

<b>Labor and Employment</b>	
Employed persons 16 years and over... by occupation	
Managers and professionals	565
Service occupations	78
Sales and office occupations	286
Farming, fishery, and forestry	15
Construction and maintenance	164
Production and transportation	144
Self-employed persons	110

<b>Income and Poverty, 1999</b>	
Per capita income	\$28,915
Median household income	\$65,667
Median family income	\$76,419
Persons in poverty	92

<b>Housing Units</b>	
Total	893
Occupied	872
Single family units	779
Owner occupied units	706
Renter occupied units	166

<b>Taxation</b> (fiscal year ending 30 June 2004; rate per \$1000 of assessed value)		
<b>Taxable Property</b>	<b>Valuation</b>	<b>Rate</b>
Total	\$441,455,550	
Residential	\$323,271,550	12.58
Commercial	\$103,145,210	12.58
Industrial	\$6,869,100	12.58
Personal	\$8,169,640	12.58

<b>Average Single Family Tax Bill, 2004</b>	
Average single family value	\$322,550
Average single family tax bill	\$4,183
Average state tax bill	\$2,894

## **Library Profile**

### **History**

The Berlin Public Library was established by vote at the 1891 Town Meeting. This was done with the assistance of the State's Free Library Commission, which provided \$100.00 worth of books. Mrs. D. Hastings gave a like amount. Other important collections soon came from the Berlin Social Library and the Union Library Association of South Berlin.

The public library was first housed in a corner of the Selectmen's room in Town Hall. A separate library building was immediately suggested. The Tuesday Club started a fund for this purpose in 1902. When the addition to the Town Hall was built in 1904-1905, the library was moved across the hall to what later became the police office.

Meanwhile, private and public fund-raising activities continued to build up money to erect a building. In the 1912 Centennial Parade, the Village Improvement Society's float carried a model of a proposed library building. In 1915, James D. Tyler gave a piece of land at the corner of Carter and Walnut Streets for a library. At the 1926 Annual Town Meeting, a building committee was established. The new library building was opened on December 8, 1928.

### **Present Description**

The library is a department of town government governed by an elected six-member Board of Library Trustees. The Board's authority is derived from Chapter 78, Sections 10 and 11 of the Massachusetts General Laws. Section 10 states in part that: "the board shall have the custody and management of the library... and all property owned by the town relating thereto. All money raised or appropriated by the town for its support and maintenance shall be expended by the board, and all money or property which the town may receive by gift or bequest... shall be administered by the board..." Responsibility for library management, collection development, and provisions of library services to the public is delegated by the Board to the library director. The director is appointed by and directly responsible to the Board, and is an employee of the Town of Berlin.

The Berlin Library is now 79 years old and is located in the center of the town. It is a wonderful old red brick building with white shutters and because of its age, problems surface on a regular basis.

The total floor space of the library is 3028 square feet. The main floor houses the adult, juvenile and young adult collections as well as the public access computers and two small offices. The lower level houses the materials for the younger children and a storage room



and a boiler room. Each level has a miniscule bathroom and no drinkable water is available.

The staff is cramped for working space and until early in 2007, the entire staff shared one office and one computer. Recently we turned a small space outside of the upstairs bathroom into an office with a staff computer for processing materials and formatting the newsletter. If someone needs to use the bathroom, the person working at the computer must get up to allow access. Adding another computer downstairs in the children's room has meant that books can now be checked out downstairs and that an additional computer is available for the staff. The director still contends with constant traffic in the larger office as new books are unpacked there, all supplies are housed there, and the fax machine, timesheets, refrigerator, and staff cubbies are all located there.

One needs to climb six steps to gain entrance to the first floor of the building and this proves difficult for many of our older patrons as well as for mothers with small children. Narrow steep steps must be navigated to gain access to the children's room from the main level. This past year we have added a second handrail for going downstairs and a large overhang with lighting and a doorbell outside of a lower level door. One must still go down 4 steps to gain access to the children's room from this lower door.

Seating in the library is limited. The children's section on the upper level has a table and four chairs, as does the adult section. There is no comfortable seating for those who desire to just sit and read. The children's room does provide sufficient seating, but not necessarily comfortable seating.

There are five parking spaces next to the library and street parking is limited. This past year the town highway department created about three more parking spaces on the other side of the library.

In spite of these difficulties many people in town love our old building and its central location and do not want any major changes. A million dollar state construction grant for a new library was turned down in 2004 when the populace voted against the raising of matching funds.

The library meets the informational needs of the community by maintaining a small reference collection, utilizing online databases purchased by the Central Massachusetts Regional Library System and the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, posting links to a wide variety of online reference resources available through the library website, and using the loan capabilities with Massachusetts and national public and university libraries. Computer access is provided through three public access computers and wireless access is available in the library to laptop computer users. The library also receives copies of important town plans and documents and makes them available to the public.

Support of local students from pre-school through high school is achieved by providing materials and services to supplement the school curriculum. Quarterly meetings are held

between the library and other librarians from the Regional School System encompassing Berlin and Boylston. The Berlin Library works closely with the local elementary school and supports their curriculum through the loan of our materials as well as obtaining materials for classroom use from other libraries. The Berlin Library receives the summer reading lists from many local schools and makes these lists available to students. Books are provided from our collection or are ordered from other libraries. Tahanto Regional High School provides their summer reading lists as well as many of the books on the list to our library to be checked out by their students.

### **Desired Facility**

The library that was designed for a construction grant prior to 2004 was the ideal library for a small town. It was an open one floor plan for patron/staff visibility, sufficient staff office space, room for a growing collection and computers, and sufficient space and comfortable seating for the patrons. A meeting room was part of the plan as well as a small kitchen for community use.

This type of library is still highly desirable. With the uncertainty about construction grants available in the near future, we are looking at other options for additional space. At present we are trying to obtain a waiver from the state so that we could possibly add on to the present library. This would provide us with additional space for computers, accessible bathrooms and an elevator for easy access to all levels for patrons.

### **Staffing**

Our staff consists of a director, two library assistants performing circulation services, one library assistant handling children's services, two pages and a custodian.

All staff (excluding the two pages and the custodian) hold college degrees and are required to take a minimum of two library-related workshops a year. Their job descriptions require they have an understanding of computers and be able to do basic research. Each staff member is given an annual performance review that is reviewed by the town personnel committee.

### **Hours**

Based on population size the library is required to be open 15 hours/week. We are open 33 hours/week. Our hours are:

<b>Library Hours</b>	
Monday through Thursday	11:00 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Saturday	10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.



The library maintains these consistent hours year round for the convenience of our patrons.

### Collection

Based on ARIS Report for FY2006

<b>Materials</b>	<b>Adult/YA</b>	<b>Children</b>	<b>Total</b>
Books	7,523	8,606	16,129
Periodicals	53	10	63
Audio/CD	282	71	353
Video/DVD	1,023	NA	1,023
E-Books	531	NA	531
CD-ROMs	168	NA	168
Misc. (passes, kits)	653	NA	653
<b>Total</b>	10,261	8,677	18,920

### Circulation

Based on ARIS Report for FY2006

<b>Total Circulation</b>	<b>Adult/YA</b>	<b>Children</b>	<b>Total</b>
Books	6,167	6,481	12,648
Periodicals	1,537	NA	1,537
Audio/CD	758	41	799
Video/DVD	3,627	42	3,699
E-Books	67	NA	67
CD-ROMS	263	2	265
Misc. (passes, kits)	204	25	229
<b>Total</b>	12,623	6,591	19,214

Circulation has been going up approximately 16% a year.

**Interlibrary Loans**

Based on ARIS Report for FY2006

<b>Interlibrary Loans</b>	<b>Total</b>
Received <i>from</i> other libraries	2,181
Provided <i>to</i> other libraries	1,365

**Registered Borrowers**

Based on ARIS Report for FY2006

<b>Number of Registered Borrowers</b>	1,334
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**Financial Resources**

<b>INCOME FY2006</b>	
<b>Town Appropriations</b>	
Wages	61,396.28
Operating Expenses	20,724.00
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>82,120.28</b>
<b>Additional Income</b>	
Revolving Video	195.85
LIG/MEG	2,980.14
Donations	3,589.25
Trust Funds	1,061.84
Grants	1,160.75
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>8,989.83</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>91,108.11</b>

**Board of Trustees**

Each year the Trustees write and submit a report for inclusion in the Town of Berlin Annual Report that is sent to all households prior to Town Meeting in May. The Trustees report on the state of the library, the events that have taken place, progress that has been made in meeting our goals, the work of the Friends, as well as statistics on holdings and circulation. They also report on the town appropriations and additional monies taken in through grants, state aid and donations.

The Trustees provide information to the town utilizing the library website and the quarterly newsletter.

**Friends of the Berlin Public Library**

New life was breathed into the Friends group about three years ago and the membership has gone from just a few to fifty members. The Friends wrote new by-laws and actively recruit new members through the library newsletter and website. They support the library through their annual book sale and take in approximately \$1500.00. The Friends sponsor programs and museum passes for the community. They have cleaned out a supply room in the library basement that they now use for their meetings and are undertaking the painting of the two bathrooms. On the horizon are new chairs and tables for a planned reading area and an expanded computer area.

**Volunteers**

The library utilizes volunteers mainly on an “as needed” basis. Volunteers from the Friends do a yard clean up in the spring, shelf read, and plant flowers. Parent volunteers help with programming. One volunteer picks up and delivers books to the senior housing complex and maintains a small collection of books in their Recreation Center. This volunteer also runs a book discussion group at the complex.

**Standards**

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts sets regulations for free public library service by declaring that Libraries

- Be open to all residents of the Commonwealth
- Make no charge for normal library services
- Be kept open a minimum number of hours per week
- Employ trained library personnel
- Expend a reasonable portion of the library's total budget on library materials
- Lend books to other libraries in the Commonwealth and extend privileges to the holders of cards issued by other public libraries in the Commonwealth on a reciprocal basis

These regulations specify minimum requirements that define a base level below which effective service cannot be provided. The Berlin Public Library continues to meet and exceed these standards.