

TOWN OF BERLIN



SELECT BOARD

NOTICE TO VOTERS

Please bring these documents to Annual Town Meeting on May 6, 2024

- Annual Town Meeting Warrant
- Berlin Finance Committee Annual Report
- Berlin Finance Committee Recommended Fiscal Year 2025 Budget

The **2023 Annual Town Report** is available:

- Online: <https://www.townofberlin.com/select-board/pages/annual-town-reports>
- In hard copy at the Annual Town Meeting, the Municipal Offices & the Berlin Public Library

For **online information** about the 2024 Annual Town Meeting, visit:

- <https://www.townofberlin.com/home/news/2024-annual-town-meeting>

All Berlin registered voters are encouraged to attend the Berlin Annual Town Meeting on May 6, 2024 at 7:30 PM at the Berlin Memorial School Gym to vote on the articles listed in the warrant.

BERLIN 2024
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
WARRANT



Monday, May 6, 2024 at 7:30 PM

Berlin Memorial School
34 South Street
Berlin, MA 01503

Financial Terms

from Glossary of Financial Terms by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue

Abatement A reduction or elimination of a real or personal property tax, motor vehicle excise, a fee, charge or special assessment imposed by a governmental unit.

Available Funds Balance in the various fund types that represent non-recurring revenue sources. Under sound practice they are frequently appropriated to meet unforeseen expenses, for capital expenditures or other one-time costs. Examples of available funds are free cash, stabilization fund, and overlay surplus.

Capital Assets All tangible property used in the operation of government which is not easily converted into cash, and has a useful life extending beyond a single financial period. Include land and land improvements, infrastructures such as roads, bridges, easements, buildings, vehicles, machinery and equipment.

Capital Improvement Plan A blueprint for planning a community's capital expenditures that comprises an annual capital budget and five-year capital program. It coordinates community planning, fiscal capacity and physical development.

Chapter 70 School Aid Chapter 70 refers to the school funding formula created under the Education Reform act of 1993 by which state aid is distributed to help establish educational equity among municipal and regional school districts.

Chapter 90 Highway Funds State funds derived from periodic transportation bond authorizations and apportioned to communities for highway projects based on a formula under the provisions of Mass. General Law Chapter 90.

Cherry Sheets Named for the cherry-colored paper on which they were originally printed, the Cherry Sheet is the official notification to cities, towns and regional school districts of the next fiscal year's state aid and assessments.

Debt Exclusion An action taken by a community through a simple majority referendum vote to raise the funds necessary to pay debt service cost for a particular project from the property tax levy, but outside the limits under Proposition 2½. By approving a debt exclusion, a community calculates its annual levy limit under Proposition 2½, then adds the excluded debt service cost. The amount is added to the levy limit for the life of the debt only and may increase the levy above the levy ceiling.

Excess and Deficiency Amount by which cash accounts receivable, and other assets exceed a regional school district's liabilities and reserves as certified by the Director of Accounts. The regional school committee must apply certified amounts exceeding 5% of the district's prior year operating and capital costs to reduce the assessment on member cities and towns.

Excess Levy Capacity The difference between the levy limit and the amount of real and personal property taxes actually levied in a given year. Annually, the board of selectmen must be informed of excess levy capacity and their acknowledgment must be submitted to DOR when setting the tax rate.

Fiscal Year Since 1974, the state and municipalities have operated on a budget cycle that begins on July 1 and ends June 30. The designation of the fiscal year is that of the calendar year in which the fiscal year ends.

Free Cash Remaining, unrestricted funds from operations of the previous fiscal year including the unexpended free cash from the previous year, actual receipts in excess of revenue estimated on the recap sheet, and unspent amount in budget line-items.

General Fund The fund used to account for most financial resources and activities governed by the normal town meeting appropriation process.

Levy The amount a community raised through the property tax. The levy can be any amount up to the levy limit, which is reestablished every year under Proposition 2½ provisions.

Levy Ceiling A levy ceiling is one of two types of levy (tax) restrictions by Proposition 2½. In any year the real and personal property taxes imposed may not exceed 2½% of the full and fair cash value of all taxable property. Property taxes levied may exceed this limit only if the community passes a capital exclusion debt exclusions or special exclusion.

Levy Limit A levy limit is one of two types of levy (tax) restrictions imposed by Proposition 2½. The real and personal property taxes imposed by a city or town may only grow each year by 2½% of the prior year's levy limit, plus new growth and any overrides or exclusions. The levy limit can exceed the levy ceiling only if the community passes a capital exclusion, a debt exclusion or a special exclusion.

Local Receipts Locally generated revenues, other than real & personal property taxes. Examples are motor vehicle excise, investment income, fees, rentals and charges. Annual estimates of local receipts are shown on the tax rate recapitulation sheet.

New Growth The additional tax revenue generated by new construction, renovations and other increases in the property tax base during a calendar year.

Non-recurring Revenue Source A one-time source of money available to a city or town. By its nature, a non-recurring revenue source cannot be relied upon in future years. Therefore, such funds should not be used for operating or other expenses that continue from year-to-year.

Offset Receipts A local option that allows estimated receipts of a particular department to be earmarked for use of the department and appropriated to offset its operating budget.

Overlay An account established annually to fund anticipated property tax abatements, exemptions and uncollected taxes in that year.

Overlay Surplus Any balance in the overlay account of a given year in excess of the amount remaining to be collected or abated can be transferred to this account. Overlay surplus may be appropriated for any lawful purpose.

Override A vote by a community at an election for permanently increase the levy limit.

Receipts Reserved for Appropriation Proceeds that are earmarked by law and placed in a separate account for appropriation for particular purposes.

Reserve Fund An amount set aside annually in the town budget to provide a funding source for unforeseen expenditures. The finance committee can authorize transfers from this fund for "extraordinary or unforeseen" expenditures.

Stabilization Fund A fund used to accumulate amounts for capital and other future spending purposes, although it may be appropriated for any lawful purpose. A 2/3s vote of town meeting is required to appropriate money from the stabilization fund.

Tax Rate The amount of property tax stated in terms of a unit of the municipal tax base; for example, \$14.80 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation of taxable real and personal property

Tax Rate Recapitulation Sheet (Recap Sheet) A document filed by a town with the Dept. of Revenue in order to set a property tax rate. It shows all estimated revenues and actual appropriations that affect the property tax rate.

Valuation (100 percent) The legal requirement is that a community's assessed value on property must reflect its market, or full and fair cash value.

Town Bylaws Governing the Conduct of Town Meeting

Article II

Section 4. At any town meeting held for the transaction of town business, no person whose name is not on the list of voters shall be admitted to the floor of the Hall, except press reporters and invited guests within the discretion of the Moderator. It shall be the special duty of the police and the town tellers to enforce this By-law by use of the check list, but the same shall not apply to the State election, primaries or meetings for the election of town officers. The Moderator shall determine the bounds of the floor of the hall.

Section 5. Articles for the warrant shall be acted upon in the order in which they stand, except that the Moderator may upon request and for reasons stated, entertain the motion to take up an article out of this regular order.

Section 6. No motion, the effect of which would be to dissolve a town meeting, shall be in order until every article in the warrant has been acted upon, but this shall not preclude the postponement of action on, or consideration of, any article to an adjournment of the meeting to a stated time.

When a question is before the meeting, the following motion, namely; to adjourn; to lay on the table; for the previous question; to postpone to a time certain; to commit, recommit or refer; to amend; to postpone indefinitely; shall be received and shall have precedence in the foregoing order; and the first three shall be decided without debate.

Section 7. All votes on motions shall be taken in the first instance by a voice vote; if the Moderator be in doubt, he may call for a standing vote; if the Moderator be still in doubt or if the vote as declared by the Moderator be immediately questioned by seven of the voters present, the vote shall be taken by a "yes" or "no" ballot.

Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent the taking of a vote by ballot in the first instance if a motion to that effect shall be duly made and carried by a majority of the voters present and voting thereon. The Moderator may call for a vote by show of hands or a standing vote in cases where a recorded vote is required by statute or the Attorney General of the Commonwealth.

All votes on the appropriation of money in excess of ten thousand dollars shall be taken in the first instance by ballot as above provided, unless said appropriation shall be recommended or approved by the Finance Committee.

All votes to rezone land shall be taken in the first instance by ballot as above provided.

The Moderator may declare a two-thirds vote of a town meeting without recording a count of all votes when the Moderator has no doubt of the two-thirds majority. Such a declaration of the Moderator shall be open to challenge by seven voters as provided in the first paragraph of this section.

Section 8. The Moderator may decline to put motions obviously frivolous or tending to disorder. A motion shall be presented in writing if the Moderator requests. The Moderator shall be governed in his rulings by the provisions of these articles.

Section 9. No person shall speak more than twice upon any question, except to answer in inquiry or to give information requested, without first obtaining leave of the meeting and then not until others who have not spoken upon the question shall have spoken if they desire.

Section 10. All committees shall be appointed by the Moderator, unless otherwise specially directed by the meeting, and all committees so appointed shall be directed to report within a given time. If a committee does not report within the time stated, or at the first annual town meeting held thereafter, it shall be considered discharged. The Moderator shall not be a member of any committee appointed by him.

Section 13. At any session of a town meeting, on completion of action on any motions on the floor at 11:00 P.M., the Moderator shall call for a vote on whether or not to continue business.

Article V — Duties of the FINANCE COMMITTEE

Section 4. The Finance Committee shall consider matters relating to the appropriation, the borrowing and the expenditure of money by the town, its indebtedness the method of administration of its various offices and departments; property valuation and assessments, and other municipal affairs, and may make recommendations to the town or to any town board, officers or committee, relative to such matters.

Section 5. The various town boards, officers and committees charged with the expenditure of the town money, shall, before January first of each year, prepare detailed estimates of amounts deemed by them necessary for the administration of their respective offices or departments for the ensuing fiscal year, with explanatory statements of the reasons of any changes from the amounts appropriated for the same purpose for the current year. They shall also prepare estimates of all probable items of income which may be received by them during the ensuing year in connection with the administration of their departments or offices, and a statement of the amount of the appropriation requested by them for the ensuing fiscal year. Said estimates and statements shall be filed with the Town Accountant by the first day of January of said year. The Town Accountant shall compile and file with the clerk of the Finance Committee said requests by January 15th of said year. In the discharge of its duty, said Finance Committee shall have free access to all books or records and accounts, bills and vouchers on which money has been or may be paid from the town treasury. Officers, boards and committees of the town shall, upon request, furnish said committee with facts, figures and any other information pertaining to their several activities.

Section 6. The Finance Committee shall duly consider the same and may confer with said town boards, officers and committees, and may hold hearings if they deem it advisable. The Committee shall thereupon approve or disapprove the amount in whole or in part of the appropriation so requested. The Committee shall furnish to the Selectmen on or before March 20th of each year, a report of the matters so considered by it, with recommendations or suggestions relative thereto, and the same shall be printed and ready for distribution at the annual town meeting. The report of the Finance Committee as published in the town report shall contain a statement of the doings of the committee during the year with such recommendations and suggestions as it may deem advisable on any matter pertaining to the welfare of the town.

Section 7. Articles in town warrants involving the expenditure or appropriation of money shall be considered by the Finance Committee, who shall approve or disapprove the same in whole or in part, and shall make report to the voters with such recommendations or suggestions as the Finance Committee shall deem advisable

Berlin Town Meeting

Public Safety. You are requested not to move any chairs without the permission of the Moderator or the Fire Chief. In case of an emergency, please USE THE SIDE EXITS OF THE GYM.

Courtesy. It is important that everyone observe basic rules of courtesy. Please do not make comments to your neighbors when someone is speaking. The meeting will proceed more quickly if there is less confusion in the hall.

The meeting will be in better order if everyone is seated. This also facilitates accurate counts of votes. The meeting may be delayed if people do not take seats. If being seated creates a personal hardship, please speak to the Moderator.

Rules. The Town By-laws governing the conduct of town meeting are printed on the previous page. There are some state laws which govern the assembly. The Moderator also uses Town Meeting Time, A parliamentary manual published by the Massachusetts Moderators' Association, as a reference for rules of order.

Motions and votes. All actions of the town meeting are taken pursuant to motions. We require a motion to be written out and given to the Moderator after it is read. A motion must be seconded to indicate that it is supported by more than one voter. Discussion follows the second.

Speaking in the meeting. Raise your hand or call out "Mr. Moderator" to be recognized. You must speak from a microphone in order that you can be heard by all. Please give your name and address when you start to speak before the meeting, even if the Moderator has identified you by name. Keep your comments directed to the issue on the floor. Be brief! Others want to speak and there are many pieces of business to consider. You will get better attention if people know that you will speak briefly and to the point.

Personalities. Berlin has a long tradition against making personal comments about other speakers. Do not characterize others negatively or indulge in name-calling. The Moderator may terminate your speaking.

Applause. Please DO NOT APPLAUD speakers during a debate. It draws out the length of the meeting. It can be intimidating to other voters. The appropriate way to show approval to a speaker is by voting in sympathy with his/her position on the issue being discussed.

Moving the question is asking that debate on an issue end and that we proceed to a vote on the motion under consideration. Since it takes away other voters' right to speak, it requires a two-thirds majority. In Berlin we have a tradition of not accepting a motion to the question from a vote that expresses an opinion just before making the motion. If you want to move the question, that should be

all that you say. The Moderator may refuse to take a motion to the question if there has not yet been a reasonable opportunity for debate.

Reconsideration. A motion to reconsider business previously done in the same town meeting may be made if something has changed since the action was taken, or if important information was not available at the time of the vote. A motion to reconsider is in order only if it is made by someone who voted with the prevailing side. It is not appropriate to reconsider an action just because your side did not prevail. In Berlin, we have a tradition against reconsideration, unless clear reasons demand it. It is helpful to discuss this with the Moderator prior to making the motion. When action has been taken on an important issue, and some voters have left the meeting thinking that the matter was concluded, the Moderator will protect the rights of those voters by refusing to accept a motion to reconsider. A new meeting can be called, with proper notice to all, if a change of the action is needed.

Voting is usually by voice vote, in order to save time. If the Moderator is uncertain of the outcome, he may call for a show of hands or a standing vote. If such a count ends in doubt, a paper ballot vote may be taken. State law requires a recorded vote in certain situations. In such cases the Moderator may call for a hand vote.

Paper ballots are customarily used on major issues, especially when emotions run high, in order that each voter can vote his/ her own conscience and to assure an accurate vote. All voters are checked on the checklist as they enter the voting area. Checklists are divided alphabetically by streets.

After being checked through, you will be given a ballot marked yes and no. Tear the ballot along the perforation. Place the portion indicating your vote in the ballot box (coffee can.) Place the remaining portion in the wastebasket after the ballot box. All ballot pieces should remain in the voting area.

When you have voted, please leave the voting area. If people stop to talk nearby, it keeps others from getting through, creates confusion, and slows down the voting.

Several voters will be asked to assist with counting the ballots. When that process is completed, the Moderator will announce the results.

No absentee voting. There is no legal provision allowing absentee voting at a town meeting. As this is a deliberative assembly, the form of the motion can be changed on the floor and a voter might want to change his/her vote because of the change. It is also not legal to turn a town meeting into an election with longer voting hours. You must be present at the time of the voting to cast a vote.

WORCESTER, SS.
To a Constable in the Town of Berlin:

GREETINGS:
In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are hereby directed to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of Berlin qualified to vote in Town Elections and Town Affairs to meet at the Berlin Memorial School, 34 South Street, Berlin, MA on **MONDAY, the SIXTH DAY OF MAY 2024 at 7:30 PM**, then and there to act on the following articles or in relation thereto, namely:

*****CURRENT FISCAL YEAR 2024 - ENDING JUNE 30, 2024*****

ARTICLE 1 PRIOR YEARS' EXPENSES

To see if the Town will vote to transfer or appropriate a sum of money to pay unpaid expenses from prior fiscal years, or take any action relative thereto. (TREASURER/COLLECTOR)

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to transfer \$3,403.00 from Free Cash for the payment of the following unpaid prior years' expenses:

		<i>TOTAL</i>
<i>Louison, Costello, Condon & Pfaff, LLP</i>	<i>Tax title services</i>	<i>\$187.00</i>
<i>Officer Dean Bellville</i>	<i>FY23 Holiday Pay</i>	<i>\$3,216.00</i>

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 4:0

DESCRIPTION

This article is required for the payment of expenses incurred prior to July 1, 2023 that were not submitted by the close of the fiscal year.

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Four-Fifths Majority Vote

ARTICLE 2 ARTICLE SUNSET CLAUSE REMOVAL

To see if the Town will vote to amend the vote taken under Article 19 of the 2020 Annual Town Meeting to remove the sunset clause by which monies must be expended, or take any action relative thereto. (ACCOUNTANT)

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to remove the sunset clause by which monies must be expended on Article 19 of the 2020 Annual Town Meeting (Planning Board Master Plan).

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 4:0

DESCRIPTION

This article is set to expire on June 30, 2024. Work on the Town's Master Plan update remains ongoing. This article will be closed out administratively by the Town Accountant once the project is complete.

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Majority Vote

ARTICLE 3 TRANSFER FREE CASH TO THE CONSERVATION OPEN SPACE FUND

To see if the Town will vote to transfer funds from Free Cash to the Conservation Open Space Fund in accordance with the Solomon Pond Mall Development Agreement, or take any action relative thereto. (ACCOUNTANT)

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to transfer \$27,712 from Free Cash to the Conservation Open Space Fund.

DESCRIPTION

Per the State Department of Local Services, mitigation funding received annually from the Solomon Pond Mall Development Agreement must be appropriated at Town Meeting prior to being used by the Conservation Commission. The annual appropriation in accordance with the Development Agreement is \$50,000. However, this year's appropriation has been reduced by the \$22,888 that was put towards the purchase of conservation land at Horseshoe Pond.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 4:0

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Majority Vote

ARTICLE 4 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT FY24 PROJECT REVISION - PAVILION

To see if the Town will vote to change the installation site for the pavilion to be built on South Commons, or take any action relative thereto. (RECREATION COMMITTEE)

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to change the installation site for the pavilion to be built on South Commons from the northwest region near the pond and recreation courts to the central region across from the Berlin Memorial School driveway as depicted below.



COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 6:0

DESCRIPTION

The Annual Town Meeting in May of 2023 appropriated \$150,000 from the Community Preservation Act Fiscal Year 2023 Budgeted Reserve to build a 25' by 44' pavilion on Town-owned property at South Commons. The Recreation Committee originally planned to build the pavilion near the new recreation courts and pond. However, after receiving further input from School and Town Departments, the Committee is proposing to relocate the pavilion to the central region of South Commons across from the Berlin Memorial School driveway where it would provide shade and shelter for residents using the fields and the playground.

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Majority Vote

ARTICLE 5 FOURTH MODIFICATION OF RIVERBRIDGE DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT

To see if the Town will vote to approve the Fourth Modification of the Riverbridge Development Agreement, or take any action relative thereto (SELECT BOARD).

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to approve the Fourth Modification of the Riverbridge Development Agreement.

DESCRIPTION

The Fourth Modification of the Riverbridge Development Agreement proposes the following:

1. The Town shall have the option to purchase both Lots 6a and 6b at River Run for \$1.00, including the two wells on this property. The current combined assessed value for both lots is \$766,200.
2. The Town will take title to the road serving River Run, including the recorded restrictive covenant on Lot 6a which requires the owner of this lot to maintain the road at River Run.
3. The Town shall forgive all rents the developers owe to the Town from their lease with Boundless Adventures prior to the conveyance of Lots 6a and 6b (approximately \$250,000).
4. After the conveyance of Lots 6a and 6b to the Town, Boundless Adventures rents shall belong exclusively to the Town (approximately \$100,000 per year).
5. Riverbridge North agrees to pay 5% interest, compounded monthly, on late payments for all sums due to the Town under the Development Agreement.
6. Riverbridge North shall pay \$550,000 toward the cost of the bridge renovation and remaining roadwork at the time of the conveyance of Lots 6a and 6b. This work is estimated to cost \$1.5M. The Town shall seek matching grant funding and utilize some of the Boundless Adventures rents to pay for the remaining cost of this work.
7. The Town agrees to nullify the provisions requiring the annual payment of \$51,200 for not constructing a Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) due to the unanticipated hotel revenue which generates approximately \$220,000 per year.
8. The Town agrees to nullify the requirement to provide or procure ambulance coverage as a CCRC was not constructed.

Total Estimated Concessions

- Forgiving an estimated \$250,000 in back rent owed
- Adding the cost of road maintenance at River Run estimated at \$1,500 every other year for seal coating and \$5,000 every 10 years for paving
- Forgiving \$51,200 annually for non-construction of the Continuing Care Retirement Community in consideration of other originally unanticipated revenue generated by the development including approximately \$220,000 in annual hotel tax

Total Estimated Gains

- Parcel 6A (appraised at \$473,800 for FY24)
- Sole ownership of wells (previously shared rights) and the right to sell water rights
- All Boundless Adventures rents (estimated at \$100,000 per year beginning 1/1/25 for remaining term of 10 years with a 15-year option to renew)

The full text of the Fourth Modification of Development Agreement can be found at:

<https://www.townofberlin.com/home/news/2024-annual-town-meeting-information>

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 4:0

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Majority Vote

ARTICLE 6 ACCEPTANCE & DISPOSITION OF PARCELS 7-28-0 and 7-28-7

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to exercise its option to purchase the parcels of land known as Lot 6a and Lot 6b at River Run, identified by the Board of Assessors as Parcels 7-28-0 and 7-28-7, as set forth more particularly in the Riverbridge Development Agreement recorded with the Worcester South District Registry of Deeds in Book 45188, Page 343, as amended from time to time, for general municipal purposes and for the purpose of acquisition for the sum of \$1.00, and, further, to authorize the Select Board to convey said parcels, by sale, long term lease and/or any other means, on such terms and conditions, and for such consideration, as the Select Board deems appropriate, or take any action relative thereto. (SELECT BOARD)

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to authorize the Select Board to exercise its option to purchase Lots 6a and 6b at River Run and to convey said parcels by sale, long term lease and/or any other means as written in the warrant.

DESCRIPTION

The Development Agreement between the Town of Berlin and Riverbridge North, LLC includes an option for the Town to purchase Lots 6a and 6b at the River Run development at Riverbridge for \$1.00. The acquisition of Lot 6a is required for the Town to assume the Boundless Adventures lease and all associated rents as well as the two wells.

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Two-Thirds Majority Vote

This space intentionally left blank

*****UPCOMING FISCAL YEAR 2025 (JULY 1, 2024 - JUNE 30, 2025)*****

ARTICLE 7 ACCEPTANCE OF CHAPTER 32B, SECTION 9A

To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of MGL Chapter 32B, Section 9a, or take any action relative thereto. (INSURANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE)

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to accept MGL Chapter 32B, Section 9a relative to funding 50% of the cost of Other Post Employment Benefits for Town retirees.

DESCRIPTION

This article accepts the provisions of MGL Chapter 32B, Section 9a, which would require the Town to fund 50% of the cost of other post-employment (OPEB) benefits for retirees, including health and dental insurance. Currently, over 95% of cities and towns in Massachusetts provide this public sector benefit to their retirees. The estimated cost to the Town for retiree premiums in the first year is \$45,000 and has been included in the FY25 budget.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 4:0

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Majority Vote

ARTICLE 8 ESTABLISHMENT OF STABILIZATION FUND BY ASSABET VALLEY REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL

To see if the Town will vote to approve the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational Technical School Committee's vote on **January 9, 2024**, to establish a Stabilization Fund for the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational Technical School District, pursuant to Section 16G ½ of Chapter 71 of the Massachusetts General Laws, said Stabilization Fund to be invested and to retain its own interest earnings as provided by law and further to set up an operational line item to be created to transfer available monies into said Stabilization Fund, or take any other action relative thereto. (ASSABET REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL DISTRICT)

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to establish a Stabilization Fund for the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational Technical School District pursuant to Section 16G ½ of Chapter 71 of the Massachusetts General Laws, said Stabilization Fund to be invested and to retain its own interest earnings as provided by law, and to set up an operational line item to transfer available monies into said Stabilization Fund.

DESCRIPTION

The sole purpose of this warrant article is to help with the creation and support of a Capital Improvement Fund for the school district. For more information about the guided process, please see the information provided by [MA DESE's Advisory on the Establishment of a Stabilization Fund for Regional School Districts](#). The Town of Berlin's FY25 contribution is \$9,000 and has been included in the FY25 budget.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 4:0

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Majority vote per M.G.L. 71 §16G1/2

ARTICLE 9 FY 2025 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds or otherwise provide a sum of money to fund the Capital Improvement Plan budget, as recommended by the Capital Planning Committee, including acquisition, installation, and equipping and other expenses incidental or related thereto, or take any action relative thereto. (CAPITAL PLANNING COMMITTEE).

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to transfer \$67,900 from Free Cash and \$325,963 from the Public Safety Stabilization account to fund the Fiscal Year 2025 Capital Improvement Plan budget for the projects/items as printed in Article 9 of the warrant, and further move that \$177,787 be transferred from Free Cash to the Capital Stabilization Fund, as recommended by the Capital Planning Committee.

#	DEPT	ITEM	AMOUNT	SOURCE
1	Select Board	Demo Brown Barn and Pave Parking Lot by Recreation Courts at South Commons (matched with \$50,000 in ARPA funding)	\$50,000	Free Cash
2	Highway	Pave the Driveway at the 1870 Town Hall	\$17,900	Free Cash
3	Fire/EMS	Gas Meters (6)	\$18,000	Public Safety Stabilization
4	Fire/EMS	EMS Stair Chair	\$5,000	Public Safety Stabilization
5	Fire/EMS	Gear Washer & Dryer	\$24,463	Public Safety Stabilization
6	Fire/EMS	Turn Out Gear Replacement	\$19,000	Public Safety Stabilization
7	Police	Tasers (5)	\$25,000	Public Safety Stabilization
8	Police	Cruiser Replacement	\$59,500	Public Safety Stabilization
9	Public Safety	Materials for Upstairs Public Safety Renovation at Municipal Offices	\$175,000	Public Safety Stabilization
10	Capital Planning Committee	Fund Capital Stabilization (savings to partially fund and/or reduce debt service on major capital projects)	\$177,787	Free Cash

CAPITAL PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 4:0

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 4:0

DESCRIPTION

The Capital Planning Committee has recommended the above listed projects for inclusion in the FY25 Capital Plan, with \$67,900 to be funded using Free Cash and \$325,963 to be funded using Public Safety Stabilization Funds in accordance with the Finance Committee's Recommended Use of Free Cash Guidelines. The Capital Planning Committee also recommends that \$177,787 in Free Cash be transferred to the Capital Stabilization Fund to partially fund and/or reduce debt service on future capital projects.

Berlin Boylston Regional School District capital items are funded out of the operating budget. The table below outlines the School Committee's requested funding and the Capital Planning

Committee's recommended funding for informational purposes only. The Capital Planning Committee recommends fully funding the School Committee's requested funding for Tahanto and \$143,132 of the School Committee's requested funding for BMS. The Committee has requested additional information, including quotes, for the HVAC/Air Conditioning work. Please note that Berlin only pays a portion of the cost of capital items for Tahanto which total \$38,253, or 34.84%, of the overall Tahanto capital projects cost of \$109,800.

#	SCHOOL	ITEM	SCHOOL REQUEST	CAPITAL RECOMMEND
1	Tahanto	Non-Student Device Replacement	\$ 5,226	\$ 5,226
2	Tahanto	HVAC Repairs/Control	\$ 2,822	\$ 2,822
3	Tahanto	Boiler Repair	\$ 3,484	\$ 3,484
4	Tahanto	Paving of Walkway	\$ 2,351	\$ 2,351
5	Tahanto	Walkie Talkies	\$ 10,699	\$ 10,699
6	Tahanto	Athletic Fields Renovation	\$ 10,187	\$ 10,187
7	Tahanto	Replacement of Water Heater	\$ 1,742	\$ 1,742
8	Tahanto	Lawn Mower	\$ 1,742	\$ 1,742
		Tahanto Total	\$38,253	\$38,253
1	BMS	HVAC/Air Conditioning in Classrooms	\$ 400,000	-----
2	BMS	Instructional Technology	\$ 115,500	\$ 115,500
3	BMS	Walkie Talkies	\$ 12,400	\$ 12,400
4	BMS	Card Swipes on Access Doors	\$ 15,232	\$ 15,232
		Berlin Memorial Total	\$543,132	\$143,132

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Two-Thirds Majority Vote

ARTICLE 10 FY 2025 OPERATING BUDGET

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, borrow, and/or transfer from available funds, or otherwise provide all necessary sums of money to defray the Town's expenses for the Fiscal Year beginning ON July 1, 2024 and ending on June 30, 2025, and to determine the salaries of the Town Officers for that period, or take any action relative thereto. (FINANCE COMMITTEE)

This article contains multiple motions that the Finance Committee will present to Town Meeting on a separate motions sheet.

ARTICLE 11 SPECIAL ARTICLE - MUNICIPAL OFFICES MAINTENANCE

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash a sum of money to fund air duct cleaning and floor maintenance at the Municipal Offices, or take any action relative thereto.
(HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT/FACILITIES DIRECTOR)

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to transfer \$32,000 from Free Cash to fund air duct cleaning and floor maintenance at the Municipal Offices.

DESCRIPTION

This funding would be used to steam clean the carpets and wax the floors at the Municipal Offices at a cost of \$9,000 along with air duct cleaning and sanitizing, which has not been done since 2018, at a cost of \$23,000, particularly in light of the recent installation of a new air handler in the building.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 4:0

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Majority Vote

ARTICLE 12 SPECIAL ARTICLE - BERLIN MASTER PLAN UPDATE

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash a sum of money to fund part of the Town's Master Plan Update, or take any action relative thereto. (PLANNING BOARD)

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to transfer \$15,000 from Free Cash to fund the Town's Master Plan Update.

DESCRIPTION

The Planning Board is currently in the process of updating the Town's 2013 Master Plan in accordance with MGL Chapter 41, Section 81D. The purpose of a Master Plan is to provide a basis for decision making regarding the long-term development of the Town. It is a policy guide and framework which includes assessments of existing resources and issues, projections of future conditions and needs, and consideration of community goals. Master Plans are recommended to be updated approximately every 10 years.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 4:0

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Majority Vote

ARTICLE 13 SPECIAL ARTICLE - FY26 REAL & PERSONAL PROPERTY REVALUATION

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash a sum of money to fund the FY26 Real and Personal Property Revaluation as required by Mass General Law, or take any action thereon. (ASSESSOR)

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to transfer \$55,000 from Free Cash to fund the FY26 Real and Personal Property Revaluation as required by Mass General Law.

DESCRIPTION

The Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR) requires all cities and towns to revalue all real and personal property in their respective municipalities once every five years. DOR must certify this revaluation before the tax rate can be set for the following fiscal year. The objective of the revaluation is to ensure that all property is fully and fairly assessed. In the interim years, the communities' values are adjusted according to the housing market and certified by DOR. This is an unfunded State mandate.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 4:0

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Majority Vote

ARTICLE 14 TRANSFER FUNDS TO OPEB STABILIZATION FUND

To see if the Town will vote to transfer funds from Free Cash to the Other Post Employment Benefits Stabilization Fund, or take any action relative thereto. (INSURANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE)

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to transfer \$85,000 from Free Cash to the Other Post Employment Benefits Stabilization Fund.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 4:0

DESCRIPTION

The acceptance of MGL Chapter 32b, Section 9a creates a future liability for the Town in the form of estimated premiums for future retirees, which is calculated based on all employees currently taking these benefits retiring from the Town. This future liability is estimated at \$3,051,941. The Town does not have to fund all or even most of this liability. The majority of cities and towns put away less than 10% towards this future cost. Rating agencies want to see that Towns are consistently saving some funds towards this long-term liability.

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Majority Vote

ARTICLE 15 TRANSFER FUNDS TO GENERAL STABILIZATION FUND

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from Free Cash a sum of money to fund the General Stabilization Fund, or take any relative action thereto. (FINANCE COMMITTEE)

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to transfer \$177,787 from Free Cash to the General Stabilization Fund.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 4:0

DESCRIPTION

The Town's General Stabilization Fund has a balance of \$1,728,255. This fund is reserved for emergency use and other extraordinary expenses. Expenditure of these funds requires a 2/3rds vote of Town Meeting. The purpose of this article is to supplement General Stabilization funding using certified Free Cash per the Finance Committee's Recommended Use of Free Cash Guidelines.

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Majority Vote pursuant to G.L. c. 40, s. 5B

ARTICLE 16 AMEND REVOLVING FUND BYLAW

To see if the Town will vote to amend the table under article XX of the Town of Berlin General Bylaws by adding a new revolving fund and to establish the annual expenditure limit for Fiscal Year 2025, or take any action relative thereto. (BOARD OF HEALTH)

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to establish a revolving fund for Transfer Station Expenses pursuant to MGL Chapter 44, Section 53E ½ and to establish the annual expenditure limit for Fiscal Year 2025, and to amend the table under Article XX of the Town of Berlin's General Bylaws by inserting said revolving funds:

TITLE	SOURCE OF RECEIPTS AND USE OF FUNDS	AUTHORITY TO EXPEND	SPENDING LIMIT
Transfer Station	Sources: Transfer Station stickers & recycling fees. Uses: Expenses associated with operating the Transfer Station.	Board of Health	\$200,000

DESCRIPTION

This article adds a new revolving account. It would enable the Transfer Station to control their own expenses.

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Majority vote per M.G.L. 44, s.53E½

ARTICLE 17 ESTABLISH REVOLVING FUND ANNUAL SPENDING LIMITS

To see if the Town will vote pursuant to MGL Chapter 44, Chapter 53E½, to establish annual expenditure limits for Fiscal Year 2025 for the following revolving funds listed in the Revolving Funds by-law, Article XX of the General Bylaws, as set forth below:

TITLE	SPENDING LIMIT
Library Video Fines	\$1,000
Recreation	\$50,000
Town Hall	\$40,000
Plumbing & Gas Inspector Wages	\$75,000
Electrical Inspector Wages	\$75,000
Bucket Truck Expenses	\$20,000
Transfer Station	\$200,000

Or take any other action relative thereto. (SELECT BOARD)

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to set the maximum amount that may be spent during Fiscal Year 2025 beginning on July 1, 2024 for the revolving funds established under Article XX of the Town General Bylaws for certain departments, boards, committees or officers in accordance with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 44, Section 53E½, as written in Article 17 of the warrant.

DESCRIPTION

Under MGL Chapter 44, Section 53E½ as amended through the Municipal Modernization Act of 2016, Town Meeting is required to vote on the amount that may be spent from each revolving fund established by the Town's General Bylaws during the upcoming fiscal year prior to July 1st.

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Majority Vote

ARTICLE 18 FUND BUCKET TRUCK REVOLVING FUND

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash a sum of money to fund the Bucket Truck Revolving Fund established under MGL Chapter 44, Section 53E ½, or take any action relative thereto. (HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT)

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to transfer \$5,000 from Free Cash to fund the Bucket Truck Revolving Fund.

DESCRIPTION

The Towns of Berlin and Clinton received a State Community Compact Grant for a shared bucket truck, with Berlin serving as the lead agency. Under the Intermunicipal Agreement between the two towns, funds must be set aside for ongoing vehicle expenses. This revolving fund allows the town to take in funds from the Town of Clinton, add a matching amount of funds, and use these funds for any repairs, inspections, certifications, equipment, etc. for the truck.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 4:0

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Majority Vote

ARTICLE 19 CABLE ACCESS COMMITTEE – P.E.G SPENDING

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate Public, Educational, and Government (P.E.G.) Access & Cable related funds as a grant to be used for Fiscal Year 2025 operating purposes in accordance with the P.E.G. Access grant and Massachusetts General Law Chapter 44, Section 53F 3/4, said sums to be expended by the Cable Access Committee; or take any action relative thereto. (CABLE ACCESS COMMITTEE)

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to appropriate from the Public, Educational, and Government (P.E.G.) Access & Cable Related Fund the sum of \$78,010 as a grant to be used for Fiscal Year 2025 operating purposes, in accordance with the P.E.G. Access grant and Massachusetts General Law Chapter 44, Section 53F 3/4, said sums to be expended by the Cable Access Committee.

DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this article is to appropriate money from the P.E.G. Access & Cable Related Fund account to cover the cost of goods and services related to the operations of Berlin Cable, per the P.E.G. Access agreement, for FY25.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 4:0

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Majority Vote

ARTICLE 20 FIRE DETAIL ACCOUNT

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from the Public Safety Stabilization Fund a sum of money to the Fire Detail Account as authorized by M.G.L. c.44, s.53C, or take any action relative thereto. (ACCOUNTANT)

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to transfer \$5,000 from Public Safety Stabilization Fund to the Fire Detail Account.

DESCRIPTION

This article would create a fund to pay Fire/EMS personnel for details and bill vendors for the cost of these details. The \$5,000 requested is startup funding to be able to pay personnel upfront as required by Mass General Law while waiting for reimbursement from vendors.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 4:0

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Majority Vote

ARTICLE 21 RESCIND MGL CHAPTER 59, SECTION 21A ½ AND ADOPT MGL CHAPTER 59, SECTION 21A

To see if the Town will vote to rescind the vote taken on June 19, 1996 to adopt MGL Chapter 59, Section 21A ½ and to adopt MGL Chapter 59, Section 21A, regarding additional compensation for Massachusetts Certified Assessors, or take any action relative thereto. (BOARD OF ASSESSORS)

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to rescind the vote taken on June 19, 1996 to adopt MGL Chapter 59, Section 21A ½ and to adopt MGL Chapter 59, Section 21A regarding additional compensation for Massachusetts Certified Assessors.

DESCRIPTION

On June 19, 1996, Town Meeting voted to adopt the provisions of MGL Chapter 59, Section 21A ½, which provides additional compensation for an Assessor who is certified by the State of Massachusetts. This statute was adopted when the Town had a part-time Assessor as a way to provide additional compensation in the amount of 10% of the Assessor's annual salary. Since this time, the position has become full-time. Rescinding Section 21A ½ of Chapter 59 and instead adopting Section 21A of Chapter 59 will enable the Board of Assessors to provide an annual stipend of \$1,000 to a certified Assessor, which is comparable to the annual stipend provided to a certified Treasurer/Collector as passed at last year's Annual Town Meeting.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 4:0

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Majority Vote

ARTICLE 22 TRANSFER TOWN OWNED PROPERTY TO THE MUNICIPAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST

To see if the Town will vote to transfer Town owned property located at 8 Lancaster Road, Map 19, Parcel 52 (1.44 acres) to the Berlin Municipal Affordable Housing Trust, or take any action relative thereto. (MUNICIPAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST)

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to transfer the Town owned property located at 8 Lancaster Road, Map 19, Parcel 52 (1.44 acres) to the Berlin Municipal Affordable Housing Trust.

DESCRIPTION

The Berlin Municipal Affordable Housing Trust was established at the 2023 Annual Town Meeting. The Trust would like to take ownership of the Town owned property located at 8 Lancaster Road for the purposes of an affordable housing community build project.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 4:0

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Two-Thirds Majority Vote

ARTICLE 23 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT FY25 BUDGET

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate or transfer/reserve from the Community Preservation Act Fund Annual Reserves in the amounts recommended by the Community Preservation Act Committee for Committee administrative expenses, community preservation projects, and other expenses in Fiscal Year 2025, with each item to be considered a separate appropriation:

Appropriations From FY 2025 estimated revenues:

<i>For Committee Administrative Expenses.....</i>	<i>\$24,628.25</i>
<i>For Budgeted Reserve</i>	<i>\$320,167.25</i>

Reserves From FY 2025 estimated revenues:

<i>For Community Housing Reserves.....</i>	<i>\$49,256.50</i>
<i>For Historic Reserve.....</i>	<i>\$49,256.50</i>
<i>For Open Space Reserve.....</i>	<i>\$49,256.50</i>

Or take any action relative thereto. (COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT COMMITTEE)

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to approve the FY25 Community Preservation Act budget as described in Article 23 of the warrant.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 6:0

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 4:0

DESCRIPTION

This article will fulfill the Town's responsibility to allocate the FY25 estimated Community Preservation Act revenue to the appropriate accounts.

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Majority Vote

ARTICLE 24 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT FY25 PROJECTS

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the total sum of \$30,000 from the Fund Balance Reserved for Open Space/Rec for Fiscal Year 2024 to fund part of a feasibility study for the Mass Central Rail Trail. This phase involves the development of a basic concept and layout for the bike trail, including its alignment, general dimensions, and key features. This is an early step in the project's development and serves as a foundation for design, environmental assessments, and cost estimations, said funds to be expended by the Conservation Commission in consultation with the Community Preservation Act Committee; or take any action relative thereto. (COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT COMMITTEE/CONSERVATION COMMISSION)

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to appropriate the total sum of \$30,000 from the Fund Balance Reserved for Open Space/Rec for Fiscal Year 2024 to fund part of a feasibility study for the Mass Central Rail Trail in Berlin.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 6:0

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 3:1

DESCRIPTION

The Mass Central Rail Trail is a 104-mile-long trail that has been under development since the mid-90s, with 51 miles currently open for use. With the Eversource project moving forward in Sudbury and Hudson, plans to complete the Wayside Branch, which ends near Coburn Road in Berlin, are underway. This project seeks to complete a detailed feasibility study that will ensure the Town has an opportunity to weigh in on the design as the state advances construction of the Wayside Branch. As part of this feasibility study, the area between Coburn Road and the Clinton town line will also be examined to determine the best route to connect with the ongoing project there. Changes in state and federal funding since the rail trail was last studied in 2018 will allow us to be part of this project with minimal investment from the town, and will help us answer the many questions raised the last time the project was reviewed. The remaining 80% percent of this feasibility study will be funded by a MassTrails grant.

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Majority Vote

ARTICLE 25 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT FY25 PROJECTS

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the total sum of \$200,000 from the Fund Balance Reserved for Affordable Housing Fiscal Year 2024. The funds would be utilized for the construction of affordable housing units and to develop a grant fund to assist low-income, first-time homebuyers, said funds to be expended by the Housing Trust in consultation with the Community Preservation Act Committee; or take any action relative thereto. (COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT COMMITTEE/MUNICIPAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST)

PROPOSED MOTION

I move the Town appropriate the total sum of \$200,000 from the Fund Balance Reserved for Affordable Housing for Fiscal Year 2024 to construct affordable housing units and to develop a grant fund to assist low-income, first-time homebuyers.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 6:0

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 4:0

DESCRIPTION

The Housing Trust looks to pursue two projects in support of their mission to create and preserve affordable housing. The funding would be used for an affordable unit community build on existing unused town owned tax title property built in partnership with a nonprofit like Habitat for Humanity. The funding would also be used to develop a first-time homebuyers grant program to help widen the pool of applicants able to purchase existing affordable units.

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Majority Vote

ARTICLE 26 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT FY25 PROJECTS

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the total sum of \$20,000 from the Fund Balance Reserved for Affordable Housing for Fiscal Year 2024. The funds would be utilized to pay a portion of the expense of engaging a part-time Housing Coordinator in Fiscal Year 2025 and Fiscal Year 2026, through a program with the Central MA Regional Planning Commission, said funds to be expended by the Housing Trust in consultation with the Community Preservation Act Committee; or take any action relative thereto. (COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT COMMITTEE/MUNICIPAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST)

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to appropriate the total sum of \$20,000 from the Fund Balance Reserve for Affordable Housing for Fiscal Year 2024 to pay a portion of the expense of engaging a part-time Housing Coordinator for FY25 and FY26.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 6:0

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 4:0

DESCRIPTION

The Housing Trust currently benefits from the assistance of a Housing Coordinator shared with several other local communities. The position allows access to professional, technical, and administrative support services for the housing related programs, projects, and activities necessary to maintain an active Housing Trust.

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Majority Vote

ARTICLE 27 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT FY25 PROJECTS

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the total sum of \$300,000 from the Fiscal Year 2024 Budgeted Reserve. The funds would be utilized for the installation of a well and irrigation system for the soccer and baseball fields and general turf improvement at South Commons, said funds to be expended by the Recreation Committee in consultation with the Community Preservation Act Committee; or take any action relative thereto. (COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT COMMITTEE/RECREATION COMMITTEE)

PROPOSED MOTION

I move the Town appropriate the total sum of \$300,000 from the Fiscal Year 2024 Budgeted Reserve for Fiscal Year 2024 for the installation of a well and irrigation system for the soccer and baseball fields and general turf improvement at South Commons.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 6:0

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 4:0

DESCRIPTION

The fields at South Commons are the most widely used recreation spaces in the Town of Berlin and host both sports and town events. Due to increasing participation in sports, the need for more level spaces to add fields, and the fields currently being in disrepair, Recreation is looking to utilize available CPA funds to improve this recreational space and make it more usable for everyone.

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Majority Vote

ARTICLE 28 ZONING BYLAW AMENDMENT – DIGITAL MUNICIPAL INFORMATION SIGNS

To see if the Town will vote to add the following as Section 970 of the Zoning Bylaws, or to take other action relevant thereto (PLANNING BOARD):

Section 970 “Digital Municipal Information Signs”

- 970.1 General Digital Municipal Information Signs (DMIS) are signs composed of directly viewed arrays of LED light sources, fiber optic or backlit display light source and such other similar technologies that are electronically controlled to display fixed or dynamic messages and which are used for public safety and public informational displays in accordance with this Section 970.
- 970.2 Content Messages shall be limited to information of public interest, related to public safety, municipal activities and events, information for parents and students of Berlin schools, and other similar information as determined by the Content Guidelines.
- 970.3 Content Messages shall not advertise or promote individual businesses except for specific acknowledgement of public contributions or similar support and specifically allowed by the Content Manager.

972 Location

- 972.1 One DMIS shall be allowed no more than 1,000 feet from the Town Center, as defined by the intersection of Central and Carter Streets.
- 972.2 One DIMS shall be allowed no more than 500 feet from the Berlin Memorial School, as defined by the intersection of the school driveway and South Street.

973 Maximum Dimensions

- 973.1 The maximum size of the illuminated DMIS area shall be no more than:
 - Width no more than 3 feet
 - Height no more than 5 feet
 - Total square feet 15 square feet per side
- 973.2 DMIS may have one-or two-sided illumination as appropriate for the location.

974 Technology

- 974.1 The technology shall be digital, internally illuminated signs conforming to the description in Section 970 that produce text or images from multiple individual light sources.
- 974.2 The visual resolution (number and size of individual light sources) shall be suitable for clear recognition of a minimum of three lines of text at a distance not more than 300 feet.
- 974.3 The technology must provide security features to prevent unauthorized alteration of content.
- 974.4 The content must be determined solely by remote electronic programming which should be maintained in a secure manner subject to supervision of the Content manager.

975 Illumination

- 975.1 Each DMIS may be illuminated between the hours of 6:00am and 9:00pm, except as modified, from time to time, by the Select Board or [TBD School Committee or Superintendent].
- 975.2 The illumination intensity must be variable and automatically adjusted to an appropriate level based on current external ambient light luminance – the light intensity of the light leaving the sign surface in a given direction. Night-time luminance shall be limited to 20 candelas per square meter (cd/m²).

976 Display

- 976.1 Content must be displayed only on a black background.
- 976.2 Content is limited to static text and static images.

977 Content Management and Sign Administration

- 977.1 Content decisions for each DMIS shall be made, implemented, and enforced by its Content Manager.
- 977.2 The Select Board shall appoint the Content Manager for any municipal signs and shall disseminate and enforce Content Guidelines.
- 977.3 The TBD [School Committee or superintendent] shall appoint the Content Manager for any school signs and shall disseminate and enforce Content Guidelines.

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to add Section 970, “Digital Municipal Information Signs” to the Berlin Zoning Bylaws as described in Article 28 of the warrant.

DESCRIPTION

In response to requests from the School Department, the Planning Board has developed a new Section 970 to the Berlin Zoning Bylaw that would allow two “Digital Municipal Information Signs”. The Bylaw provides guidelines and standards for the creation, location, dimensions and general management of digital signage when developed for Municipal use.

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Two-Thirds Majority Vote

ARTICLE 29 ZONING BYLAW AMENDMENT – SENIOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Bylaw Section 720 Senior Residential Development by eliminating 723.2(b) as shown below in strikethrough and changing 723.2(c) to 723.2(b) as shown below in strikethrough and bold type; or take any action relative thereto (PLANNING BOARD):

- 723.2 Occupancy Restriction: The following provisions are intended to ensure that the dwelling units in an SRD are used as residences for persons of age 55 and older.

- (a) Each unit in an SRD shall be occupied by at least one person 55 years of age or older.

~~(b) — Children under age 18 may not reside in a dwelling unit in an SRD for more than six (6) months in any nine (9) month period.~~

~~(e)(b)~~ In the event of the death of the qualifying owner/occupant(s) of a unit, or foreclosure or other involuntary transfer of a unit in an SRD, a two-year exemption shall be allowed for the transfer of the unit to another eligible household.

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to amend the Zoning Bylaws Section 720 Senior Residential Development by eliminating 723.2(b) and changing 723.2(c) to 723.2(b) as described in Article 29 of the warrant.

DESCRIPTION

This article eliminates a conflict in the Zoning Bylaws. Section 730 requires all new developments of six or more units to have fifteen percent (15%) of the units be affordable. To be counted as affordable, there cannot be an age restriction placed on children residing in these units. This article will remove the living restriction on children under age 18 at Senior Residential Developments.

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Two-Thirds Majority Vote

ARTICLE 30 CITIZENS PETITION (ZONING)

This is a request to have this article put on/added onto the Warrant for the Berlin, MA Town meeting on May 1, 2024 to be heard/voted on. This request is to have the current Limited Business Zoning on 180 River Rd W in Berlin, MA to be re-zoned down to Residential/Agricultural zoning which is what surrounds this property and the nearby area as well. This parcel of land consists of 29.17 acres of land. Located on Map 70 Block 29, Lot 0-0.

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Two-Thirds Majority Vote

****Explanatory note: This parcel is located on Map 7, not Map 70. There is no Map 70.***

ARTICLE 31 2024 ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION

To meet at the Berlin Town Offices, 23 Linden Street, lower level, in said Berlin on Monday, May 13, 2024, between the hours of 12:00 noon and 8:00 pm to elect by ballot the following officers: Moderator for one year, Select Board member for three years, Assessor for three years, Library Trustee for three years, Trustee of Trust Funds for three years, Cemetery Commissioner for three years, Planning Board for five years, Board of Health for three years.

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to adjourn this meeting to Monday, May 13, 2024 at 12 noon at the Berlin Town Offices, 23 Linden Street, lower level, at which time and place the polls will be open for the election of Town officers under Article 31, and that following the announcement of the results of the election, this meeting be dissolved.

VOTE REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE Majority Vote

***This warrant contains proposed motions at the time of printing to assist the public in understanding the articles. Proposed motions are subject to change.*

And you are directed to serve this Warrant, by posting up attested copies thereof as per vote of the Town in said Town, seven (7) days at least before the time of holding said meeting.

Given under our hands this 1st day of April, 2024.

BERLIN SELECT BOARD

Christine Keefe, Chair

Margaret Stone, Vice-Chair

R. Scott Hawkins, Clerk

Berlin Town Finance Committee Annual Report

The Finance Committee recommends a FY2025 budget that increases overall spending by 3.9% over FY2024 (excluding school capital and offset receipts for the Transfer Station). The Finance Committee recommends increasing property tax levied under this budget by only 2.5% over FY2024. This budget puts an emphasis on getting back to a 2.5% tax increase after providing an additional \$200k in FY24 to the Berlin Boylston Regional School District which resulted in a 4.0% levy increase. Approximately \$1.2M in budget requests were not recommended by the Finance Committee for funding in FY25 in order to present a balanced budget to Town Meeting.

Notable Items in FY2025 Recommended Budget

COLA - A 2% cost of living and market adjustments for relevant positions have been factored in to Town nonunion employee compensation.

Expenses – The Finance Committee requested that only level service expense budgets be submitted for FY25. This means only contractual and non-discretionary increases were to be included. Supplemental, or above level services requests, were submitted on a separate form, some of which are recommended for funding.

Assabet Regional Vocational Technical High School – The budget for Assabet decreased by nearly \$84K, or 11.9%, for FY25 due to lower projected enrollments from Berlin for FY25. Assabet has asked its member communities to approve a Capital Stabilization Fund to save for future capital costs due to decreasing out of district revenues (see Article 8). Town Meeting will be asked to approve the creation of this fund and to add \$9,000 to it in FY25. The Finance Committee recommends approving and funding this request.

Berlin Boylston Regional School District (BBRSD) – The BBRSD School Committee failed to collaborate with the Finance Committee to develop a mutually agreed upon budget for FY25 that meets the level service needs of the Town and the Schools while minimizing the impact on taxpayers. The Finance Committee and the Select Board sent a joint letter to the District and School Committee in November asking the School Committee to stay within a 2.5% increase when submitting their FY25 budget. BBRSD's final budget numbers provided to the Town on March 22nd represent an overall 10.2% budgetary increase over FY24.

In FY24, Town Meeting approved an additional \$382,715 in one-time funds from Free Cash to fund a large anticipated increase in out-of-district special education tuition at Berlin Memorial School (BMS).

In the FY25 School Committee budget for BMS, this expense category decreases by over \$500K, showing the need has decreased. Contrary to the agreement reached between the Town of Berlin and the School Committee to close this unexpected gap with the Town's Free Cash funds, the School Committee has added these one-time funds to the baseline for determining the Town's operating assessment increase in FY25. BBRSD's requested increase for BMS of \$583,672 represents a 14.9% increase over FY24 and a total increase of \$485,561 above and beyond the Finance Committee's recommended 2.5% increase. The 14.9% FY25 requested increase is in addition to the 9.1% increase approved by Town Meeting in FY24. This increase is calculated without including the \$382,715 in Free Cash.

The Tahanto requested operating assessment increase of \$335,911 is a 10.5% increase over FY24, or \$255,751 more than the Finance Committee recommended increase of 2.5%. This is in addition to the 8.9% increase approved by Town Meeting for Tahanto in FY24.

Due to late submittals from the School Committee, the Finance Committee will make their recommendation on the School Committee's BMS capital request at Town Meeting. The BMS capital request is \$543,132, a 16% increase over FY24 and \$115,923 more than the \$427,209 in funding that is available in accordance with the Town of Berlin's Recommended Use of Certified Free Cash Guidelines. The Tahanto capital assessment recommendation matches the request at \$38,253 for a decrease of 81.9% over FY24. With the exception of the debt repayment for building Tahanto, these costs are funded by Free Cash in the operating budget.

Public Safety – The full time and part time wages budgets have been combined for both police and fire due to movement between these funds that occurs throughout the fiscal year to avoid having to do reserve fund transfers. The recommended police budget reduces the Town's dependence on Public Safety Stabilization funds for personnel costs. This funding previously paid for three police officers per year. The FY25 budget recommends moving one of these officers into the operating budget with the goal of continuing to reduce the amount of payroll expenses funded using Public Safety Stabilization funds. The recommended budget also fully funds the 10th full time police officer, half of which was funded in the FY24 budget, and funds a half year of the 11th full time police officer.

There is a significant increase in the Fire/EMS wages due to a one-time payroll reset as a result of the new union contract and the need to retain and hire new employees to fill the multitude of open shifts each month.

The Highway budget includes one additional highway laborer and two seasonal laborers, one of which was added to cover the additional mowing at South Commons that will be required due to the proposed Community Preservation Act field renovation project (see Article 28). The Snow & Ice budget includes the addition of another temporary plow driver to aid in winter operations.

COA/Social Services Salary – The part time Social Services Director portion of this position (21 hours/week) which has been funded using Federal ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds for the past three years has been moved into the operating budget, making the COA/Social Services Director a full time 40 hour per week position.

Recreation – The Recreation budget adds expenses to cover maintenance costs associated with the proposed Community Preservation Act field renovation project at South Commons (see Article 28) along with funding for a new scheduling software. The proposed budget also adds a part time wages line item to fund a Recreation Director position for 10 hours per week. The goal is to use revenue generated from increased recreational classes and opportunities to help fund recreation personnel and expenses in the future.

Benefits and Insurance – Health insurance rates reflect a 7.27% increase for FY25. \$45,000 has also been added to fund 50% of the cost of retired employee health insurance premiums (see Article 7). The town's assessment from Worcester Regional Retirement increased by 10.8%, or \$71K.

Expenses and Services –

- Line 11: A new human resources (HR) expense line item has been added to the Town Administrator's budget to fund vacation payout for departing employees, advertising, increases to salaries for new hires, new contractual obligations under union contracts, etc. Use of any funds from this line item requires sign off from both the FinCom and Select Board.
- Line 28: The legal expense line has increased by \$25K to fund continually growing costs largely associated with personnel matters.
- Lines 32-39: Town Clerk, Elections and Registration have all increased due to the Presidential election.
- Line 40: Two additional hours per week have been added to the Conservation Agent's hours.
- Line 45: Public building expenses have increased significantly due to the ever increasing costs of maintaining town buildings.
- Line 49: Increased by \$7,500 to develop a monthly townwide newsletter in order to improve Town communications with the public.
- Lines 65-66: Increased due to the retirement of the Town's longtime Animal Inspector and the negotiated cost for the new Animal Inspector who started in April.
- Lines 109-110: The Animal Control officer total costs increase by \$14.5k as the town enters a regional agreement for these services.

Stabilization Fund – The Finance Committee supports the allocation of \$178K into the Town's General Stabilization Fund.

Accounting Line Changes – Several accounts have been consolidated to reduce administrative costs.

- Lines 3-11: The Select Board and Town Administrator wages, consulting and expense costs have been consolidated under the Town Administrator budget to reduce the number of accounts that one office with two employees needs to track.
- Lines 22-23: The revaluation expense line item has moved to Assessor expense line item.
- Lines 45-46: Public building repairs has been moved into the public building expense line item.
- Line 76: Transfer Station expenses transition out of an offset receipts account to a new revolving account.
- Lines 113 & 115: Consolidates the Town's workers compensation/injured on duty costs into one account.

Summary

The FY25 budget leverages software and systems across departments, consolidates line items to streamline the budget, pairs up departments such as recreation and highway to save reduce administrative costs, increase efficiencies, and carefully balances the needs of key departments like public safety with sensitivity to the impact on taxpayers.

While we acknowledge the increased level of services year over year the Town must provide, we will continue to carefully scrutinize the growth of all Town departments, step and cost of living increases for Town employees, and other large sections of the budget, most notably the regional schools.

Berlin Finance Committee: Clif LaPorte, Julie Malik, Mary Porter and Scott Schultz, Chair

Finance Committee Budget Summary for Year Ending June 30, 2025

Revenue	FY24 Budget	FY25 Proposed
Local Property Taxes	\$ 13,684,633	\$ 14,415,193
Property Taxes: New Growth	\$ 350,000	\$ 300,000
State Aid	\$ 278,086	\$ 291,590
Local Receipts	\$ 1,201,600	\$ 1,286,600
Offset Receipts	\$ 124,615	\$ -
Receipts Reserved for Appropriation	\$ 113,550	\$ 138,550
Other Revenue Sources	\$ 949,306	\$ 336,149
Less Obligations	\$ (300,739)	\$ (255,599)
Total Revenue	\$ 16,401,051	\$ 16,512,483
Expenses		
100 - General Government	\$ 1,542,136	\$ 1,671,608
200 - Public Safety	\$ 2,614,706	\$ 2,777,427
400 - Public Works	\$ 919,613	\$ 862,715
500 - Human Services	\$ 126,958	\$ 169,308
600 - Culture & Recreation	\$ 193,529	\$ 215,612
700 - Debt & Interest	\$ 291,175	\$ 285,475
800 - Intergovernmental Expenses	\$ 9,040,698	\$ 8,676,833
900 - Misc. Benefits & Insurance	\$ 1,672,236	\$ 1,853,505
Total Expenses	\$ 16,401,051	\$ 16,512,483
Maximum Budget Calculations		
Levy Limit (Prior FY)	\$ 14,225,046	\$ 14,942,930
Allowed 2.5% Increase	\$ 355,626	\$ 373,573
New Growth	\$ 350,000	\$ 300,000
Add Debt Exclusion	\$ 733,927	\$ 745,410
Subtotal	\$ 15,664,599	\$ 16,361,913
State Aid	\$ 278,086	\$ 291,590
Local Receipts	\$ 1,201,600	\$ 1,286,600
Offset Receipts	\$ 124,615	\$ -
Receipts Reserved for Appropriation	\$ 113,550	\$ 138,550
Other Revenue Sources	\$ 949,306	\$ 336,149
Less Obligations	\$ (300,739)	\$ (255,599)
Maximum Allowed Budget	\$ 18,031,017	\$ 18,159,203
Proposed FY Budget	\$ 16,401,051	\$ 16,512,483
Excess Levy Capacity	\$ 1,629,966	\$ 1,646,720

Sources of Funds Fiscal Year 2025

Sources of Funds	FY24 Budget	FY25 Budget	% Change
STATE AID			
Exemptions-Vets, Blind, Elderly-Sps	\$ 15,647	\$ 21,943	28.7%
Unrestricted General Aid	\$ 238,216	\$ 248,249	4.0%
Veterans Benefits	\$ 16,213	\$ 11,944	-35.7%
Public Library Offset Receipts	\$ 8,010	\$ 9,454	15.3%
TOTAL	\$ 278,086	\$ 291,590	4.6%
LOCAL RECEIPTS			
Motor Vehicle Excise	\$ 600,000	\$ 695,000	13.7%
State Meals Tax	\$ 40,000	\$ 35,000	-14.3%
Hotel Rooms Tax	\$ 240,000	\$ 220,000	-9.1%
Interest on PP,RE & Excise	\$ 30,000	\$ 20,000	-50.0%
Payment in Lieu of Taxes	\$ 82,600	\$ 82,600	0.0%
Fees and Charges	\$ 20,000	\$ 40,000	50.0%
Other Departmental	\$ 28,000	\$ 3,000	-833.3%
Building Permits*	\$ 80,000	\$ 80,000	0.0%
Other Licenses and Permits*	\$ 35,000	\$ 40,000	12.5%
Fines and Forfeits	\$ 21,000	\$ 21,000	0.0%
Interest on Investments	\$ 25,000	\$ 50,000	50.0%
TOTAL	\$ 1,201,600	\$ 1,286,600	6.6%
OFFSET RECEIPTS			
Transfer Station Receipts	\$ 124,615	\$ -	-100.0%
TOTAL	\$ 124,615	\$ -	-100.0%
		<i>*switching to a revolving fund</i>	
RECEIPTS RESERVED FOR APPROP.			
Ambulance Fund	\$ 100,000	\$ 125,000	20.0%
Cemetery Receipts	\$ 13,550	\$ 13,550	0.0%
TOTAL	\$ 113,550	\$ 138,550	18.0%
OTHER REVENUE SOURCES			
Free Cash for BMS & Tahanto Capital	\$ 680,009	\$ 181,385	-274.9%
Affordable Housing Account	\$ 7,000	\$ 8,500	17.6%
Public Safety Special Stabilization Fund	\$ 262,297	\$ 146,264	-79.3%
TOTAL	\$ 949,306	\$ 336,149	-182.4%
ESTIMATED OBLIGATIONS			
Library Offset	\$ (8,010)	\$ (9,454)	15.3%
State Charges	\$ (42,729)	\$ (46,145)	7.4%
Assessors Overlay	\$ (250,000)	\$ (200,000)	-25.0%
TOTAL	\$ (300,739)	\$ (255,599)	-17.7%
DEBT EXCLUSIONS			
Tahanto Capital Assessment Debt Service	\$ 442,752	\$ 459,935	3.7%
Highway Barn	\$ 291,175	\$ 285,475	-2.0%
TOTAL	\$ 733,927	\$ 745,410	1.5%

	UMAS ACCT	DEPARTMENT	FY24 ATM	FY25 REQUEST	\$ CHANGE	FY25 ATM	\$ CHANGE	% CHANGE
100		100 GENERAL GOVERNMENT						
1	114-5110	Moderator - Salary	\$ 50	\$ 50	\$ -	\$ 50	\$ -	0.0%
2	114-5700	Expenses	\$ 85	\$ 100	\$ 15	\$ 145	\$ 60	70.6%
3	122-5110	Select Board - Stipend	\$ 3,861	\$ 3,939	\$ 78	\$ 3,939	\$ 78	2.0%
4	122-5112	Wages-FT	\$ 70,819	\$ -	\$ (70,819)	\$ -	\$ (70,819)	-100.0%
5	122-5200	Consulting	\$ 20,500	\$ -	\$ (20,500)	\$ -	\$ (20,500)	-100.0%
6	122-5700	Expenses	\$ 8,508	\$ -	\$ (8,508)	\$ -	\$ (8,508)	-100.0%
7	123-5111-0	Town Administrator - Salary	\$ 144,000	\$ 148,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 148,000	\$ 4,000	2.8%
8	123-5111-1	Admin - FT Salary	\$ -	\$ 71,682	\$ 71,682	\$ 71,682	\$ 71,682	100.0%
9	123-5200	Consulting	\$ -	\$ 20,500	\$ 20,500	\$ 20,500	\$ 20,500	100.0%
10	123-5700	Expenses	\$ 3,965	\$ 13,215	\$ 9,250	\$ 13,765	\$ 9,800	247.2%
11	123-5150	HR Expenses (new)		\$ -	\$ -	\$ 55,000	\$ 55,000	100.0%
12	131-5700	Finance Committee - Expenses	\$ 180	\$ 180	\$ -	\$ 180	\$ -	0.0%
13	132-5781	Reserve Fund	\$ 110,000	\$ 110,000	\$ -	\$ 110,000	\$ -	0.0%
14	135-5111	Accountant - Salary	\$ 96,342	\$ 98,269	\$ 1,927	\$ 98,269	\$ 1,927	2.0%
15	135-5112	Wages-FT	\$ 51,613	\$ 54,075	\$ 2,462	\$ 54,075	\$ 2,462	4.8%
16	135-5700	Expenses	\$ 10,936	\$ 10,936	\$ -	\$ 13,426	\$ 2,490	22.8%
17	136-5700	Audit	\$ 20,000	\$ 21,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 21,000	\$ 1,000	5.0%
18	141-5110	Assessor - Elected Salary	\$ 2,441	\$ 2,490	\$ 49	\$ 2,490	\$ 49	2.0%
19	141-5113	Assessor - FT Salary	\$ 78,925	\$ 81,600	\$ 2,675	\$ 81,600	\$ 2,675	3.4%
20	141-5114	Wages-PT	\$ 69,897	\$ 66,802	\$ (3,095)	\$ 66,802	\$ (3,095)	-4.4%
21	141-5170	Incentive	-	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	100.0%
22	141-5700	Expenses	\$ 54,567	\$ 75,236	\$ 20,669	\$ 75,236	\$ 20,669	37.9%
23	142-5000	Revaluation - Expenses	\$ 17,300	\$ -	\$ (17,300)	\$ -	\$ (17,300)	-100.0%
24	145-5111	Treasurer/Collector - Salary	\$ 92,250	\$ 94,095	\$ 1,845	\$ 94,095	\$ 1,845	2.0%
25	145-5114	Wages - FT	\$ 49,872	\$ 56,564	\$ 6,692	\$ 56,564	\$ 6,692	13.4%
26	145-5170	Incentive	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ -	\$ 1,000	\$ -	0.0%
27	145-5700	Expenses	\$ 50,756	\$ 45,876	\$ (4,880)	\$ 45,876	\$ (4,880)	-9.6%
28	151-5700	Legal - Expenses	\$ 75,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 25,000	33.3%
29	152-5700	Personnel -Expenses	\$ 250	\$ 250	\$ -	\$ 250	\$ -	0.0%
30	153-5000	Tax Title - Expenses	\$ 15,000	\$ 10,000	\$ (5,000)	\$ 10,000	\$ (5,000)	-33.3%
31	155-5700	Data Systems - Expenses	\$ 103,388	\$ 103,388	\$ -	\$ 103,388	\$ -	0.0%
32	161-5110	Town Clerk -Salary	\$ 40,000	\$ 42,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 42,000	\$ 2,000	5.0%
33	161-5114	Wages PT	\$ 16,692	\$ 17,029	\$ 337	\$ 17,029	\$ 337	2.0%
34	161-5700	Expenses	\$ 3,420	\$ 3,535	\$ 115	\$ 3,535	\$ 115	3.4%
35	162-5124	Elections -Wages PT	\$ 5,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 3,000	60.0%
36	162-5700	Expenses	\$ 5,700	\$ 6,250	\$ 550	\$ 6,250	\$ 550	9.6%
37	163-5113	Registration -Salary	\$ 100	\$ 150	\$ 50	\$ 150	\$ 50	50.0%
38	163-5114	Wages-PT	\$ 600	\$ 700	\$ 100	\$ 700	\$ 100	16.7%
39	163-5700	Expenses	\$ 150	\$ 175	\$ 25	\$ 175	\$ 25	16.7%
40	171-5114	Conservation Commission -Wages PT	\$ 12,081	\$ 12,884	\$ 803	\$ 16,105	\$ 4,024	33.3%
41	171-5700	Conservation Commission -Expenses	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ -	\$ 2,000	\$ -	0.0%
42	175-5700	Planning Board -Expenses	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ -	\$ 1,000	\$ -	0.0%
43	176-5700	Zoning Board of Appeals - Expenses	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ -	\$ 500	\$ -	0.0%
44	177-5700	Agricultural Commission -Expenses	\$ 1,375	\$ 1,375	\$ -	\$ 1,375	\$ -	0.0%
45	192-5700	Public Buildings - Expenses	\$ 111,418	\$ 138,957	\$ 27,539	\$ 139,457	\$ 28,039	25.2%

	UMAS ACCT	DEPARTMENT	FY24 ATM	FY25 REQUEST	\$ CHANGE	FY25 ATM	\$ CHANGE	% CHANGE
46	192-5701	Repairs (Town Owned Property)	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (10,000)	-100.0%
47	192-5211	Electricity	\$ 80,000	\$ 80,000	\$ -	\$ 80,000	\$ -	0.0%
48	192-5212	Fuel Oil	\$ 97,010	\$ 95,000	\$ (2,010)	\$ 95,000	\$ (2,010)	-2.1%
49	195-5700	Town Report/Communications - Expenses	\$ 3,585	\$ 2,500	\$ (1,085)	\$ 10,000	\$ 6,415	178.9%
100	TOTAL GENERAL GOVERNMENT		\$ 1,542,136	\$ 1,612,302	\$ 70,166	\$ 1,671,608	\$ 129,472	8.4%
200	PUBLIC SAFETY							
50	210-5111	Police-Salary	\$ 139,052	\$ 141,833	\$ 2,781	\$ 141,833	\$ 2,781	2.0%
51	210-5112/4	Wages FT & PT	\$ 1,064,738	\$ 1,101,658	\$ 36,920	\$ 1,137,658	\$ 72,920	6.8%
52	210-5114	Wages PT	*combined FT & PT wages					
53	210-5700	Expenses	\$ 118,577	\$ 128,577	\$ 10,000	\$ 128,577	\$ 10,000	8.4%
54	221-5111	Fire & EMS- Salary	\$ 151,875	\$ 156,825	\$ 4,950	\$ 156,825	\$ 4,950	3.3%
55	221-5112/4	Wages FT & PT	\$ 545,546	\$ 613,486	\$ 67,940	\$ 613,486	\$ 67,940	12.5%
56	221-5114	Wages PT	*combined FT & PT wages					
57	221-5700	Expenses	\$ 153,964	\$ 162,042	\$ 8,078	\$ 166,042	\$ 12,078	7.8%
58	241-5111	Bldg Inspector-Salary	\$ 98,643	\$ 100,616	\$ 1,973	\$ 100,616	\$ 1,973	2.0%
59	241-5114	Wages PT	\$ 34,799	\$ 36,307	\$ 1,508	\$ 36,307	\$ 1,508	4.3%
60	241-5700	Expenses	\$ 26,821	\$ 24,108	\$ (2,713)	\$ 24,108	\$ (2,713)	-10.1%
61	242-5700	Plumbing & Gas Inspector - Expenses	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ -	\$ 300	\$ -	0.0%
62	243-5700	Elec Inspector - Expenses	\$ 600	\$ 600	\$ -	\$ 600	\$ -	0.0%
63	249-5113	Animal Inspector-Salary	\$ 2,125	\$ 2,500	\$ 375	\$ 2,500	\$ 375	17.6%
64	249-5700	Expenses	\$ 500	\$ 1,100	\$ 600	\$ 1,100	\$ 600	120.0%
65	296-5112	Communications-Wages FT	\$ 49,816	\$ 52,200	\$ 2,384	\$ 52,200	\$ 2,384	4.8%
66	296-5700	Expenses	\$ 227,350	\$ 215,275	\$ (12,075)	\$ 215,275	\$ (12,075)	-5.3%
200	TOTAL PUBLIC SAFETY		\$ 2,614,706	\$ 2,737,427	\$ 122,721	\$ 2,777,427	\$ 162,721	6.2%
400	400 PUBLIC WORKS/FACILITIES							
67	422-5111	Highway-Salary	\$ 88,959	\$ 92,735	\$ 3,776	\$ 92,735	\$ 3,776	4.2%
68	422-5112	Wages FT	\$ 286,897	\$ 302,951	\$ 16,054	\$ 351,515	\$ 64,618	22.5%
69	422-5114	Wages PT	\$ 25,937	\$ 14,431	\$ (11,506)	\$ 22,263	\$ (3,674)	-14.2%
70	422-5700	Expenses	\$ 146,680	\$ 146,680	\$ -	\$ 146,680	\$ -	0.0%
71	423-5112	Snow & Ice - FT OT	\$ 45,567	\$ 45,253	\$ (314)	\$ 45,253	\$ (314)	-0.7%
72	423-5114	Wages PT	\$ 11,790	\$ 11,778	\$ (12)	\$ 14,257	\$ 2,467	20.9%
73	423-5700	Expenses	\$ 89,600	\$ 89,600	\$ -	\$ 89,600	\$ -	0.0%
74	424-5211	Street Lights	\$ 9,225	\$ 9,000	\$ (225)	\$ 9,000	\$ (225)	-2.4%
75	433-5114	Transfer Station-Wages PT	\$ 44,509	\$ 47,503	\$ 2,994	\$ 47,503	\$ 2,994	6.7%
76	433-5700	Expenses	\$ 154,390	\$ 27,850	\$ (126,540)	\$ 27,850	\$ (126,540)	-82.0%
77	491-5700	Cemetery - Expenses	\$ 16,059	\$ 16,059	\$ -	\$ 16,059	\$ -	0.0%
400	TOTAL PUBLIC WORKS		\$ 919,613	\$ 803,840	\$ (115,773)	\$ 862,715	\$ (56,898)	-6.2%
500	500 HUMAN SERVICES							
78	510-5110	Board of Health-Salary	\$ 2,004	\$ 2,045	\$ 41	\$ 2,045	\$ 41	2.0%
79	510-5114	Wages PT	\$ 6,831	\$ 7,267	\$ 436	\$ 7,267	\$ 436	6.4%
80	510-5700	Expenses	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ -	\$ 1,000	\$ -	0.0%
81	511-5200	Nashoba Health	\$ 10,592	\$ 11,387	\$ 795	\$ 11,387	\$ 795	7.5%
82	522-5200	Nashoba Nursing	\$ 4,855	\$ 5,220	\$ 365	\$ 5,220	\$ 365	7.5%
83	541-5112	COA/Social Services-Wages FT	\$ 34,383	\$ 73,853	\$ 39,470	\$ 73,853	\$ 39,470	114.8%
84	541-5114	Wages PT	\$ 25,248	\$ 25,769	\$ 521	\$ 25,769	\$ 521	2.1%
85	541-5700	Expenses	\$ 17,341	\$ 17,841	\$ 500	\$ 17,841	\$ 500	2.9%

	UMAS ACCT	DEPARTMENT	FY24 ATM	FY25 REQUEST	\$ CHANGE	FY25 ATM	\$ CHANGE	% CHANGE
86	543-5111	Veterans-Salary	\$ 9,354	\$ 9,541	\$ 187	\$ 9,541	\$ 187	2.0%
87	543-5700	Expenses	\$ 350	\$ 385	\$ 35	\$ 385	\$ 35	10.0%
88	543-5800	Benefits	\$ 11,000	\$ 11,000	\$ -	\$ 11,000	\$ -	0.0%
89	599-5200	Community Social Services	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ -	\$ 4,000	\$ -	0.0%
500	TOTAL HUMAN SERVICES		\$ 126,958	\$ 169,308	\$ 42,350	\$ 169,308	\$ 42,350	33.4%
600	600 CULTURE AND RECREATION							
90	610-5114	Library-Wages PT	\$ 137,864	\$ 132,075	\$ (5,789)	\$ 132,075	\$ (5,789)	-4.2%
91	610-5700	Expenses	\$ 34,000	\$ 38,362	\$ 4,362	\$ 38,362	\$ 4,362	12.8%
92	630-5700	Recreation-Expenses	\$ 17,550	\$ 28,660	\$ 11,110	\$ 30,660	\$ 13,110	74.7%
93	630-5114	PT Wages				\$ 10,400	\$ 10,400	100.0%
94	631-5700	Cultural Council -Expenses	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ -	\$ 1,500	\$ -	0.0%
95	691-5700	Historic Comm- Expenses	\$ 615	\$ 615	\$ -	\$ 615	\$ -	0.0%
96	692-5700	Memorial Day-Expense	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ -	\$ 2,000	\$ -	0.0%
600	TOTAL CULTURE & RECREATION		\$ 193,529	\$ 203,212	\$ 9,683	\$ 215,612	\$ 22,083	11.4%
700	700 DEBT & INTEREST							
97	752-5800	Interest	\$ 101,175	\$ 95,475	\$ (5,700)	\$ 95,475	\$ (5,700)	-5.6%
98	752-5900	Principal	\$ 190,000	\$ 190,000	\$ -	\$ 190,000	\$ -	0.0%
700	TOTAL DEBT & INTEREST		\$ 291,175	\$ 285,475	\$ (5,700)	\$ 285,475	\$ (5,700)	-2.0%
800	800 INTERGOVERNMENTAL EXPENDITURES							
99	800-5641	CMRPC	\$ 974	\$ 999	\$ 25	\$ 999	\$ 25	2.6%
100	840-5700	Assabet Reg Housing Consortium	\$ 7,000	\$ 8,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 8,500	\$ 1,500	21.4%
101	835-5321	Assabet Valley Regional Assessment	\$ 705,398	\$ 621,688	\$ (83,710)	\$ 621,688	\$ (83,710)	-11.9%
102	835-5901	Assabet Debt Repayment	\$ 66,170	\$ 64,162	\$ (2,008)	\$ 64,162	\$ (2,008)	-3.0%
103	835-5800	Assabet Capital Stabilization	\$ -	\$ 9,078	\$ 9,078	\$ 9,078	\$ 9,078	100.0%
104	835-5320	Berlin Memorial Assessment	\$ 3,924,434	\$ 4,508,106	\$ 583,672	\$ 4,022,545	\$ 98,111	2.5%
105	835-5903	Berlin Memorial Capital Assessment	\$ 468,410	\$ 543,132	\$ 74,722	\$ 143,132	\$ (325,278)	-69.4%
106	835-5322	Tahanto Assessment	\$ 3,206,381	\$ 3,542,292	\$ 335,911	\$ 3,286,541	\$ 80,160	2.5%
107	835-5900	Tahanto Capital Assessment	\$ 211,599	\$ 38,253	\$ (173,346)	\$ 38,253	\$ (173,346)	-81.9%
108	835-5902	Tahanto Debt Repayment	\$ 442,752	\$ 459,935	\$ 17,183	\$ 459,935	\$ 17,183	3.9%
109	292-5113	Intermunicipal Animal Control Officer	\$ 5,760	\$ -	\$ (5,760)	\$ -	\$ (5,760)	-100.0%
110	292-5700	Expenses	\$ 1,820	\$ 22,000	\$ 20,180	\$ 22,000	\$ 20,180	1108.8%
800	TOTAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL		\$ 9,040,698	\$ 9,818,145	\$ 777,447	\$ 8,676,833	\$ (363,865)	-4.0%
900	900 MISC BENEFITS & INSURANCE							
111	911-5200	Worcester Regional Retirement	\$ 664,381	\$ 736,314	\$ 71,933	\$ 736,314	\$ 71,933	10.8%
112	912-5200	Workers Compensation	\$ 23,000	\$ 55,000	\$ 32,000	\$ 55,000	\$ 32,000	139.1%
113	913-5200	Unemployment Insurance	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000	\$ -	\$ 35,000	\$ -	0.0%
114	915-5175	Chap32B Insurance (Health/Dental,+)	\$ 734,825	\$ 832,525	\$ 97,700	\$ 832,525	\$ 97,700	13.3%
115	916-5200	Police & Fire Sick & Acc Ins	\$ 25,200	\$ -	\$ (25,200)	\$ -	\$ (25,200)	-100.0%
116	919-5190	Sick Pay	\$ 40,775	\$ 41,590	\$ 815	\$ 41,590	\$ 815	2.0%
117	920-5170	Medicare	\$ 48,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 2,000	4.2%
118	945-5740	Property/Liability Insurance	\$ 101,055	\$ 103,076	\$ 2,021	\$ 103,076	\$ 2,021	2.0%
900	TOTAL MISC BENEFITS & INSURANCE		\$ 1,672,236	\$ 1,853,505	\$ 181,269	\$ 1,853,505	\$ 181,269	10.8%
	TOTAL BUDGETS		\$ 16,401,051	\$17,483,214	\$1,082,163	\$16,512,483	\$ 111,432	0.7%

OPEN AND SAVE

2024 Annual Town Meeting Warrant and Proposed FY25 Budget Enclosed

Select Board Coffee Talk – All About Town Meeting

- Thursday, April 25, 2024 at 6:30pm
- Berlin Municipal Offices, 23 Linden Street, Room 227
- or- online at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84354687148>

Annual Town Meeting

- Monday, May 6, 2024 at 7:30pm
- Berlin Memorial School Gym, 34 South Street

Annual Town Election

- Monday, May 13, 2024 from 12pm-8pm
- Berlin Municipal Offices, 23 Linden Street, Room 114

****Last day for voter registration (if not already registered to vote in Berlin) is April 26th from 9am-5pm at the Town Clerk's Office, 23 Linden Street, Room 202****

Berlin Select Board
23 Linden Street
Berlin, MA 01503

Presorted Standard
U.S. Postage
ECRWSS
PAID
PERMIT NO. 3
BERLIN MA 01503

**POSTAL PATRON
BERLIN, MA 01503**