

MUNICIPAL HOME RULE PROGRAM

City of Beckley

2024
PROGRESS
REPORT

WV Municipal Home Rule Board
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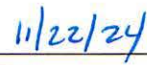
Rev. 08.01.24

West Virginia State Code §8-1-5a (m) provides:

“Commencing December 1, 2015, and each year thereafter, each participating municipality shall give a progress report to the Municipal Home Rule Board and commencing January 1, 2016, and each year thereafter, the Municipal Home Rule Board shall give a summary report of all the participating municipalities to the Joint Committee on Government and Finance.”

The Municipal Home Rule Board has developed this standard format for Home Rule Program participating municipalities to prepare and submit their respective Annual Progress Reports. The intent of this standard format is to gather and compile information in a consistent, easily understood, and efficient manner that will be used to develop a concise and practical summary report to the Joint Committee on Government and Finance.

Annual Progress Reports must be submitted electronically as an individual file in PDF format no later than the close of business on the first business day of December, by emailing to WV Municipal Home Rule Board at MunicipalHomeRule@wv.gov.

A. General Information		
Name of Municipality: City of Beckley		
Certifying Official: Jessica Chandler	Title: Interim Recorder-Treasurer	
Contact Person: Jessica Chandler	Title: Interim Recorder-Treasurer	
Address: 409 S Kanawha Street		
City, State, Zip: Beckley, WV 25801		
Telephone Number: 304-256-1768	Fax Number: 304-256-1767	
E-Mail Address: Jessica.chandler@beckley.org		
2020 Census Population: 17,614		
B. Municipal Classification		
<input type="checkbox"/> Class I	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Class II	<input type="checkbox"/> Class III <input type="checkbox"/> Class IV
C. Attest		
I hereby confirm that I am the authorized official for this municipality and certify that the information submitted herein and attached hereto is true and accurate and that this report addresses each and every initiative included in the original Home Rule Pilot Program Plan Application for this municipality and any subsequent amendments, if applicable.		
		
Type Name of Certifying Official	Signature of Certifying Official	Date

Please use this page to report progress on each **non-tax related initiative** included in your Home Rule Application and Amendment(s). Each non-tax related initiative must be listed on a separate page.

Initiative: Authorization of Code Enforcement Officials to issue citations immediately on scene for code violations concerning public nuisance, safety and/or health.

Was this non-tax initiative a part of your original plan application ☒ or a plan amendment ☐?

Has the ordinance(s) needed to implement this initiative been enacted? ☒ Yes ☐ No

If yes, when was the ordinance enacted? 12/8/2015

If no, please describe challenges faced in enacting the related ordinance(s).

SUCSESSES – In the space below, please provide a brief narrative which highlights successes realized through the implementation of this initiative and any metrics used to track performance.

The ability to issue citations and the increasing awareness of the public that Code Enforcement has the ability to issue citations has led to more voluntary cooperation especially in the area of property maintenance. Residents and businesses that are cited have demonstrated that they would prefer to resolve the violations quickly rather than to deal with a citation and in addition to resolving the problem. Compliance has greatly increased when citations are issued and followed up in a short time. Along with compliance, we have increased Code Enforcement permit revenue, municipal license revenue and B&O revenue as contractors have been compelled to be in compliance.

LESSONS LEARNED – In the space below, please provide a brief narrative highlighting lessons learned during implementation of this revenue initiative that would benefit other municipalities.

This initiative has taken additional inspectors in order to make this plan successful. This allows for a more frequent and constant presence as well as more staff to follow up on complaints. Potential safety risks are being mitigated and the appearance in neighborhoods is very valuable. Also, it is good to note that once a problem has been identified and addressed timely, the offender is less likely to repeat the offense.

Please use this page to report progress on each **non-tax related initiative** included in your Home Rule Application and Amendment(s). Each non-tax related initiative must be listed on a separate page.

Initiative: Authorization to dispose of City property without auction, to lease or sell City property for less than fair market value in certain circumstances.

Was this non-tax initiative a part of your original plan application ☒ or a plan amendment ☐?

Has the ordinance(s) needed to implement this initiative been enacted? ☒ Yes ☐ No

If yes, when was the ordinance enacted? 12/8/2015

If no, please describe challenges faced in enacting the related ordinance(s).

SUCSESSES – In the space below, please provide a brief narrative which highlights successes realized through the implementation of this initiative and any metrics used to track performance.

The City has opted to use a streamlined auction method to dispose of its surplus property. The City is mirroring the State of West Virginia in using Govdeals to dispose of surplus property in on-line auctions. This has expanded the pool of interested buyers greatly and has resulted in higher returns from the sale of surplus property. The City can sell property as it creates surplus on an ongoing basis rather than having to wait and store items and arranging public auctions.

There have been cases where the City has property that could be used to expand existing businesses but would have limited auction value because of the size and proximity. These properties have been conveyed for less than appraised value to commercial enterprises that have used them to increase their ability to do business.

The City has been able to provide an unused city lot for a minimal price to an expanding local business.

LESSONS LEARNED – In the space below, please provide a brief narrative highlighting lessons learned during implementation of this revenue initiative that would benefit other municipalities.

The City has turned previously City owned properties into commercial entities, placing them back on the property tax roster.

Please use this page to report progress on each **non-tax related initiative** included in your Home Rule Application and Amendment(s). Each non-tax related initiative must be listed on a separate page.

Initiative: Authorizes purchase of tax liens on property subject to delinquent property taxes with the right of redemption by the City
Was this non-tax initiative a part of your original plan application <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> or a plan amendment <input type="checkbox"/> ?
Has the ordinance(s) needed to implement this initiative been enacted? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, when was the ordinance enacted? 12/8/2015
If no, please describe challenges faced in enacting the related ordinance(s).
<p>SUCCESES – In the space below, please provide a brief narrative which highlights successes realized through the implementation of this initiative and any metrics used to track performance.</p> <p>The City has been able to redeem a property with a demolition lien that was delinquent on property taxes. This lot is beside our Fire Station and will allow the City to utilize this otherwise vacant lot.</p> <p>The City is exploring a land bank initiative like the ones used in other Cities. This gives the City a better opportunity to recover these properties and turn them into productive uses.</p>
<p>LESSONS LEARNED – In the space below, please provide a brief narrative highlighting lessons learned during implementation of this revenue initiative that would benefit other municipalities.</p> <p>As with any other initiative, preparation and public support will be the key to success of this project.</p>

Please use this page to report progress on each **non-tax related initiative** included in your Home Rule Application and Amendment(s). Each non-tax related initiative must be listed on a separate page.

Initiative: Ability to enter into intergovernmental agreements by resolution
Was this non-tax initiative a part of your original plan application <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> or a plan amendment <input type="checkbox"/> ?
Has the ordinance(s) needed to implement this initiative been enacted? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, when was the ordinance enacted? 12/8/2015
If no, please describe challenges faced in enacting the related ordinance(s).
<p>SUCSESSES – In the space below, please provide a brief narrative which highlights successes realized through the implementation of this initiative and any metrics used to track performance.</p> <p>The City has partnered with the County to integrate some services with Raleigh County. The City Information Technology department has configured itself to be the backup for the County Emergency Operations Center. There are also agreements to assist in operation of the County Civic Center and Health Department. The City has joined with the county in an effort to supplement the current animal shelter by sponsoring animal transportation to outside adoption centers.</p>
<p>LESSONS LEARNED – In the space below, please provide a brief narrative highlighting lessons learned during implementation of this revenue initiative that would benefit other municipalities.</p> <p>Intergovernmental agreements will save both the City and County money, but attention needs to be paid to how both savings and responsibilities are allocated initially. Joint funding of projects has to have a beneficial result for the City as well as the county.</p>

Please use this page to report progress on each **non-tax related initiative** included in your Home Rule Application and Amendment(s). Each non-tax related initiative must be listed on a separate page.

Initiative: Authorizes City to place liens on property for action taken in regard to eyesores and dilapidated buildings
Was this non-tax initiative a part of your original plan application <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> or a plan amendment <input type="checkbox"/> ?
Has the ordinance(s) needed to implement this initiative been enacted? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, when was the ordinance enacted? 12/8/2015
If no, please describe challenges faced in enacting the related ordinance(s).
<p>SUCSESSES – In the space below, please provide a brief narrative which highlights successes realized through the implementation of this initiative and any metrics used to track performance.</p> <p>The City utilizes liens when city resources are utilized to demolish, repair, alter, mow or eliminate public health and safety hazards from private property. The City actively demolishes structures that are a threat to public safety. Most of these properties do not have an owner that is able to undertake the financial obligation of demolishing or altering these structures. A lien is placed on these structures and then upon sale of the vacant lot many times this lien is satisfied. The City also allows payment plans for anyone that has property maintenance costs associated with their property. This allows for the City to maintain the lien in place until the payment plan is paid in full. The City does have several successful payment plans since this has been enacted. The City has collected successfully on several demolition/property maintenance liens.</p>
<p>LESSONS LEARNED – In the space below, please provide a brief narrative highlighting lessons learned during implementation of this revenue initiative that would benefit other municipalities.</p> <p>The ability to use liens to recover expenses has been a good tool in the effort to remove blighted properties. It is in the City's best interest to recover expenses via payments in a payment plan rather than waiting until the property is sold to recover these costs. However, challenges do remain with absentee owners and heirship complications.</p>

Please use this page to report progress on each **non-tax related initiative** included in your Home Rule Application and Amendment(s). Each non-tax related initiative must be listed on a separate page.

Initiative: Authorizes the City of Beckley to allow sale of alcoholic beverages on Sundays beginning at 10:00 am, "Brunch Bill"
Was this non-tax initiative a part of your original plan application <input type="checkbox"/> or a plan amendment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X?
Has the ordinance(s) needed to implement this initiative been enacted? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, when was the ordinance enacted? 10/25/2016
If no, please describe challenges faced in enacting the related ordinance(s).
<p>SUCSESSES – In the space below, please provide a brief narrative which highlights successes realized through the implementation of this initiative and any metrics used to track performance.</p> <p>Senate Bill 561 that went into effect in June of 2019 was a statewide authorization for the sale of alcoholic beverages beginning at 10:00 am on Sundays. This made the City of Beckley local initiative unnecessary.</p>
<p>LESSONS LEARNED – In the space below, please provide a brief narrative highlighting lessons learned during implementation of this revenue initiative that would benefit other municipalities.</p> <p>None that apply.</p>

Please use this page to report progress on each **tax related initiative** included in your Home Rule Application. Each tax related initiative must be listed on a separate page.

Initiative: Reduction of B&O rates in 3 classifications and enactment of a 1% consumer sales tax
Was this tax initiative a part of your original plan application <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> or a plan amendment <input type="checkbox"/> or N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Has the ordinance(s) needed to implement this initiative been enacted? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, when was the ordinance enacted? 12/8/2015, effective 7/1/2016
If no, please describe challenges faced in enacting the related ordinance(s).
<p>REVENUES – In the space below, please provide a brief narrative highlighting revenue amounts and revenue categories realized; revenue amounts and revenue categories reduced; net revenue gain; and, any metrics used to track performance.</p> <p>The City of Beckley reduced the B&O tax in 3 categories: Manufacturing (from \$.30/\$100 to \$.25/\$100), Retail (from \$.50/\$100 to \$.40/\$100) and Amusement (from \$.50/\$100 to \$.35/\$100). In addition, the City enacted a 1% consumer sales and use tax. 1% sales tax revenue for 6/30/24 was \$7,198,103.52, B&O tax revenue for 6/30/24 was \$12,871,122.39. The reduced B&O categories resulted in a \$824,141 reduction in B&O tax revenue for the period ended 6/30/24.</p>
<p>SUCCESES – In the space below, please provide a brief narrative highlighting projects, improvements, programming, etc. realized through the implementation of this revenue initiative and any metrics used to track performance.</p> <p>The City has used the additional funding source to address critical needs that could not have been realized with B&O tax alone. A new Police headquarters has been constructed replacing the former decrepit building. A replacement Fire station has also been constructed allowing for a more suitable location for our Fire Department. It has allowed vehicle and equipment upgrades that allow departments to more efficiently provide needed services to the citizens in a safe and efficient manner.</p>
<p>LESSONS LEARNED – In the space below, please provide a brief narrative highlighting lessons learned during implementation of this revenue initiative that would benefit other municipalities.</p> <p>The WV State Tax Department has been an invaluable resource during this process, and it is recommended that their assistance be sought out. Inflation is a driver of both B&O and 1% sales tax. While inflation bolsters revenue, the expenses are also increasing due to inflation. Salaries and benefits expenses have far exceeded the inflation increase from the revenue.</p>