The Hiawatha History Committee met at the 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, Bev Daws, Don Gabel, Dick Larson, Jerry Seifried, and Roberta Hamdorf.

Edie Wheeler welcomed Janel McGovern from Nixon Elementary School PTA.

The History Committee interviewed Janel McGovern before the business meeting. Highlights of the interview include the following information:

* Janel McGovern is the president of the Nixon School PTA. The organization is a PTA instead of a PTO because it is part of a national organization.
* When Janel McGovern tried to find the history on Nixon School she was told there was no information available, everything was destroyed in the flood.
* Janel found information about Nixon School on the Gazette website and at the Nixon School library.
* In October 1968, a $5.9 million bond passed which paid for Nixon School and four other schools.
* The land Nixon School was built on was purchased from Pirie in 1969 for $2,725 per acre.
* Nixon School was built in 1970 and opened the same year even though it was not finished. There were no chalkboards and the plumbing wasn’t complete.
* In 1970, the area surrounding the school had no roads and there was a creek. The kids had to walk across private property and the creek to get to school and when it flooded, they couldn’t get to school.
* Nixon School was named after President Richard Nixon who was sitting president at the time.
* In 1970, the beams in Nixon School cracked and so did the ceiling. During the 1971 school year, steel beams were installed in the school.
* When Nixon School was built, there were no walls and no doors between the classrooms, and there were no chairs, the kids sat on the floor. Parents and teachers created the curriculum.
* In 1975, there was a campaign to remove President Nixon’s name from the school and change it to Lincoln but it did not happen.
* Nixon School was built as a kindergarten through 6th grade facility and changed to kindergarten through 5th grade in 1987. Today Nixon School is alternative kindergarten and preschool through 5th grade.
* President Nixon sent the school a letter to thank them for naming the school after him and sent a tree to plant at the school.
* Richard Nixon’s brother Ed and his wife visited Nixon School.
* In 2002, Nixon School turned a locker room into a computer room.
* Lunches used to be $0.35 and today they cost $2.35
* Parents have donated a majority of the landscaping outside the school.
* In the 1980’s and 1990’s Nixon School was updated with new carpeting.
* In 1990, Nixon School used portables due to overcrowding.
* In 1995, Nixon School had its 25th Annual Celebration and that is when all the history information on the school was gathered but it was never organized.
* In 1995, the teachers attempted to make a time capsule but it was never completed. Janel’s father-in-law is making a time capsule to open at the 50thanniversary.
* In 2002, Nixon School went through mold removal.
* Nixon School is the only school in the region that doesn’t have a picture of the president hanging in the school. The PTA is trying to get the picture back up.
* Nixon School’s 50th Anniversary Celebration will be held in 2020 and the PTA wants to get Richard Nixon’s grandkids to visit.
* Today Nixon School has secured doors in case of invasion.
* Nixon School’s colors are green and yellow because they are a feeder school for Kennedy High School. The school mascot is the bobcat.
* Nixon School currently has 430 students.
* The PTA raises approximately $10,000 each year from fundraisers
* The Nixon School PTA meets once a month.
* Today Nixon School has interactive boards instead of white boards.
* Nixon School has a wear blue day to raise awareness to bullying and they talk to the kids about it.
* Nixon School has a Spanish program for K – 3rd grade.
* The preschool program is funded by the state and it is a half-day program in the morning and afternoon.
* The alternative kindergarten program is a small half-day program offered to kids who need a little work before entering kindergarten.

Jerry Seifried approved the amended agenda changing PTO to PTA, seconded by Bev Daws. Motion carried. Dick Larson moved the approval of the May 12, 2014 meeting minutes, seconded by Pat Semelroth. Motion carried*.*

**Update on Interviews**

Pat Semelroth will contact Deb at the Barber Shop to see if she will do an interview at the August History Committee meeting.

**Ideas for Hiawatha Insight Articles for June**

Edie announced the July History newsletter article would be the I-380 dedication.

**Other Discussion**

Don Gabel announced he is moving out of Hiawatha in September.

Edie informed the committee her daughter wrote a book titled, Gracie’s Adventures, the Bear, and she will be selling the book for $5.00 at the Farmer’s Market on Father’s Day, Sunday, June 15.

The next History Committee meeting is August 11, 2014 at 1:30 p.m. This History Committee decided to cancel the July 14 History Committee meeting and have a history luncheon at Adelitas on July 7, 2014 at 1:00 p.m.

Bev Daws moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:03 p.m., seconded by Roberta Hamdorf. Motion carried.

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Edie Wheeler, Chair