

United States Department of the Interior
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Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 3

Historic Local Government Buildings in Oklahoma's All-Black Towns

Major Bibliographical References:

Tolson, Arthur L., The Black Oklahomans, A History: 1541-1972. New Orleans: Edwards Printing Co., 1966.

Ruth, Kent, Oklahoma Travel Handbook. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1977.

Personal Interview: Mayor Lelia Davis, July, 1983

Quadrangle Name: Taft, Oklahoma

Scale: 7.5 minutes

UTM: 15/269900/3960230

Verbal Boundary: Lot 14, Block 17, Original Townsite of Taft, OK

2. Red Bird City Hall (No. 2 on Sketch Map and Photos 4-6)

Location: Boston Street
Red Bird, OK 74458

County: Wagoner Code: 145

Owner of Property: City of Red Bird
Red Bird, OK 74458

Location of Legal Description: Office of County Clerk
Wagoner County Courthouse
Wagoner, OK 74467

Description: The Red Bird City Hall is a one-story, detached local government building constructed of native sandstone of random course finish. The square-shaped building has a hipped roof covered with green composition shingles and attenuated wooden rafters. A single stack red brick interior chimney is located on the west end of the roof.

The front or north side of the building has a wooden framed central entrance door. The door is constructed of vertical wood planks. To the west of the door is a wooden framed, paired, double-hung, sash-type window with a smooth ashlar lintel. The left side of the window has 4/6 lights and the right 1/6 lights. The paired window to the east of the door has a wooden frame and is a double-hung, 1/1 sash type. On the northeast corner of the facade, a smooth ashlar cornerstone is incorporated in the wall of the building.

The west and east sides have no windows or doors. At the rear or south side, there are two windows on either side of a rear entrance door. The door has a wooden frame with vertical wooden planks. The wooden framed windows are double-hung sash types with 6/4 lights.

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Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 4

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Although the roof was recently recovered and the window surrounds and doors need paint, the basic structure remains intact.

Statement of Significance: The Red Bird City Hall is the second oldest local government building located in the twelve historic all-black towns still in existence in Oklahoma. The all-black town of Red Bird was established in 1902 in Indian Territory. It was one of twenty-seven such communities founded during the Twin Territorial Era. Of the twelve all-black communities which still exist, Red Bird is one of the oldest. By 1907, when Oklahoma entered the Union, Red Bird's population had reached 140 and was a rural market center for the black farmers who lived in the rich Arkansas River Valley. Red Bird's population peaked during the 1920s at approximately 400. The town's city government leaders met at various facilities such as schools and churches until 1932 when they decided to build the nominated property.

Completed in 1933, the Red Bird City Hall has served as the local government center for more than 50 years. It is used not only for local government functions, but also as a meeting place for other civic and community organizations.

Major Bibliographical References:

Tolson, Arthur L., The Black Oklahomans, A History: 1541-1972. New Orleans: Edwards Printing Co., 1966.

Teall, Kaye M., Black History in Oklahoma: A Resource Book. Oklahoma City: Oklahoma City Public Schools, 1971.

Muskogee Cimeter, December 28, 1905.

Personal Interview: Josephine Cook, June, 1983.

Quadrangle Name: Red Bird, Oklahoma

Scale: 7.5 minutes

UTM: 15/266285/3975140

Verbal Boundary: Lots 1-4, Block 144, Original Townsite of Red Bird, OK.

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Continuation sheet Description

Item number 7

Page 5

Local Government Buildings in All-Black Towns

