

TOWN OF BERLIN
REGULAR BOARD OF FINANCE MEETING
MAY 14, 2024
“Doc” McIntosh Conference Room or Remote Meeting
7:00 P.M.

[https://berlinct-
gov.zoom.us/j/4148724481?pwd=SkpBQmd1U0NoNTF5U0dWTXZGVUhiUT09&omn=82244834738](https://berlinct.gov.zoom.us/j/4148724481?pwd=SkpBQmd1U0NoNTF5U0dWTXZGVUhiUT09&omn=82244834738)

Call-in Option:	1 929 205 6099 United States Toll
Meeting ID:	414 872 4481
Passcode:	539615

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

C. ROLL CALL

D. PUBLIC COMMENTS

E. <u>APPROVAL OF PRIOR MINUTES</u>	March 30, 2024, Annual Budget Hearing March 30, 2024, Regular Budget Meeting April 9, 2024, Regular Board of Finance Meeting May 2, 2024, Special Budget Meeting
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F. NEW BUSINESS

1. Move to transfer \$109,600.00, as detailed on the accompanying spreadsheet to be attached to the minutes, to cover higher than budgeted expenditures in identified accounts.
2. Move to approve the transfer of \$30,000 from Parks and Recreation Lifeguards/Pool Worker account to the Public Grounds Feasibility Study account, both in the General Fund, for a Feasibility Study to be done on Demore, Dinda, Bittner Jr. Memorial Complex.
3. Move to approve the transfer of \$16,000.00 to the Maintenance & Repair account from the Computer Support account (\$6,100), the Internet Services account (\$2,900), and the Vehicle Fuel account (\$7,000), all in the General Fund Golf Course department.
4. Move to approve the transfer of \$14,000 from the Storm-Related Overtime account to the Veterans Memorial Park account in the Public Grounds Department, both in the General Fund, to fund the replacement of the fountains at Veterans Memorial Park.
5. Move to approve the transfer of \$150,000 from the Water Main Relining account to the Meriden Potable Water Interconnection account, both in the Berlin Water Control Water Department.

6. Move to appropriate a \$62,762.00 Senior Center ARPA grant to the Senior Center ARPA Grant account in the Special Grants & Donations Fund.
7. Move to appropriate a \$780,000 Community Connectivity grant to the Community Connectivity Grant (2023) account in the Economic Development Fund.
8. Finance Director update.

G. ADJOURNMENT

TOWN OF BERLIN
ANNUAL BUDGET HEARING
Tuesday, March 26, 2024
Berlin High School Auditorium
6:00 P.M.

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBMUXMxSi05OrZUdfNpMAw?view_as=subscriber

1. Call to Order

Chairman Bordonaro called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call of Board of Finance

Members Present: Sal Bordonaro, Raul Fernandes, Tim Grady, Denise McNair, George Millerd, Gerald Paradis

Members Absent: None

Staff Present:

Mark Benigni – School Superintendent

Kevin Delaney – Finance Director

Julia Dennis - Board of Education President

Arosha Jayawickrema – Town Manager

4. Introductory Remarks by Board of Finance Chairman

Chairman Bordonaro said contractual wage obligations and meeting police staffing requirements are the primary drivers for the increase. We are reducing overall debt in the proposed budget, but we are also planning to issue \$5.4M in new bonds for various capital projects: Griswold and Hubbard HVAC upgrades, Berlin High School track resurfacing, Town Hall roof replacement, police station renovations and fixing police radio coverage gaps. It's been 4 years since we last added new debt.

The Board of Finance approved a 2.75% Board of Education operations budget increase. Education in Berlin has been more than adequately funded with the annual budget increases despite a decline in student enrollment. Also, the town expects \$1.8M in tax revenue from real growth in the grand list. We have put forth a fiscally responsible budget.

5. Presentation of Town Budget

Town Manager Jayawickrema said the four pillars of putting a budget together are public safety, education, infrastructure and culture and recreations. We started the Willard HVAC project and are also planning to do the other two elementary schools. The police station renovation is underway. Other items we plan to invest in for FY25 include the Berlin High School courtyard, Town Hall roof

and the Sage Park parking lot. Also, we have started to increase the police department staff number from 42 to 46. School vans, fire suppression system, school cameras, bridges at Timberlin, and Economic Development activities and grants are also in the plan.

Initially, it was a 7.2% or \$7.2M increase in the budget. The Board of Education budget was reduced by the Board of Finance for an overall increase of 2.75%. We plan to fund capital items with any surpluses at the end of FY24. Debt service payments are deferred until FY26. We reduced the grant match funds by \$150k. Public Building Commission consultants is being reduced by \$75k. We requested to make one of our Animal Control positions full-time and that was denied.

The state imposed a 2.5% revenue cap. Interest income has increased because the market is doing well and rates are holding at 5% until at least mid-year. VNA nursing revenues were reduced from \$750k to \$350k. We also feel that we can collect more building inspection fees with more buildings coming up.

The overall budget increase is 3.2%. The mill rate would go from 29.56 to 30.21. The proposed Board of Education increase is 2.75%. It would be about \$157 more per year, or \$13 more per month based on the average home price of \$345k.

The Berlin grand list grew by 2.11%. Most of our revenues come from taxes, over 87%. The tax collection rate is 99.3%. The drivers of the increase to the General Government budget are staffing. We are funding the hiring of 4 additional Police Officers and there are contractual increases. We are also increasing the staffing in Social Services and a part-time custodian is needed.

Berlin Water Control Enterprise does not have a lot of changes this year, except for staffing. They are hiring a consultant to access the water system to understand the value of the water and sewer system.

Next steps are the Town Council will meet on April 3 to discuss the proposed budget and then the Budget Referendum will be held on April 30.

6. Presentation of Board of Education Budget

Board of Education President Dennis said we believe in the Superintendents goals for 2024-2025 to provide a quality education, prepare students for multiple options and opportunities, maintain favorable class sizes and course offerings and consistent support of technology and commitment to provide a safe learning environment. There is a lot to celebrate in what we have all achieved and accomplished because of our well-funded school district, but we need people and programs to get to that point.

The proposed Board of Education budget is 6.39% and the Board of Finance has voted for a 2.75% increase. Our Supplies, Expenditures and All Others category has been completely reduced and wiped out. Equipment has never been funded and we use end of year funds, which is a small surplus that we have left. We had surpluses from FY17 to FY18 through FY22 to FY23. We have been able to fund technology by using surplus. We are criticized for having a 1% to 2% surplus, but the town had a 10% surplus last year. We are looking to cut two Administrators, 4 Teachers, 1.5 Paraprofessionals and 0.5 unaffiliated, which is someone not part of the union to meet the 2.75% increase. We would also need to reduce programming. Parents are trusting us to make choices to

provide the best quality education. We are doing what is right and best for the students at Berlin Public Schools. That is why the Board of Education is a separate entity.

Chairman Bordonaro added that in last year's budget presentation, the Board of Education stated they would have to make some cuts if they did not receive the complete 5.84% increase, but no cuts were in fact made and staff was added. I don't have a problem with budget surplus, but the proposed budgets are overstated.

Mr. Millerd said we have capital expenditures and have a lot of infrastructure to support in town and that surplus money goes directly back in. We have to be sensitive to every demographic group including the seniors on fixed incomes. We have to balance that and come up with what is fair and equitable to everybody.

7. Audience of Citizens

Cornel Boudria, 115 Skinner Rd.

Mr. Boudria said I'm advocating for increased funding for the Board of Education. The Board of Education approved an increase of 6.39% and the Board of Finance is not even meeting them halfway. Contractual obligations are 4.2% and they are not being met. The presentation from Board of Education President Dennis shows there will be sizable cuts to programs and staff. We need to add more money back into the school budget. Meet them halfway and get as close to 4.2% as you can get to not have to cut staff and programs.

Dave Francalangia, 232 Butternut Lane

Mr. Francalangia said he is an educator and an Athletic Director at the High School. I understand that taxes are going to increase and that my parents and relatives are on a fixed income as well, but there has to be something else. People come to Berlin for the school system. I see the kids smiles when working with their teachers. I'm asking the Board of Finance to have another conversation to see what can be done.

Joan Veley, Registrar of Voters.

Ms. Veley said I want to talk about all of the work that we have been putting in and the demands that early voting has brought us. Christy Miano and I do not align ourselves with the idea of a stipend. Two years ago, the Registrars were promised a stipend for the work that was done on redistricting. We were frugal and had some of our budget leftover, but taking out a stipend was never realized. The hours we are putting in now align more with full time hours than part time hours. We are looking for a salary increase. It was said at a previous meeting that the Registrars receive a bump in pay of \$1k every January, but the bump in pay is actually every two years, or \$500 per year. We are not the highest paid registrars in comparison to other towns and other registers are having the same struggles with the demands of early voting. It is all about equity pay for the job.

Donna Bovee, 85 Steepleview Dr.

Ms. Bovee said one of my biggest concerns is how we budget capital. We have a very high debt and I give the Board of Finance and Town Council credit for bringing that debt down, but other towns seem to include some maintenance capital in their taxable budget. We have to get to a point that you

are including maintenance capital. You have to spend some money because if we continue to defer, it only gets bigger. The list has \$6M that was requested from the town departments this year. You are going to fund \$1.3M. I was hopeful that we could start including some capital in our budget. It has been taken out and I ask you to reconsider that. If you continue doing this every year and only count on your surplus, which is never big enough to do what we need to do for capital, we are never going to do another investment in this town. There is a study for a community and senior center being done, but without a vision to incorporate some maintenance, you have to start doing this at some point. Please start doing it with this year.

Sarah Lopopsky, 170 Tree Hill Rd.

Ms. Lopopsky said last year and this year, I've sensed a lot of frustration both passively and aggressively. I want to encourage the Board of Education and the Board of Finance to come to some resolution and peace in this whole experience so that we can work together much more proactively and professionally.

We expect as citizens, parents and community members for the Board of Education to respect and honor the budget that is set regardless of the percentage or what they think the percentage should be and in doing so they are being fiscally responsible. When they stick with the budget that has been set forth, they are getting penalized for being creative, or finding thoughtful ways to honor their budget. I hope that comes to an end and we can move past that and appreciate that they are respecting the budget, rather than using it as a tactic and sandbagging their budget in the coming year.

I believe that the increase that was set forth should be consistent between the Board of Education and the government from a percentage perspective, no questions asked. If you are increasing the General Government fund by \$3.7M, then you should increase the Board of Education by \$3.7M. I truly understand how difficult this process is, however we need to find a balance between the spreadsheet exercise and the realities of what is going on in our community both within education, infrastructure and other areas. We need to step back from the spreadsheet a little bit and look at the realities of what is going on in our community.

Mr. Fernandes asked if the 3.05% is the total to keep the Board of Education jobs? What is the difference between 2.75% and 3.1% financially? If we gave you 3.1%, would you be able to keep all of the jobs that the Board of Education is saying they are going to cut? Board of Education President Dennis said no, because our contractual obligations alone are at 4.2%. Superintendent Benigni said 3.05 would not cover the new staff. The 3.05 represents what the new one would be minus the staff that we are cutting now, 2 Administrators, 4 teaching staff, 1.5 paraprofessionals and 0.50 unaffiliated. That is without having these positions. Mr. Fernandes said if you received 3.1%, what would you be able to save or do with that percentage? Superintendent Benigni said it would be around \$230k and it would not cover all of the positions. Mr. Fernandes said we should rethink the amount after the meeting.

8. Adjournment

Mr. Grady moved to adjourn at 6:51 p.m.

Seconded by Mr. Millerd.

Those voting in favor: Mr. Bordonaro, Mr. Fernandes, Mr. Grady, Ms. McNair, Mr. Millerd, Mr. Paradis

Vote being 6-0

Submitted by,
Alina Brown

TOWN OF BERLIN
REGULAR BOARD OF FINANCE BUDGET MEETING
Tuesday, March 26, 2024
Berlin High School Auditorium
Immediately following the Annual Budget Hearing

<https://berlinct-gov.zoom.us/j/4148724481?pwd=SkpBQmdlU0NoNTF5U0dWTXZGVUhIUT09&omn=83137362984>

Call-in Option:	1 929 205 6099
Meeting ID:	414 872 4481
Passcode:	539615

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bordonaro called the meeting to order at 6:55 p.m.

ATTENDANCE:

Members Present: Sal Bordonaro, Raul Fernandes, Tim Grady, Denise McNair, George Millerd, Gerald Paradis

Members Absent: None

Staff Present:

Kevin Delaney – Finance Director

B. DISCUSSION OF DEPARTMENT BUDGETS:

1. Discuss and possible modifications to fiscal year 2025 proposed Board of Education, General Government and Berlin Water Control budgets.

Ms. McNair made a motion to increase the Board of Education budget to 3.2%.

Seconded by Mr. Fernandes

Those voting in favor: Mr. Fernandes, Ms. McNair, Mr. Paradis

Those not voting in favor: Mr. Bordonaro, Mr. Grady, Mr. Millerd

Vote being 3-3 (Motion Fails)

Mr. Grady said every year we show numbers that are contractual obligations and told that cuts would need to be made and programs will suffer, but not once has that happened in the last five years that I've been here. The 2.75 proposed increase is actually a bit on the higher side. We have a budget referendum coming and will let voters decide. I'm comfortable with 2.75.

Chairman Bordonaro said there is no way to access the Board of Education budget other than historical performance after the year ends. Their budget requests are overstated because they do not make any cuts.

Ms. McNair said they have no choice but to make do with what they have. Mr. Grady said they always have a surplus. Mr. Paradis said maybe we should get back to having a representative from the Board of Finance attend the Board of Education meetings to have a little bit more information back and answer questions.

2. Move to send the Board of Education budget of \$ _____ to the Town Council.

Mr. Grady made a motion to approve the Board of Education budget at 2.75% and move it to the Town Council.

Seconded by Mr. Millerd.

Those voting in favor: Mr. Bordonaro, Mr. Grady, Mr. Millerd

Those not voting in favor: Mr. Fernandes, Ms. McNair,

Mr. Paradis abstained.

Vote being 3-2-1 (Motion Approved)

3. Move to send the General Government budget of \$50,570,442 to the Town Council.

Mr. Paradis moved to send the General Government budget of \$50,570,442 to the Town Council.

Seconded by Mr. Fernandes.

Those voting in favor: Mr. Bordonaro, Mr. Fernandes, Mr. Grady, Mr. Millerd, Mr. Paradis

Those not voting in favor: Ms. McNair,

Vote being 5-1. (Motion Approved)

4. Move to send the Berlin Water Control budget of \$ _____ to the Town Council.

Mr. Paradis moved to send the Berlin Water Control budget of \$8,287,469 to the Town Council.

Seconded by Mr. Grady.

6-0 Motion Approved.

Those voting in favor: Mr. Bordonaro, Mr. Fernandes, Mr. Grady, Ms. McNair, Mr. Millerd, Mr. Paradis

C. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Paradis moved to adjourn at 7:09 p.m.

Seconded by Mr. Grady.

Vote being 6-0.

Those voting in favor: Mr. Bordonaro, Mr. Fernandes, Mr. Grady, Ms. McNair, Mr. Millerd, Mr. Paradis

Submitted by,
Alina Brown

TOWN OF BERLIN
REGULAR BOARD OF FINANCE MEETING
APRIL 9, 2024
Remote Meeting
7:00 P.M.

<https://berlingov.zoom.us/j/4148724481?pwd=SkpBQmd1U0NoNTF5U0dWTXZGVUhlUT09&omn=82498248846>

Call-in Option: 1 929 205 6099
Meeting ID: 414 872 4481
Passcode: 539615

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bordonaro called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

C. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Sal Bordonaro, Tim Grady, Denise McNair, George Millerd, Gerald Paradis
(joined at 7:09 p.m.)

Members Absent: Raul Fernandes

Staff Present:

Kevin Delaney – Finance Director

D. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

E. APPROVAL OF PRIOR MINUTES

March 4, 2024, Regular Budget Meeting
March 6, 2024, Regular Budget Meeting
March 11, 2024, Regular Budget Meeting
March 12, 2024, Regular Board of Finance Meeting
March 20, 2024, Regular Budget Meeting

Mr. Grady moved to approve the March 4, 2024 Regular Budget Meeting, March 6, 2024, Regular Budget Meeting, March 11, 2024, Regular Budget Meeting, March 12, 2024, Regular Board of Finance Meeting and the March 20, 2024, Regular Budget Meeting minutes.

Seconded by Mr. Millerd.

Those voting in favor: Chairman Bordonaro, Mr. Grady, Ms. McNair, Mr. Millerd

Vote being 4-0. (MOTION CARRIED)

Mr. Paradis asked to amend page 5 of the March 12, 2024 Regular Board of Finance Meeting Minutes. It should state that Mr. Millerd moved to remove the full-time Animal Control Officer position and leave the part-time position.

Also, Mr. Paradis amended page 4 of the March 20, 2024 Regular Budget Meeting Minutes. It should state that Mr. Paradis voted in favor of the 3% Board of Education budget increase and Mr. Fernandes votes not in favor of sending the \$52,252,092 Board of Education budget to the Annual Budget Hearing.

F. NEW BUSINESS

1. Move to transfer \$577,500.00, as detailed on the accompanying spreadsheet to be attached to the minutes, to cover higher than budgeted expenditures in identified accounts.

Mr. Grady moved to transfer \$577,500.00, as detailed on the accompanying spreadsheet to be attached to the minutes, to cover higher than budgeted expenditures in identified accounts.

Seconded by Mr. Millerd.

Those voting in favor: Chairman Bordonaro, Mr. Grady, Ms. McNair, Mr. Millerd

Vote being 4-0. (MOTION CARRIED)

Ms. McNair asked if there would be more of these? Finance Director Delaney said yes, I try to do them once a month and this was the big one to take care of larger personnel matters. Chairman Bordonaro said there needs to be a well-developed plan for Police overtime next year. Mr. Grady said that he agrees, we definitely need a better plan going forward.

2. Move to approve the resolution making certain findings with respect to completed capital projects and repealing remaining authorized but unissued debt and expenditure authority for such projects totaling \$1,588,508.

Mr. Grady moved to approve the resolution making certain findings with respect to completed capital projects and repealing remaining authorized but unissued debt and expenditure authority for such projects totaling \$1,588,508.

Seconded by Mr. Millerd.

Those voting in favor: Chairman Bordonaro, Mr. Grady, Ms. McNair, Mr. Millerd

Vote being 4-0. (MOTION CARRIED)

3. Discuss post-referendum meeting schedule – 5/1 or 5/2?

Finance Director Delaney said the referendum is on April 30. If the budget passes, then the Board of Finance has to meet within two days to set the mill rate. If it fails, the Board of Finance has to meet within 5 days to send a budget back to the Town Council. The Board of Finance agreed to have a remote meeting on 5/2 at 6 p.m.

4. Finance Director update.

Finance Director Delaney said revenue is a little bit below budget vs. last year. Last fiscal year's interest budget was \$55k and we came in at \$1.5M. We are closer to \$2M now in the current fiscal year. The FY24 budget was bumped up about \$1.5M which means the variance to budget would be narrower. We had another decent month for the VNA. It was over \$50k of revenue.

Building is coming in very strong with new development on the Berlin Turnpike. I added the request to capital that was removed in the FY25 budget to the risks & opportunities and started to show where the projected general fund unassigned balance lands as compared to the current year budget and the proposed budget.

G. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Millerd moved to adjourn at 7:12 p.m.

Seconded by Ms. McNair

Those voting in favor: Chairman Bordonaro, Mr. Grady, Ms. McNair, Mr. Millerd, Mr. Paradis

Vote being 5-0

Submitted by,
Alina Brown

TOWN OF BERLIN
SPECIAL BOARD OF FINANCE BUDGET MEETING
MAY 2, 2024
REMOTE MEETING
6:00 P.M.

<https://berlinc-t-gov.zoom.us/j/4148724481?pwd=SkpBQmd1U0NoNTF5U0dWTXZGVUhIUT09&omn=89559727254>

Call-in Option: 1 929 205 6099
Meeting ID: 414 872 4481
Passcode: 539615

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bordonaro called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

C. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Sal Bordonaro, Raul Fernandes, Tim Grady, Denise McNair, George Millerd, Gerald Paradis

Members Absent: None

D. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

E. NEW BUSINESS

1. Discuss Fiscal Year 2025 Proposed Budget (*If one or both budgets fail on April 30th*):

Mr. Millerd made a motion to increase the Board of Education budget from 2.75% to 3%, a \$128,600 increase.

Seconded by Mr. Paradis.

Those voting in favor: Chairman Bordonaro, Mr. Grady, Ms. McNair, Mr. Millerd, Mr. Paradis

Those not voting in favor: Mr. Fernandes

Vote being: 5-1. (MOTION CARRIED)

Mr. Fernandes said it is still too low. We should be as close as possible to 4.2%. Chairman Bordonaro said history shows that whatever budget we have given the Board of Education they more than met contractual requirements. Mr. Grady said from the results it is obvious that nobody wants to raise their taxes. Finance Director Delaney said the new Board of Education budget would be \$52,380,692.

- a. Move to send the Board of Education budget of \$ 52,380,693 to the Town Council.

Mr. Paradis moved to send the Board of Education budget of \$52,380,693 to the Town Council.

Seconded by Mr. Grady

Those voting in favor: Chairman Bordonaro, Mr. Grady, Ms. McNair, Mr. Millerd

Those not voting in favor: Mr. Fernandes

Vote being 5-1. (MOTION CARRIED)

- b. Move to send the General Government budget of \$50,320,442 to the Town Council.

Chairman Bordonaro said there should be a reduction. I had suggested a \$50k reduction in contractual services for Department 61 and a \$50k reduction in operating materials in Department 61, both are school expenses. Also, a \$50k reduction for Public Works 2036 storm related overtime and a \$50k reduction in Police Department overtime for a total of \$200k. Mr. Grady said I think \$200k is a reasonable cut. We are probably going to need to cut at least what the Board of Education increase on the town side is and probably a little bit more.

Ms. McNair said she disagrees with the cuts from Department 61 We just went from 2.75 up to 3 and you suggest cutting from Department 61, which is some of the schools support. I might be able to go with the overtime in both departments, but if we have a bad winter, then we would be taking out of fund balance. The Town Council should weigh in on this.

Mr. Paradis said he agrees, I wouldn't do any further cuts at this point. With the many changes in the Police Department, it is good to see they are getting closer to full staffing levels, but there are still a lot of unknowns. I don't want to put us in a position where we might have to cover more things from fund balance. We will have big hits on fund balance because we did not budget anything for capital this year. The Town Council should weigh in on where their priorities are in terms of these things. I don't think I'd change anything on the town side.

Mr. Fernandes said that he agrees, we already hit the schools and I don't want to hit public safety. Let's see what the Town Council has to say about this. Mr. Millerd said it makes sense to let the Town Council weigh in. They have much more vested on the town side. Chairman Bordonaro said I would still challenge the town on some level of reduction. People want to see lower taxes. We can possibly get away with \$150k-\$200k. We kind of know where we are going to end up this year. It was our expectation to take out of fund balance. I'm okay with not making any reductions.

Mr. Grady said we raised the school budget based on the vote. I want to take out at least what the Board of Education was increased by, which is \$100k. What happens to Department 61 does not affect anything with the schools other than the buildings themselves and the town handles the buildings. Ms. McNair said it's a way of funding the schools without putting it into the Board of Education budget. Chairman Bordonaro said he is challenging the budget to do better. I'm

looking at areas and asking why we are spending so much here. One compromise is to reduce \$125k to offset the school increase and the town can take it out of anywhere they want.

Mr. Paradis said when you only get 9% of the town to vote, you will get people that are passionate one way or another only to come out and vote. Chairman Bordonaro said he is okay with passing it on to the Town Council.

Mr. Millerd motioned to send the same budget to the Town Council for consideration.

Seconded by Mr. Paradis.

Those voting in favor: Chairman Bordonaro, Ms. McNair, Mr. Millerd, Mr. Paradis, Mr. Fernandes,

Those not voting in favor: Mr. Grady

Vote being 5-1. (MOTION CARRIED)

- c. Mr. Paradis moved to send the General Government budget of \$8,287,469 to the Town Council.

Seconded by Mr. Grady

Those voting in favor: Chairman Bordonaro, Mr. Fernandes, Mr. Grady, Ms. McNair, Mr. Millerd, Mr. Paradis

Vote being 6-0. (MOTION CARRIED)

2. Move to set the Fiscal Year 2025 mill rate for the Town of Berlin at _____ and maintain this mill rate for all properties not identified in any mill rate cap established by the State of Connecticut. *(If both budgets pass on April 30th)*

F. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Paradis moved to adjourn at 6:20 p.m.

Seconded by Mr. Grady.

Those voting in favor: Chairman Bordonaro, Mr. Fernandes, Mr. Grady, Ms. McNair, Mr. Millerd, Mr. Paradis

Vote being 6-0. (MOTION CARRIED)

Submitted by,
Alina Brown

Agenda Item No. F-1
Request for Board of Finance Action

TO: The Board of Finance

FROM: Arosha Jayawickrema, Town Manager

DATE: March 11, 2024

SUBJECT: Budget Transfers

Summary of Agenda Item:

Over the course of the fiscal year some accounts exceed budget for different reasons. All higher than budgeted costs are offset in other parts of the budget or contingency. No new money is being appropriated with this request. These items are summarized on the Budget Adjustments spreadsheet submitted with this action item.

Action Needed:

Move to transfer \$109,600.00, as detailed on the accompanying spreadsheet to be attached to the minutes, to cover higher than budgeted expenditures in identified accounts.

Attachments:

Budget Adjustments spreadsheet

Prepared By:

Kevin Delaney, Finance Director

**Budget Adjustments
April 23, 2024**

F-1

<u>Department</u>	<u>GL Account #</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
Highway	001.20.2037.0.53604.00000		\$25,000.00	Higher than budgeted outside snowplowing volume caused the account to go overbudget. Funds are available in Storm Overtime because of the relatively mild winter.
	001.20.2036.0.51445.00000	\$25,000.00		
VNA	001.30.3053.0.51145.00000		\$20,000.00	Nursing hours worked have exceeded budgeted hours throughout the fiscal year. Lower than budgeted volume of physical therapy allows for the excess funds to be transferred.
	001.30.3053.0.51188.00000	\$20,000.00		
VNA	001.30.3053.0.51130.00000		\$10,500.00	Payout for unused leave time for two employees who retired during the fiscal year caused the Clerical Personnel account to be overbudget. Funds are available in the Mid-Manager budget because of a current vacancy.
	001.30.3053.0.51125.00000	\$10,500.00		
VNA	001.30.3053.0.53920.00000		\$13,000.00	While the interim Administrator secures the necessary credentials, the Department of Public Health requires the VNA to appoint a 10-hour/week acting Administrator. Funds are available in the Mid-Manager account due to the current vacancy.
	001.30.3053.0.51125.00000	\$13,000.00		
Library	001.25.2544.0.51100.00000		\$10,000.00	A combination of the payout of unused leave time for the departing Library Director and a short overlapping period with the new Director resulted in the Department Head account going overbudget. There are funds available in the Mid-Manager account because a former Mid-Manager became the new Director.
	001.25.2544.0.51125.00000	\$10,000.00		
Schools	001.35.3561.0.51820.00000		\$6,100.00	
	001.35.3561.0.52235.00000	\$3,100.00		Due to changes in employee health insurance elections and a transfer from the VNA to Schools as a result of the reorganization, in lieu of health insurance is higher than budgeted.
	001.35.3561.0.51400.00000	\$3,000.00		
GENERAL FUND TOTAL		<u>\$84,600.00</u>	<u>\$84,600.00</u>	

844.55.5582.0.56504.00000
844.55.5588.0.58062.00000

Payment for Seweage (Other Entities)
Update Sewer Stations

\$25,000.00
\$25,000.00

Insufficient funds to reimburse KFDF for sewage for BW customers.

WATER CONTROL TOTAL

\$25,000.00 \$25,000.00

CAPITAL PROJECTS TOTAL

\$0.00 \$0.00

GRAND TOTAL

\$109,600.00 \$109,600.00

Agenda Item No. F-2
Request for Board of Finance Action

TO: The Board of Finance

FROM: Aroscha Jayawickrema, Town Manager

DATE: March 28, 2024

SUBJECT: Approve the transfer of \$30,000 to fund a feasibility study of Demore, Dinda, Bittner Jr. Memorial Complex and waive bidding requirements

SUMMARY:

At the December 12, 2023 Town Council meeting the future of the Demore, Dinda, Bittner Jr. Memorial Pool and other possibilities for that physical area were discussed. A vote was passed to close Demore, Dinda, Bittner Jr. Memorial Pool for the 2024 summer season.

The Parks and Grounds Department would now like to conduct a Feasibility Study of the Demore, Dinda, Bittner Jr. Memorial Complex redevelopment options that would include updating and making the bathhouse ADA compliant, renovating the pool area, including the pool deck, or the option of filling in the pool for permanent closure, installing a splash pad and small playscape and at the same time renovating the current tennis courts to pickleball courts. The feasibility study will provide the cost estimates for these projects and identify wetlands permitting issues. This will then give an overall look at the possibilities for that area so the Town can decide the best use for creating an area in East Berlin that could be enjoyed by all ages for recreation.

The funds for this Feasibility Study would be coming from the cost savings from not opening Demore, Dinda, Bittner Jr. Memorial Pool in the summer of 2023 in the Parks and Recreation Department from Fiscal Year 2023/2024.

The Parks and Grounds Department would like to utilize KBA Architects for the feasibility study seeing we have worked with them on numerous projects over the last few years and they are familiar with ventures of this magnitude. Prompt completion of this study would also provide the Economic Development Department with information to submit an application for a STEAP Grant of up to \$500,000 to contribute toward the redevelopment of the property.

FUNDING:

001.25.2542.0.51520.00000 – Parks and Recreation Budget \$30,000

ACTION NEEDED:

Move to approve the transfer of \$30,000 from Parks and Recreation Life Guards/Pool Worker account to the Public Grounds Feasibility Study account, both in the General Fund, for a Feasibility Study to be done on Demore, Dinda, Bittner Jr. Memorial Complex.

ATTACHMENTS:

None

PREPARED BY:

Jennifer Ochoa, Director of Community, Recreation & Parks Services
Steven T. Wood, Superintendent of Parks and Grounds Department

Agenda Item No. F-3
Request for Board of Finance Action

TO: The Board of Finance

FROM: Aroscha Jayawickrema, Town Manager

DATE: April 10, 2024

SUBJECT: Approve the Budget Funds Transfer – Timberlin Golf Course

Summary of Agenda Item:

The Director of Golf, Sol Guerrero, is requesting a Budget Transfer of \$16,000.00 to the Maintenance & Repair Acct#001.25.2543.0.53245.00000, \$6,100.00 from Acct#001.25.2543.0.53813.00000-Computer Support, \$2,900.00 from Acct#001.25.2543.0.53950.00000-Internet Services, \$7,000.00 from Acct#001.25.2543.0.53106.00000-Vehicle Fuel, due to a shortage, caused by the department needing to send out their Toro Equipment for maintenance & repair services to Turf Products (Sole Source Provider). This will also cover additional maintenance expenditures for the course for the remainder of the FY2023-24.

Funding:

Budget Transfer from following General Fund Accounts;

- Acct#001.25.2543.0.53813.00000 – Computer Support - \$6,100.00
- Acct#001.25.2543.0.53950.00000 – Internet Services - \$2,900.00
- Acct#001.25.2543.0.53106.00000 – Vehicle Fuel - \$7,000.00

Action Needed:

Move to approve the Budget Transfer of \$16,000.00, to the Maintenance & Repair account, \$6,100.00 from Computer Support account, \$2,900.00 from Internet Services account, \$7,000.00 from Vehicle Fuel account, all in the General Fund Golf Course Department.

Attachments:

None

Prepared By:

Sol Guerrero, PGA – Director of Golf

Agenda Item No. F-4
Request for Board of Finance Action

TO: The Board of Finance

FROM: Aroscha Jayawickrema, Town Manager

DATE: April 23, 2024

SUBJECT: Two new fountains for Veterans Park and waive bidding requirements

Summary of Agenda Item:

The Parks and Grounds Department has been working with the Veterans Commission for years trying to come up with a way to replace the underperforming problematic fountains at Veterans Park. The current fountains have given us nothing but problems for the last 15 years either by motor failure, defective parts, electrical panels or components catching on fire, or replacement parts being discontinued. The lighting package that was purchased with the units is no longer offered with no possible way of retrofitting them with new ones. The Grounds Department with the approval of the Veterans Commission would like to purchase two new complete fountain sets from Water & Wetland that come with a five-year warranty. The fountains would be 5hp Kasco J-Series with RGBW lighting and a much-needed improvement for Veterans Park.

The funds for the project would be coming from two accounts Veterans Memorial Park and the Storm-Related Overtime Account.

The Parks and Grounds Department would like to hire Water and Wetland for the amazing response and success we have had with them over the last several years regarding the invasive species at several properties throughout the Town Of Berlin. Water & Wetland truly understands the Veterans Memorial Park Pond, as they manage the weeds and algae; therefore, they understand the benefits of the fountains and have spec'd the appropriate systems/replacement fountains for both the health of the pond, and the necessary aesthetic benefits.

Funding:

- 524.10.1017.0.54000.01403 Veterans Memorial Park \$26,571.21
- 001.25.2545.0.54000.01403 Veterans Memorial Park \$14,000.00

Action Needed:

Move to approve the transfer of \$14,000 from the Storm-Related Overtime account to the Veterans Memorial Park account in the Public Grounds Department, both in the General Fund, to fund the replacement of the fountains at Veterans Memorial Park.

Attachments:

None

Prepared By:

Steven T. Wood, Superintendent of Parks and Grounds Department

Agenda Item No. F-5
Request for Board of Finance Action

TO: The Board of Finance

FROM: Arosha Jayawickrema, Town Manager

DATE: April 25, 2024

SUBJECT: Request to Waive the Bidding Process for Haley Ward for Design and Oversight Services for a New Water Main Connection to the Meriden Water Department

SUMMARY:

Historically it has been identified in several Consultant Reports that Berlin Water Control should have a water connection with the Meriden Water Department along the Berlin Turnpike. This connection has become more important because of corrosion in our Lamentation Tank. An additional water source is necessary to allow this tank to be taken out of service during its repair. Two individual companies (CorrTech and Underwater Solutions) have confirmed corrosion in the Lamentation Tank.

Haley Ward (formerly Lenard Engineering) bid for the main replacement on the Berlin Turnpike in 2022 and 2023. Berlin Water Control went through a Quality-Based Selection (QBS) process for this project. Haley Ward was selected out of three other companies that bid the project. They have proven themselves in the design and oversight of the recent main installation on the Berlin Turnpike and are well-versed in the Department of Public Health's Drinking Water States Fund (DWSRF) program application process. Staff is therefore recommending the Haley Ward be awarded this project to connect to the Meriden Water Department.

FUNDING:

843.50.5088.0.58109.00000 Meriden Potable Water Interconnection Account

ACTION NEEDED:

Move to approve the transfer of \$150,000 from the Water Main Relining account to the Meriden Potable Water Interconnection account, both in the Berlin Water Control Water Department.

ATTACHMENTS:

None

PREPARED BY:

Ray Jarema, P.E., Water Control Commission

Agenda Item No. F-6
Request for Board of Finance Action

TO: The Board of Finance

FROM: Arosha Jayawickrema, Town Manager

DATE: March 12, 2024

SUBJECT: American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds, allocation of such funds to CT Senior Centers through the CT Department of Aging and Disability Service Budget.

Summary of Agenda Item:

The Senior Center will receive funds in the amount of \$62,762 from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds which were allocated within the CT Department of Aging and Disability Service's (ADS) budget. To obtain this funding, the Senior Center must develop a plan and submit it, along with an application to the Connecticut Department of Aging and Disability Services' Unit on Aging. Funds are to be used to support upgrades and enhancements at the Senior Center.

If the Senior Center's plan is approved, the funds will be appropriated to the Senior Center ARPA Grant account (100.30.3055.0.54000.00375) in the Special Grants & Donations Fund.

Funding:

Requesting approval for the allocation amount of \$62,762.00 from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), through the CT Department of Aging and Disability Service's (ADS) budget to the Senior Center special account.

Action Needed:

Move to appropriate a \$62,762.00 Senior Center ARPA grant to the Senior Center ARPA Grant account in the Special Grants & Donations Fund.

Attachments:

None

Prepared By:

Christine S. Doyle, Berlin Senior Center Director

Agenda Item No. F-7
Request for Board of Finance Action

TO: The Board of Finance

FROM: Arosha Jayawickrema, Town Manager

DATE: March 27, 2024

SUBJECT: Appropriation of Community Connectivity Grant for Sidewalks Project

Summary of Agenda Item:

The Town Council authorized the Town Manager to apply for a Connecticut Department of Transportation for a Connecticut Connectivity Grant Program (CCGP) and the Town has been offered a grant of \$780,000 for capital costs for the following sidewalk projects:

1. Four Rod Road from Winding Meadow Drive to Norton Road
2. Percival Avenue from Carbo Lane to Percival Field
3. Robbins Road from Town Drive to Timberwood Road
4. Kensington Road from Norton Road to Steeple View Drive
5. Norton Road, east and west of Cole Lane.

The Town Council also previously authorized \$85,000 from account # 140.20.2037.0.54000.00509 – Grant Road Improvement for bidding assistance and construction administration services for CCPG sidewalks. The next step is to appropriate the \$780,000 Community Connectivity Grant to account 504.10.1017.0.53470.23502, Community Connectivity Grant (2023).

Funding:

The purpose of this agenda item is to appropriate funds for the CCPG sidewalk grant project.

Actions Needed:

Move to appropriate a \$780,000 Community Connectivity grant to the Community Connectivity Grant (2023) account.

Attachments:

None

Prepared By:

Jim Mahoney, Economic Development Coordinator
Mike Ahern, Public Works Director
Chris Edge, Economic Development Director

GENERAL FUND

(budgeted amount excludes assigned fund balance)

Receipts

	<u>FY 2024</u>	<u>FY 2023</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Actual Receipts	\$98,512,531	\$97,466,516	
Budgeted Receipts	\$98,782,146	\$96,178,498	
% to Budget	99.7%	101.3%	FY23 experienced FYTS Mar favorable interest earnings \$1.5MM and FY24 experienced FYTD Mar favorable interest earnings of \$0.5MM - FY24 budgeted interest was \$1.55MM vs. FY23 \$55k.
Current Year Tax Receipts	\$83,952,733	\$82,814,987	
Current Tax Budget	\$84,207,963	\$83,068,727	
Current Tax Levy (99.3%/99.3% collection rates)	\$84,801,574	\$83,654,307	
% to Current Budget	99.7%	99.7%	
% to Current Levy	99.0%	99.0%	
Adopted budget target %	99.3%	99.3%	

Expenditures (excludes capital expenditures)

Actual Expenditures	\$79,738,183	\$75,187,720	
Budgeted Expenditures	\$100,729,813	\$98,136,931	
% to Budget	79.2%	76.6%	
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Encumbered</u>	<u>Var to Budget</u>
Storm-related Overtime (51445)	\$78,396	\$39,000	\$26,039
Electricity (53102)	\$910,587	\$367,171	\$143,435
Refuse Disposal (53823)	\$1,387,972	\$533,095	\$1,416,245
Legal (53828)	\$230,430	\$124,570	\$1,922,120
Tax Refunds (53924)	\$93,466	\$0	\$1,052
			\$0
			\$215,000
			\$121,534

Target Floor Fd Bal. Actual Fund Bal.

INSURANCE FUNDS

Health Insurance Fund

	\$2,327,226	\$2,636,974	The Health Insurance Fund balance is 24.7% of full year projected expenses - target floor reserve is 25%.
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General Insurance Fund

	\$1,000,000	\$2,312,453	The fund is used to pay Liability & Worker's Compensation insurance premiums for both the Town and BOE, on-going heart & hypertension claims from police officers, widow/widower heart & hypertension claims, "fronting" reimbursable environmental remediation costs, small equipment claims where Town elects to self-insure and deductibles. Town policy is a \$1 million floor and ceiling at 5% of General Fund budget (or \$4,980,635 for FY24). Displayed fund balance is net of H&H reserve and encumbrances for self-insured claims.
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TOTAL INSURANCE FUNDS

	\$3,327,226	\$4,949,427	
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Town of Berlin
Financial Status Report
Board of Finance Meeting of May 14, 2024

F-8

PENSION FUND

	<u>Closed Plan</u>	<u>Police Plan</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Total Liability (as of 7/1/2023)	\$4,726,976	\$7,289,488	The Closed Town of Berlin Retirement Income (Defined Benefit) Plan was amended for the last time effective July 1, 2000. As a result of this final amendment no new Town employees were eligible to participate in the plan.
Cash Balances:			
Prudential	\$2,058,817	\$0	
ICMA Plus	\$2,147,041	\$0	
Webster	\$0	\$6,118,651	Closed DB Pension Plan Census
	\$4,205,857	\$6,118,651	3 active participants all eligible to retire; 12 annuitants receiving monthly checks
			Annual annuity payments & total monthly fees: \$172,000
Funding % - Total	89.0%	83.9%	
Funding % - DB	43.6%	0.0%	
Unfunded Liability	(\$521,119)	(\$1,170,837)	

ACTIVE CAPITAL PROJECTS

	<u>% Complete*</u>	<u>Project Balance**</u>	<u>PBC Managed</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Notes</u>
4-Bridge Rehabilitation	91%	\$0		Public Works	Current Phase: close out with the State of CT
Highway Wash Bay	94%	\$1,563		Facilities	Current Phase: construction
55 Steele Boulevard	19%	\$0		Economic Dev.	Building 3 of 3 from Newport's original Farmington Ave plans
Sidewalk Upgrades	100%	\$0		Public Works	Current Phase: final reporting to State of CT
3-Road Project (CRCOG Pre-Funded Construction)	78%	\$0		Public Works	Current Phase: finalize
Kensington Road Bridge - Design Phase	41%	\$0		Public Works	Current Phase: design (local funded); once project is approved by DOT, CRCOG grant will pre-funded for bid amount + contingency & incidentals
Percival Soccer Field	91%	\$77,350		Public Grounds	Current Phase: close out
Biscoglio Field Turf (DEEP Grant)	94%	\$0		Public Grounds	Current Phase: close out
Willard HVAC Upgrades (ARPA Funds)	57%	\$296,795	PBC	Facilities	Current Phase: construction; Balance is ARPA - need to reallocate by 12/31/2024
Willard HVAC Upgrades (Local Funds)	92%	\$0	PBC	Facilities	Current Phase: construction
Police Station Renovation	29%	\$0	PBC	Facilities	Current Phase: construction

* % complete represents invoices received versus total expected project cost - this metric will lag actual construction completion

** Capital projects fund balance includes encumbrances.

Risks

Description	Projected - Low	Projected - High	Probability
RECEIPTS			
VNA	(\$150,000)	(\$200,000)	Medium/High
Town Clerk Fees	(\$50,000)	(\$100,000)	Medium/High

EXPENDITURES

TOTAL

Total excluding Pension payouts

(\$200,000)
(\$200,000)

(\$300,000)
(\$300,000)

Opportunities

Description	Projected - Low	Projected - High	Probability
RECEIPTS			
Interest	\$900,000	\$950,000	High
Building Inspection	\$200,000	\$250,000	High

EXPENDITURES

Vacant positions (wages & benefits)

\$1,500,000

High

TOTAL

\$2,600,000
\$2,950,000

NET RISKS/OPPORTUNITIES

\$2,400,000

\$2,650,000

6/30/2023 General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance (audited)

\$16,436,763

\$16,436,763

Non-Budgeted Appropriation of FY24 General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance:

Large dump truck body replacement (in lieu of vehicle replacements)

Vans (3 school vans)

Camera Upgrades (districtwide)

Timberlin on-course bridges

Pickup Truck (Highway)

Police Modems (and related hardware) (IT/Police)

Police Vehicles

Replace equipment at Little People's Playground

Track Snow Machine (Grounds)

Police Station

Resurface Basketball/Tennis Courts (assume yr 7) (BHS)

Non-Budgeted Appropriation for Local Match of State Grants

FY25 Budgeted Appropriation of General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance:

ADEC of closed defined benefit pension plan

(\$652,688)

(\$652,688)

Requested capital removed from FY25 Town Manager's budget proposal
Request to the Town Council (5/7) for sidewalk grant match (\$3.2M grant)

(\$1,251,320)
(\$800,000)

(\$1,251,320)
(\$800,000)

Projected 6/30/2024 General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance

\$13,707,755

Projected 6/30/2024 GF Unassigned FB as a % of amended FY24 GF Budget

13.6%

13.9%

Projected 6/30/2024 GF Unassigned FB as a % of proposed FY25 GF Budget

13.3%

13.6%

Financial Status Report

Board of Finance Meeting of May 14, 2024

	<u>Jul</u>	<u>Aug</u>	<u>Sep</u>	<u>Oct</u>	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Dec</u>	<u>Jan</u>	<u>Feb</u>	<u>Mar</u>	<u>Apr</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Jun</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>YTD</u>
FY2019	55,212	74,521	82,025	142,845	81,705	58,331	97,213	71,442	119,187	72,239	90,498	100,562	1,045,780	854,720
FY2020	47,155	82,851	58,019	85,737	58,047	51,550	62,354	63,243	62,270	99,186	51,272	76,057	797,741	670,412
FY2021	48,132	56,105	61,099	53,775	54,553	64,397	66,910	57,967	78,281	82,029	27,123	107,013	757,385	623,249
FY2022	51,814	67,134	56,464	49,192	39,038	32,530	43,379	48,339	70,744	45,424	48,569	61,528	614,156	504,059
FY2023	43,842	57,446	67,243	57,167	52,526	61,072	45,590	26,033	53,655	60,131	55,054	54,550	634,309	524,705
FY2024	37,692	53,924	36,570	39,543	51,115	40,460	28,414	63,876	55,144	45,533			452,270	452,270
CY vs. PY	(6,150)	(3,522)	(30,673)	(17,624)	(1,411)	(20,612)	(17,176)	37,843	1,489	(14,598)	(55,054)	(54,550)		

