

**MINUTES OF THE  
MARYLAND STEM CELL RESEARCH COMMISSION**

Thursday, January 30, 2014

TEDCO Offices

Columbia, Maryland

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**Action Items from January 30, 2014**

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- 1. Dan will circulate the final results of the Economic Impact Study to the Commission via email.**
  - 2. The Commission will discuss the terms of the CIRM collaboration at the July 2014 meeting.**
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**Members in attendance:**

Rachel Brewster  
Margaret Conn Himelfarb  
Kevin Fitzgerald  
Diane Hoffmann  
Sharon Krag  
Debra Mathews  
David Mosser, Vice Chair  
Linda Powers  
Avram Reisner, Chair  
Noel Rose  
Ira Schwartz  
Curt Van Tassell  
Bowen Weisheit

**Staff in Attendance:**

Dan Gincel, MSCRF  
Kathleen Shaffer, MGH  
Sabrina Spinner, MSCRF

**The Commission meeting was called to order at 2:20 p.m.**

**I. Approval of Minutes**

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the September 24, 2013 meeting. A motion was made and seconded to approve the meeting minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

**II. Chairman Report**

Avram Reisner, Chair reported that TEDCO submitted its FY2015 budget proposal to DBM. The analysis resulted in cost containment for FY2014, reducing the MSCRF budget by \$185k. The recapture of funds will not have a material effect on the program. MSCRF is budgeted for \$10.4 million for FY2015, which is level funding from FY2014.

Avram indicated that he will accompany TEDCO management during the General Assembly Sessions to testify at the budget hearings and attend legislative meeting prior to the hearings. To support this effort, his testimony will include success stories regarding clinical trials, in addition to the economic benefits generated by the Fund, and its role in advancing cutting-edge science.

### **III. Executive Director Report**

Dan Gincel presented the administrative report, which focused on the following items:

#### **A. Maryland Stem Cell Research Symposium Update**

The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Maryland Stem Cell Research Symposium was held on Tuesday, December 3, 2013 at the JHU Medical Campus in Baltimore. The Symposium was a great success that attracted close to 350 registrants, including many Commission members. Overall, there was great feedback on the event, particularly for the poster and scientific presentations from the MSCRF funded researchers.

#### **B. 2014 Grant Applications**

The Commission received **151** grant applications for FY 2014, and issued a press release with the breakdown by category (3 Clinical/Preclinical, 36 Investigator Initiated, 70 Exploratory, and 42 Postdoctoral Fellowship).

#### **C. State Ethics 2013 Financial Disclosure**

The State Ethics Commission is in the process of implementing the financial disclosure program for calendar year 2013. All Commission members are required to file the financial disclosure statement within 30 days of appointment to the Commission and every April 30th thereafter.

#### **D. Commission Attendance & Appointment Requirements**

The Governor's Appointments Office requests an annual attendance roster for Governor-appointed Commission members. As a reminder, Maryland law requires Governor-appointed Commission members to be present for at least 50% of the meetings. Any Governor-appointed Commission member who fails to meet that obligation is deemed by law to have resigned, and must submit a waiver request to the Governor's office if s/he wishes to continue to serve.

There are two positions available on the Commission that will be appointed by the President of the Senate (patient advocate and biotechnology expert). Linda Powers has reached the end her appointment term and there is currently no replacement to fill her position. However, the Stem Cell Act stipulates that Commission members continue to serve until their replacements have been appointed. So Linda will continue in the biotechnology expert seat until she is replaced. We are actively seeking nominations for the currently vacant patient advocate seat.

### **IV. Discussion of the Economic Impact Study**

Dan indicated that TEDCO contracted with the Battelle Institute to conduct a broader analysis of all TEDCO programs, including the MSCRF program. The results of the economic impact study are available and have been announced through a press release. The results will help to inform the legislature, university systems, and the public about the economic benefits and value of the Fund. Dan will circulate the report to the Commission via email and welcomes the Commission to not only share the results but to offer any suggested approaches to effectively disseminate the information.

### **V. 2014 General Assembly Session**

The 2014 General Assembly Session has begun. MSCRF is budgeted for \$10.4 million for FY2015, which is level funding from FY2014. TEDCO we will be called to testify on the MSCRF annual budget and for bills related to Commission matters before the Senate Subcommittee on February 17, 2014, and before the House Subcommittee on February 20, 2014. Avram Reisner, Dan Gincel, Robert Rosenbaum, and John Wasilisin will be present. All Commission members are encouraged to attend. Letters of recommendation and support are always welcome. Dan Gincel will provide electronic updates as they become available.

### **VI. Discussion on Legislative Issues**

Dan reported that Senate Bill 467 proposes to require additional information for the MSCRF annual report. The statute currently requires the Commission to annually submit a report on the progress of State-funded stem cell research. The report must include:

- (1) each recipient of money from the Fund;
- (2) the amount of money awarded to each recipient; and
- (3) a description of the type of stem cell research performed by the recipient.

Senate Bill 467 proposes to require a general description of the results, final accomplishments, patient treatments/clinical trials- *if applicable*, for completed MSCRF-funded research. A request in the bill for reporting the number of patients treated was deleted by amendment per our request, since most MSCRF research is not clinical. We are prepared to accept the bill as amended. Dan and Ira Schwartz will continue to follow the proposed bill and provide update as they become available.

## **VII. MSCRF-Funded Publications**

The Commission established a web portal, designed to conveniently allow researchers to report publications that result from MSCRF funding. The developing web portal provides a comprehensive list of MSCRF-funded publications, and will help highlight some of the current advances in regenerative medicine, therapies, and cures supported through MSCRF-funded research.

## **VIII. Application Submission Process**

TEDCO management is implementing a new application and portfolio management system. The system will also be used during the MSCRF application review meetings. Dan will explore the system's capability to be utilized by the Commission during the review process.

## **IX. Discussion on Collaborations**

This funding cycle will mark the fourth consecutive year that our special collaboration with CIRM has significantly leveraged State dollars. Dan indicated that Maryland researchers express great interest in the joint collaborations; however, many are finding it difficult to establish a relationship with the CIRM recipients due to the time lag between the start date of the CIRM project, and establishing a relationship with a CIRM recipient subject to Commission approval to fund the Maryland-based research. There is a request from several researchers to allow Maryland based researchers to collaborate with CIRM awardees regardless of the year that they were initially funded, as long as the CIRM project is still active. There was a consensus that there are many subjective factors that will need to be thoroughly addressed. The Commission deferred further discussion until the July 2014 Commission meeting.

Dan reported that The Foundation Fighting Blindness expressed an interest in exploring a collaborative funding program with TEDCO for stem cell research. Dan is working on the details to find the best option for collaboration, and will update the Commission on the progress.

## **X. Future Meeting Date**

Thursday, May 1, 2014 – 9:30 am to 5:00 pm (TEDCO Offices, Columbia, MD)

Meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.