

County turns down request to form cemetery district

(KNZA)--The Brown County Commission has turned down a request from the city of Hiawatha to form a cemetery district by resolution that would allow for a tax levy to provide funding for upkeep of four local cemeteries.

The Commission voted Monday to sign a letter that will be sent to the city informing them of their decision.

Commissioners indicated they would prefer that a petition be circulated instead to form a cemetery district that would benefit the Hiawatha Cemetery, Mount Hope Cemetery and two other smaller local cemeteries. The cemetery district would have its own taxing authority.

The petition would require the signatures of at least 51 percent of the qualified voters in the proposed district.

During the past two years, the city of Hiawatha has provided financial assistance to the Hiawatha Cemetery Board to help with the maintenance and upkeep of their cemetery grounds.

In a letter to the county, Hiawatha Mayor Bill Collins said he doesn't feel the financial burden should rest solely on the shoulders of city residents as not just city residents are buried in the cemetery.

It was noted that there are currently 12 cemetery districts in the county.