



BROOKE'S BPW BRIEF



Breaking down the Board of Public Works

Meeting Date

July 3, 2024

ELECTRONIC BENEFITS TRANSFER SYSTEM

The BPW approved a request from the Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS) to award Conduent State & Local Solutions, Inc. (Washington, D.C.) a contract to **implement, operate, and maintain a web-based system for Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT)**. EBT is the electronic system that delivers Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, Temporary Cash Assistance, and Temporary Disability Assistance to recipients (943,000 Marylanders) and allows them to pay for food and other goods using these benefits. This 5-year contract was awarded at a cost of \$11 million.

The contract is currently under protest and, at the Comptroller's request, the agenda item was deferred from the June 5 BPW meeting to allow more time for review of the protest. The runner up filed a bid protest with DHS, alleging that the bid evaluation was arbitrary, capricious, and unlawful, while also failing to adhere to the selection process and criteria set forth in the RFP. DHS denied the protest and the losing offeror filed an appeal with the Maryland State Board of Contract Appeals. State law allows for the BPW to approve an item under protest if it is necessary to protect State interests - in this case, the protection of Marylanders from ongoing benefits theft.

Summary Figures

The BPW approved 136 items, representing a total State expenditure of \$524 million including:

- 13 items awarding \$44 million to prime certified small businesses.
- 4 items awarding \$20 million to prime Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs).
- 19 items awarded with established participation goals for MBEs; 3 with goals for Veteran-owned Small Business Enterprises.

CAPITAL GRANTS

The BPW approved a \$400,000 grant to the Greater Baybrook Alliance (GBA) for the renovation of a Bank of America branch building in Baltimore City's Brooklyn neighborhood, donated to GBA by the bank. GBA will transform the building into a vibrant community space that will contribute positively to the area's economic development and neighborhood identity.

GBA is non-profit community development corporation (CDC), responsible for a wide range of community building, neighborhood revitalization, and issue advocacy leadership for the South Baltimore peninsula.

RURAL LEGACY EASEMENT ACQUISITIONS

The BPW approved a request from the Dept. of Natural Resources to grant \$2.76 million in Rural Legacy Program (RLP) funding to acquire 5 conservation easements in Calvert, Caroline, Carroll, Talbot, and Wicomico Counties totaling 730 acres. The RLP was created by the General Assembly in 1997 to preserve valuable farmland, forests & natural areas.