

33 Re: 2% Utility Tax

AN ORDINANCE IMPOSING AND LEVYING A TAX ON THE PRIVILEGE OF PURCHASING, USING, OR CONSUMING PUBLIC UTILITY SERVICES OR TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY SUPPLIED BY PUBLIC UTILITIES.

An Ordinance imposing and levying a tax on the privilege of purchasing, using or consuming public utility services of tangible personal property supplied by public utilities; defining terms; fixing the amount of such tax; providing for the collection of such tax and the method of payment and accounting therefore to the municipality; specifying effective date of ordinance; requiring proration and records and authorizing inspections of records; providing exemptions; specifying nonliability of public utilities and duties of the municipality; authorizing rules and regulations; establishing liens, remedies and penalties for violations of the ordinance; requiring notice to public utilities; and providing a severability clause.

Be it ordained by the Council of the Municipality of Beech Bottom Brooke County West Virginia:

That an excise tax upon the privilege of purchasing, using or consuming within the corporate limits of this municipality any public utility service and tangible personal property supplied by any public utility subject to the jurisdiction of the Public Service Commission of West Virginia (whether such public utility be privately or municipally owned or otherwise owned by any type of governmental entity) is hereby imposed and levied as follows :

SECTION 1. Definitions

The following words and phrases when used in this ordinance shall for the purposes of this ordinance have the following respective meanings:

- (a) "Person" includes individuals, firms, partnerships, associations, corporations and combinations thereof, of whatever form or character;
- (b) "Public utility service" means all services and tangible personal property purchased within this municipality from a seller, as hereinafter in this section defined, namely, telephone service; electric service; gas service,

including bottled or liquid gas, if the seller thereof is classified as a public utility subject to the jurisdiction of the Public Service Commission of West Virginia; water service and sanitary sewer service; if purchased, used or consumed within the corporate limits of this municipality;

(c) "purchaser" includes every person who purchases, uses or consumes a public service;

(d) "Seller" includes every person, whether a public service corporation, a municipality or private corporation, classified as a public utility and subject to the jurisdiction of the Public Service Commission of West Virginia, who sells, furnishes or supplies a public utility service and

(e) "user" means the owner or tenant of private residential property or the owner or tenant of property used for commercial or industrial purposes, and every combination thereof, every kind or description.

SECTION 2. Imposition and levying of tax; amount of tax.

There is hereby imposed and levied upon each and every purchaser of a public utility service an excise tax upon the privilege of purchasing, using or consuming, within the corporate limits of this municipality, such public utility service. Such tax shall be in the amount of two percent of the charge exclusive of any federal or state tax thereon made by the seller against the purchaser with respect to each public utility service, which tax in every case shall be collected by the seller and paid by the purchaser upon the amount of each periodic statement rendered such purchaser by the seller, and shall be paid by the purchaser to the seller at the time the purchase price or such charge shall become due and payable under the agreement between the purchaser and the seller. The tax imposed and levied by this Ordinance is in addition to all other taxes imposed and levied by this municipality. In the event more than one public utility shall furnish the identical public utility service to the same purchaser, said purchaser shall be entitled to group the same as a single public utility service in calculating the amount of the charges in any calendar month for such public utility service.

SECTION 3. Collection; time of payment; accounting; effective date of ordinance; proration.

It shall be the duty of every seller in acting as the tax collecting medium or agency for this municipality to collect from each purchaser for the use of this municipality the tax hereby imposed and levied at the time of collecting the purchase price charged for its public utility service, and the amount of tax actually collected during each calendar month shall be reported by each seller to this municipality and each seller shall remit the amount of tax shown by said report to have been collected to this municipality on or before that first day of the second calendar month following the month in which collected, together with the name and address of any purchaser who has failed or refused to pay the tax so imposed and levied. The tax imposed and levied by this ordinance shall apply to periodic statements rendered after July one, one thousand nine hundred and seventy-nine, and when any such periodic statement covers public utility service rendered both before and after said date shall be subject to such tax, and the portion subject to such tax shall be such portion of the total charge as the number of days after June thirty, one thousand nine hundred seventy-nine within the period covered by such periodic statement, bear to the total number of days covered by such periodic statement. The required reports shall be in the form prescribed by the official of this municipality charged with the responsibility of collecting taxes due this municipality.

SECTION 4 Records; inspection thereof.

. Each and every seller shall keep and maintain complete records showing all purchases of public utility service within the corporate limits of this municipality, which records shall show the charge made against each purchaser, the date such public utility service was furnished, the date of payment therefor, and the amount of tax imposed hereunder, and such records shall be kept open for inspection by the duly authorized agents of this municipality shall have the right, power and

authority to make at the expense of this municipality such transcripts thereof during such times as they may desire.

SECTION 5. Exemptions

The tax hereby imposed and levied shall not apply to the following transactions, which transactions are hereby exempted from such tax:

- (a) Purchases of public utility service for resale;
- (b) Purchasers of public utility service by the United State of America, the State of West Virginia, and the political subdivisions, municipalities, boards, commissions, authorities and public corporations thereof;
- (c) Purchases of tangible personal property such as appliances or the like, as distinguished from the public service supplied;
- (d) charges for telephone services which are paid by the insertion of coins into coin-operated telephones, and specific charges or tolls for telephone calls to points outside the corporate limits of this municipality; and
- (e) Nonrecurring or one-time charges incidental to the furnishing of public utility service.

SECTION 6. Nonliability of utility; duty of municipality; refunds; rules and regulations.

There shall be no liability upon the seller for erroneously collecting the tax hereby imposed and levied or for erroneously failing to bill for such tax as a result of a good faith mistake on the part of the seller. When any purchaser contends that such tax is not owed by such purchaser on the ground that the public utility service was not purchased, used or consumed within the corporate limits of this municipality, the seller shall refer the question to the official of this municipality charged with the responsibility of collecting taxes due to this municipality, and such seller shall thereafter collect or refrain from collecting such tax from such purchaser for such public utility service as instructed in writing to do so by such officials of this municipality. Any and all claims for refunds of any such tax shall be presented to this municipality shall have the authority to promulgate

and enforce reasonable rules and regulations necessary for the administration and enforcement of this ordinance.

SECTION 7. Enforcement provisions; penalties.

Any amount of tax due and unpaid under this ordinance shall be a debt due this municipality. In the event that the purchaser fails or refuses to pay any tax when due hereunder, such tax shall thereupon become a lien upon the property of the purchaser and shall be collected by this municipality in the same manner and by the same remedies as are provided by law for enforcement of levies and liens of other municipal taxes.

Any purchaser who fails or refuses to pay the tax hereby levied, and any purchaser or supplier who violates any of the provisions hereof or any lawful rule or regulation promulgated hereunder, shall be fined not more than one hundred dollars (\$ 100). The failure or refusal to pay the tax for public utility service purchased, used or consumed during different periodic statement periods shall constitute a separate and distinct offense.

SECTION 8. Notice to utilities.

The tax hereby imposed and levied shall not be effective until this municipality gives sixty days' written notice by certified mail of the effective date of the ordinance to any public utility doing business within this municipality which is required to collect the tax imposed and levied hereby.

SECTION 9. Severability.

If any provision of this ordinance or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held unconstitutional or invalid, such unconstitutionality or invalidity shall not affect other provisions of this ordinance are hereby declared to be severable.