

Hiawatha

INSIGHTS

March 2026

Vol. 212

HELP US BUILD A BETTER BACKYARD: 2026 COMMUNITY RECREATION SURVEY

As we turn the page to March and watch Hiawatha come alive with the sights and sounds of spring, our department is already looking ahead. Whether it's the crack of a bat at a youth ballgame, laughter at a special event, or the quiet focus of a morning yoga class, our goal remains simple: to improve the quality of life for every resident in Hiawatha. As our community grows, so do your needs – and to serve you better, we need your feedback. This month, we're launching the Hiawatha Parks & Recreation Community Recreation Survey. We're asking for just five minutes of your time to help us answer three key questions that will shape future programs and services:

1. What Do You Really Want to Do?

Are our programs hitting the mark? Where should we focus?

- Sports: More adult competitive leagues or casual drop-in nights? Expanded youth sports?
- Enrichment & Arts: Painting, pottery, music?
- Education: STEM camps, cooking workshops, language classes?
- Special Events: Large community festivals or smaller neighborhood gatherings?

2. How Can We Reach You?

When we announce events, are you seeing them?

- Print newspaper or phone-based news?
- Facebook, Instagram, TikTok?
- Text alerts, direct email, or a registration newsletter?

3. What's Holding You Back?

If you've ever thought, "I'd love to, but..." – we want to know why. Is registration difficult? Are times inconvenient? Did you hear about it too late? Whether through newspaper ads, radio spots, or social media, we want to connect in the way that works best for you.



Your Voice Matters

This survey is your direct line to my desk. I will personally review the results to ensure our plans align with what Hiawathans want.

How to Participate

Scan the QR Code: Use your smartphone camera on the code to take the digital survey instantly.

Visit Us Online:

Go to <https://www.hiawatha-iowa.com/departments/parks-recreation> to fill it out on your computer.



SCAN ME

CONNECT:



CITY OF HIAWATHA, IOWA



HIAWATHA-IOWA.COM

HIAWATHA-IOWA.COM/ALERT-SIGNUP/



MAYOR
STEVE DODSON
mayor@hiawatha-iowa.com



COUNCIL MEMBER
ROB ARCHIBALD
rarchibal@hiawatha-iowa.com



COUNCIL MEMBER
JEFF CATER
jcater@hiawatha-iowa.com



COUNCIL MEMBER
BEN FIEDLER
bfiedler@hiawatha-iowa.com



COUNCIL MEMBER
JILL WEIGEL
jweigel@hiawatha-iowa.com



COUNCIL MEMBER
CJ FLYNN
cflynn@hiawatha-iowa.com



FROM THE CITY COUNCIL



As we move into the new year, one of the City Council's most important responsibilities is approving the fiscal year 2027 municipal budget. This process affects each of us, whether from driving on our streets, visiting our parks, relying on public safety, or simply looking to our community's future. I would like to take this opportunity to share how this process works, when it occurs, why it matters, and how your voice continues to guide the decisions we make.

To begin, creating a municipal budget is a collaborative effort between city staff, department heads, the City Council, and, most importantly, its residents. Over the past several months, city staff have been reviewing departmental requests, analyzing revenue projections, and identifying our priorities for the coming fiscal year. This process requires difficult choices and careful consideration of competing needs, including maintaining our infrastructure, planning our growth, and supporting our emergency services, library, and recreational programs. Every budget cycle brings its own challenges. At the same time, we look forward to the opportunity to maintain fiscal discipline in order to protect our city's long-term stability.

Following this year's discussion and planning, we are pleased to report that we have maintained our municipal levy rate at 13.78 for the third consecutive year. This is a significant reduction from the 14.75 rate that residents paid between 2020 and 2024 and from much higher rates in the decade prior. This is the result of City staff and Council prioritizing holding the line on tax rates while continuing to prioritize providing essential services. We have worked hard to find efficiencies and make strategic decisions that benefit taxpayers and their own personal budgets.

We believe the two most important elements of a healthy municipal process are transparency and resident involvement. Accordingly, we will hold public hearings to discuss the proposed FY27 budget at the April 1st and April 15th council meetings. What services are most important to you? What areas can we improve upon? Simply, these hearings are your opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback on how your tax dollars should be spent. Whether you're concerned about a specific program, have suggestions for improvements, or simply want to better understand how city finances work, we are asking for your input. We understand that every dollar we spend represents your investment in our city's future. My colleagues and I are committed to ensuring that your investment yields meaningful returns, specifically safe neighborhoods, well-maintained streets, accessible recreation, and an expanding local economy.

I'm proud of the financial discipline our city has demonstrated and the positive direction we're heading. As we finalize this year's budget, I'm optimistic. As with all things, we have challenges to address looking forward, but we also have a strong fiscal foundation and a community that cares deeply about its future. I'm grateful for the opportunity to serve you, and I'm committed to making sure our city continues to grow, thrive, and remain a place we're all proud to call home.

I encourage you to mark your calendars for April 1st or 15th, and attend one of the public hearings. Your city government works best when residents are engaged and informed. If you have questions prior, please don't hesitate to reach out to me by phone or email, or simply visit our city website for more information about our processes.

Jeff Cater, Hiawatha Councilmember

MARCH MEETING SCHEDULE

- 04 City Council 5:30 PM
- 10 Parks Board 5:30 PM
- 10 Library Board 7:00 PM
- 17 Water Board 5:30 PM
- 18 City Council 5:30 PM
- 19 History Commission 9:00 AM
- 23 Planning & Zoning 5:30 PM



Interested in community events? Find out what's happening in Hiawatha by checking out our city calendars!

hiawatha-iowa.com/calendar/



City Calendar



Library Calendar

CITY DIRECTORY

TITLE	NAME	PHONE	EMAIL ADDRESS
City Manager	Dennis Marks	319-393-1515	dmarks@hiawatha-iowa.com
City Clerk	Kari Graber	319-393-1515	kgrab@hiawatha-iowa.com
Finance Director	Cindy Daack	319-393-1515	cdaack@hiawatha-iowa.com
Parks & Recreation Director	Matt Boggess	319-393-1515	mboggess@hiawatha-iowa.com
Community Development Director	Kesha Billings	319-393-1515	kbillings@hiawatha-iowa.com
City Engineer	Jon Fitch	319-393-1515	jfitch@hiawatha-iowa.com
Public Works Superintendent	Rod Jasa	319-393-6601	rjasa@hiawatha-iowa.com
Water Superintendent	Marty Recker	319-393-1515	mrecker@hiawatha-iowa.com
Police Chief	Ben Kamm	319-393-1212	chief@hiawathapolice.com
Fire Chief	Matt Powers	319-393-4180	mkpowers@hiawatha-iowa.com
Library Director	Chris Stoner	319-393-1414	cstoner@hiawatha-iowa.com

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

Shoutout to our anniversary all-stars! 🙌 We appreciate your commitment, teamwork, and all the ways you help keep things running smoothly.

Thank you

From the City of Hiawatha and Hiawatha Girl Scout Troop 3568



Seth Allen
25 Years



Rob Opfer
25 Years



Taryn Kincaid
5 Years

A sincere thank you to everyone who helped make our charity drive such a success. From planning and organizing to donating and attending, every contribution mattered. We are incredibly proud to be part of a community that shows up, gives back, and makes a positive impact together.



MILITARY AND VETERAN BANNER PROGRAM INFORMATION

The City of Hiawatha is proud to continue our community tradition honoring those who are serving or have served in the United States Armed Forces. Now in its third year, the Military and Veteran Banner Program recognizes past and present military personnel with personalized banners displaying the honoree's name, branch, years of service, and the names of those honoring them.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Honoree is an active-duty member of the U.S. Armed Forces.
- Honoree is a retired or honorably discharged service member

BANNERS

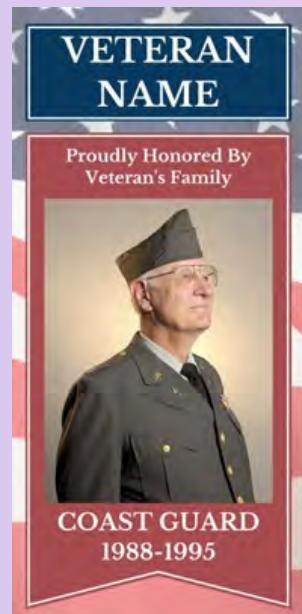
- 30" x 63", double-sided, full color, one honoree per banner.
- Displayed along Center Point Road, Emmons Street, and the new Edgewood Road extension from Memorial Day through Veterans Day in 2026, and again in 2027.
- Limit of 80 new banners for 2026; first-come, first-served. Payment is required to reserve.
- Banners will be returned to the honoree or applicant after the display period. The City is not responsible for loss or damage due to weather, vandalism, or other factors.

COST & DEADLINE

- \$125 per banner (covers both years).
- Applications due March 6, 2026, or until full.

TO ORDER

- Access the application can be found under the "News" section at www.hiawatha-iowa.com or the Hiawatha Facebook page.
- Submit the completed application and/or honoree photo in person, by direct mail c/o Jamie Fiedler, or by email. High-resolution photos and applications can be emailed to jfiedler@hiawatha-iowa.com, or physical copies can be brought to City Hall to be scanned.



QUESTIONS?

Jamie Fiedler, Deputy Clerk:
jfiedler@hiawatha-iowa.com

Rod Jasa, Public Works Superintendent:
rjasa@hiawatha-iowa.com

Or call 319-393-1515.



CITY OF HIAWATHA, IOWA



HIAWATHA-IOWA.COM

Hiawatha Public Library has a brand-new display case—and it's ready to spotlight your favorite collectibles! Whether you collect Spider-Man figures, University of Iowa memorabilia, Precious Moments figurines, or something totally unique, we'd love to show it off. No matter your age, if you're passionate about your collection, chances are others will be too. The library needs your help to fill this space with creativity and community pride! If you have a collection you'd like to display, please contact Alicia Mangin at amangin@hiawatha-iowa.com. We can't wait to see what you love!



Did you know that your library card gives you free, online access to Consumer Reports, LinkedIn Learning, Auto Repair Source, and Heritage Quest, all from the comfort of your own home? Visit hiawathapubliclibrary.org and select "Databases" in the "Resources" tab at the top of the site to start taking advantage of everything your library card has to offer!



Consumer Reports

Searchable reviews of consumer goods like refrigerators, computers, and vehicles.

LinkedIn Learning



Choose from thousands of online courses to learn in-demand skills from real-world industry experts. Learn business, software, technology, and creative skills to achieve personal and professional goals.

Auto Repair Source



Provides service and repair information for thousands of vehicles from 1974 - Present. If you are repairing your car at home, looking up a recalled part, or just need to identify a diagnostic trouble code, Auto Repair Source can help.



Heritage Quest

A searchable online database for genealogical research

Pied Piper Concert
March 14 @ 9:15
Woodwinds
Hiawatha Public Library
Hear Every Note, Feel Every Note
Pied Piper Concerts introduce young children to the orchestra through fun and interactive musical experiences.
Presented by Orchestra Iowa



THE IOWA CHILDREN'S MUSEUM
SPACE STATIONS
PRESENTED BY THE IOWA CHILDREN'S MUSEUM
SATURDAY, MARCH 14 FROM 1:00-2:30
HIAWATHA PUBLIC LIBRARY

MUSIC FOR EVERY WEATHER
March 16 @ 10:00
Hiawatha Public Library
WITH MISS CARLY FROM IOWA MUSIC SCHOOL

Kids, spend your Spring Break at Hiawatha Public Library!

Do You Feel Lucky?
March 17 @ 10:00
A Saint Patrick's Day Story Time
Hiawatha Public Library



KPop Demon Huntress Story Time & Singalong
March 18
10:00-11:00
Hiawatha Public Library
Adorable Princess Party



ARCHAEOLOGY POWERING THE PAST PRESERVING THE FUTURE
MARCH 19 @ 10:00
8-12 year olds
Hiawatha Public Library
See how a creative prototype from a local LEGO League brings archaeology to life - and then roll up your sleeves for a hands-on mock dig.

Avenue of Flags 2026



Hiawatha, Iowa

For \$40 a year, the American Legion will place a 3' x 5' American flag in front of your home on five National holidays:

Memorial Day
Flag Day
Independence Day

Labor Day
Veterans Day

Post 735 supports the following community activities:

Flag essay for 5th grade at Hiawatha, Nixon, and Viola Gibson

American Legion Scholarship

Legion Baseball

Hiawatha Kids League

Hiawatha Fun Days

Cemetery flags: Shiloh, Monroe & Buffalo



American Legion volunteers put up the flags and retrieve them. A receptacle is installed near the curb in front of each home. Post 735 is responsible for the replacement of any flag that is soiled, damaged or stolen.

Mail your completed form and check by May 1, 2026 to:

American Legion Post 735
207 Robins Rd.
Hiawatha, Iowa 52233

Call 319-393-2377 for questions.

IF YOU WERE PART OF THE PROGRAM LAST YEAR, PLEASE USE THIS FORM AS YOUR RENEWAL NOTICE

Detach and return with payment

Enclosed is our check for _____ payable to "American Legion Post 735"
1st flag is \$40; additional flags at the same address are \$25 each

Name _____

Address _____

Phone # _____ Email _____

Do you have underground sprinklers? Yes _____ No _____

Circle one below:

Do you have underground pet fence? Yes _____ No _____

NEW or RENEWAL

WELCOME TO HIAWATHA!

The Hiawatha Public Works is excited to welcome Brady Steffen to our team as a Public Works Technician. Brady has worked as a seasonal employee with the Parks Department for the past two years, and has already shown himself to be a valuable asset to the team.

In his new role, Brady will assist the park operations by leading the summer seasonal staff, as well as supporting daily Public Works operations. We are thrilled to have him on board and look forward to the positive contributions he will continue to make.

Brady was born and raised in the Cedar Rapids area and attended Kirkwood Community College, where he has completed the Parks and Natural Resources Program. In his free time, Brady enjoys spending time with family and sharing his love for the great outdoors.

If you see Brady out and about, please be sure to give him a warm welcome to the City of Hiawatha.



HOW TO BECOME A HIAWATHA POLICE OFFICER

One of the most common questions we receive at the Hiawatha Police Department is, "How do I become a Hiawatha Police Officer?" While the process is straightforward, it is also intentionally thorough to ensure we hire officers who will serve our community with professionalism, integrity, and dedication.

The first step is the availability of an open position. Police officer openings in Hiawatha do not occur frequently. When a position becomes available, we advertise it through the City of Hiawatha's website and our official social media platforms. Interested candidates must submit an application through the City of Hiawatha website by the posted deadline.

Once applications close, we review all submissions and contact qualified applicants to move forward in the hiring process. Certified peace officers and non-certified applicants follow slightly different paths at this stage.

Certified officers are provided with a 26-page background investigation packet and are not required to complete the physical agility or written examinations. Non-certified applicants are also sent the background packet and are scheduled for physical agility and written testing. These tests are based on standards established by the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA), which all Iowa peace officers must meet.

After reviewing test results and background packets, selected applicants may be invited to complete the Critical Hire Assessment. This pre-employment assessment evaluates integrity and personality traits specific to law enforcement. We have found this assessment to be a valuable tool in identifying candidates who are likely to be successful within the Hiawatha Police Department.

Applicants who advance past this stage are invited to participate in our interview process. These interviews are an important part of our selection process. We are not only looking for strong law enforcement skills, but for individuals who are a good fit for the Hiawatha community and the culture of our department.



Following the interview process, candidates undergo an intensive background investigation. Applicants who successfully complete this phase may receive a conditional offer of employment. After accepting a conditional offer, candidates must complete the MMPI-2 psychological evaluation and pass a medical examination.

The hiring process can take three months or longer to complete. While it is a lengthy process, it is critical to ensuring we hire the right people. Even one poor hiring decision can cause lasting harm to community trust. We take great pride in selecting officers who will represent the Hiawatha Police Department with integrity and help keep our community safe.

It is important to note that this process represents only the hiring phase and is just the beginning of a possible career with the Hiawatha Police Department. Once hired, new officers must complete several months of additional training to ensure they are fully prepared to serve the Hiawatha community.

HEDCO SPOTLIGHT: CEDAR RUN'S BIG EXPANSION

Sonia Brandley's vision is nearly a reality. The owner of Cedar Run Companies is putting the finishing touches on a state-of-the-art facility at Robins Road and Tower Terrace in Hiawatha. It will be the new home to both North Star Veterinary Clinic and Cedar Run Wellness and Training. Cedar Run already serves area pet owners at two locations in Hiawatha offering boarding and grooming, but this building marks a major expansion of those services. Sonia gave us a sneak peek inside both spaces; the wellness and training center is on track for a ribbon-cutting in about two months — with the veterinary clinic expected to open its doors in early June.



Sonia Brandley (standing) oversees the operation of an aqua therapy tank for dogs who will be visiting the new Cedar Run Wellness and Training facility.

REGIONAL EMS PROFESSIONALS GATHER FOR ANNUAL EMS SATURDAY

Recently the Fire Department hosted over 75 EMS professionals from across Eastern Iowa for their annual EMS Saturday. This is an annual educational event that gives EMS providers an opportunity to get continual education hours for recertification of their EMS license. EMS Professionals have to complete between 20 and 30 hours every two years to recertify their certifications with the state. This annual educational event has become one of the premier EMS educational events in the region with many people relying on it to get their needed continuing education hours. When asked to



describe the event EMS Deputy Chief Nick Jellison stated “EMS Saturday is a great training opportunity for responders throughout Eastern Iowa. It allows them to collaborate with other services and providers and teaches participants about current EMS trends”. This year’s topics included sessions on Sepsis, Chest Pain and Cardiac Issues, Caring for Children with Special Health Care Needs, Pregnancy and OB Emergencies, Traumatic Cardiac Arrest and First Responder Wellness and Resiliency. These classes were instructed by area Doctors, Nurses, and Paramedics. These classes help to improve our First Responder’s clinical knowledge and skills so that they can continue to provide the best pre-hospital medical care to their communities. A big THANK YOU goes out to the Parks and Recreation Department for allowing the Fire Department to host the event at the Community Center and to Oscar’s Restaurant for supply breakfast and lunch for the attendees.

SPRING HYDRANT FLUSHING PROGRAM BEGINS MARCH 23



With spring approaching, the Hiawatha water operators will begin the annual hydrant flushing program. For the safety of the operators, citizens will see two operators working together flushing hydrants. Hydrants will be flushed for a minimum of five minutes to remove any sediment that may have accumulated in the water mains, valves or hydrants. Flushing hydrants also removes any stagnant water in the distribution system. During these five-minute flush operators are recording data such as chlorine residual, water pressure, and any issues of the hydrant that will be corrected after the flushing season. Residents and businesses can expect to see some discoloration of the water. Possibly some orange or red water coloring from the iron being broken up in the distribution system. This may discolor clothing when doing laundry.

This can be a great time for water users to flush their water heaters. Removing calcium build ups and other deposits in the water heater that may prolong the water heaters lifespan. Operators will begin to flush hydrants the week of March 23rd. Our goal is to have this project completed by May 1st just before City wide garage sales. If you have any questions about hydrant flushing, as always please call the Hiawatha Water Department at 393-5556.

IS TOO MUCH LIGHTING A BAD THING?

It can be! Especially when it creates light trespass onto a neighbor’s yard or home. For years, the City of Hiawatha has followed Dark Sky principles, which require certain outdoor lighting to dim after 10:00 p.m. to help preserve a darker night sky. Chapter 168 of the Hiawatha City Code states: “All outdoor lighting shall be installed with the idea of being a ‘good neighbor,’ to keep unnecessary direct light from shining onto abutting properties or streets.” While City staff does respond to complaints regarding light trespass between neighboring properties, we encourage residents to think proactively. Before installing new outdoor lighting, please consider how it may impact those living around you.



DELIVER BY
FRIDAY,
03/06/2026

POSTAL CUSTOMER HIAWATHA, IOWA 52233

PSRST STD
US Postage
PAID
Hiawatha, IA
Permit No. 33
ECRWSS

HIAWATHA CITY COUNCIL ACTION

RESOLUTION

FEBRUARY 4, 2026

- #26-013 PSA with Hall and Hall Engineers for Clark Park Pond Project
- #26-014 PSA with Shive Hattery to Update Guthridge Park Master Plan
- #26-015 Purchase of 25 L.E.D. Garland Snowflakes
- #26-016 Fire Department Purchase of 10 sets of Firefighter Personal Protective Gear
- #26-017 Parks and Recreation Department Purchase and Install of Guthridge Park Restroom

RESOLUTION

FEBRUARY 18, 2026

- #26-018 Setting PH & Order Notice on Proposed Tax Levy for FY2027
- #26-019 Hiawatha Urban Renewal Plan
- #26-020 Bond Counsel Engagement Agreement
- #26-021 Fix Date 2026 GO CLN
- #26-022 DA Davidson Engagement Letter
- #26-023 Temporary Construction Easement - The Crossing Boyson Rd
- #26-024 Temporary Construction Easement - Treeline
- #26-025 Phone System Replacement
- #26-026 K9 Golf Outing
- #26-027 Support for CCB Expansion and IEDA BIG Program

The Hiawatha City Council meeting minutes may be obtained online or by request to the City Clerk's Office at City Hall at 319-393-1515 x526



<https://www.hiawatha-iowa.com/government/city-council-documents/>

HIAWATHA HISTORY COMMISSION

Answer to February's Question:

This diner stool was from the first Truck Stop north of Cedar Rapids along Highway 150. It was a main road, before I -380, to Waterloo. Now known as N. Center Point Road. It was located in the Quonset building at the Emmons Street corner.



Do you like history? Would you be interested in helping preserve Hiawatha's History? The Hiawatha History Commission would love for you to join them!

Meetings are the 3rd Thursday of the month at 9:00 AM.

COFFEE TALK WITH MAYOR DODSON

It's time to talk. Do you have ideas, solutions or thoughts about the City of Hiawatha? Mayor Dodson wants to hear from you! Join him at Roasters Coffee House in Hiawatha!

MARCH 12

APRIL 9

MAY 14

7:00 - 9:00 AM



CELEBRATING FREE BOOKS FOR KIDS 0-5!



Since Dolly Parton's Imagination Library program began in the Hiawatha area, **298 children** have registered for free & **89** have graduated!



Sign your 0 - 5 year-old up today, FOR FREE, at www.hiawathapubliclibrary.org/imagination-library