

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
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Historic Local Government Buildings in Oklahoma's All-Black Towns1. Taft City Hall (No. 1 on Sketch Map and Photos 1-3)Location: Elm and Seminole
Taft, Oklahoma 74463County: Muskogee Code: 101Owner of Property: City of Taft
P.O. Box 6
Taft, OK 74463Location of Legal Description: Office of County Clerk
Muskogee County Courthouse
Muskogee, OK 74401

Description: The Taft City Hall is a one-story, detached local government building constructed of red brick laid in the common bond with a header course every seventh row. It is approximately 15' x 30' and has a hipped roof with a plain wooden fascia board.

The front or east side of the building has a single wooden framed door. The door has wood panels and a double paned window light above. A weather screen door protects the entrance.

The north side has two wooden framed, 2/2 double-hung sash-type windows. Both windows have rowlock-laid brick sills, one has a double layered semi-elliptical arch above and the other a plain wooden lintel.

The south side has a small 1/1 sash-type window encased in a wooden frame. This window is covered by an iron window grille. A second window on this side has been boarded up.

At the rear or west side of the building is a wooden framed and paneled door leading into the back part of the building.

Alterations are minimal. The original roof has been replaced with composition shingles. The cornice, window surrounds, and doors need repair and paint, however, the basic structure remains intact.

Statement of Significance: The Taft City Hall is the oldest remaining local government building in any of the twelve all-black towns still in existence in Oklahoma. Built in 1910, seven years after the town was founded, the property has served as a meeting place for Taft's city government for more than 73 years. The all-black town of Taft was founded in 1903 in Indian Territory and served as a rural market center for blacks who migrated from the South as well as those black freedmen who remained in Indian Territory following the Civil War. Taft's population had reached 225 by the time of statehood and the stability of the community resulted in the formation of a city council. In 1910 the city of Taft built the nominated property to house local political meetings as well as to serve as a focal point for other community organizations. For the past 73 years, the Taft City Hall has retained its historic integrity and continues to serve the community of Taft as its only local government structure.

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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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