

**STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA, COUNTY OF UPSHUR, CITY OF BUCKHANNON, TO WIT:**

A regular meeting of the Buckhannon City Planning Commission was held in Council Chambers at City Hall, 70 East Main on Monday, April 18, 2022 at 7:00 pm with the following in attendance:

Susan Aloï	President (Chair)	Present
Richard Clemens	Vice-President (Vice-Chair)	Present - by GoToMeeting
Randy Sanders	City Recorder	Present
CJ Rylands	Member/Council Rep	Present
Vincent Smith	Member/Building Code Enforcement	Present
Curtis Wilkerson	Member	Present - by GoToMeeting
Mike Sharpolisky	Member	Absent
Kelley Tierney	Member	Present
Sara Aylestock	Member	Present
Sarah St. Clair	Member	Absent
Thomas O'Neill	City Attorney	Present

Guests: Jennifer Bostian, UCDA Executive Director; Mayor Robbie Skinner, COB; Amberle Jenkins, Assistant Recorder & Director of Finance, COB.

*City of Buckhannon Planning Commission -  
Meeting Agenda for Monday, April 18, 2022 at 7:00pm at City Hall in Council Chambers*

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A regular meeting of the Buckhannon City Planning Commission will be held on April 18, 2022 at 7:00 pm. The meeting will be held in the City Council Chambers at City Hall, 70 East Main Street, Buckhannon WV 26201. This is an open meeting (per WV code § 6-9A-3) and all interested parties are welcome to attend.

**A. Call to Order**

- A.1 Moment of Silence
- A.2 Pledge to the Flag of the United States of America

**B. Recognized Guests**

- B.1 Upshur County Development Authority-Executive Director Jennifer M. Tanner-Bostian: RE: E1
- B.2 City Attorney-Tom O'Neill; RE: E.2

**C. Consent Agenda**

- C.1 Approval of Minutes - Regular Meeting 01/18/22

**D. Correspondence & Information**

- D.1 Meeting Minutes-Special Joint Session of City Council & Planning Commission 02/23/22  
RE: Parks & Recreation Operations

**E. Strategic Issues for Discussion and/or Vote**

- E.1 Discussion on Economic Development Section of the 2025 Comprehensive Plan
- E.2 Discussion/Possible Action Recommendation to City Council to Amend Zoning Ordinance No. 244 Section 502, R 2, General Residential District A, to include Condominiums per City Attorney Tom O'Neill

**F. Comments and Announcements**

**G. Adjournment**

Posted 04/12/2022

**A. Call to Order** - The meeting was called to order by the President of the Planning Commission, Dr. Susan Aloï, who asked for all to observe a Moment of Silence. Kelley Tierney led the group in the Pledge to the Flag of the United States of America.

**B. Recognized Guests**

**B.1 Upshur County Development Authority-Executive Director Jennifer M. Tanner-Bostian: RE: E1 Discussion on Economic Development Section of the 2025 Comprehensive Plan**

Dr. Aloï recognized UCDA Executive Director Jennifer M. Tanner-Bostian who noted that she recently presented a full overview of the Upshur County Development Authority (UCDA) 2022-2027 Strategic Plan to City Council (a copy of which is in our meeting packet). Throughout her presentation she also referenced a recent survey of stakeholders that the UCDA conducted.

It was noted that the UCDA purpose is to serve as the City of Buckhannon's & Upshur County's point of contact for economic development services and functions as well as development and marketing of available commercial/industrial properties to capture opportunities.

Ms. Bostian noted that the UCDA is specifically focusing on:

- Working with stakeholders to raise the workforce participation rate.
- Promoting and assisting in developing quality of life opportunities in Upshur County such as housing, the downtown district, general retail, service industries, and outdoor recreation to attract more residents, remote workers, and new employees for existing businesses.
- Educating stakeholders to identify and act on new opportunities for expansion & recruitment through coordination and education of economic development tools.
- Focus on business retention and expansion activities with regular employer interviews and follow up activities.
- Having additional ready properties to capture opportunities for investment as they arise.
- Keep a scorecard of metrics to show economic development progress and areas to improve.

A few takeaways from the survey included:

- 65% of survey respondents said that educational opportunities was an important factor in our community:
- 70% of new jobs come from existing businesses;
- We need more marketing and communication efforts;
- 4,000 nonresidents come in to Upshur County for work daily while 3,000 of our residents leave Upshur County for work daily.

A brief Q & A with Ms. Bostian followed along with comments from various Commission members and Mayor Robbie Skinner.

## **B.2 City Attorney-Tom O'Neill - RE: E.2 Discussion/Possible Action Recommendation to City Council to Amend Zoning Ordinance No. 244 Section 502, R 2, General Residential District A, to include Condominiums per City Attorney Tom O'Neill**

Dr. Aloï next recognized City Attorney, Tom O'Neill who discussed the fact that our zoning ordinance established multiple residential, commercial, and other zones to manage and promote the development of land within the municipal limits. The R-2 zone was established to promote higher density residential construction than is permitted in the R-1 Single Family Residential District Zone. It was noted that condominium or other unit property are authorized in Chapter 36A of the West Virginia Code yet the establishment of condominium or unit properties are not explicitly addressed within the city's zoning ordinance.

Several Commission members asked questions and sought clarifications before the Chair asked for a motion to move the item forward.

**Motion that the Planning Commission of the City of Buckhannon specifically recommend to the City Council of Buckhannon to amend Zoning Ordinance No. 244 Section 502, R 2, General Residential District A, to include the placement of condominiums or other unit property, as defined in Chapter 36A of the West Virginia Code, was made by Rylands/Tierney. Motion carried.**

President Aloï asked for an update on the Parks & Receptions Board with City Attorney O'Neill and Mayor Skinner explaining that the Ordinance No. 456 of the City of Buckhannon, an ordinance establishing the Buckhannon Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, is up for its second and final reading at the next Council Meeting. Discussion took place.

## **C. Consent Agenda**

**C.1 Approval of Minutes - Regular Meeting 01/18/22** – President Aloï reviewed the Regular Meeting Minutes of 01/18/22 with the Commission members and asked if there were any corrections or additions to any of these minutes and none were given.

**Motion to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting 01/18/22 was made by Rylands/Aylestock. Motion carried.**

**D. Correspondence & Information** – President Aloï reviewed the following with the Commission:

**D.1 Meeting Minutes-Special Joint Session of City Council & Planning Commission 02/23/22  
RE: Parks & Recreation Operations**

**STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA, COUNTY OF UPSHUR, CITY OF BUCKHANNON, TO WIT:**

A special joint working session of the Buckhannon City Council and Buckhannon Planning Commission was held on Wednesday, February 23, 2022 at 7:00 pm in City Hall. The following were in attendance (GTM – GoToMeeting):

Mayor	Robbie Skinner	Present
City Recorder	Randy Sanders	Present
Council Member	Pam Bucklew	Present
Council Member	Shelia Lewis-Sines	Present
Council Member	Jack Reger	Present-Virtual
Council Member	CJ Rylands	Present
Council Member	David Thomas	Present
Assistant Recorder & Director of Finance	Amberle Jenkins	Present
City Attorney	Tom O'Neill	Absent
Director of Public Works	Jerry Arnold	Present
Planning Commission President	Susan Aloï	Present
Planning Commission Member	Curtis Wilkerson	Present
Planning Commission Member	Mike Sharpolisky	Present
Planning Commission Member	Sarah St. Clair	Present
Code Enforcement Officer	Vincent Smith	Present
Record Delta	Kristen Harvey	Present
Channel 3	Dennis Cortes	Present
MyBuckhannon	Katie Kuba	Present

Also in attendance: Carl Weaver (previous year Park Attendant); Robyn Simons; Don Nestor; Dr. Joseph Reed; Joshua Hinchman; David McCauley; Dale Shannon. Attending virtually were; Richard Clemens and John Boskovic.

**To Participate in the meeting virtually,**  
Please join the meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone:  
<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/887760181>  
**You can also dial in using your phone:** United States: **+1 (646) 749-3122** Access Code: 887-760-181

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Special Joint Working Session of City Council of Buckhannon & Planning Commission  
7:00 pm in Council Chambers  
Meeting Agenda for Wednesday, February 23, 2022

- A. Call to Order**
  - A.1 Moment of Silence**
  - A.2 Pledge to the Flag of the United States of America**
- B. Working Session & Discussion**
  - B.1 Parks and Recreation Operations in the City of Buckhannon**
- C. Board Members Comments and Announcements**
- D. Adjournment**

**POSTED 01/26/2022**

- A. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order with a moment of silence and pledge to the flag.
- B. Working Session & Discussion:**

**B.1 Parks and Recreation Operations in the City of Buckhannon**

**City Parks & Recreation - Discussion Outline**

- **Intro/Explanation of purpose of meeting led by Mayor Robbie Skinner**
- **Where we are: Findings of the Parks & Recreation Subcommittee (of Planning Commission) and photos of current state of the parks led by Subcommittee Chair and Planning Commission Member, Curtis Wilkerson**

- **Where we might go: Recreation section of 2025 Comprehensive Plan and photos of other parks led by Planning Commission President Susan Aloï**
- **Planning Commission recommendation to City Council led by Council Member/Commission Member CJ Rylands**
- **Recap of City Council's thinking/discussions about Parks & Recreation Board and Director led by Mayor Skinner**
- **Job description of possible Parks & Recreation Director**
  - **Duties & Responsibilities**
  - **Knowledge & Skills**
  - **Education & Experience**
- **Budget projection for Director and Operations**
- **Structure**
  - **Director reports to whom?**
  - **Director coordinates with which other units?**
  - **Parks & Recreation Board (modeled after the Colonial Arts Center board)?**
- **Other suggestions and concerns led by Mayor Skinner**
- **Questions?**

Mayor Skinner opened the meeting with a brief overview of the purpose of this meeting which is to see what is expected of our parks and if there is the need to hire a Parks and Recreation Director to oversee and develop programming for the parks.

Skinner turned the meeting over to Planning Commission President Dr. Susan Aloï.

Dr. Aloï explained the purpose of the Planning Commission. "The Planning Commission is charged with a development of a comprehensive plan that was then submitted to City Council who approved. There is a section in the plan required by state code regarding recreation. We also completed a survey in the community and received over 750 responses of what people would like to see in Buckhannon."

Aloï noted that many of the responses mentioned recreation and therefore, a Parks and Recreation Subcommittee was developed. Curtis Wilkerson is the chairman of the subcommittee and a member of the Planning Commission. Wilkerson verbalized, "One of the things we did was to assess the facilities and take pictures. The next thing we looked at was the utilization. We started to come to the conclusion that we have all these really great assets but a lack of focus and planning across multiple generations and activities. We wanted to take a look at long term plans of what the City of Buckhannon could be. The parks fall under the streets department, which is already overworked, and our parks are not at the top of the list and there are a lot of street and other city infrastructure that need attention. We haven't had a constant set of eyes on our parks. There are picnic tables with tree limbs falling down on them, unusable horseshoe pits and roofs that need repair." Pictures were also available of our local parks and the areas that need addressed.





Council member CJ Rylands noted when referring to our parks, "This has been a reactive rather than a proactive approach. We want to diminish the load on the street department so they can accomplish their mission and at the same time enhance our parks to improve the quality of life for our citizens. We also want to increase the utilization."

### C. Comments:

Comments were made by many of the participants of the meeting including but not limited to the following:

- Aloï- Central Planning will improve use of parks. Example pictures of other communities were displayed.
- Wilkerson- Parks are a quality of life and help keep a community vibrant. Activities go in and out of fashion. Constant planning is important.
- Rylands- If a Director would be hired the framework to develop that position should be thought out.
- Sines- Questioned if the position should be a director or a worker. What would a director do during the winter? There is a lot to consider.
- Thomas- Wants to be proactive. More things are possible with the help of sales tax revenue. This needs to be looked at in total, along with Stockert, Colonial, the Madison/Jawbone, Dog Park and

trails. Maybe we need less parks. This should be reviewed comprehensively. Maybe one person to look at all these facilities every day.

- Reger- Suggests forming a committee to develop a plan over the next year.
- Skinner- Some of the parks are used in different ways. Madison/Jawbone is more for events, city parks are combination of youth and adult activities. Some parks are more aesthetical.
- Clemens- Lives next to the City Park on Park St and observes it. It is maintained and well mowed during the spring and summer season and a little less during off season. It is well used. There doesn't need to be a formal program every week.
- Jerry Arnold- Cautioned that if a Director were to be hired, not to set them up for failure. Directors working for the city do more than just organize and manage, they must help with the daily tasks as well. A few part time personnel will not be beneficial to help a director that has been described.
- Mr. Carl Weaver was present and acknowledged for his hard work the past year in working as a park attendant. Weaver spoke of issues, including homeless people and drug issues in parks as well. Additionally, Weaver noted it is not an easy task and would require a team of people to effectively run and improve our present parks.
- Dr. Reed expressed his own observations, stating that West Virginia Wesleyan College is Buckhannon's largest attraction. In addition, he made request to council to consider remodeling Jawbone Park and having adequate restrooms available.
- Former Mayor David McCauley spoke on the issue, stating, "We need to focus on accessibility and inclusivity." He also noted that he would recommend a full-time director to promote planning and work on funding. Furthermore, McCauley said working on "inter-connectedness" of our parks and recreation system would be beneficial.
- Comments in favor of a park director came from a few guests that were present virtually and in-person. Others would like to see more volunteerism to help. There was much discussion on what would be most beneficial to all departments and individuals when developing a plan to improve our parks. All in attendance discussed pros and cons of various options. Initially it was discussed to have only a part-time director to oversee our parks, however it was pointed out by others in attendance that in the off-season would be the time that would be spent to plan for the next open season, make significant repairs and perform grant writing to provide funding to improve the recreational areas in Buckhannon. Parks are generally in-season starting in May and closing for off-season in October. Discussion also explored increasing volunteerism to address repairs such as group painting projects.

Overall, it was noted that the City of Buckhannon is highly ambitious to develop and implement a plan to improve our recreational areas. Multiple ideas were also considered including exploring opportunities to fund creating a skate park, splash pad, pickle ball, ice rink and sled riding areas. City Council mentioned possibly using sales tax to cover costs of projects but other funding would still be required. It was also reported that grants may be available to the city for recreational projects. What's more is that the consensus was that more utilization in our parks improves quality of life for our citizens and will also deter drug use and vandalism.

Upon the end of discussion, Mayor Skinner noted that he would recommend that City Council create a Parks and Recreation Board, appoint members and move forward. "I think this is a great first step. We will explore the quick tangibles that we can achieve, then mid-range line items we want to tackle and then long-range end of the road planning of what we want to see happen with the parks," Mayor Skinner concluded.

**D. Adjournment:** There being no further discussions, the meeting adjourned at 8:54 pm.

Mayor Robert N. Skinner III \_\_\_\_\_

City Recorder Randall H. Sanders \_\_\_\_\_

(Portions of these minutes are from Record Delta newspaper.)

**E. Strategic Issues for Discussion and/or Vote**

**E.1 Discussion on Economic Development Section of the 2025 Comprehensive Plan –**  
 President Aloï reviewed the Status of Goals from the Comprehensive Plan with the Commission. One item discussed was the tourism element of the City and there was interest in having the CVB office open on the weekends when visitors are in the downtown area. A more in depth discussion took place concerning businesses opening on weekends as well. Recorder Sanders provided an overview on his experiences as the City’s representative on the Board for the CVB and noted that the CVB’s primary function is to create and implement marketing programs for outside areas like Pittsburgh and Washington, DC. He is willing to address the question about having weekend hours and an upcoming CVB Board of Directors meeting.

Commission member Rich Clemens suggested having an alternate space for people to pick up information on the weekends. Also, instead of asking our people why they don’t want to work weekend, instead research with community’s that already have weekend hours to find how they do it.

City of Buckhannon  
 Planning Commission  
 April 2022

**Status of Goals from 2025 Comprehensive Plan**

<b>Goal</b>	<b>Completed</b>	<b>In Process</b>	<b>Not Completed</b>	<b>No Longer Relevant</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
<b>Economic Development</b>					
1. Attract young professionals and other knowledge workers					- UCDA and Create Buckhannon are good partners for this
2. Explore light industry in emerging areas such as renewable energy, hemp manufacturing, agribusiness...		<b>X</b>			- Hemp – old armory and MoonFlower downtown
3. Nurture current partnerships and seek additional partners (examples follow):					
• Upshur Schools, WVWC, St. Joseph’s, City & County government, UCDE & IDEA Center, existing businesses – identify entrepreneurial opportunities					- What about the DECA chapter at B-UHS?
• Collaborate with organizers					- UCDA director

of statewide and regional pitch contests to attract new entrepreneurs		<b>X</b>			involved in B-UHS student visit - UCDA director helped judge WVWC business plan competition; in touch with winners
• Facilitate additional creative placemaking initiatives, building on existing projects (Artistry on Main, ART 26201, Festival Fridays, etc.)	Traders Alley Madison St	<b>X</b>			
4. Facilitate trades training and business support for emerging and long-standing tradespeople who have work skills, but lack business experience		<b>X</b>			- CCWV ARC INSPIRE grant proposal - UCDA ARC POWER planning grant proposal - COH Upshur Incubator project
<b>Goal</b>	<b>Completed</b>	<b>In Process</b>	<b>Not Completed</b>	<b>No Longer Relevant</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
5. Build on opportunities for outdoor recreation (river, walking/bike trails)		<b>X</b>			- Work with partners to extend the river trail to the HS trail - Promote bike paths
6. Host races and other recreational events					- Bring back the Strawberry 5K; maybe another group can organize - Isn't there a new women's running club?
7. Maintain a vibrant downtown		<b>X</b>			- Need to monitor what's going on in the section torn down from fire
8. Enhance collaborative marketing of shops, restaurants, music, art, dance, events, etc.					- Can CVB take leadership on this?
9. Encourage more downtown shops to remain open on Saturdays					-Weekends, esp. Sat., seem most promising for tourism... Can the CVB be open at least on Sat?
10. Attract & retain retirees – appropriate housing, public transportation, volunteer, continued learning, & recreational opportunities		<b>X</b>			-Check in with CVB and MtCAP about retirement city designation

**E.2 Discussion/Possible Action Recommendation to City Council to Amend Zoning Ordinance No. 244 Section 502, R 2, General Residential District A, to include Condominiums per City Attorney Tom O'Neill - Addressed earlier in the meeting. Action taken.**

**F. Comments and Announcements**

Commission member Sara Aylestock asked what was happening with Mr. Foster's property on Main Street where the building burned. There was some speculation but no one knew specifics.

Commission member CJ Rylands led a discussion on the new Stockert Youth & Community Center building design. Mr. Rylands feels the proposed plans may not reflect what the community wants and he advocated for more time to be taken to include public meetings to allow that input. He also recommended that we engage City Architect Bryson VanNonstand to hold public meetings and create a design from those discussions for consideration. The idea of looking at other facilities throughout the area and country to get more ideas was discussed by Mayor Skinner. A lengthy discussion on the subject took place.

Recorder Sanders provided a report on the World Association of Marching Show Bands 2023 Competition to be held in Buckhannon, July 17 to 24, 2023.

#### **G. Adjournment**

**Without objection, President Aloï adjourned the meeting at 8:36 PM.**

**Commission President Susan Aloï**

**City Recorder Randall H. Sanders**