

Surprise motion leaves Hiawatha Police Chief terminated

(KNZA)--After nearly a decade on the job, Hiawatha's Police Chief is out. That comes following unexpected action of the Hiawatha City Commission Monday evening, with Police Chief John Defore ousted on a vote of 3 to 2.

Hiawatha Mayor Bill Collins, saying he is not pleased with the Chief of Police and that the City needs to go in a new direction of leadership, made the motion toward the meeting's end.

The motion, seconded by Commissioner Brian Shefferd, was supported by Commissioner Evans Woehlecke, leading to the 3 to 2 vote.

Commissioners Becky Shamburg and David Middendorf cast no votes against the move, with the two voicing surprise and opposition to the motion.

Defore, present during the time of his firing, told the Commission that due to his contract calling for severance if terminated without cause, he would collect his belongings, and turn in property, prior to departing Monday evening.

A reason for the decision to terminate Defore, who has held the position since July, 2012, has not been stated publicly.

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