

April 10, 2008

Dear Commissioner,

On behalf of the **Berlin Performing Arts Center Research Committee** (BPAC), we would like to invite you to join the enormous ground swell of supporters from the community in the current phase of our Performing Arts Center Initiative. This is an exciting time. Right now, the sky's the limit. We have developed a venue that will impact all of our lives, our children's lives and all of those who will choose to settle in our wonderful community in the future.

The origin of the PAC committee actually goes back approximately five years. While Worcester County and Ocean City were updating their Comprehensive Plans, it became obvious that not only was there a desire but a need for a Performing Arts Center in Worcester County. At that time a group consisting of Ocean City and Berlin business owners, a number of City Council members, County Commissioners and the Director of Worcester County Tourism held a series of meetings to explore the need and sustainability of a Cultural and Performing Arts Center in our county.

These meetings led to an **Economic Feasibility Study** authorized by the County which clearly showed that a Performing Arts Center was indeed economically viable. The study confirmed that such a venue would fill a great cultural void in the community while providing a positive economic impact. Based on the results of the study and with the support of the County Commissioners, "to find a suitable location and to develop and to present a proposal" to the county for a Performing Arts Center, we have been working and making great strides towards this goal.

At this time, the Research Committee members have completed their "fact finding" mission. After having visited and interviewed over 20 PAC facilities within a 150 mile radius, the research committee compiled their findings while other committees went to work on the nuts and bolts of a general business plan, finance strategy, proposed location and preliminary design. We are prepared for the final stages in development.

At this time we are asking that the county to partner with private sector in order to complete this project. We are requesting a **one time** commitment of \$2.5 million (over the next 4-5 years) for the renovation of the existing historic Cannery building, beginning with \$200,000 in the coming budget. This amount will allow us to hire the technical professionals to finish the Architectural drawings, obtain the required permits and begin our fundraising stage. With your support, it will be possible to start construction January of '09 with completion within 9-12 months. The Performing Arts Center will be owned, maintained and financially supported by the Non-Profit entity PAC, Inc.

We understand the current budget challenges but while contractors are desperate for business, this is a very affordable time to build. We have an enormous amount of community support, which we will present to you on April 22nd as well as letters of financial support from private individuals, including a \$100,000 private donation from a local Arts advocate. The community believes in this project and agree it is 10 years overdue. Your financial support will make this Performing Arts Center possible!

Respectfully,