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## Letter from the Chair

Dear Residents,

Fall season is upon us with its vibrant colors and cooler weather and your trustees, township employees, and members of other boards have been diligently working to ensure that we maintain a safe, healthy, and thriving community.

Change is inevitable, and much like the changing seasons, our township is no exception. With numerous zoning projects underway, the opening of new Olentangy schools, and several important township initiatives, we are committed to finding innovative and fiscally responsible ways to enhance our community's capacity for the benefit of all residents.

For example, thanks to the Zoning staff, we are modernizing the zoning permit and payment process to offer convenient electronic transfer options. In addition, the Zoning Commission has recommended your trustees adopt a new Comprehensive Land Use Plan for zoning that offers a vision for future development. Our dedicated Parks and Trails Advisory Committee has worked with Mid-Ohio Regional Planning to propose recommendations for current and future trail opportunities that are now available.

I am also pleased to announce the recent renaming of Fairview Cemetery to Evergreen Memorial and residents will soon see upgrades to reflect this change.

Looking ahead, over the next six months we will continue our rebranding efforts by refreshing the township entry signs. In addition, we will be updating the zoning resolution to ensure harmony with our Comprehensive Land Use plan.

As always, residents are encouraged to attend all township events and together we will continue to make our township a great place to live for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Meghan B. Raehl  
Chair, Board of Trustees  
Berlin Township

## Updates from Fire Department

A couple key considerations from your Fire Department:

### Can we get to your house in an emergency?

While driving in the township conducting routine inspections, our Senior Fire Inspector, Lt. Craig Hall, made an important observation. He observed many residents who have potential access issues. Before the wintry snow is upon us, you may want to take a few moments to look at the access to your house.

### Do you have enough clearance to allow our fire apparatus to access your home in an emergency?

Berlin Township recommends that your driveway or access road have at least 12 feet of vertical and horizontal areas that are clear of bushes, shrubs, and trees, including any overhead obstructions from limbs. We don't expect your driveway to be this wide, however, there will be a wide array of apparatus responding to your home depending on the emergency, including Engines, Tankers, and Ladder Trucks. These trucks come in many sizes, but they all require clear access to respond to the emergency while minimizing damage to the trucks and your property.

This would also be a good time to ensure your home's entry areas are free from obstructions or clutter. Firefighters may enter from a front or rear entry door, garage doors, or even windows. A small investment of your time now will bring great dividends in allowing your Firefighters to access the emergency in a quick and efficient manner. Remember a fire often doubles in size every 30 seconds

## Updates from Zoning Department

Berlin Township Zoning Department has continued to upgrade processes and improve efficiencies for residents! Welcoming our new workflow process, we are introducing our new Community Development Software, iWorQ. This system will allow Berlin Township to streamline day-to-day operations and create succinct efficiency for our community members and contractors. iWorQ includes a new permitting software, code enforcement software and payment processing management. This system will also include access to making online payments via credit card or debit card. The go-live date for this system is tentatively 10/14/2023.

As of 9/22/2023, Berlin Township has welcomed 100 new homes to the Township. Give a warm welcome to the new community members!

The Zoning Commission diligently worked on revising the 2023 Comprehensive Land Use Plan. You can follow this process via YouTube and Facebook live streams and check out the current draft on the township website.

As a friendly reminder, boating and camping days continue through the end of the season so make sure your recreational vehicles are stored correctly and in accordance with the Resolution. No boats, RVs, campers or any such item should be parked in front of your residence.

If you have any questions, please contact Inspector Jake Bon at: [zoninginspector@berlintwp.us](mailto:zoninginspector@berlintwp.us).

## Resident Pro Tip

**Road Superintendent Tip:** Consider checking your mailbox now while the weather is good. When the snow falls and the road is plowed, your mailbox may take some serious snow being directed its way. The icy and wet snow being plowed off the road can hit the box with a lot of force and cause damage if the box is in disrepair. Please check to see that the box materials are in good condition with fasteners fully in place. Plastic boxes and post are susceptible to sun damage and become brittle. The fasteners can be corroded and not capable of holding the mailbox together.

### Berlin Township Fire Department Annual Open House

Mark your calendars for the Berlin Township Fire Department annual open house. **Please join us on Sunday, October 22, 2023. The event will begin at 1 P.M. and conclude at 3 P.M.** Located at 2708 Lackey Old State Rd. Come and participate in a day of fun and learning for all ages. You can explore the fire trucks and equipment, meet the firefighters, ask questions, and participate in kid-friendly firefighter activities. There will be refreshments and candy as well. You don't want to miss this day of community and socializing!

## Updates from Roads Department

As the days grow shorter and the nights get longer winter will be here before we know it. We would like to take this time to ask for the residents' help this upcoming snow plowing season. When the forecast is for a measurable snowfall, we ask for 3 things to help the road crew: **First**, park vehicles in off street parking to make plowing and clean-up more effective. Our **second** request is to keep trash cans out of the street, the plows do not necessarily have to hit them to knock them over, as the force of the snow rolling off the plow may make them tumble over, which when full, makes a mess. The **third** request is the most important and has to do with the safety of our children. As operators of these trucks, we devote our attention simultaneously to many important safety factors. We ask people to educate youth to stay a safe distance from the trucks. Children love to play in the snow and love to watch the snow plow as it goes by. But we ask that children stay a safe distance from the road when snow plowing may occur. The trucks are large and **DO** have blind spots just like school buses. Again, thank you for your cooperation this winter season.

### Roundabout Safety

There are many roundabouts now in Berlin Township which are doing a good job of moving traffic through busy intersections. Something to be aware of is the aprons paved in the middle of the roundabout. These aprons are there to provide space for large vehicles to negotiate the intersection. Automobiles and small vehicles do not normally use these aprons and it would be easy to incorrectly think the area could be used for foot traffic, which is not true. This space should never be used other than for large vehicles. Never walk or allow anyone to use the apron area as a shortcut through the intersection. All non-vehicle traffic should be done outside the roundabout. Use the sidewalks if available or use the grass outside the roundabout as a pedestrian. This should be taught to everyone as a safety measure.

### House Bill 33

The Ohio General Assembly has recently concluded the formulation of its biennial budget, known as House Bill 33, for the fiscal years 2024-2025. This legislation encompasses several provisions with implications for townships.

One notable and important change for townships is the prerequisites for placing a referendum on the ballot. The threshold for required signatures has increased from 8% to 15% of the voters in the last gubernatorial election. Although this represents a substantial increase, it signifies a compromise from the originally proposed 25% threshold outlined in the Senate's version of the bill.

A critical point of interest is the modification of the Local Government Fund (LGF), which serves as a primary source of income for townships from the state government. The LGF allocation has been adjusted from 1.66% to 1.7%. At first glance, this change might suggest increased funding for townships. However, it is crucial to understand that the LGF is linked to the General Revenue Fund (GRF). Due to tax reductions within the GRF, Berlin and other townships will need to anticipate reduced state funding compared to previous years.

For more detailed information regarding the bill and its provisions, please visit: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/135/hb33>

**RETURN ADDRESS:**  
3271 Cheshire Rd.  
Delaware, OH 43015

PRSRT STD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
COLUMBUS, OH  
PERMIT NO. 8559

## CURRENT RESIDENT OR

### Berlin Township Zoning Commission (BZC)

Darcy Kaplan  
Vice-Chair

Angela Brown  
Keith Goshia  
Jenny Sloas

BZC Alternates  
Jasper De Christopher  
Tara Shields

Zoning Clerk  
Lisa Knapp

### Berlin Township Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA)

Don Sutton  
Chair

Jason Acevado  
Brad Cook  
Michele Cook  
Larry Harmon

BZA Alternates  
Jessica Kuenzli  
Quinn Machan

Zoning Clerk  
Lisa Knapp

**DON'T MISS OUT!** Residents can stay up to date with the latest township news at: [www.berlintwp.us](http://www.berlintwp.us)

## From the Fire Chief's Desk

### Berlin Township Beggar's Night

Berlin Township Beggar's night is October 31st from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Subdivision's are welcomed to set their own date.

Parents are urged to use caution when taking children out for trick or treat.

#### Remember:

- Turn on outside lights if you're participating in the fun.
- Carry a flashlight to increase visibility!
- Use costumes and treat containers that allow walking without tripping!
- Use sidewalks whenever possible!
- Be safe and have fun!



The Berlin Township Fire Department is facing the end of an era of sorts. Assistant Fire Chief Joe Pichert is resigning from his position. Joe has been with Berlin Township for nearly 20 years. He was the very first full-time paid Firefighter for Berlin. Since day one, Joe has been dedicated to the Fire Department and, more importantly, Berlin Township residents.

He always strived to be the best Firefighter he could be, always trying to improve himself and the department's readiness to respond to emergencies. Joe secured grants to obtain much-needed safety equipment for the Firefighters at reduced or no cost to the taxpayers.

He was instrumental in successfully building the current fire station and procuring most of the Fire Apparatus. He is linked to almost every positive part of the modern Berlin Township Fire Department. Joe's efforts were rewarded with his promotion to Lieutenant in May 2009 and Assistant Fire Chief in 2014. I have known and worked with Joe since he was a Fire Explorer in high school. He positively affects the lives of everyone he meets; that's just the person he is. We will genuinely miss Chief Joe. He has certainly left his "mark" on all of us including the Fire Station. Assistant Fire Chief Joe Pichert, you will be missed. We wish you and your family health and happiness and continued success in your career as a Firefighter with the City of Worthington Division of Fire.