

Cemetery Board Requests Financial Help from City

**(KNZA)--Representatives of the Hiawatha Cemetery Society Board met with the City Commission Tuesday evening to request financial assistance from the city.**

**Board Member John Howard told the Commission they are “basically out of money.”**

**The cemetery, located on the north edge of Hiawatha, has existed since the city was founded in 1857 and been operated under a volunteer board. Since that time, Howard said the cemetery has received no tax dollars or public financing.**

**According to information provided by Board member Dave Wilson, the cemetery’s annual operating expenses have averaged around \$23,000 since 2013.**

**Wilson said they contract to do mowing, which is their largest single expense. He said they also contract some of their labor services for grave openings and closings along with any maintenance, with the rest done on a volunteer basis.**

**The two board members told the Commission they needed about \$5,200 to finish out the year and complete the mowing season.**

**The Commission voted unanimously to provide the needed funds.**

**The Commission will meet with the cemetery board at a later date to discuss options to keep operations going into the future.**