

April 24, 2020

News from Mayor Mark Kaczynski

As always, I hope this letter finds you in good health. The following are updates related to COVID-19 and some other Town news that you may find useful. Since my Newsletter last week, the number of Berlin residents who have been tested positive for the COVID-19 virus has gone up to 81 and sadly 4 have passed away.

For additional information on the State's as well as the Town's COVID-19 cases, please click on the link below that will take you to the Town's webpage <https://www.town.berlin.ct.us> and then click on Breaking News to access the State of CT COVID-19 updates, Central CT Health District COVID-19 Resource Hub and the UConn Department of Geography – CT Dashboard on COVID-19.

Tax Relief: On April 1, 2020, Governor Lamont issued Executive Order 7S, which establishes two programs to offer support to eligible taxpayers, businesses, nonprofits, and residents who have been economically affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The two programs are referred to as the “Deferment Program” and the “Low Interest Rate Program”. The “Deferment Program” allows the Town to extend payment deadline by 90 days from the tax due date, instead of the usual 30 days and the “Low Interest Rate Program” will allow for a lower rate of interest, 0.25% per month, or 3% per year from the tax due date for a period of up to 90 days. Each municipality is required to participate in one or both programs. The Town Council unanimously voted to adopt the Low Interest Rate Program on delinquent property tax bills at its April 21, 2020 meeting.

This program provides a ‘window’ of three months from April 1, 2020 through July 1, 2020 from the due date where taxpayers would be able to pay at a reduced interest rate. For the July 1, 2020 installment, the last day to pay without paying any interest will (still) be August 3, 2020 (August 1 is a Saturday) but if the taxpayer pays on August 4 or later, they will pay 0.25% interest instead of the standard 1.5% per month. This plan would remain in force only for three months from the due date of July 1 and it would end on October 2, 2020.

Please contact the Revenue Collector's office with any questions you may have about how this plan affects your current delinquent or upcoming taxes. 860-828-7023

New Website for the Berlin-Peck Library: On Monday, April 20, the Berlin-Peck Library launched our new website. Now, when you go to berlinpeck.org, you will be directed to our easier-to-navigate, mobile-friendly and refreshed home page. Take a few minutes to explore! Everything you've been able to previously access will still be available.

The mission of the Berlin-Peck Memorial Library is to enrich the lives of residents of all ages by providing equal access to materials and services which will serve their lifelong, informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs. While navigating this difficult time in our nation's history, the library doors may be closed, but librarians still aim to serve the public in any way they can.

In the coming weeks, the library will begin seeking and collecting narratives, memories and photos from Berlin citizens regarding their experiences during this unprecedented time. These memories will be celebrated in a weekly online "magazine" and preserved digitally for public access and generations to come. Check berlinpeck.org in order to subscribe to our "*Quaranzine*."

Remember, if you have any trouble or have a question in general, the library staff will be available by email (library@berlinpeck.org) and by phone (860-828-7125) Monday-Friday from 9am-5pm.

A Big THANK YOU! I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Berlin Resident Mrs. Joyce Hornkohl for making over 200 beautiful face masks for the Town employees. The Town's staff appreciates her generosity and kindness very much. The Town is very fortunate to have such selfless residents like Mrs. Hornkohl in our community. Thank you again on behalf of the staff and the Town Council.

As always, the Town Manager and the Town staff are available to answer any questions you may have.

If you have any questions for me, please feel free to email me at mkaczynski@town.berlin.ct.us