



**BERLIN MAYOR AND COUNCIL
Meeting Agenda**

**Berlin Town Hall
10 William Street
Monday, February 23, 2026**

6:00 PM CALL TO ORDER, REGULAR SESSION – Council Chambers

- 1. 6:05 PM APPROVAL OF MINUTES: (*Strategic Plan: DS1*)**
 - a) Work Session Minutes of 02.09.26
 - b) Regular Session Minutes of 02.09.26
- 2. 6:10 PM Berlin Fire Company and Berlin Fire Company Emergency Services: 6-Month Presentation – President David Fitzgerald (*Strategic Plan: DS2*)**
- 3. 6:30 PM ITEM(S) FOR APPROVAL:**

A public comment period will now be offered after discussion by the Mayor and Council for each Item For Approval. Any person who may wish to speak will be given two (2) minutes or such time as may be deemed appropriate by the Mayor.

 - a) Motion 2026-10: Parcel 57 Disposition Amendment – Mayor Zack Tyndall (*Strategic Plan: DS3*)
 - b) Resolution 2026-02: Advanced Metering Opt-Out Program – Town Administrator Mary Bohlen (*Strategic Plan: DS3*)
- 4. 6:50 PM ANNOUNCEMENT: Budget and Tax Rate Schedule – Mayor Tyndall (*Strategic Plan: DS1-DS6*)**
- 5. 7:00 PM REPORTS: Town Administrator’s Report, Departmental Reports (*Strategic Plan: DS1; DS4*)**
- 6. 7:10 PM COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC (*Strategic Plan: DS4; DS5*)**

Anyone wishing to speak during COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC at the Regular Session may do so for up to five (5) minutes, or as determined by the Mayor. Please state your name, street, and the subject you wish to address.
- 7. 7:15 PM COMMENTS FROM THE COUNCIL**
- 8. 7:40 PM COMMENTS FROM THE MAYOR’S OFFICE**
- 9. 7:50 PM COMMENTS FROM THE PRESS**
- 10. 8:00 PM ADJOURNMENT**

To access the Meeting via Facebook, please click the blue Facebook icon at the top of any page on www.berlinmd.gov, or type @townofberlinmd in the Facebook search bar. QR code links to online packet and Strategic Plan. Anyone having questions about the meetings mentioned above or needing special accommodations should contact Town Administrator Mary Bohlen at (410) 641-2770. Written materials in alternate formats for persons with disabilities are made available upon request. TTY users dial 7-1-1 in the State of Maryland/outside Maryland dial 1-800-735-2258.





BERLIN MAYOR AND COUNCIL
Meeting Minutes
Work Session
Monday, February 9, 2026

5:00 PM WORK SESSION – Berlin Town Hall Council Chambers

Mayor and Councilmembers Present: Mayor Zack Tyndall, Councilmembers Steve Green, Jay Knerr, Shaneka Nichols, and Jack Orris.

Planning Commission Members Present: Chairman Matt Stoehr, Vice Chairman Austin Purnell, Newt Chandler, Pete Cosby, Jenelle Gerthoffer, Logan Hall, and Erich Pfeffer.

Absent: Vice President Burrell, Steven Scheiber, and Dirk Widdowson.

Staff Present: Town Administrator Mary Bohlen, Town Attorney David Gaskill, Town Attorney for the Planning Department Emily Morris, Acting Planning Director Ryan Hardesty, Town Special Projects Administrator Kate Daub, and Administrative Assistant Laura Brown.

This meeting was broadcast live via Facebook. Mayor Tyndall called the meeting to order at approximately 5:03 PM.

1. Discussion: Initial Discussion of ADU requirements with Planning Commission

Mayor Tyndall opened the work session discussing the State’s revised requirements concerning accessory dwelling units (ADUs). Councilmember Green requested feedback on whether ADUs should be permitted “by right” or as a “conditional use,” noting that “by right” approvals would limit discretionary review. He also raised considerations related to project size parameters and whether Board of Zoning Appeals review should be required.

Planning Commission Chairman Matthew Stoehr asked whether the Town had conducted a residential parking study, stating that additional parking requirements could not be imposed without supporting data. He further observed that many roadways may not accommodate increased vehicle demand associated with ADUs. Mayor Tyndall suggested referencing Worcester County’s ADU zoning framework, with Councilmember Green noting the County’s standards predated recent legislation and had not proven overly restrictive.

Mr. Stoehr expressed concern about potential investor activity and housing price impacts. Councilmember Nichols emphasized the need to be more restrictive in the beginning of the ADU review process. She believed the Town should not try to stop the usage but rather to slow the process. Discussion ensued regarding the need to be mindful of affordable housing and how it’s an integral part of the Town’s strategic plan. Councilmember Orris reminded those in attendance of the Town’s stance to shift from using “affordable housing” to “attainable housing.”

Additional topics included possible limitations on construction standards, road frontage as a parameter, 911 addressing implications, bedroom limits, and height restrictions. Reference was

made to packet materials reflecting one- to two-bedroom concepts. Town Attorney for the Planning Department Emily Morris recommended establishing height limitations. Town Administrator Mary Bohlen reminded participants that the Town may set reasonable limitations consistent with State law but should avoid overly burdensome regulations. Parking requirements were discussed, with Mr. Stoehr reiterating that enforceable standards would require a parking study.

Councilmember Nichols supported size parameters in the range of 500 to 700 square feet. Mayor Tyndall requested the Town's attorneys review parking-related options and invited submission of additional suggestions. Consideration was also given to parameters for the conversion of existing structures into ADUs and the potential for an amnesty approach.

Discussion concluded with acknowledgment of questions related to equivalent dwelling units (EDUs), associated costs, and fixture limitations, with consensus that these matters would be addressed at a future session.

Following no further comments, Mayor Tyndall adjourned the work session meeting at approximately 6:02 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Laura Brown', written in a cursive style.

Laura Brown
Administrative Assistant



BERLIN MAYOR AND COUNCIL
Meeting Minutes
Monday, February 9, 2026

6:00 PM REGULAR SESSION – Berlin Town Hall Council Chambers

Present: Mayor Zackery Tyndall, Councilmembers Steve Green, Jay Knerr, Shaneka Nichols, and Jack Orris.

Absent: Vice President Dean Burrell.

Staff Present: Town Administrator Mary Bohlen, Town Attorney David Gaskill, Human Resources Director Kelsey Jensen, Economic and Community Development Director Ivy Wells, Finance Director Natalie Saleh, Director of Public Works Jimmy Charles, Electric Utility Director Tim Lawrence, Berlin Police Sgt. Jessica Collins, Mayor’s Executive Assistant Sara Gorfinkel, Special Projects Administrator Kate Daub, and Administrative Assistant Laura Brown.

This meeting was also broadcast live via Facebook. After the moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance, Mayor Zackery Tyndall called the meeting to order at approximately 6:07 PM.

1. Approval of Minutes (*Strategic Plan: DS1*):

a. Regular Session of 01.12.26

Councilmember Orris noted that he had brought Finance Director Natalie Saleh’s attention to an error he found on pages 38 and 39 of the audit report regarding a \$2.1 million calculation error on behalf of PKS regarding the Town’s debt. Ms. Saleh noted that it has since been adjusted from approximately \$10 million to the correct calculation of \$8.2 million. He encouraged the Town’s partner to be a bit more focused in their due diligence. Finance Director Natalie Saleh added it was not as error of statement but rather an error pulled from the line above. On the motion of Councilmember Orris, second by Councilmember Knerr, the Regular Session of 01.12.26 minutes were approved by the following vote:

Name	Counted toward Quorum			Recused	Absent
	Aye	No	Abstain		
Dean Burrell, VP					X
Steve Green	X				
Jay Knerr	X				
Shaneka Nichols	X				
Jack Orris	X				
<i>Voting Tally</i>	4				1

2. Proclamations

- a. Proclamation 2026-01: Month of February as National Black History Month (*Strategic Plan: DS1, AS1*) – Mayor Zack Tyndall

Mayor Tyndall proclaimed February 2026 as Black History Month in the Town of Berlin, recognizing National Black History Month, the 2026 national theme, “A Century of Black History Commemorations,” and honoring the history, culture, and contributions of Black Americans locally, statewide, and nationally. The proclamation acknowledged the lasting influence of Berlin’s Black community, the importance of commemorating Black history and achievements, and the need to continue confronting past and present injustices while reaffirming the Town’s commitment to freedom, equality, and equal opportunity for all.

- b. Proclamation 2026-02: March as Women's History Month (*Strategic Plan: DS1, AS1*) – Mayor Zack Tyndall

Mayor Tyndall proclaimed March 2026 as Women’s History Month in the Town of Berlin, recognizing the historic and ongoing contributions of women of all backgrounds to families, workplaces, communities, and the nation. The proclamation acknowledged that women’s achievements have often been underrepresented in history and highlighted the 2026 national theme, “Leading the Change: Women Shaping a Sustainable Future,” which recognizes women’s leadership in addressing interconnected global challenges and advancing sustainable solutions for future generations. Mayor Tyndall encouraged the community to honor the legacy, impact, and aspirations of women and girls throughout the month.

3. Items for Approval:

- a. Motion 2026-04: Transfer of Unassigned Funds – Mayor Zack Tyndall and Finance Director Natalie Saleh (*Strategic Plan: DS1*)

Mayor Tyndall explained that Motion 2026-04 (Transfer of Unassigned Funds), Motion 2026-05 (Award of Contract Town Hall Renovation Project), and Motion 2026-06 (Award of Funding Allocation Town Hall Renovation Project Alternates) would be discussed concurrently, as the motions were interconnected.

Daniele Haley of Haley Architecture informed the Mayor and Council that bids received for RFP 2026-01, Town Hall Renovation Project, were generally consistent. She stated the intent was to award the contract to Keller Brothers as the lowest bidder. Ms. Haley reviewed Motion 2026-05, which proposed awarding the contract to Keller Brothers in the amount of \$2,391,000, including Alternate #3 (Elevator) in the amount of \$204,990. The motion also included approval of a 10% contingency in the amount of \$312,019 and the authorization of \$300,703 for furniture. She further explained that Alternates 1, 2, 4, and 5 were moved to a separate motion to allow the project to be phased and to create potential cost savings.

Mayor Tyndall stated that the transfer of funds was necessary due to previously unanticipated conditions, including a full HVAC overhaul, geothermal well failures, and the determination that a sprinkler system was a prudent safety measure.

Councilmember Orris asked how the contingency amount was calculated. Ms. Haley explained that the contingency represented 10% of the total construction cost. Councilmember Orris

expressed his frustration with the option to 1.6 million from the unassigned fund for the Town Hall Renovation when other initiatives, such as stormwater projects, hadn't been able to move forward due to financial restrictions. He also inquired how the unassigned fund would be replenished. He emphasized the need for Town Hall Renovations, but felt as though some of the items were wants, not needs. Therefore, it gave him pause. Mayor Tyndall clarified that Enterprise Funds could not be used for General Fund projects, so these funds would not be available for allocation towards a stormwater project. Finance Director Natalie Saleh stated the transfer would leave the Town with three month's worth of expenditures in the unassigned fund, and the recommended amount was two months worth. She noted the Town would not be making the decision to reallocate the funds if this were not the case. She emphasized any grant funds received would go towards replenishing the unassigned fund.

Councilmember Orris requested clarification regarding façade improvements. Ms. Haley confirmed the façade plans had been reviewed by the Historic District Commission and stated that door relocation costs were included in the base bid. Councilmember Knerr requested clarification regarding the annex and was informed it referred to the Planning and Zoning building.

Councilmember Green expressed concern regarding the overall project costs. Mayor Tyndall clarified that the staff's recommendation was to proceed only with Alternate #3 (Elevator), noting it would be more difficult to complete following renovation. Ms. Haley added that while the A/V alternate would also be challenging post-construction, infrastructure could be roughed in for future upgrades. She noted that alternate pricing would remain valid for 60 days.

Councilmember Knerr noted even with the exclusion of Motion 2026-06, the project still comes in approximately \$700,000 over budget, and Mayor Tyndall reiterated this was due to larger issues that were not expected. In addition to the items Mayor Tyndall discussed earlier, Ms. Haley informed the Council that the sprinkler system was best practice. Ms. Saleh clarified that the allocation of funds did not represent immediate expenditures but rather the movement of funds between accounts.

Councilmember Green cited other capital priorities. Councilmember Orris asked about deferring the generator replacement. Electric Utility Director Tim Lawrence informed the Council that the existing generator had been in service for approximately 26-years and replacement was highly recommended. However, it could remain in service for the time being.

Councilmember Orris asked whether the contingency could be reduced. Ms. Haley recommended maintaining the 10% contingency due to the age of the building. Town Administrator Mary Bohlen emphasized that the contingency funds would not be utilized until it's absolutely necessary. Councilmember Orris asked for further explanation on what was included in the furniture cost and Ms. Haley clarified that the projected cost was an all-inclusive estimate. It was also expected to change following the furniture inventory at the end of the month. Councilmember Nichols asked about existing furniture, and Ms. Bohlen stated that items to keep, such as file cabinets in very good condition, would be re-used, or other departments would have priority before surplus items were sold.

Gina Velong, Intrepid Lane, requested clarification on the base bid scope, and Ms. Haley stated it encompassed the full renovation. Austin Purnell, Planning Commission, asked the Mayor and Council to keep other needs outside of Town Hall in focus and to remember what residents need and want.

Councilmember Knerr motioned to approve Motion 2026-04, and Councilmember Nichols seconded. Discussion followed regarding furniture costs. Mayor Tyndall suggested making furniture expenditures contingent upon Council review of an itemized list. Ms. Saleh noted that, simply because the projected cost was a certain dollar amount did not mean the Town would spend it to the penny. Town staff would continue to do what they have always done, which is find ways to cut costs and be prudent with taxpayers' dollars.

After much discussion, the Council agreed to amend Motion 2026-04 Transfer of Unassigned Funds from \$1,600,000 to \$1,045,000, which includes the \$2,391,000 construction base bid, Alternate 3 (Elevator) at \$204,990, a contingency of 10% for unknown conditions at \$260,000, and furniture at \$300,703 which was not to be expensed until Council reviewed and approved purchase(s) in a separate action.

On the motion of Councilmember Knerr, second by Councilmember Nichols, Motion 2026-04: Transfer of Unassigned Funds was adopted by the following vote:

Name	Counted toward Quorum			Recused	Absent
	Aye	No	Abstain		
Dean Burrell, VP					X
Steve Green	X				
Jay Knerr	X				
Shaneka Nichols	X				
Jack Orris	X				
<i>Voting Tally</i>	4				1

- b. Motion 2026-05: Award of Contract Town Hall Renovation Project – Mayor Zack Tyndall & Architect Daniele Haley (Strategic Plan: DS1)

Please see 3a: Items for Approval – Motion 2026-04 Transfer of Unassigned Funds for discussion information.

On the motion of Councilmember Nichols, second by Councilmember Green, Motion 2026-05: Award of Contract Town Hall Renovation Project was adopted by the following vote:

Name	Counted toward Quorum			Recused	Absent
	Aye	No	Abstain		
Dean Burrell, VP					X
Steve Green	X				
Jay Knerr	X				
Shaneka Nichols	X				

Jack Orris	X				
<i>Voting Tally</i>	4				1

- c. Motion 2026-06: Award of Funding Allocation Town Hall Renovation Project Alternates - Mayor Zack Tyndall and Finance Director Natalie Saleh (*Strategic Plan: DS1*)

By consensus, the Council agreed to not take action on Motion 2026-06 (Project Alternates).

- d. Motion 2026-07: Alcohol Permit Request: Berlin Celebrates Vintage and Vinyl for Record Store Day, Saturday, April 18th, 11 AM - 4 PM & Rain Date for Sunday, April 19th – Economic and Community Development Director Ivy Wells (*Strategic Plan: DS1, AS1*)

Economic and Community Development Director Ivy Wells requested approval of an alcohol permit and a rain date for the pre-approved Berlin Celebrates Vintage and Vinyl event for Record Store Day on Saturday, April 18th, from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM. The proposed rain date was Sunday, April 19th. Ms. Wells noted this would be the Town’s fourth event to include alcohol.

On the motion of Councilmember Orris, second by Councilmember Nichols, Motion 2026-07: Alcohol Permit Request: Berlin Celebrates Vintage and Vinyl for Record Store Day, Saturday, April 18th, 11 AM - 4 PM & Rain Date for Sunday, April 19th was adopted by the following vote:

Name	Counted toward Quorum			Recused	Absent
	Aye	No	Abstain		
Dean Burrell, VP					X
Steve Green	X				
Jay Knerr	X				
Shaneka Nichols	X				
Jack Orris	X				
<i>Voting Tally</i>	4				1

- e. Motion 2026-08: Declaration of Surplus Property – Sgt. Jessica Collins sitting in for Interim Chief of Police Robert Fisher – (*Strategic Plan: DS2*)

Sergeant Collins requested approval to surplus and dispose of a duty Glock firearm of a former officer.

On the motion of Councilmember Knerr, second by Councilmember Green, Motion 2026-08: Declaration of Surplus Property was adopted by the following vote:

Name	Counted toward Quorum			Recused	Absent
	Aye	No	Abstain		
Dean Burrell, VP					X
Steve Green	X				
Jay Knerr	X				

Shaneka Nichols	X				
Jack Orris	X				
<i>Voting Tally</i>	4				1

- f. Motion 2026-09: Exempt Employees Vacation Carryover – Human Resources Director Kelsey Jensen (*Strategic Plan: DS4*)

Human Resources Director Kelsey Jensen explained that non-exempt employees may carry over up to 240 hours of compensatory time and 240 hours of vacation time. She requested increasing the allowable vacation carryover for exempt employees from 240 hours to 480 hours to align with non-exempt employees’ maximum carryover, noting exempt employees are not eligible to accrue compensatory time.

On the motion of Councilmember Orris, second by Councilmember Nichols, Motion 2026-09: Exempt Employees Vacation Carryover was adopted by the following vote:

Name	Counted toward Quorum			Recused	Absent
	Aye	No	Abstain		
Dean Burrell, VP					X
Steve Green	X				
Jay Knerr	X				
Shaneka Nichols	X				
Jack Orris	X				
<i>Voting Tally</i>	4				1

- 4. PJM Quarterly Report – Electric Utility Director Tim Lawrence (*Strategic Plan: DS3*)

Electric Utility Director Tim Lawrence presented a report on the Town’s electric utility performance for July through September, the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2026. He reported total energy sales of \$12,255,046 during the quarter.

As a member of AMP, the Town was charged \$493,432 for handling Berlin’s electricity, while the Pennsylvania–Jersey–Maryland (PJM) Interconnection billed \$398,972. The Town received a credit (ARR) from PJM totaling \$87,146. The Town’s power plant recorded expenses of \$40,647 for fuel, lube oil, and related costs. Total power costs for the quarter were \$845,904, with an average cost per kWh sold of \$0.06902.

- 5. Update: From Parking Subcommittee to the Council – Mayor Zack Tyndall (*Strategic Plan: DS5, AS1*)

Mayor Tyndall noted that no consensus had been reached on a paid parking strategy. Councilmember Green commented that the estimated \$1 million in expenditures made the issue complex. He explained the subcommittee encountered opposition to multiple concepts, including paid parking, event-based paid parking, the option of applying a nominal percentage-based allocation on transactions within the downtown district, with proceeds designated for the Arts & Entertainment District, adjustments to business license fees, and noted the recently completed survey. He emphasized the matter remained unresolved despite significant effort and mentioned exploring grant

opportunities, offering to assist with funding research. The Mayor's Executive Assistant Sara Gorfinkel referenced the federal BUILD Grant but stated the project would not meet funding thresholds. She added the Town could pursue earmark funding. She also clarified the Town could not apply for CDBG funds until existing funds designated for the Multi-Purpose Building demolition were expended. Town Administrator Mary Bohlen informed the Council the demolition bid opening was scheduled for March 18th and clarified the funds were reimbursable.

Councilmember Knerr reiterated concerns previously raised to the subcommittee that paid parking would negatively impact downtown businesses. He asked whether the project could be approached in phases. Councilmember Orris questioned the opposition to paid event parking. Councilmember Green noted his surprise that merchants viewed paid event parking as a step toward broader paid parking. Mayor Tyndall emphasized the need for progress despite the lack of consensus.

6. Announcement: Special Sunday Permit Poll Vote – Town Administrator Mary Bohlen
(*Strategic Plan: DS1, AS1*)

Ms. Bohlen explained, that, because the January 26, 2026 meeting was cancelled due to the winter storm event, and due to the timing of this event being held prior to tonight's Mayor and Council meeting, Council approval was needed in the interim. So, a poll vote was orchestrated and the Council reached a quorum in favor of the event.

7. Reports: Town Administrator's Report, Departmental Reports (*Strategic Plan: DS3, DS4*)

Mayor Tyndall acknowledged a letter from Joe Moore thanking the Electric Department for restoring power during recent high winds and low temperatures. Electric Utility Director Tim Lawrence reported the first outage call was received at 3:00 PM on Saturday, February 7th, prompting crews to respond. A fallen 40-foot tree on Buckingham Lane damaged multiple poles, which resulted in an outage affecting approximately 780 customers. Between 6 PM and 7 PM, service had been restored to all but two customers. Mr. Lawrence also noted two additional outages caused by melted fuses. Crews concluded work at approximately 1 AM on Sunday, February 8th. Mr. Lawrence recognized Brian Fortune and Casey Webb for maintaining 24/7 standby operations at the Power Plant over the previous two weeks for peak shaving, which was run eight times.

Town Administrator Mary Bohlen also expressed appreciation to the Water Department for addressing freezing temperatures and related pipe issues over the weekend, noting the demands placed on staff. She also thanked the Berlin Police Department for organizing former Chief of Police Arnold Downing's retirement event. Ms. Bohlen reminded the public that most Town offices would be closed on Monday, February 16th, in observance of Presidents' Day, and announced a Comprehensive Plan Update Work Session scheduled for Thursday, February 19th, from 6 PM to 7:30 PM. She further advised that she would be out of the office from February 10th to 13th. Councilmember Orris asked about the status of the Broad Street Lift Station. Ms. Bohlen indicated she was not aware of any issues but would follow up with Water Resources Director Jamey Latchum. Councilmember Orris thanked Town crews for their responsiveness to recent events.

8. Comments from the Public (*Strategic Plan: DS4; DS5*) – None.

9. Comments from the Council

Councilmember Orris noted he had a great evening attending former Chief Downing's retirement event. He asked for clarification regarding the approval process for projects requiring Historic District Commission review and Planning and Zoning permits. Ms. Bohlen explained that applicants must first submit materials for Historic District Commission review. Following Commission approval, applicants must obtain Planning and Zoning Department approval and complete permitting requirements, including payment of applicable fees. Special Projects Administrator Kate Daub emphasized that work cannot proceed prior to Planning and Zoning approval and fee payment, and that Historic District Commission approval did not constitute permitting approval. It was also noted that there were agencies other than the Town which needed permitting and approval, such as the for the Worcester County Electrical Permit and Ms. Utility location of underground utilities. Mayor Tyndall believed this was state law to which Ms. Bohlen agreed. Ms. Bohlen noted that while no specific fine applied for failure to follow the process, permitting fees could be doubled in cases where processes were not properly followed. Councilmember Green asked if this matter was closed, and Ms. Bohlen informed him that as of last week, outstanding permits remained.

Councilmember Green recognized Lorelei Donoway for winning the "Hit The Books" bookmark contest for the second consecutive year.

Councilmember Knerr expressed appreciation to the Electric, Water, and Public Works Departments for their efforts during the recent winter weather and outages. He agreed with Councilmember Orris' sentiment on how amazing the retirement event for former Chief Downing was. He asked Sergeant Collins to expand on the note in the Police Department's weekly report regarding the testing of five academy applicants. Sergeant Collins explained that best candidates from across the state were evaluated, followed by interviews conducted by the Berlin Police Department to identify potential lateral candidates.

Councilmember Nichols expressed her gratitude for the support she received during her absence and thanked Town departments for their continued work. She also acknowledged community participation at the February 7 sports complex meeting with the Town of Ocean City, noting resident opposition to the proposed location.

10. Comments from the Mayor's Office

The Mayor's Executive Assistant Sara Gorfinkel reminded the public of the upcoming Reconnecting Neighborhoods and Communities public engagement sessions scheduled for February 11th from 6 to 8 PM at St. Paul's Episcopal Church and February 12th from 9 to 11 AM at the Berlin Library.

Mayor Tyndall discussed the letter received from the West View Community regarding sidewalks along Old Ocean City Boulevard and informed the public the letter would be shared with the State Highway Administration. He expressed appreciation to staff and departments for their efforts during the recent winter weather event and referenced the potential use of brine as an alternative to road salt.

Mayor Tyndall commented that while Historic District Commission and Planning and Zoning processes can be arduous, existing Town Code requirements needed to be adhered to. He noted that improvements to communication and process understanding could be explored and suggested the

formation of a subcommittee consisting of Town staff, the chairmen of the Board of Zoning Appeals, Historic District Commission, Planning Commission, and two Councilmembers.

Mayor Tyndall reminded Councilmembers to notify Sara Gorfinkel if they wished to participate in internal budget meetings. He thanked those who attended the sports complex meeting and clarified that the Town’s concern related to the proposed location rather than the facility itself. Mayor Tyndall presented a draft letter to the Town of Ocean City, and Council indicated approval for its transmittal.

Mayor Tyndall also reviewed the Town’s FY27 grant request plan. It was decided that the Town would request \$550,000 in unrestricted grant funding from Worcester County to support the West Street project and the Community Center. Councilmember Orris requested clarification regarding prior discussions with Worcester County about directly providing funding to the Berlin Fire Department and Berlin Fire Department Emergency Medical Services as opposed to going through the Town of Berlin, and Mayor Tyndall informed him the County was open to having a conversation.

11. Comments from the Press – None.

12. Adjournment:

On the motion of Councilmember Knerr, second by Councilmember Orris, the Mayor and Council meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:29 PM.

Name	Counted toward Quorum			Recused	Absent
	Aye	No	Abstain		
Dean Burrell, VP					X
Steve Green	X				
Jay Knerr	X				
Shaneka Nichols	X				
Jack Orris	X				
<i>Voting Tally</i>	4				1

Respectfully submitted,



Laura Brown
Administrative Assistant



Berlin Fire Company

Semi-Annual Update

July 1 – December 31, 2025

OPERATIONS RESPONSE REPORT

Fire Chief

Fire-Rescue
July 1 – December 31, 2025
In-Town Fire/Rescue Call Responses

74

37% of calls

(Out Town—126---63%)

(Past Six months increase 58 total calls)

Fire-Rescue
July 1 – December 31, 2025
Busiest Day

Friday followed by Tuesday

(Past Six Months Friday followed by Wednesday)

Busiest Times of Day

3 pm to 4 pm followed by 10 am to 11 am

(Past Six Months 1 pm to 2 pm followed by 5 pm to 6 pm)

Fire-Rescue
July 1 – December 31, 2025
Simultaneous Calls

**23—TWO OR more fire, rescue calls
occurring at the same time**

(Past six months—14 times)

ADMINISTRATIVE
and
FINANCIAL
REPORT

President

Fire-Rescue
July 1 – December 31, 2025
Response Time

4 minutes 3 seconds

*(Total Decrease in Response Times by 2 seconds from past six
months)*

County response time standard to respond from station is 6 minutes
pg 29-Matrix report—nine minutes or less to respond

Fire-Rescue
July 1 – December 31, 2025
Volunteer Manpower

Emergency Calls---1,286.19 volunteer hours
Non-Emergency—Training, Meetings,
Fundraisers, etc.

1,498.25 volunteer hours

TOTAL VOLUNTEER HOURS—2,784.44

Many other items—standby-administrative, etc.

Fire-Rescue
July 1 – December 31, 2025

Revenue Budget Highlights

All county and town fiscal year funds received

Annual drive \$2,000 less than previous year

Fire-Rescue
Capital Expense Summary

Updated plan provided to town in December

Engine and Rescue replacement

1999 Rescue (26 years old)

Next unit is 1998 engine to replace

New Capital Status Update –

Engine 6-Delivered/In Service

Rescue-complete February—in service approx. April 2026

\$2.5 million loan--\$200,000 annual loan payment for engine and rescue—15 years--Funded by county out of town run funds

Without additional town financial support we will not be able to sustain capital replacement schedule—Further budget discussion

Fire-Rescue
July 1 – December 31, 2025

Expense Budget Highlights

Vehicle Expenses—88.24% at six months

Reminder--we wait until last quarter for most equipment replacements to ensure funds are available

Fire-Rescue
Capital Expense Summary

Updated plan provided to town in December

Engine and Rescue replacement

1999 Rescue (26 years old)

Next unit is 1998 engine to replace

New Capital Status Update –

Engine 6-Delivered/In Service

Rescue-complete February—in service approx. April 2026

\$2.5 million loan--\$200,000 annual loan payment for engine and rescue—15 years--Funded by county out of town run funds

Without additional town financial support we will not be able to sustain capital replacement schedule—Further budget discussion



Berlin Fire Company
Emergency Medical Services

Semi-Annual Update
July 1 – December 31, 2025

Emergency Medical Services
July 1 – December 31, 2025
In-Town EMS Call Responses

680

58.27% of calls

(487 Out of Town-41.73%)

(Increase from Past Six Months 111 in town calls)

OPERATIONAL
REPORT

EMS Captain

Emergency Medical Services
July 1 – December 31, 2025
In-Town

TRANSPORTS 457

67.21 %

NON-TRANSPORTS 223

(Out Town-244 transport (50.1%)—243 non-transport)

Increase in Town transports of 43 from past six months

Increase in town non transports 68 from past six months

Emergency Medical Services
July 1 – December 31, 2025

Busiest Days

Monday followed by Wednesday

past six months Friday followed by Thursday

Busiest Times of Day

11 am to 12 pm followed by 12 noon to 1 pm

past six months– 12 noon to 1 pm followed by 6 pm to 7 pm

Emergency Medical Services
July 1 – December 31, 2025

Simultaneous calls

233 times

Number of times where a second or third EMS
call has occurred

Past six months 299 times

Emergency Medical Services
July 1 – December 31, 2025

Station Notified to Responding Time

1.08 minute average (64 seconds)

This includes third run calls that may be full volunteer response
from home, responses from hospital patient being
transferred, etc.

past six months – 1.19 minute (69 seconds)

(page 29-Matrix report—60 seconds for staffed station)

ADMINISTRATIVE
AND
FINANCIAL
REPORT

President

**Emergency Medical Services
July 1 – December 31, 2025
Revenue Budget Highlights**

2026 EMS Donation Drive Mailed

EMS Billing – 52% of budgeted

**Emergency Medical Services
July 1 – December 31, 2025
Expense Budget Highlights**

Salary expense due to vacancies—overtime for coverage—some benefit savings

Six month review of other surrounding salaries

Vehicle Maintenance and Repairs—age of EMS units
75% budget expended in first six month

**Emergency Medical Services
Capital Expense Summary**

Updated plan provided to town in December

Ambulance Replacements—2025-2027-2029

2025 Ambulance--\$415,010-delivery expected Feb
2026

2027 Ambulance--\$419,744

(Both ambulances based on 2023 chassis pricing—prices will increase)

County Providing \$75,000 per year ambulance formula

Town providing \$15,000 from casino funds for 3 years

Without additional town financial support we will not be able to sustain
capital replacement schedule—further budget discussion



MOTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL 2026-10

A motion of the Mayor and Council of the Town of Berlin APPROVING THE FIRST AMENDMENT AS ATTACHED TO THE LAND DISPOSITION AGREEMENT WITH COASTAL VENTURES PROPERTIES, LLC, DATED APRIL 15, 2025.

APPROVED this ____ day of _____, 2026, by the Council of the Town of Berlin, Maryland, by the vote as indicated below:

Name	Counted toward Quorum			Recused	Absent
	Aye	No	Abstain		
Dean Burrell, VP					
Steve Green					
Jay Knerr					
Shaneka Nichols					
Jack Orris					
<i>Voting Tally</i>					

Dean Burrell, Sr. Vice President of the Council

Approved this ____ day of _____, 2026, by the Mayor of the Town of Berlin.

Zack Tyndall, Mayor, President of the Council

Attest: _____
Mary Bohlen, Town Administrator

**FIRST ADDENDUM TO
LAND DISPOSITION AGREEMENT**

THIS FIRST ADDENDUM TO LAND DISPOSITION AGREEMENT (this “**First Addendum**”), is made effective for all purposes as of the ____ day of February, 2026 (“**Execution Date**”) between (i) **Town of Berlin**, a municipal corporation (“**Town**”), and (ii) **Coastal Ventures Properties, LLC**, a State of Maryland limited liability company, or its assigns (“**Developer**”), collectively referred to as the “**Parties.**”

RECITALS:

R-1. On or about April 15, 2025, the Parties entered into a Land Disposition Agreement (“**LDA**”) regarding, among other things, Town conveying to Developer a portion of the lands located within the Town commonly known as Parcel 57 within the Heron Park (hereinafter referred to as “**Parcel 57**”).

R-2. The Parties wish to correct a Scribner’s error in the recitals of the LDA in reference to the acreage of the portion of Parcel 57 to be conveyed to the Developer.

R-3. The Developer has requested, and the Town has agreed to extend the Initial Study Period (as defined in the LDA) to August 14, 2026.

R-4. The Parties have also agreed to memorialize certain other agreements as reflected herein.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants contained herein and other good and valuable consideration in hand paid, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged by the Parties hereto, Town and Developer do hereby agree as follows, to wit:

1. The Parties incorporate by reference, as if fully set forth herein, the preceding paragraphs and recitals of this First Addendum.
2. The Parties agree that the property area intended to be conveyed by the Town to the Developer is the approximately 8.32 acres of “Parcel 57” as depicted on **Attachment A** to this First Amendment, less and accept the area shown for the Access Road.
3. The Town has determined, and the Developer acknowledges, that the final location of the Access Road (as defined in the LDA) is reflected on **Attachment A**.
4. Subject to Council approval, in addition to the land previously agreed by the Town to be conveyed to the Developer, the Town has agreed to further extend the northern boundary line to incorporate and convey the forested area to the Developer as reflected on **Attachment B** (the “**Forested Area**”). The Forested Area shall be subject to the same “Open Space” deed use restrictions as defined in the LDA and Deed attached to the LDA as Exhibit B. The addition of the Forested Area shall not change the open space use restriction within the 75-foot real setbacks to the approximate 8.32 acres as shown generally on **Attachment B**, and the Deed will be updated to reflect the “Open Space” use restrictions for the Forested Area prior to Closing.
5. Section 2.3.1 (b) of the LDA is revised to extend the expiration of the Initial Study Period to August 14, 2026, with the understanding that Closing (as defined in LDA) will occur on or before November 14, 2026.

6. Except as is specifically set forth in this First Addendum, all other terms and provisions of the LDA shall remain in full force and effect and binding upon the parties and their successors and assigns. In the event of a conflict between the LDA and this First Amendment, this First Amendment shall govern.

7. This Agreement may be executed in one or more counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original and all of which together shall constitute one and the same instrument. Signatures transmitted by electronic means, including but not limited to PDF, facsimile, scanned image, or by electronic signature platform (including, without limitation, DocuSign or similar service), shall be deemed original signatures for all purposes and shall be fully binding and enforceable upon the parties.

DRAFT

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties have caused these presents to be signed, acknowledged and delivered in by their duly authorized representative, as of the date set forth below his signature.

TOWN OF BERLIN

By: _____
Name: Zackery Tyndall
Title: Mayor

Date:

DEVELOPER
Coastal Ventures Properties LLC, a State of Maryland limited liability company

By: _____
Name: Palmer Gillis
Title: Managing Partner

Date:

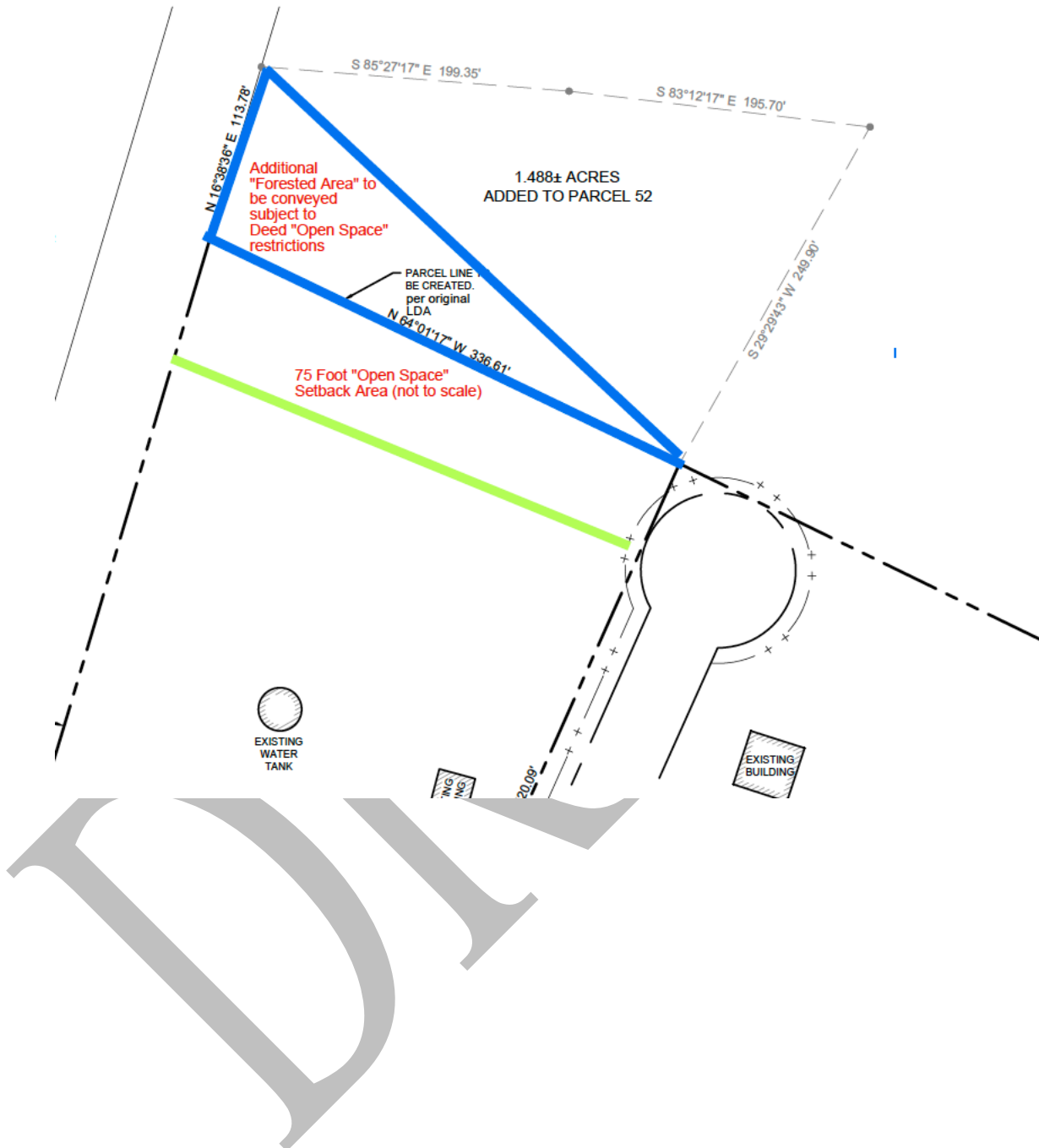
DRAFT

**Attachment A
Portion of Parcel 57 To Be Conveyed**

[Attached]

DRAFT

Attachment B
“Forested Area”
Subject to Deed Open Space Restriction





STAFF REPORT

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Mary Bohlen, Town Administrator ~~MTB~~

MEETING DATE: February 23, 2026

SUBJECT: Smart Meter Opt-Out Policy

SUMMARY

Under Maryland Public Service Commission (MPSC) regulations, electric utilities utilizing Smart Meters are required to offer their customers the option to Opt-Out of having two-way communications between their meter and the utility. The utility is permitted to charge a one-time fee, as well as a monthly recurring fee for this option to offset the cost of the personnel and equipment/resources needed to read the meters without the benefit of remote communication, i.e., in-person, visual meter readings.

MPSC regulations only apply to electric utilities; MPSC regulations do not apply to municipally owned water systems like Berlin's, and therefore no such provision is required for the Town's water meters.

In addition to enacting a policy and procedure for opting out, an amendment to the Town's Electric Utility Tariff will be required. The Town's third-party electric utility consulting firm, Booth & Associates, as well as the Town's legal counsel for electric utility matters are currently reviewing and preparing for the tariff amendment process to address this and at least one other matter.

The policy attached is intended to capture the Smart Meter Opt-Out for both Electric and Water meters and to establish the appropriate fees. The fees indicated are identical to fees in place by other Maryland Electric Utilities already approved by the MPSC, therefore, we do not anticipate difficulty in getting MPSC approval. The tariff approval process, however, does take some time.

Having already had several customers express a desire to opt-out of the smart meter program, staff seeks approval of the Mayor and Council in establishing a policy to accommodate such requests. While we can implement the fees for Water meter opt-outs immediately, it would not be prudent to charge the fees for Electric customers prior to approval by the MPSC. However, the customers' desire to not have a smart meter should be respected and accommodated with the understanding that fees will be charged in the future as appropriate.

OPTIONS

1. Approve the attached Resolution and Policy as written and presented.
2. Amend the Resolution and Policy to address Water Meters only and amend the policy or adopt a separate policy at a later date following MPSC approval of the tariff amendments and fees to account for Electric Meter Opt-outs.

Attachments: Resolution 2026-02 with attached Policy. Please note items highlighted in yellow on the policy will be updated before final release.



RESOLUTION NO. 2026-02

**A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF BERLIN
ADOPTING A SMART/AMI METER OPT-OUT POLICY**

WHEREAS, The Mayor and Council of the Town of Berlin has invested significantly in Smart/AMI (Advanced Metering Infrastructure) technology and equipment for both the Electric and Water Utilities for the purposes of increased accuracy and reliability of the metering system, which is ultimately to the benefit the customers of the Town of Berlin;

WHEREAS, it is required by the Maryland Public Service Commission (MPSC) to offer the option for Electric Utility customers to choose not to participate in the Smart Meter system for their account; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the requirement as pertains to the Electric Utility, the Town of Berlin has also elected to offer the same Opt-Out Program for Smart Meters under the Water Utility.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Berlin hereby adopts the AMI METER OPT-OUT POLICY, INCLUDING THE FEE STRUCTURE INDICATED and as attached.

Approved this _____ day of _____, 20____ by the Council of the Town of Berlin, Maryland, by the following vote.

Name	Counted toward Quorum			Recused	Absent
	Aye	No	Abstain		
Dean Burrell, VP					
Steve Green					
Jay Knerr					
Shaneka Nichols					
Jack Orris					
<i>Voting Tally</i>					

Dean Burrell, Sr., Vice-President of the Council

Approved this _____ day of _____, 20____ by the Mayor of the Town of Berlin.

ATTEST:

Zackery Tyndall, Mayor and President of Council

Mary Bohlen, Town Administrator



Mayor & Council of Berlin

10 William Street, Berlin, Maryland 21811

Phone 410-641-2770 Fax 410-641-2316

www.berlinmd.gov

Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) / Smart Meter Opt-Out Policy

The Town of Berlin has invested in Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) for both its Electric and Water Utilities. These “smart meters” provide significantly greater accuracy and reliability than older metering technologies and allow meters to be read remotely via secure radio communication. AMI also improves customer access to account information by enabling near real-time viewing of meter activity through designated online portals.

Customer Portals

- **Water Utility:** <https://townofberlin.my360-app.com>
- **Electric Utility:** Portal information will be provided once the program is fully operational

Customer Right to Opt Out

Pursuant to regulations of the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC), electric utility customers have the right to decline participation in the AMI metering program. As a courtesy to customers, the Town of Berlin is extending a similar opt-out option to water utility customers.

Smart Meter Opt-Out Program

Customers who elect to opt out of AMI metering (“Opt-Out Customers”) are subject to both a one-time, up-front fee and a recurring monthly fee for each applicable meter.

Opt-Out Fees

- **One-time fee:** \$75.00 per meter
 - Payable in three (3) equal monthly installments
- **Monthly fee:** \$17.00 per meter, per month

All opt-out charges will appear as separate line items on the customer’s monthly utility bill.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The Town of Berlin must seek approval of the MPSC to impose the above fees for customers choosing to opt-out of Electric Utility AMI Meters. However, the Town is offering the ability to customers to opt-out at this time, **with appropriate fees to be payable upon approval of the MPSC.**

Water Utility Opt-out customers, including those with both Electric and Water meters, will be charged fees for the Water meter opt-out immediately.

Billing and Waiver Provisions

Upon enrollment, Opt-Out Customers will receive an initial bill that includes:

- The first installment of the one-time fee; and
- The applicable monthly opt-out fee.

An Opt-Out Customer may discontinue the opt-out program at any time by electing to have a smart meter installed.

Waiver Period

If the customer agrees to have a smart meter installed **before the end of the fifth (5th) billing cycle** following the first appearance of opt-out charges on the bill—and allows reasonable access for installation—all opt-out charges will be waived and removed from the customer’s account as applicable.

After the Waiver Period

If the customer elects to have a smart meter installed **after** the waiver period has expired:

- Opt-out charges will continue to be billed; and
- No refunds will be issued for any opt-out charges paid prior to election to have a smart meter installed beyond the waiver period described above.
- Charges will cease upon the earlier of:
 - Installation of a smart meter; or
 - Thirty (30) days after the Town receives customer notification, provided reasonable access is allowed for installation.

Multiple Meters

Customers with multiple meters—whether serving a single property or multiple properties—must specify, by account number, which meters are being enrolled in the AMI/Smart Meter Opt-Out Program. Fees will apply separately to each individual meter enrolled in the opt-out program.

How to Request Opt-Out

Requests to opt out of AMI metering for electric and/or water service must be submitted in writing by one of the following methods:

- Completion of the appropriate opt-out form: [\[link to form\]](#)
- Email: info@berlinmd.gov
- Written correspondence delivered to the Town of Berlin, Smart Meter Opt-Out Program, 10 William Street, Berlin, MD 21811

Additional Information and Meter-Specific Details

- Only the **Electric Utility AMI program** is regulated by the Maryland Public Service Commission. However, the Town of Berlin has chosen to offer opt-out guidelines for the Water Utility.

Electric Meters

If a customer opts out of AMI metering:

- The existing analog, AMR, or ERT* meter will remain in service.
- If that meter fails or requires replacement in the future, it will be replaced with the appropriate metering technology available at that time.

Water Meters

- At the time of the development of this policy, AMI-capable water meters have been or will be installed for all customers.
- For customers who opt out, the two-way communication capability of the water meter will be disabled.

*Meter Definitions

- **Analog Meter:** Requires on-site visual reading
- **AMR:** Automatic Meter Reading
- **ERT:** Encoder/Receiver/Transmitter

Smart Meter (AMI) Frequently Asked Questions

What is Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI)?

Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI), also known as “smart meters,” is modern metering technology used by the Town of Berlin for Electric and Water Utilities. AMI meters:

- Provide more accurate and reliable readings
 - Allow meters to be read remotely using secure radio technology
 - Enable customers to view usage information through online portals, often in near real time
-

How can I access my meter information online?

- **Water Utility Portal:** <https://townofberlin.my360-app.com>
 - **Electric Utility Portal:** Information will be provided once the program is fully operational
-

Do I have the right to opt out of a smart meter?

Yes. Under Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) regulations, electric utility customers may choose not to participate in the AMI program. Although water utilities are not regulated by the PSC, the Town of Berlin offers a similar opt-out option for water customers as a courtesy.

What does it mean to opt out?

Opting out means that your electric and/or water meter will not actively use AMI communication technology. Customers who opt out remain responsible for manual meter reading and related administrative costs, which are recovered through opt-out fees.

What are the opt-out fees?

Opt-out fees apply **per meter** and include:

- **One-time fee:** \$75.00
 - Billed in three (3) equal monthly installments
- **Monthly fee:** \$17.00 per meter, per month as long as the meter is enrolled in the program.

These charges will appear as separate line items on your utility bill.

When will opt-out charges begin?

After you enroll in the opt-out program, your first bill will include:

- The first installment of the one-time fee, and
 - The monthly opt-out fee
-

Can I change my mind after opting out?

Yes. You may discontinue the opt-out program at any time by choosing to have a smart meter installed, provided you allow reasonable access for installation.

Is there a fee waiver if I change my mind?

Yes. If you agree to have a smart meter installed **within five (5) billing cycles** of when opt-out charges first appear on your bill:

- All opt-out charges will be waived and removed from your account
 - Reasonable access for installation must be provided
-

What happens if I change my mind after the waiver period?

If you request smart meter installation after the five-billing-cycle waiver period:

- Opt-out charges will stop when:
 - A smart meter is installed, or
 - Within 30 days after the Town receives your request, provided installation access is allowed
-

What if I have more than one meter?

Customers with multiple meters must specify, by account number, which meters are opting out. Opt-out fees apply separately to each meter.

How do I request to opt out?

Opt-out requests must be submitted in writing by one of the following methods:

- Complete the opt-out form: [\[link to form\]](#)
 - Email: info@berlinmd.gov
 - Written correspondence delivered to the Town of Berlin
-

What happens if I opt out of an electric smart meter?

- Your existing analog, AMR, or ERT meter will remain in service
 - If that meter fails or must be replaced in the future, it will be replaced with the appropriate technology available at that time
-

What happens if I opt out of a water smart meter?

- AMI-capable water meters are installed for all customers
 - If you opt out, the two-way communication feature of the water meter will be disabled
-

Are electric and water smart meters regulated the same way?

No. The Electric Utility AMI program is regulated by the Maryland Public Service Commission. The Water Utility is not PSC-regulated; however, the Town applies similar opt-out guidelines for consistency and customer convenience.

What do these meter terms mean?

- **Analog Meter:** Requires on-site visual reading
- **AMR (Automatic Meter Reading):** One-way automated meter reading
- **ERT (Encoder/Receiver/Transmitter):** A device that transmits meter data



Mayor & Council of Berlin

10 William Street, Berlin, Maryland 21811

Phone 410-641-2770 Fax 410-641-2316

www.berlinmd.gov

AMI/Smart Meter Opt-Out Request form

By submitting the form below, or otherwise requesting in writing, I acknowledge that I have read the Town of Berlin AMI Opt-Out Policy and agree with the terms and conditions described.

- I understand that I will be billed a one-time fee of \$75.00, payable in three monthly installments, as well as a \$17.00 monthly fee, until such time as I may inform the Town of Berlin that I no longer wish to participate in the Opt-Out program.
- I understand that the Town of Berlin must receive approval from the Maryland Public Service Commission for fees for the Electric Utility Smart Meter opt-out.
- I further understand that these fees are payable for each meter for the accounts identified.

If the customer is requesting to Opt-Out for multiple accounts, a separate form must be submitted for each account. Or the customer may submit written correspondence listing each applicable account. It is acceptable to attach a separate page listing each applicable account with this signed form, provided the relevant information requested below is included.

Requests must be sent to:

**Town of Berlin
AMI Opt-Out
10 William Street
Berlin, MD 21811**

Or by email to: info@berlinmd.gov

Accountholder name: _____

Physical Address of account: _____, Berlin, MD 21811

Account number: _____

Type of Account: Electric Water/Sewer

Contact information for questions:

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Printed Name: _____



Town of Berlin Budget Schedule for FY 2027

Date	Topic	Public Comment Information
April 9 th 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM	Staff Meeting to discuss General Fund FY 2027 Budget General Fund Revenues. Departments discuss operating budgets and capital projects.	Mayor, Town Administrator, Department Heads
April 9 th 1:00 PM to 4:30 PM	Staff Meeting to discuss Utility Fund FY 2027 Budget Utility Funds Revenues. Departments discuss operating budgets and capital projects.	Mayor, Town Administrator, Department Heads
April 13 th 6:00 PM Mayor & Council Meeting	Financial Highlights General Fund and Enterprise Funds Budgeted vs Actual FY 2026	
April 20 th 5:00 PM Work Session	General Fund Budget Work Session: Town Departments, Fire Company, and Fire Company EMS	Work sessions are designed for the Mayor and Council to meet with department heads, the fire company, and EMS. No comments from the public will be taken.
April 27 th 6:00 PM Mayor & Council Meeting	Introduction/First Reading of the Tax Rate and Constant Yield Rate by Council (Ordinance 2026-xx)	No action is required by the Council.
May 4 th 5:00 PM Work Session	Utilities Fund Budget Work Session: Electric, Water, Wastewater, Stormwater Funds	Work sessions are designed for the Mayor and Council to meet with department heads. No comments from the public will be taken.
May 11 th 6:00 PM Mayor & Council Meeting	Public Hearing on the Tax Rate Adoption and Constant Yield Rate by the Council (Ordinance 2026-xx)	Opportunity for public input. Action needed by Council.
May 26 th Tuesday 6:00 PM Mayor & Council Meeting	Introduction/First Reading of the Budget (Ordinance 2026-xx)	No action is required by Council
June 8 th 6:00 PM Mayor & Council Meeting	Public Hearing on the Budget and Adoption by the Council (Ordinance 2026-xx)	Opportunity for public input. Action needed by Council.

The Town of Berlin values our citizens' input during the budgeting process. If you have any questions, contact Town Hall, the Mayor's office, or your Councilmember.

Town Hall: 410-641-2770

Mayor's Office: 410-641-3853



February 23, 2026 Weekly Report

Departments This Week:

Town Administration

- SAVE-THE-DATE
 - Monday, February 23: Regular Session 6:00 PM
 - Tuesday, February 24: Ethics Commission Meeting, 1:00 PM; Closed Session to immediately follow.
 - Monday, March 9: Closed Session TBD; Regular Session 6:00 PM
 - Monday, March 23: Closed Session TBD; Regular Session 6:00 PM
- ADU legislation: A joint Worksession of the Mayor and Council and the Planning Commission was held on Monday, February 9, 2026 at 5:00 PM for an initial discussion of the required Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) legislation. Additional information regarding future meetings will be announced
- Comprehensive Plan Update: Initial Work Session of the Mayor and Council and Planning Commission with Mead & Hunt was held Thursday, February 19th, at 6:00 PM in the Council Chambers. This is the first of what will be several opportunities through this process for public input, which is vital to the success of the project.
- Ongoing for Town Hall Renovations:
 - Staff is continuing to work on the contents of their individual offices as well as records.
 - The Visitor Center remediation work has been completed, and logistics will be discussed to begin relocating Town Hall personnel as appropriate in the coming weeks. Office closure to the public may occur; every effort will be made to provide as much advance notice as possible.
- Multipurpose Building Demolition: This project has gone to publication for the bidding process. Bid opening is scheduled for March 18th.
- The Smart Meter Opt-Out program is on the agenda for Monday, February 23rd. The program being proposed at this time encompasses both Electric and Water meters, but the Electric Meter portion will require additional scrutiny by the Public Service Commission before implementation.
- Water leak awareness: This time of year, with temperatures freezing and thawing and then freezing and thawing again, water leaks are a significant problem and these last few weeks have been no exception. Often the problems don't become apparent until the temperatures rise, thawing the pipes and releasing the water under pressure, causing pipe breakage and leaks. The new Smart Meters are providing virtually real-time awareness of when and where leaks are occurring, allowing staff to react much more quickly - in the past leaks often went undetected for days (or longer). Of course, if people notice what appears to be unusual amounts of water on streets or sidewalks, or even in neighbor's driveways or yards, the Water Department, or Town Hall, should be contacted immediately. Typically, the problem is on the customer's side of the meter, and therefore the customer's responsibility, but Town crews need to respond to cut the water off until the property owner can address it.

Economic and Community Development

- Attended the Taste of the Eastern Shore event in Annapolis to advocate for continued grant funding for the Berlin Main Street District.

- Invited to speak about downtown Berlin at the October Main Street Maryland Conference in Hagerstown.
- Actively coordinating and securing vendors for the Vintage and Vinyl event scheduled for April 18.
- Attended the Berlin Chamber of Commerce Board meeting.
- Drafted and submitted testimony letters for the upcoming legislative session in support of continued Main Street Improvement Program grant funding.
- Wrote and completed the AARP Community Challenge Grant application to rebuild the town stage. This is a no-match grant and does not require town funding.
- Purchased additional high-top tables using Main Street Improvement Program grant funds for use at town events.
- Mid-grant term Meeting with Main Street Maryland regarding the Berlin Main Street program.
- Arranged free carriage rides for Valentine's Day in downtown Berlin.
- Continued cleanup and organization efforts at the Berlin Welcome Center.
- Attending the Worcester County Liquor Board meeting on 2/18 to advocate for legislation allowing restaurants and bars within the approved event footprint (downtown) the option to sell consumable alcohol to-go during the event.
- Working on our Maryland State Arts Council A&E District grant: \$15,000

Electric

- Buckingham Lane-Circuit 210 Outage-Tree Issue.
- William Street Outage-Melted fuse.
- Graham Ave-Replaced Cutout & Arrestor.
- Dueling Way-Installed Underground Electric Service.
- Buckingham Lane-Installed Inline Disconnects.
- Electric Department Safety Meeting.
- Street Light Repairs-Variou Locations.
- AMI Meter & Gateway Installs-Variou Locations.
- Attending Active Shooter Training.
- Electric Cutoffs.
- Power Plant-Peak Shaving & Maintenance.
- **Note: I received a call on Tuesday 2/10 from Worcester County Emergency Services requesting disconnect of power to a house fire located on Poplar Rd. I was able to disconnect power remotely within one minute of the call. House fire was a false alarm. Reconnected power remotely once fire department determined it was a false alarm.**

Finance Director

Continues to work on:

- FY 2027 Budget scheduling and scenarios preparation.
- FY 2026 half-year performance. Preparation of financial highlights.
- FY 2026-2027 capital projects, water resources, and lead replacement projects.
- Tyler's on-cloud hosting credit card processing software.
- Tyler credit card processing discussions.
- Grants, water loans, public works bond, MWIFA loans.
- Bank accounts review, positive pay submissions.
- CDA Bond paperwork, requisitions for bond reimbursements.
- Delinquent accounts review.

- Public Service Commissioner's reports and submissions, PCA calculations – Michelle.
- DBF invoices review and processing.
- EA invoices review and processing.
- Credit card payments and processing- Shirley.
- Bank reconciliations – Melissa.
- Journal entries and invoices – Linda.
- Electric rate study paperwork and necessary reports for evaluation, working with Booth and Assoc-in process.
- Water and electric meter readings - Michelle.
- Check processing and credit card payments, review registers, checks, and the Town's card payments – Shirley.
- Department meetings scheduled, projects, and planning.
- Employees' training, new customer service representative start date 02/23.
- GFOA standing committee meeting upcoming in January.
- Implementation of new Tyler modules for code enforcement, assets, and project accounting, January.
- Records keeping, cleaning, shredding, and moving out of Town Hall.

Human Resources Department

- Processed payroll and all related reports on 02/09/26.
- Packing for the renovations.
- Conducted Police Chief Interviews, Customer Service Interviews, and Police Cadet interviews. Still working through those decisions.
- Still working with the SHRM Handbook builder tool, it has been on hold for more pressing issues. Once finished, I will present it to the Mayor and Council.
- Responded to several federal and state agencies' requests for various information, labor statistics, employment verifications, unemployment claims, etc.
- Ocean City's Police Lieutenant, Kyle Murray, conducted Active Shooter Training for our staff on 02/11/26.
- Two Workers' Compensation claims filed.
- Open positions:
 - Police Communications Officer (part-time) – Police
 - Police Officers (four) – Police
 - Chief of Police – Police

Planning Department

- Attended HDC meeting 2/4/26- 4 cases.
- Attended Planning Commission meeting 2/11/26- 2 cases.
- Attended ADU work session.
- Led the February Monthly Project Review meeting.
- Attended Active shooter training.
- Taking online Planning courses.
- Ongoing review of development projects.
- Continuous cataloging of completed project plans.
- Received permits for: Fence- 2, Renovation- 2, Roof- 1, Demo- 1, Accessory building- 1.
- Released permits for: Roof- 1, Shed- 1, Sign- 1, Fence- 2, Excavation- 2.
- Received applications for: Business License- 2, Contractors License- 1.

- Issued door tags/corrective action letters for: Lighting- 1, Removed illegal advertising signs- 2, Dilapidated sign- 1.
- Prepared maps for Pedestrian/Bikeway Crossing presentation.
- Compiled data for Comp Plan meeting.
- Reviewing property data with insurance policy information.
- Worked with Electric Dept to obtain GIS data.

Police Department

- 2/3: Lt. Fisher - Senate Bill 907 Eastern Qtr. Regional L.E. Coordination Call.
- 2/7: Lt. Fisher, Sgt. Collins, Sgt. Bragg, Cpl. Lloyd, Cpl. Bratten, PCO Purnell, PCO Kelly, PCO Moore, PCO Antypas, PCO Carmean, Bernita.
- Attended retirement celebration for Chief Downing.
- 2/9: Sgt Collins - Working on two backgrounds for applicants.
- 2/11: Pfc Shockley - Met with “Behind the Lines” scheduling mental health and wellness training.
- 2/12: Sgt Collins - K-9 training Anne Arundel County (Navy/Marine Corp stadium).
- Collisions – 4.
- Arrest – 1.

Public Works

- We have completed shoulder work on Decatur St., adding millings to preserve the edge of the roadway. We will continue this in other areas needed around town.
- PW will be addressing areas of road deterioration in Henry’s Mill this week, cutting out pieces of affected roadway and putting down roadway surface.
- We continue to be on the lookout for pothole around town and have been addressing them as we see them or as they are reported to us.
- The welcome center is in its final stages of renovation in preparation for the move of staff from town hall. We anticipate being completely done at the end of this week.
- Trash and recycling collection continues as normal.
- Weekly parks maintenance and trash collection in parks continues as well.

Water Resources

- Staff attended the Active Shooter Training at Town Hall.
- Multiple water shut offs for frozen/busted pipes.
- Mixer Motor failed at the WWTP. Aerial Crane assisted in the replacement of the motor.
- Electrical work at Franklin Knol, Decatur Street lift station, WWTP.
- Jamey, Dave, Hannah attended a lunch & learn on the new Swordfish device for testing water lines.
- Pulled sludge pump out at the WWTP.
- Worked on multiple lift stations.
- Hauled sludge.
- Cleaned post EQ Tank.
- Worked on frozen pipes at the WWTP.



Check Run Report
will be posted when available.