

Memo

To: Berlin City Council
From: Jim Wheeler, City Manager
Date: 1/4/2021
Re: City Manager's Report

1. Cross Excavation has predominantly removed the building adjacent to the Fire Station following the demolition of 4 & 8 Main St. They are expected to complete work on this site by the end of this week.
2. Relative to current tax bill and as a reminder, Governor Sununu's Emergency Orders #25 and #56 authorize communities "to enter into agreements with property taxpayers for the payment of property taxes on an agreed schedule, which may include a reduction or waiver of any interest on such taxes." At their July 20, 2020 meeting the Council authorized waiving interest if the balance of the full principal of taxes and sewer on all properties in the same ownership is paid in full. There is more information on the City's web site at; <https://www.berlinnh.gov/tax-collector/pages/opportunity-have-interest-waived-overdue-taxes-and-sewer>
3. The Public Works Department will be picking up Christmas Trees in Precincts 1 and 4 on Friday, January 8th and Precincts 2 and 3 on Friday, January 15th. Christmas trees may also be taken to the AVRDD Transfer Station on Rte 110 in accordance with AVRDD rules or dropped off at the Tondreau Parking Lot adjacent to the Mason Street Bridge.
4. The City was notified on November 18, 2020 that the Board of Tax and Land Appeals has scheduled an [evidentiary hearing for Tuesday, January 12, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.](#) This hearing will be conducted remotely via Cisco's WebEx platform. The Clerk of the BTLA will, in advance of the hearing date, obtain e-mail addresses to provide information regarding how to participate in this remote hearing.
5. On December 30th, 2020 Pam Laflamme, myself, Burgess Biopower and our technical team participated in a de-briefing with a representative from the Federal Highway Administration on our BUILD application submitted in 2020 for the Downtown Reconstruction Project. The FHA offers de-briefings to help applicants improve their chances on future submissions. During the call we learned that FHA received 656 applications in 2020. Those applications represented approximately \$10B in requests. The BUILD program has approximately \$1B in funding. All applications are initially put into one of four categories including; Highly Recommended, Recommended, Acceptable and Not Acceptable. Only those applications that are rated Highly Acceptable go on for further consideration. Of the 656 total applications, 236 were rated Highly Recommended. Berlin's application was one of these. In the end, of the 236 Highly Recommended applications, only 70 received awards. Nonetheless, it was very encouraging to learn how well we did in the process. We learned several things which we believe will help us improve our chances in a future round.
6. Happy New Year!