

SPECIAL COMMON COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA
MONDAY, JULY 28, 2025 AT 5:30PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, BERLIN CITY HALL, 2ND FLOOR
MEETING IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC & CITY HALL IS HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE
CITY MEETINGS CAN BE WATCHED LIVE OR RECORDED
ON THE CITY OF BERLIN YOUTUBE PAGE @CITYOFBERLIN5623

1. Call to order/Roll Call
2. Seat Virtual Attendees (if necessary)
3. General Public Comments. Registration card required (located at podium in Council Chambers). Comments will be limited to **3 minutes** per registrant. NOTE: No comments will be heard during this agenda item concerning any matter that has been or will be the subject of a public hearing, as the appropriate time for such comments is at the duly noticed public hearing, so that all interested persons can hear the comments and due process is preserved.
The public is welcome to register to speak regarding "Discussion of the future of the Berlin Aquatic Center".
4. Discussion of the future of the Berlin Aquatic Center:
 - a. Structural condition of the pool
 - i. Capital improvement needs
 1. Approximately \$2M in repair needs identified in 2024 to continue to operate. Estimate does not include funds to bring the facility into ADA compliance or provide for amenity upgrades
 - b. Operational deficit of the pool
 - c. Options for funding structural repairs and project timeline
 - i. City Borrowing
 - ii. Community Donations
 - iii. Combination of Borrowing and Donations
 - iv. Unfunded – close pool
 - v. Unfunded – sell or donate pool
 - d. Creation and Posting of Senior Center and Aquatic Center Manager Position
5. General Public Comments. Registration card required (located at podium in Council Chambers). Comments will be limited to **2 minutes** per registrant.
6. Old Business (To be used to request items of old business be put on a future agenda for further discussion or action; or used to make a motion for reconsideration of an item from the current meeting or immediately previous meeting; or to make a motion to take items off the table which were laid on the table only during the current meeting.)
7. New Business (To be used to request items of new business be put on a future agenda)
8. Adjourn.

Note: In adherence to the City of Berlin Public Meeting Participation Policy, public participation will be allowed under each agenda item at the discretion of the presiding officer, with the exception of the Consent Agenda. Attendees must register their intention to participate on either a general comments section or a specific agenda item prior to the meeting by filling out a Registration Card, which can be obtained from the Internet, City Clerk's office or in the City Hall Council Chambers at the podium. Registration Cards should be turned in prior to the meeting to either the presiding officer or City Clerk.

Please note, upon reasonable notice, efforts will be made to accommodate the needs of disabled individuals through appropriate aids and services. For additional information to request services, contact the municipal Clerk at 920-361-5400.

It is possible that members of and possibly a quorum of members of other governmental bodies of the municipality may be in attendance in the above stated meeting to gather information; no action will be taken by any other governmental body except by the governing body noticed above.

**CITY OF BERLIN
SPECIAL COMMON COUNCIL MEETING
STAFF REPORT**

TO: Common Council
FROM: Jessi Balcom, City Administrator
AGENDA ITEM: Options for the Future of the Berlin Aquatic Center
MEETING DATE: Monday, July 28, 2025 at 5:30PM

There are two sets of concerns for the pool – the first is the structural condition of the pool and the second is the operational deficit.

Structural condition of the pool – the estimate for repairs to the pool, which was prepared last year by Ramaker, is about \$2M. The cost of fixing the structural/maintenance deficiencies of the pool is anticipated to be greater than this due to inflation, possible economic factors, further wear and tear on the pool, etc. These repairs would bring the structure back to functioning as it was designed, however it would not address ADA concerns or provide for any enhancements or upgrades.

Options for funding include- **City borrows for the repairs.**

Donations/community raises funds.

Combination of borrowing and donations.

Unfunded – **City closes (possibly razes) the pool**
Or the City no longer owns the pool
(structure is sold or donated)

City borrows for the repairs. Because the City does not have cash on hand to address the structural needs of the pool and would not be able to absorb the anticipated costs into the City's operational budget, funding will have to come from another source. Due to levy limits, and the City's inability to raise the levy, other than by the issuance of debt, city funding of the pool repairs would have to be borrowed.

The City is working to develop/update the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The purpose of this plan is to list all of the City's assets (that need/will need maintenance or replacement) and future capital projects (which will most likely require borrowing to fund) to allow the Council to have a complete picture of the needs of the City and prioritize the City's funds to best address these needs.

This CIP has not been finalized, and the Council has not yet had an opportunity to review the needs of the community as a whole or to determine what level of debt funding would be most appropriate for the City to take on to address these needs and priorities. Due to this, the following is preliminary and several assumptions have been made by staff to produce this initial opinion:

Assuming that the City could begin to fund a steady capital improvement borrowing (to address the needs identified and prioritized in the CIP) of approximately \$500,000 per year (or \$1M every other year) to allow the tax levy for borrowing to be consistent and manageable from year to year (as debt will begin to fall off/be paid back as new debt is taken on), borrowing to repair the pool would utilize all of the funding planned to be used (borrowed for) for all capital projects and equipment for the next 4 (or more) years.

Other known expenses that will most likely be part of a future borrowing include:

- Remaining cost of the Fire Truck - a Fire Truck was ordered, and is currently being built, for \$950,174. The cost of the truck is being shared by all of the communities that are served by the Berlin Fire Department. The City of Berlin's portion of the cost is \$466,472 (\$266,472 of which has not yet been borrowed for, likely utilizing the City's anticipated CIP funds (borrowing) for more than half a year).
- Hwy 91 (in 2029) and Hwy 49 (in 2030) Connecting Highway projects. The City's portion of the cost of these State projects is not known at this time, but it is anticipated that each project will be more than a \$1M, likely utilizing all of the City's anticipated CIP funds (borrowing) for at least 4 years.
- Road repair/reconstruction – the City is responsible for approximately 43 miles of road. Assuming that a road will last around 25 years before significant repair is needed, the City would need to repair/rebuild about 1.75 miles of road per year to maintain the roads in good condition. A very rough estimate to complete this road work is \$1M per year (the cost to mill and overlay one mile of street is approximately \$0.5M.) If the City continues to repair streets at its current rate of 0.45 miles per year (since 2018 the City has reconstructed or mill and paved 3.62 miles of road), it will take the City 96 years to replace all of the streets in Berlin (43 miles / 0.45 miles per year). The current rate would utilize 100% of the \$500,000 anticipated to be borrowed per year. The \$1-2M cost of maintaining a 25-year maintenance schedule is well outside the anticipated ability of the City to borrow for such repairs (with total borrowing for all capital needs estimated to be \$500,000 per year).
- Other priorities of the Council. (To be determined following the completion of the CIP and with the development and adoption of the 2026 City (and future) budget(s)).

Donations/community raises funds. Because the City does not have cash on hand to address the structural needs of the pool and would not be able to absorb the anticipated costs into the City's operational budget, funding will have to come from another source. If the Council chooses to move forward with structural repairs to the

pool, the Community could be asked to support the project through donations to cover these costs. Should this option be utilized, several parameters will have to be identified and worked through:

Amount of funding needed – the preliminary estimate to bring the pool back to its designed capabilities is \$2M. Depending on the timeframe to completion (the longer the time period, the less accurate the current estimate will be and the more likely the cost of the project will increase), and the scope of the project (will the project address only the structural repairs noted in the estimate, or address ADA compliance issues as well, or provide any amenity upgrades), the total funding needed to complete the project is likely significantly higher than the approximately \$2M noted in the estimate generated last year.

Timeframe – there will need to be a project timeline developed. I would suggest that the pool be closed for some period of time (perhaps two years) to allow funds to be raised, the final project plans developed and final costs determined. The City would not operate the pool during this time. If the funds are raised within the project timeline, the City could initiate the project; if the funds are not raised the pool would be razed (or some another option the Council would determine) and planning for the future use of the City site could begin.

Combination of borrowing and donations. Another option would be to fund a portion of the pool repairs through donation and the remaining portion through borrowing. If this option is pursued, it is suggested that the Council determine an appropriate timeline for the pool project and commit to borrowing funds only after all of the funds needed to be raised through donation have been provided to the City. If the funds are not raised/received within the determined timeframe, the Council would not undertake the borrowing.

City closes (possibly razes) the pool. Under this scenario the Council would close the pool due to lack of operational funds and prioritization of other capital funding needs.

Staff has reached out to contractors to get an initial estimate of the cost to raze the pool and bathhouse structures. The cost of \$200,000-\$300,00 is preliminary, the numbers are approximate and for discussion purposes only. The City would plan to recover as much cost as possible thorough the scrapping of demoed materials. A very rough estimate of the annual cost to close/not run the pool is about \$7,500 a year to cover utility costs.

City no longer owns the pool (structure is sold or donated). Under this scenario the pool would be sold to the highest bidder or donated to a nonprofit. The City's code

of Ordinances currently outlines the process of the City disposing of surplus City property:

Sec. 2-868. - Disposition of surplus city property.



- (a) Whenever the common council determines that an item of property is surplus city property and the fair market value of the item is less than \$500.00, the department head responsible for the item shall dispose of such property as he or she shall determine in his or her discretion.
- (b) Whenever the fair market value of an item is more than \$500.00, and the common council has determined, pursuant to [section 2-867](#) that the item is surplus city property, the department head responsible for the item shall dispose of the property by:
 - (1) Donating it to a nonprofit organization within the city or to a governmental agency;
 - (2) Public auction; or
 - (3) Sale by sealed bid.
- (c) In the event of a public auction or sale by sealed bid, the item will be sold in as-is condition to the person submitting the highest bid; provided, however, that a lower bid submitted by a nonprofit organization or governmental agency may be accepted by the common council. The department head responsible for the item shall determine the time in which the successful bidder must remove the item. If the item is not removed within that time, the item shall revert to the city and the amount of the bid shall be forfeited to the city. If no bids are received, then the item shall be disposed of as directed by the common council.
- (d) No public auction or awarding of bids for surplus property shall occur unless a description of the item to be sold and an advance notice of the time and place for such auction or bid submission is first published.

(Code 1989, § 3-4-1(c))

Currently, the code only anticipates the property being donated to a nonprofit organization within the City or to a governmental agency; being sold at public auction; or being sold through the sealed bid process. If the Council would like to consider selling the pool to a nonprofit organization, or requiring that the purchaser/receiver of the pool guarantee that the pool would be open to the public as a pool for some period of time, the Council would first need to amend the City's Code of Ordinances to allow for such an action.

Sale or donation of the pool would mean that the pool, and the land it is on, would no longer be owned, maintained or controlled by the City. The new owner, depending on any requirements/terms agreed to in the sale/donation, would have the right to utilize the property as they saw fit (within zoning/municipal code and legal regulations). Additionally, there are significant concerns as to whether it is possible to overcome the financial challenge of operating at a net deficit and keep the pool compliant with State laws and safety standards.

Operational deficit of the pool – costs to operate the pool are approximately \$120,000 more per year than the revenues brought in for pool passes/entrance fees and the concession stand. Fixing the structural condition of the pool will not address the operational deficit.

Scott Zabel, Street Superintendent, has put together a memo RE: BERLIN AQUATIC CENTER which summarizes the pool's operations and anticipated costs to remain open or to close the pool for the next couple of years. This memo relays a best-case scenario, assuming that there are no failures of the electrical system, pump system, or safety situations. Both the electrical and pump systems are obsolete and failure would result in the immediate closure of the pool until such systems could be rebuilt (requiring significant funds).

DATE: 7/16/2025

TO: Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Scott Zabel

RE: BERLIN AQUATIC CENTER

BACKGROUND: If the pool continues to operate status quo without a plan in place the expected costs (needed to continue to operate) are:

2026: status quo operation but should expect roughly a \$120,000.00 loss.

2027: Replace the pool filtration system, the cost in the 2024 evaluation provided by Ramaker was \$170,000.00 that cost now is closer or going to exceed \$200,000.00. Keep in mind that this is just to keep the pool operating. There are still several unknowns that we could expect to fail such as pumps, motors, electrical and the constant loss of water and chemical from the basin due to the sinking issue by the large slide which was in the evaluation. Failure of any of these systems would require closing of the pool.

The projected loss will probably continue to exceed \$120k.

Days the pool was closed to date in 2025:

6- low attendance

3- weather related

2- staff issues

If the pool was taken out of service for a year the utility costs are estimated to be:

The utility costs associated to the pool even if it is not operating or out of season are for monthly gas, electric and water meter charges. During the winter months the basement mechanical room is heated to prevent freeze damage to the water conduit and related plumbing.

In 2020 the pool was out of service due to covid. The utilities budget in 2020 was \$22,000.00 with \$5,432.00 used. The utility budget for 2025 is \$27,500.00, the expected utility cost if closed is estimated to be \$7,500.00.

CITY OF BERLIN
POSITION DESCRIPTION
FOR
SENIOR CENTER & AQUATIC CENTER MANAGER

SUPERVISOR:	City Administrator
SHIFT/HOURS:	7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. M-F generally, (other hours as needed, Must cover pool operations in summer)

JOB SUMMARY

The Senior Center and Aquatic Center Manager is responsible for managing and overseeing the Senior Center and Aquatic Center. This involves the planning and coordination of senior programming, pool programming, regular and special event planning, and managing the senior nutrition and transportation programs. The Manager is directly responsible for working with various agencies to provide services and event planning for older adults, and for record keeping, bookkeeping functions, managing public relations and facility/staff coordination. Responsibilities also include the overall operational, staffing and mechanical aspects of the Aquatic Center and concession stand.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

- (1) Plans and directs training programs and development initiatives for Senior Center and Aquatic Center staff. Manager hires, trains, and directly supervises all Aquatic Center and Senior Center, nutrition, and transportation staff. Clearly defines and effectively delegates work assignments to staff; provides support and offers guidance to staff as they carry out their assigned tasks.
- (2) Supervises the pool, staff and swimmers during open hours of the pool. Manages day-to-day operations of the Aquatic Center, handling complaints, behavior problems, first-aid emergencies, etc.
- (3) Facilitate County senior nutrition program and senior transportation program and the development of long-range plans. Also includes researching and seeking out of potential grants or any governmental funding programs (including local, state, and federal programs on older adult programs and pool/aquatic needs), prepares and plans information pertaining to applications for state and federal funding of projects. When needed, performs duties of the cook for the nutrition program.
- (4) Serves as staff liaison to the Park and Recreation Commission and Committee on Aging; keeps Commission/Committee informed of pertinent issues and guides their

efforts to provide the City Council with meaningful advice. Provides all correspondence for commission/Committee (i.e. monthly agendas, commission meeting packet, coordinate minutes, maintain commission files, and any other correspondence that pertains to issues the commission must act upon.) Keeps the City Administrator informed of any important developments on a timely basis; attends Park and Recreation Commission, Committee on Aging, and City Council and all other meetings as required or directed; also serves on various committees as assigned.

- (5) Administers the camp ground and pavilion rental program. Manages reservations, collects fees, and ensures policies are communicated and up to date.
- (6) Directs public relations and marketing initiatives. Coordinates updates to City, Senior Center and Aquatic Center websites and social media, writes weekly press release to local papers and media outlets, coordinates advertising initiatives for campground and aquatic center, creates individual program and school flyers for distribution. Works with the school district, counties and other social service agencies to determine the needs of special population groups, which are economically or socially disadvantaged. Directs a strong public relations program; delivers presentations to community groups, professional groups and others; and oversees the development of promotional materials.
- (7) Attends seminars and continuing education to stay abreast of latest trends in senior needs and aquatic management, programming and maintenance. This includes memberships to related organizations in the field of aging, seniors and recreation as required and/or approved by the governing committee.
- (8) Develops and maintains effective communications with the school district and other community groups to avoid duplication of services and to ensure minimal conflicts with programs and maximum utilization of community facilities, including Public Library, Sr. Center, Civic groups (Kiwanis, Rotary, Jaycees, etc.), Adult Sports Leagues, Boys & Girls Club, etc.
- (9) Maintains accurate records of senior programming, and aquatic programs including program registration and data. Responsible for submission of all applicable weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annual or annual reports as required. This includes volunteer time, in-kind sheets, expenditures, facility use request and any others as needed due to local, state and federal guidelines.
- (10) Coordinate facility usage/rental (including senior center, schools, ball fields, pavilion use, campgrounds, etc.)

- (11) Receptionist duties as needed.
- (12) Responsible for all departmental purchases, cash deposits, payroll preparation and budgeting (senior nutrition, senior center, senior transportation and aquatic center and concession stand) as required by the City. Aid with cash management and prepare regular deposits of senior nutrition, transportation, program, and recreational facility usage fees.
- (13) Maintains records for Aquatic Center and handles lifeguard supervision, staffing, and training (CPR training, Lifeguard certifications, and standard first-aid).
- (14) Conducts pre-season in-service for all pool guards on pool maintenance, water testing, scheduling, first aid, emergency procedures, and daily procedures at the pool.
- (15) Orders all supplies and chemicals for the pool. Coordinates all cleaning and care of the pool (including, but not limited to, testing and maintaining water balance, care of amenities, cleaning of locker rooms, etc.)
- (16) Performs other duties as needed or assigned.

SKILLS & QUALIFICATIONS

- (1) At least three years of educational and/or experienced background in human services, therapeutic recreation, geriatrics, social work, pool management or a closely related field. Degree not required, but considered a plus.
- (2) Three years administrative and supervisory experience, preferably related to Senior Aging Needs and/or Pool Management including record and personnel management.
- (3) Working knowledge of community resources, activities and agencies geared to the needs and interests of older adults; working knowledge of the equipment, facilities, and operations.
- (4) The knowledge and ability to coordinate and manage promotional activities pertaining to senior and aquatic programming.

- (5) The ability to coordinate and manage the activities of personnel; the ability to prioritize and assign jobs, to prepare schedules and anticipate staffing needs.
- (6) Substantial knowledge of municipal senior and aquatic operations to include multidivisional budget preparation, capital improvement plan development and implementation, coaching and instructing.
- (7) Considerable knowledge of the field of aging and understanding of aging problems.
- (8) Knowledge of recreational activities and community resources and agencies providing service for citizens of all generations.
- (9) Knowledge and education on wellness for all generations and of state and federal agencies and their services for older adults.
- (10) The ability to communicate effectively in both written and verbal form with a variety of city personnel and members of the public, and maintain effective working relationships as well.
- (11) Multi-task oriented and ability to work positively with change.
- (12) Computer literacy including working knowledge of MS Word, Excel, Publisher, PowerPoint, recreation software, and Internet Explorer.
- (13) Valid driver's license.
- (14) Must have knowledge and ability to use various lifesaving equipment.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

- (1) Ability to occasionally lift and carry heavy objects of 10-50 lbs.
- (2) Ability to sit continuously for long periods of time, and occasionally reach above shoulders and bend.

- (3) While performing the duties of this job, the employee is frequently required to talk or hear; use hands to finger, handle, feel or operate objects, tools, or controls; and reach with hands and arms. The employee is frequently required to stand and walk.
- (4) Aquatic Center work is performed mostly outdoors and around the pool deck.
- (5) Eye-hand coordination is necessary to operate various pieces of equipment.
- (6) Must have excellent swimming ability as well as the strength required to rescue a patron using certified lifesaving techniques, as well as ability to react professionally in a lifesaving situation.

MINIMUM CERTIFICATIONS

All certifications must be obtained within 120 days of hire or prior to seasonal opening of Aquatic Center, whichever comes first.

- (1) Current CPO (Certified Pool Operator) certification or NRPA AFO (Aquatic Facility Operator Certification).
- (2) Current Pro-CPR Trained. (Pro-CPR Instructor Certification preferred.)
- (3) Current Lifeguard Certified. (Lifeguard Instructor preferred.)
- (4) First Aid Safety Instructor
- (5) Water Safety Instructor Certification
- (6) Serve Safe Certification