



BROOKE'S BPW BRIEF



Breaking down the Board of Public Works

Meeting Date

April 3, 2024

Summary Figures

The BPW approved 152 items, representing a total State expenditure of \$396.6 million including:

- 18 items awarding \$40 million to prime certified small businesses.
- 4 items awarding \$28 million to prime Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs).
- 9 items awarded with established participation goals for MBEs.
- 3 items awarding \$7 million to Employment Works Providers
- 1 item awarded with established participation goals for Veteran-owned Small Business Enterprises (VSBE).

TITLE IX SETTLEMENT

The BPW approved a request from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) and the Office of the Attorney General to approve a payment of up to \$4.1 million to settle a Title IX investigation into sexual discrimination against student athletes at UMBC.

In 2020, the U.S. Department of Justice opened an investigation into allegations that UMBC had failed to comply with its obligations under Title IX to respond to reports of student sexual abuse from members of the women's and men's swimming and diving team. **It found egregious and ongoing abuse and negligence by University actors over a multi-year period.**

The approved funding will be offered as settlement payments to the individuals identified by the DOJ during their investigation. Further, an agreement between UMBC and DOJ includes measures to enhance the strength, accountability, and independence of UMBC's Title IX office and requires additional university-wide training to improve UMBC's response to and prevention of sexual abuse.

THE MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT FINANCING AUTHORITY

The BPW approved a request from the Department of Commerce to award Meridian Management Group, Inc. (Baltimore) a contract to provide management services for the Maryland Small Business Development Financing Authority (MSBDFA) Program. The 32-month contract was awarded at a cost of \$2.3 million. MSBDFA utilizes funds appropriated to make loans, investments, loan guarantees, and surety bonds to small and minority-owned businesses that do not meet the credit criteria required to obtain financing through traditional channels.

EASEMENT ACQUISITIONS

The BPW approved requests from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to grant a total of \$1.9 million in Rural Legacy Program funding to 3 recipients for 4 conservation easements, totaling 292 acres. The properties are located in Frederick, Baltimore (2), and Worcester Counties. The Rural Legacy Program preserves large, contiguous tracts of land to enhance natural resources, agricultural, forestry, and environmental protections.