

01. ADMINISTRATION

1.4. Historic Courthouse Use

BOS Approved November 6, 2002

1.4.1. Purpose. This policy provides procedural guidelines and user restrictions for the Fluvanna County's historic courthouse.

1.4.2. Considerations. The Board of Supervisors determined that the historic Fluvanna County Courthouse should continue to be used, and continue its tradition of service to the people of the County. However, the character of the Historic Courthouse must be preserved and respected. The County recognizes three basic characteristics of the Historic Courthouse, all of which must be honored in connection with future use:

A. Historic character. The Historic Courthouse is the second-oldest existing public buildings in the County; the Stone Jail is older, and was built as part of the same project. Its principal designer, John Hartwell Cocke, figured prominently in Fluvanna's early history. A personal friend of Thomas Jefferson and other contemporaries of post-Revolutionary Virginia, General Cocke's influence pervaded the first century of the County's history. The courthouse forms a tangible link between modern Fluvanna and its most prominent citizen. While the County recognizes that changes must be made to the building, we will work to ensure that all such changes remain consistent with the its historic character. Future use of the building must preserve and enhance that historic character.

B. Public service and dignity. As the former seat of County government, the Historic Courthouse has come to symbolize the dignity of government based on law and justice. Any future use must be consistent with these principles. To that end, the first priority of all future use must be to serve the public through County government. Any other use must be of a character which respects and promotes the public character of the building and its historical status.

C. Intrinsic value. The Historic Courthouse must be preserved for future generations. While future use will necessarily entail future investment in maintenance and repair and modifications, the same shall be consistent with size, structural design and materials of the building. Any use which imposes excessive wear on the existing heart-pine floors should be avoided, as well as substantial modification of the basic fabric of the building.

1.4.3. Guidelines for use

A. Priority is for public use. Such use includes the following:

1. Hearings of the courts of the Commonwealth which serve the County;
2. Meetings of the board of supervisors and other duly constituted public bodies, i.e., the planning commission, board of zoning appeals, economic development commission,

industrial development authority and those committees or task forces and study teams which function as part of the county government;

3. Public ceremonies authorized by the board of supervisors;

4. Educational activities, such as tours, lectures, and historical reenactments, sponsored by the Fluvanna County Public Schools.

B. Private entities may be permitted use of the building, if approved by the Board of Supervisors. Contemplated uses may include the following:

1. Use of appropriate portions of the building for research, record storage and historical displays by the Fluvanna County Historical Society as the principal guardian of the history of the County;

2. Educational activities sponsored by accredited bona fide educational institutions or other responsible community groups, other than the County's Public Schools;

3. Other activities of a historical or educational character which are consistent with the foregoing principles.

C. All users other than those users described in paragraph A above must apply in writing to the county administrator, specifying:

1. A description of the proposed use;

2. The duration of such proposed use;

3. Any furniture, equipment and materials which will be needed, including lighting and other electrical equipment;

4. Any proposed changes or movement of furnishings and/or decoration of the interior or exterior of the building;

5. Number of participants, including spectators, anticipated;

6. Provisions for trash disposal and janitorial services, security, parking and traffic control. The county administrator, his designee, or the board of supervisors may request additional information prior to approval.

D. The County may require any user to provide evidence of financial responsibility so as to ensure that the County shall be indemnified against all hazards, including, but not necessarily limited to, fire and other physical damage; together with the provision of janitorial, security and other services, as well as extraordinary use of water, sewer, electrical and other public utility services and wear and tear on the building. The user shall remain liable until effective control of

the facility is transferred back to an authorized County official or his/her designated representative.

E. The county administrator, or his designee, may allow the use of the Historic Courthouse for private users for periods not to exceed three calendar days per year. Any such use for more than three calendar days must be approved by the board of supervisors.

F. In addition to the foregoing, and in addition to any and all requirements which may be imposed in a particular case, the following shall apply to any use of the Historic Courthouse and its immediate environs:

1. Alcoholic beverages, tobacco products and all drugs (other than lawful over-the-counter and lawfully prescribed medications) shall be strictly prohibited.

2. There shall be no electronically amplified music.

3. All furnishings and decorations shall be restored to their original positions and condition immediately after the completion of the use. No additional furnishings, equipment or materials shall be used on the premises without prior approval.

4. There shall be no permanent modifications of any kind to the premises without prior approval of the board of supervisors.