

# MAYOR'S REPORT

## FEBRUARY 28, 2013

With spring about a month away, things will be very busy in City Hall. With the new City Manager search going full steam ahead, the preliminary search committee has narrowed the field to 10 applicants. There were over 40 people who applied for the position. This process would be very daunting had it not been for the City Council's wise decision to employ the free services of Primex, the city's insurance carrier. Carl Weber and Rick Alpers of Primex have extensive background in aiding communities develop a recruitment process for their top management people, being elected and appointed officials themselves in their careers. We hope to begin the actual interview process the first of April, so we are on target of having a new City Manager here on August 1<sup>st</sup>.

It's budget season again and City Council members will be quite busy beginning mid-March. Things are always difficult as there never seems to be enough money to meet the true needs of the community. We are really working hard to convince Concord that level funding of the state education grant is critical for us to keep moving forward while we continue to address surplus housing in Berlin. Add to the difficulties is the huge uncertainties the utilities are creating statewide with their property value appeals. They seem to want it both ways, often times paying way above market value when acquiring new assets from other utilities, then saying they aren't worth what they pay for them. Luckily, Senator Woodburn has been proactive in dealing with this at the legislative level. Berlin has about 33 percent of it's value in utility property so the least bit of change could cause the tax rate here to skyrocket. That is why this issue has been so important.

I had a chance to review and analyze Governor Hassan's budget recommendations and I have to say she's got it right in all areas. The state is finally taking on additional responsibility with respect to the huge mental health problems this state is facing. The Governor's budget restores funding to communities to help pay for water and wastewater treatment projects that were promised by law. Berlin has always supported gaming as a revenue source for the state, and we have gone on record again last week to support Governor Hassan's new efforts. Without this new important revenue source, the House of Representatives, controlled by Democrats, will essentially be re-arranging the chairs on the deck of the Titanic, pushing more and more of its responsibilities

onto the cash strapped cities and towns.

It's high school tourney time and I want to take a moment to wish all of our student athletes the best of luck. The Berlin High School basketball team will be looking to defend its state title and the undefeated BHS Mountaineers will be looking for their first hockey crown in nearly 40 years. The lady Mountaineers hockey team closed out their season with a big win and really look to go deep in their state tourney. GO GET'EM MOUNTIES !!!!!!!!!!!

Lastly, I want to wish my dear friend, Executive Councillor Ray Burton, a speedy recovery from recent cancer treatment. Ray is as tough as nails, keeping a public schedule that a pro athlete would struggle with. Councillor Burton is well respected by leaders and voters from all walks of life and he works hard for his "boss", the people of his district. Hurry back Ray!!

Until Next Time,



Paul Grenier