

MUNICIPAL HOME RULE  
PROGRAM

City of Buckhannon

2024  
PROGRESS  
REPORT

West Virginia  
Municipal Home Rule Board  
P. O. Box 11360  
Charleston, WV 25339-1360  
[MunicipalHomeRule@wv.gov](mailto:MunicipalHomeRule@wv.gov)  
304.558.3356

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.

<b>Initiative : Property Nuisance Abatement – Tax Lien – On-Site Citations</b>
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? July 19, 2015
If no, please describe challenges faced in enacting the related ordinance(s).
<p><b>SUCSESSES</b> – 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><b>Seventeen citations were issued in fiscal year 2023-24. The ordinance was updated to tighten up the timeframe to allow issuance of citations. This has helped the positive outcome of compliance.</b></p> <p><b>We have had no success in trying to place a tax lien on the property. See narrative in “lessons learned” below. The on-site citations help to remediate un-kept and vacant properties.</b></p>
<p><b>LESSONS LEARNED</b> – 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><b>More Legislative action needs taken to make County Assessors and their software vendor recognize the benefit to this strategy. Tax liens have proven to be challenging. The Upshur County Assessor will not place the liens on the property taxes because Software Solutions, the company that controls the tax software will not recognize this as a tax lien. Until they are directed to do so in writing by state law or State Auditor the liens will not be recognized or placed on the property.</b></p>

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<b>Initiative: Online Sale or Disposition of Municipal Property</b>
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? December 15, 2016
If no, please describe challenges faced in enacting the related ordinance(s).
<p><b>SUCSESSES</b> – 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><b>In the 2020 report we noted that he first online auction was held in 2019. All of our departments compiled a list of surplus equipment to be auctioned. We drafted an RFP to select an auctioneer. JJ Kane Auctioneers was awarded our auction service. This proved very successful. It exposed our items to a much larger audience. We received over \$61,000 for all of our departments, in combined revenue.</b></p> <p><b>We did not hold an auction in 2020 or 2021.</b></p> <p><b>In 2022 the City auctioned a problem property (Sedgwick St \$45,500) that was obtained in a tax sale. A second property (Upper Drive) was obtained but did not receive a minimum bid at auction. The house, which was in very poor condition, was demoed by the city.</b></p> <p><b>We have not held an auction in 2023 or 2024.</b></p>
<p><b>LESSONS LEARNED</b> – 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><b>It was beneficial to solicit an auctioneer. Each auctioneer charge differently for their services.</b></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.

Was this tax initiative a part of your original plan application  or a plan amendment  or N/A

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

If yes, when was the ordinance enacted? August 15, 2015

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

**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.

**As of this date, No revenues have been realized through this initiative**

**SUCSESSES** – 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.

**No business has taken advantage of this at this time.**

**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.

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: Municipal Sales Tax and reduction of B&O tax.**

Was this tax initiative a part of your original plan application  or a plan amendment  Yes  or

**Police Department:**

- Maintenance of K-9 purchased for department
- In 2024, continued the program to rotated and lease financed cruisers. This ensures reliable cruisers for department use.
- Police software annual maintenance
- Continued funding for CALEA. Accreditation was achieved through the help that funds were available for needed expenses to certify the department
- New for 2022, added one new police officer position. This will be an ongoing cost
- Pay increases in 2022 will be an ongoing cost
- New mobile radios were budgeted \$33,700
- Equipment for use by the Volunteers in Police Service. This group is a huge help that assist the police department and community with tasks such as traffic control and manning street barricades and community gatherings. \$3,500

**Fire Department:**

- Budgeted for three new fire fighters in 2021. This will be an ongoing cost.
- In 23-24 \$60,000 was allocated toward a training facility. 24-25 \$50,000
- In 2022 the City starting paying 100% of the insurance premium for the Volunteer Fire Department. This is an ongoing cost
- In 2022 a new fire truck was delivered and has been financed. This is an ongoing cost to 2031
- In 2023 a new truck for the Fire Chief was obtained through the Enterprise vehicle lease program
- In 2023 funding was allocated for Lifepak equipment
- Pay increases in 2022. This is an ongoing expense.
- In 24-25 budget funds were allocated toward recruitment and equipment and training for volunteer fire fighters. \$30,000
- 24-25 budget also includes SCBA Airpaks financing \$58,000 annually.

**Street Department:**

- Concrete truck and silo continue to be financed. We have seen a savings owning this in-house for small concrete jobs.
- Property and buildings were purchased on the Mudlick Road in 2020. The Street Department functions were moved to this complex and are shared with the Waste Collection Department. Waste Department moved a large portion of their operations to this facility which will enable use of a large building for a fire and police training facility. Annual property payment is \$117,300.
- \$165,000 was allocated in the 24-25 budget for Street Department Projects
- \$88,000 was allocated in the 24-25 budget for lease finance payments for equipment
- \$200,000 is allocated toward paving projects 24-25.
- \$100,000 will be contributed to the Stormwater Department of the Sanitary Board

**Stockert Youth Center:**

- Annual maintenance of Software obtained to help track various youth activities \$3,900 annual
- New gymnasium floor in 24-25.

**Colonial Arts Center:**

- This facility is a former theatre that was in a dilapidated condition. Council voted to obtain the property in 2016. Since then, some grants were obtained and some donations were received and fundraising activities conducted since then. The building was renovated and is now in full use as an arts center owned and operated by the City of Buckhannon.

**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.

**Prior to applying for this plank, the Buckhannon City Council established a Revenue Review Committee to explore options to increase revenue and identify projects and activities that the revenues would fund prior to public meeting and discussions with City Council.**