

taken the recommendation to use the funds for community wide benefits. Mr. Calaman stated that the list is order from when they would be reimbursed. Mr. Lynch confirmed and that the last person on the list, the project was completed in 2012.

Mr. Webb stated that he thinks it should be paid out. Mr. Owen agrees.

**ACTION:** *Mr. Webb motions to consolidate accounts and pay off the green energy projects. Mr. Owen seconded the motion.*

*President Lee- Aye*

*A. Thomas Owen- Aye*

*Earl Webb- Aye*

*Richard Nichols- Aye*

#### **11. Open forum/ general discussion of the annual donation to the Lewes Fire Department.**

Mr. Calaman stated that historically, the Fire Department is the one and only donation the BPW makes. In 2020, the BPW made a donation \$40,000 to the Lewes Fire Department with \$5000 going to the EMS. Mr. Calaman questioned how much the city is contributing. Mayor Becker state that the city is donating \$60,000 and does not specify between the fire department and EMS. President Lee stated that in the past few years there has been a discussion if the BPW should do the donation and last year it was decided to divide up the between the two. President Lee stated that the Lewes Fire Department was notified that this was happening.

Mr. Panetta stated that the BPW is reliant on the fire department and ambulances to support operations. The BPW does high risk operations with high water pressure and electric. The fire department protects the BPW assets. Mr. Panetta stated that the Lewes Fire Department had assessed their needs last year or the year before and felt they were underfunded and not just by the BPW. Mr. Panetta reminded the Board that this is the only donation that the BPW makes to a non-profit and the BPW has a direct benefit. Mr. Panetta recommends increasing donation especially as costs have gone up in the era of COVID. Mr. Nichols questions is there a reason to suggest a separate breakout for the EMS. Mr. Calaman stated that it was due to COVID, and that the money was spread throughout the departments. Mr. Owen stated that EMS had been overloaded because of COVID and the BPW wanted to recognize them. Mr. Nichols questioned if the EMS is part of the fire department. Mr. Owen confirmed that it is. Mayor Becker corrected his previous statement, and that the city is donating 75 not 60. Mayor Becker stated that the city has also added a file on taxes for anyone who wishes to make a separate donation in addition to their taxes. Residents/taxpayers have been contributing over and above the \$75,000 that the city gives. This also goes directly to the fire department without an administrative fee. President Lee stated that residents are solicited individually as well.

Mr. Webb stated that it was discussed in a prior meeting developing policy that would have visibility to the 990n that shows the amount of revenue and the amount of cost associated with the fire department. That is pending a vote in the January meeting. Mr. Webb questioned if the Board should give money now or wait to look at that form. Mr. Webb does have last year's

numbers but does not have current data. Mayor Becker stated that the banquet where the check is normally presented occurs at the end of January and it has always been well received. President Lee stated that last year was a strange year. President Lee questioned Mr. Webb if he had any specific concerns. Mr. Webb stated that the data from 2020 shows that there was revenue of 3.29 million and expenses of 2.75 million and was 16.4 % positive. The data may say the Board needs to give more or less; Mr. Webb is unsure. Mr. Nichols questioned the data Mr. Webb is using and if it showed a breakout of what was siphoned to the EMS. Mr. Webb stated that it does not differentiate from EMS, just states fire department.

Mayor Becker stated that Lewes and Rehoboth departments are hit hard because of the way the county disperses the money and is currently under review. The contributions that the county makes are equal across the county. Lewes and Rehoboth are the two most busy fire departments and there is no recognition of the disparity between the responsible numbers and the money that actually flows to them. It has been discussed but no resolution yet.

Mr. Panetta stated that the policy regarding the financial forms should be adopted for next year. President Lee stated that this will be a problem next year unless it is requested sooner. Mr. Webb stated the revenue and expenses are listed. Mayor Becker stated the fire department is anticipating a new truck and there is obviously a substantial increase in numbers right now.

**ACTION:** *Mr. Panetta motioned to increase the BPW donation to \$50,000 considering inflation and demand on services like this. Mr. Nichols seconded the motion.*

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Webb stated that he voted to increase the donation last year as well. Mr. Webb referred to previous minutes and need for a water tower for fire flow. BPW pays for this and there are things that the BPW does to support the fire department. Mr. Webb stated that arguably the fire department has more money than the BPW according to the document. Mr. Panetta stated that the excess cash maybe allotted for a new truck, or something else. There are questions that do not have answers at this moment. Mayor Becker stated that the fire department will come and make a presentation, but it will not happen until February. President Lee questioned what the Rehoboth department gets in donation from the city, as the Lewes department receives two separate donations. Mr. Calaman stated that Rehoboth's received a donation of \$100,000. Mr. Panetta also stated that Rehoboth has more large businesses in comparison to Lewes.

Mr. Owen suggested an amendment to the motion for a 10% increase bringing the donation to \$44,000.

**ACTION:** *Motion to increase the BPW donation to \$50,000 passed with 3 votes in favor, 2 votes against, and 0 abstained.*

D. Preston Lee- yes  
A. Thomas Owen- no  
Thomas Panetta- yes

Earl Webb- no  
Richard Nichols- yes

## **12. Open forum/general discussion for the Wastewater Treatment Plant planning grant.**

President Lee stated that this topic started with conversations between himself, Mayor Becker, Khalil, and Representative Carper's office. The hope was to get federal money to have a study done at the wastewater treatment plant and find the best option moving forward. There has been talk of moving the plant, but President Lee does not think the BPW is at that point yet. President Lee stated that it makes sense to study the plant to see the options. Senator Lopez was onboard since the BPW was directed from Carper's office that it needed to come from the state. President Lee stated that the study will not be cheap, and he throw out \$100,000. Mr. Webb questioned who the money would go to. Mr. O'Donnell stated that the Board would hire an engineer. Planning grants are 50/50 matching. Mr. O'Donnell stated that for the resiliency part of it, the \$100,000 may cover it, but when looking to relocate, it is a big process. Mr. O'Donnell stated that the BPW looked into combining with the county 20 years ago with different outfalls and effluent. The more options, the more expensive the study will be.

Mr. Panetta stated looking at the resiliency part first will determine if the plant could be hardened and may negate the need to look at the second option. Mr. Panetta stated that doing a two-fold study is the best use of monies and energy. President Lee stated this is an unusual opportunity for grant funding and if it is available the BPW should do it. Mr. O'Donnell stated that the state will only reimburse the amount of money that GMB bills on a project. The funding expires over a certain period of time, usually a year. Mr. Panetta questioned if both could be done in a year. Mr. O'Donnell stated that it is a lot of work and phase two takes so much collaboration with other parties. Mr. Calaman stated that he made a presentation to council as far as projects that may qualify for ARPA and this may qualify. Mayor Becker stated that it may and that supposedly the final guidance on what the monies can be used for was issued last week. The Board will review this information. Mr. O'Donnell stated that Investments Innovation Act that recently passed is going to filter more money for grants on drinking water and wastewater side. President Lee stated that he was told that the planning money and capital money comes from two different pots. Mr. O'Donnell confirmed. Mr. O'Donnell stated that there is a Planning Advance grant where it awards funding for the study and the design, but forces to move forward with the construction of the project. Mr. Calaman stated that the BPW is currently utilizing the planning grant for the water study.

Mr. Webb questioned if the mitigation committee with the city and if it was funded in any way. Mayor Becker stated that it is strictly funded through the city unless DENREC awards a grant. Mayor Becker stated that the city has not done any study specifically recently. Mr. Webb stated that Scott, University of Delaware, has models that can give an idea of what it looks like over time. Mr. Webb referred to sea level rise. Mr. Panetta stated that the wheel