

TOWN OF RICHLANDS FACILITY USE POLICY

Purpose and Intent

The purpose of this policy is to establish the criteria, terms, and conditions for the use of Town meeting rooms. This policy shall apply to the Town Hall Board Room, the Community Building and any other meeting spaces which may be created from time to time. It is the intent of the Board of Aldermen to allow the use of designated rooms and facilities for the benefit of the public, provided the use by the public does not interfere with the operations of the Town or constitute an activity that is commercial in nature.

Availability

Town meeting rooms may be used by town residents, community organizations, civic organizations, governmental agencies, social groups, other citizens, and businesses. *The operating of an actual business or venture is not permissible in town meeting rooms.* Meeting rooms may not be used for political or religious gatherings, events, or purposes.

In accordance with Section 163-99 of the North Carolina General Statutes, the Town is authorized and directed to permit the use of town facilities without charge, except custodial and utility fees, by political parties, as defined in G.S. 163-96, for the express purpose of annual or biennial precinct meetings and county and district conventions.

Applications and Reservations

In order to reserve any of the designated Town rooms or facilities, eligible applicants must complete and submit an application and required fees or deposits to the Town Clerk's Office no earlier than six months prior to the date for which the facility is being requested. Rooms and facilities may not be reserved without the submittal of an application and the remittance of any required fees or deposits.

Reservations for the use of rooms and facilities will be scheduled as completed applications, including any fees and deposits, are received. The Town Administrator is authorized to cancel or relocate any reservations due to scheduling conflicts or unforeseen events that make the use of a room or facility unsafe, unreasonable or otherwise not in the best interest of the public. In the event that a cancellation or relocation of a reservation is required by the Town, the Town will notify the applicant as soon as possible to the change and refund any required fees or deposits. Groups or entities that have reserved a room or facility and need to cancel the reservation must provide a minimum of a two week notice of such cancellation or forfeit the deposit on the room or facility.

Use Priority

Town boards, committees, departments and Town-sponsored activities shall have priority for the use of meeting rooms and facilities. All other use shall generally be considered on a first-come, first served basis.

Fees

Use Fees - Except for Town government or Town-sponsored events and activities, fees will be charged for the use of the meeting rooms and facilities. These fees may include the following:

- 1) Administrative fees for processing of applications and for post-use inspection of facilities.
- 2) Minimum and hourly use fees for the use of the facility and utilities. Hourly use fees apply to both the event and on-site event preparation time.
- 3) Service fees for pre-event set-up work, waste removal, equipment set-up, and/or use of furnishings.
- 4) Attendant fees for unlocking, locking, and/or monitoring facilities.

Some fees may be waived in whole or in part (a) for qualified not-for-profit organizations that provide local community services, (b) for governmental agencies, and (c) for organizations conducting activities of direct financial benefit to the Town government.

Damage/Clean-up - There will also be a damage and clean-up fee for any events involving the service of food, for any other events that may require clean-up work, and for any events that may include a risk of damage. The fee may be retained in whole or in part if the meeting room is not properly cleaned, if the area of use is not returned to its pre-use condition, if there is damage to the meeting room and/or adjacent facilities, or if the alcohol consumption terms and conditions are violated. The requirement for a damage and clean-up fee is not a limitation on a user's responsibility and financial liability for actual damage and clean-up costs. Fees, when determined to be applicable, will not normally be waived because of non-profit or government status.

Fee Schedule - Fees and deposits shall be as set forth from time to time in the schedule of fees adopted by the Board of Aldermen. If a person desires to use a space for which a fee is not listed, the administrator of this policy shall determine the fee by comparison with other established fees. All fees due shall be paid in advance of use.

General Rules of Use

The application and any agreements regarding meeting room use shall include appropriate provisions and conditions designed to (a) protect the Town from liability in instances of meeting room use by other persons or organizations, (b) protect Town property from damage or unreasonable wear and tear, and (c) protect the Town from unnecessary post-use clean-up costs.

1. The rental time for the Town Hall Board Room shall not exceed 3 hours. The rental time for the Community Building goes from 8:00 AM until 11:30 PM of the same day. Unless authorized by the Town Clerk, early use of the Community Building outside of the designated rental time shall not be allowed.
2. All use of rooms and facilities, except incidental use by Town staff, must be scheduled in advance through an application filed with the Town Clerk's Office. All required deposits and fees must accompany the application.
3. The use of rooms and facilities does not obligate the Town to provide any furnishings or equipment not currently assigned to the area. Furnishings and equipment may not be removed from the room or facility. Additional equipment may be brought in to rooms and facilities if noted on the application and approved by the Town Administrator.
4. Under no circumstances will a group or entity using the Town Hall Board Room be given a key to access any part of the Town Hall. If used during normal operating hours, Town staff will provide access to the room or facility. Access to rooms and facilities during non-operating hours will be provided through the monitor staff.
5. Town equipment (except furnishings), including audio-visual equipment, may not be used unless expressly authorized by the Town Administrator.
6. The use of displays, decorations or similar items is expressly limited to tables or easels. The attachment of displays, decorations or similar items on walls, doors, windows or any other surface by any staple, nail, tack or adhesive is prohibited. Blue painter's tape is the only adhesive approved for use on the Community Building. Post-event, all signs, decoration and materials must be removed from the premises. The use of candles or any other device that exposes the Town Hall and/or the Community Building to an open flame is prohibited. Failure to abide by any of the aforementioned rules will result in automatic forfeiture of the deposit.
7. The Town Hall and the Community Building are smoke free environments; hence, smoking is prohibited.
8. Except as explicitly permitted in this policy, the use of alcohol in any town facility is prohibited.
9. The use of the kitchen area in the Community Building is intended for the re-heating and final preparation of food items. The kitchen area is not intended to be used to produce food items from scratch. No food will be allowed to be served at the Town Hall Board Room unless the room is being used for an official town function.
10. Groups or entities using rooms and facilities will return the rooms and facilities to their pre-event condition in accordance with the checklist provided with the application.

11. The use of any signage must be noted on the application and approved by the Town Administrator. Under no circumstances may a group or entity use Town insignias, including the Town seal without the express permission of the Town Administrator.
12. If a group or entity does not conclude the use of a room or facility (defined as more than fifteen minutes beyond the time indicated on the application), it will result in the forfeiture of the deposit.
13. Individuals, groups and entities using the rooms and facilities of the Town are responsible for their behavior and are expected to comply with all policies, laws and regulations. Failure to do so could result in dismissal from the Town facilities and the denial of future use applications.
14. The Town reserves the right to deny the use of the rooms and facilities of the Town Hall Complex if it is determined that to allow the use is not in the best interest of the public. The Town also reserves the right to evict any group or entity from any room or facility in the Town Hall Complex if to do so is deemed to be in the best interest of the public.
15. The policy administrator may include any other reasonable terms and conditions necessary to protect the interests of the Town and to protect municipal property. The Town reserves the right to cancel any meeting use reservation due to (a) the need to use the facility for an essential municipal purpose or (b) a determination that the proposed use of the facility is inappropriate, unsafe, or based on false or inaccurate application information.

Use of Alcohol

In order for alcohol to be served at the Richlands Community Building, the following applies:

- All alcohol must be bartended. No self-service of alcohol by event guests is permitted.
- At events where children are present and alcohol is served, the client is responsible to establish a system of checking ID's and identifying minors with bartender/caterer.
- At events where alcohol is served, the Town of Richlands (Town) requires the rental client to employ a Security Officer thru the Town of Richlands Police Department for the duration of the event at an hourly rate of \$25 with a 3-hour minimum. Scheduling of the officer will be facilitated through Town staff. Client must make payment directly to the Security Officer on the date of contracted event.
- The Town of Richlands requires that General liability Insurance be provided by the rental client to cover contracted events where alcohol is served. General liability insurance, to include dram shop liability coverage must name the Town of Richlands and staff as covered during duration of event. Copy for file required two weeks prior to event. The Town waives all liability for illness or injury related to the consumption or service of event-related alcohol on or off premises.

- State law requires that an ABC Special Use Permit be secured by the client for any ticketed event serving beer and wine, any event with charge for beer/wine (including donation) or any event serving liquor UNLESS the client has hired a licensed caterer with ABC permit to provide and serve the alcohol. The Town requires this permit be submitted for file with the Town Clerk no later than 2 weeks prior to event date.
- Cash bars may only be operated at events in which 100% of the proceeds from alcohol sales are used to fund a non-profit cause. The Town provides no change.
- State law requires that a Cash Bar permit be secured by the sponsoring organization. The Town requires this permit to be submitted for file no later than two weeks prior to event date.

Care and Maintenance

All meeting room users shall exercise care and vigilance in the use of the reserved room, shall insure that any reserved facility is left clean and orderly, shall place all refuse in trash bins located outside the building, and shall return the room and its furnishings to its pre-use condition, and shall insure that the meeting space is left secure following use. No equipment or furnishings shall be relocated, altered, or removed without the approval of the policy administrator. Items left behind in a meeting room are not the responsibility of the Town, will not be kept stored for recovery, and will be disposed of in the discretion of the Town.

Administration

The Town Clerk is designated as the day-to-day administrator of this policy. Interpretations and determinations under the policy, if in question, may be made by (first) the Town Administrator and (second) the Board of Aldermen.