

Hiawatha Seeks Delay of Concealed Carry

(KNZA)--Hiawatha city officials will seek a six-month exemption from a new state law that will allow permit holders to carry handguns in public buildings.

The Hiawatha City Commission Monday evening voted to authorize Mayor Crosby Gernon to sign an exemption request letter to the Kansas Attorney General allowing the police department until January 1st to adequately assess and develop security plans for all city buildings.

The new law takes effect July 1st, but local governments are allowed to seek a six-month delay. The law requires local governments to allow concealed weapons in public buildings unless they have an adequate plan for security at the buildings.

City Administrator Lynne Ladner says the law also allows the city to prohibit employees from carrying concealed weapons while on duty in non-law enforcement positions. However, she said there is considerable discussion that the way the law is written its not enforceable.

Ladner drafted a personnel policy that prohibits city employees from carrying concealed weapons on city property or in city vehicles while on duty, which she said had been reviewed by the city attorney.

The commission approved an ordinance implementing the new policy.

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