

THE WRITTEN REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE ON PAGE 115-116 OF THE 2018 TOWN REPORT IS THE PREVIOUS YEAR'S REPORT, PRINTED IN ERROR. THE FOLLOWING IS THE CORRECT VERSION OF THIS YEAR'S REPORT. THE TOWN REPORT COMMITTEE APOLOGIZES FOR THE ERROR.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Berlin's finances are in a strong position as we approach Fiscal Year 2020.

The town has achieved a AA+ credit rating which greatly decreases our borrowing costs. For that we can thank the diligence of Dennis Fearebay, the town Treasurer; June Poland, the town Accountant; and the work of the members of our new Capital Planning Committee. The Finance Committee has kept local property tax increases below the permitted 2.5% annual increase for five of the past six years (your taxes may have gone up more than that due to rising property values in town). Berlin has not seen a Proposition 2 ½ property tax rate override vote since the 1980's, and our residential property tax rates continue to be below the average of other cities and towns in the Commonwealth.

Two years ago we promised the taxpayers of Berlin that we would retire the debt on the Town Offices before incurring finance payments on the new Town Barn. We are pleased to let you know that the final payment on the municipal office building was made in Fiscal Year

2019, and that we will begin payments on the Barn in FY2020.

The Finance Committee would like to express its thanks to outgoing Fire/EMS Chief Paul Zbikowski for his careful evaluation of the town's fire fighting vehicles. Paul determined that we could reduce the total fire fleet by one vehicle and still have what we need to deal with fire protection and rescue in Berlin. Thus the new fire truck on this year's warrant will replace two vehicles in the current pool. That will permanently remove one large fire capital purchase from our future, and save us a great deal of money.

Starting this year the Finance Committee plans significant increases in our yearly contribution to the town's Stabilization Fund. This is our savings account held in trust against lean economic times. The national economy is currently in its longest period of expansion since the late 1940's, but this cannot last forever. We ask your support for a prudent effort to boost our savings during this time.

Buzz Harris, Chair
Berlin Finance Committee

CORRECTIONS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT AS PRINTED IN THE ANNUAL TOWN REPORT.

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Article 5. [Corrected table from the posted warrant:]

| | |
|---------------------|----------|
| Dog Licensing | \$600 |
| Library Video Fines | \$1,000 |
| Recreation | \$20,000 |
| Town Hall | \$40,000 |

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Heading omitted for **Article 34:** CHANGE TAX COLLECTOR DEMAND FEE

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PLANNING BOARD – SENIOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT [Corrected as in posted warrant]

Article 35. To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning By-Law 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.

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 and 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.~~

~~(c)~~ **(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. (Planning Board)