johnston at Camp Dodge for 14 weeks. When Dennis attended the academy, it was 10 weeks of training.
* The two new officers hired in 2013 did not replace anyone that has left the department.

Bev Daws moved the approval of the agenda, second by Pat Semelroth. Motion carried. Jerry Seifried moved the approval of the September 9, 2013 meeting minutes, second by Dick Larson.

**Opening Comments**

Dick Larson will be leaving on Wednesday, October 16th at 9:15 a.m. to go on the Honor Flight to Washington. There will be 58 military and one personal attendant for each military member on the flight.

**Further Work Sessions**

No future work sessions were scheduled.

**Update on Interviews**

* Edie Wheeler did not hear back from Peg Bader to see if she would be able to do the interview in November.
* The Peckosh girls will not be available to do an interview until January.

**Future Interviews**

* Police Chief, Dennis Marks suggested interviewing Police Officer, Gary Manhart because he has been a member of the police department for many years.

**Hiawatha Insight Articles**

Edie Wheeler informed commission members there would be an article on the hose cart in the November newsletter.

**Other Discussion**

Edie Wheeler will check to see if Clarence Sampson can attend the November History Commission meeting.

The next History Commission meeting will be held on November 11, 2013 at 1:30 p.m.

Dick Larson moved to adjourn at 3:01 P.M., second by Pat Semelroth. Motion carried.

**Meeting with Metro Studios**

After the business meeting was adjourned, the History Commission met with Keith and Connie Westpfahl of Metro Studios to discuss the status of the history CD’s and the creation of the history book.

Connie Westpfahl informed commission members that the short videos were complete and they were ready to post on the internet at any time. Connie thought there were 40 to 50 videos.

Keith and Connie spoke to the History Commission about creating a history page on the Hiawatha website or building a site and linking it to the Hiawatha website. The videos could be placed on the history page as links where people could click on whatever video they wanted to watch. The videos could be linked to You Tube for free and they could play directly from the website by clicking on the video link.

History website items to be completed:

* History Commission members were interested in moving forward with creating a history page on the Hiawatha website and linking the videos to You Tube.
* Connie and Keith said Metro Studios could link the videos to You Tube for the commission and Stacy Schryba-Mead could help create the History page.
* The History Commission needs to create the titles for the website video links that will display on the history page.
* Connie brought in the last set of CD’s with the completed short videos and said she would put together a list of the videos with titles so commission members could go review them to make sure everything was correct.
* The History Commission will watch the last set of short videos in during their November meeting.

Connie and Keith also discussed creating a CD and book that the History Commission could sell. Keith told the commission they could put an electronic version of the book out on the history page where people could download the book for a fee.

Kim Downs and Kelly Kornegor looked in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and determined $28,000 was budgeted in 2019 for history book development/production project.

Connie informed the commission the transcripts were almost done.

The History Commission mentioned that the City of Robins had a history book that talked about the families, Don Gabel had a soft cover history book that was approximately 5X7 in size, and Dick Larson had a history book from Apple Valley.

Commission members felt the history book should be in large print and start out with information on Fay Clark.

History book items to complete:

* Commission members will bring in samples of history books so they can take a look at them.
* Connie and Keith said the commission would need to determine how many books they want printed and suggested checking with some of the local printers to see if they would be willing to do any of the work for a discount.

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Edith Wheeler, Chair