

**Minutes of the Maryland Stem Cell Research Commission**

Thursday, June 4, 2009  
UMB BioPark, Baltimore, MD

**Action Items from June 4, 2009**

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- 1. The Commission created an RFA Subcommittee (Brenda Crabbs-Vice Chair, Ira Schwartz, and Renee Winsky have agreed to participate). Commission members Linda Powers and Murray Sachs will be contacted by Dan Gincel regarding their availability to participate. The Subcommittee will report to the Commission during the September 2009 Meeting.**
  - 2. The Commission has requested that TEDCO send an official letter to those who responded to the Shared Facilities RFI forwarding a copy of the RFI Subcommittee's report (Dan Gincel).**
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**Members in attendance:**

Joseph Capizzi  
Brenda Crabbs, Vice Chair  
Margaret Conn Himelfarb  
Suzanne Ostrand-Rosenberg  
Karen Rothenberg, Chair  
Murray Sachs  
Steven Salzberg  
Ira Schwartz  
Jeremy Sugarman  
Bowen Weisheit

**Others in attendance:**

Dan Gincel (TEDCO)  
Renee Winsky (TEDCO)

The Commission meeting was called to order at 2:06 p.m.

**I. Approval of Minutes**

The Commission considered the minutes of April 23, 2009. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

**II. Administrative Report**

Dr. Gincel provided an update on administrative activities.

A. 2009 World Stem Cell Summit

The 2009 Stem Cell Symposium will be incorporated into the World Stem Cell Summit, which will be held at the Baltimore Convention Center, September 21-23, 2009. The MSCRF will organize and support the scientific poster session which will include scientific posters from all of the MSCRF Awardees. The poster session, along with other sessions provided by other organizing partners, will be free to the public, but the actual World Stem Cell Summit meeting will not. To date, the event will consist of approximately 17 scientific talks, as well as about 17 hours of policy and advocacy talks. There will also be a panel of Governors General Session at the Summit.

## **B. Events & Future Meetings**

- Karen Rothenberg, Chair, and Dan Gincel both participated in the Interstate Alliance of Stem Cell Research (IASCR) meeting.
- Karen Rothenberg, Chair, spoke about the MSCRF to the Greater Baltimore Committee during the Bio Science Speaker event on May 23, 2009.
- Dan Gincel and Renee Winsky attended the International BIO Convention which was held at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta, GA from May 18-21, 2009. There were an overwhelming number of individuals that expressed interest in the MSCRF program.
- New York Stem Cell Symposium will be held in Albany, NY on June 11, 2009; Dan Gincel will attend.
- The Kennedy Krieger Symposium on Cell Based Therapy will take place on June 20, 2009

## **III. Report of the Sub-Committees**

### **A. Shared Resources Sub-Committee**

Commission members Murray Sachs, Ira Schwartz, and Bowen Weisheit agreed to participate on the Shared Resources subcommittee. Bowen Weisheit presented a report to the Commission which concludes that an initiation of a RFA for shared resource facilities should not be undertaken at this time.

The Commission reviewed and discussed the report and there was a consensus to table the idea of establishing a shared resource facility RFA until further notice. The Commission has requested TEDCO management to circulate the responses to those who responded to the RFI.

### **B. Ethics Sub-Committee**

Commission members Joseph Capizzi, Karen Rothenberg, Chair, Jeremy Sugarman, and Joel Zaiman agreed to participate on the Ethics subcommittee.

Both Jeremy Sugarman and Karen Rothenberg reported on the discussion regarding the possible use of funds or to set aside funds from the MSCRF program to designate specifically for analyzing the ethical, legal, and social implications of stem cell research. The Committee reached out to legal counsel regarding this idea and it was relayed that the program funds could not be used for that sole purpose; however, the Commission could use a small amount of administrative support funding to assist with ethical inquiries that may arise.

In addition, Jeremy Sugarman reported that there was a recommendation to require all embryonic stem cell research to go through an ESCRO/SCRO review prior to receiving funding.

Due to the weaknesses of the ethics sections of a large percentage of previously submitted applications, TEDCO offered a suggestion to encourage applicants to have a bio-ethicist in their scientific research groups, to assist and guide the principal investigators through the relevant issues. The Commission did not feel that such representation would be necessary for most applications. However, the Commission would like to take a proactive approach to support applicants who will need assistance to understand the ethical criteria inherent to their research.

The Commission also agreed with creating a stricter ethics section to be included in the application process and requested that TEDCO circulate the content before posting the language on the actual application for Commission approval.

#### **IV. Public Addresses**

The Commission invited members of the public to speak before the Commission upon request in advance of the meeting. Two individuals addressed the Commission:

- Dr. Peshwa Madhududan, Executive Vice President, Maxcyte Inc. (Gaithersburg,MD)
- Dr. Nancy Paltell, Associate Director, Maryland Catholic Conference.

#### **V. Discussion of Repeating RFAs and a New RFA for FY 2010**

Dr. Gincel suggested the Commission create an RFA Subcommittee and presented a list of suggested topics for their discussion:

- To rewrite portions of the Exploratory and Fellowship RFAs
- To encourage collaborations between for-profit companies and academic institutes
- To modify the Investigative Initiated grants

There was a consensus amongst the Commission that giving preference to research based on collaboration rather than to good science is not the message that they would like to convey.

The Commission agreed to establish an RFA Subcommittee. Commission members Brenda Crabbs-Vice Chair and Ira Schwartz, and Renee Winsky agreed to serve on the Subcommittee. Commission members Linda Powers and Murray Sachs will be asked to participate as well. The Subcommittee will meet throughout the summer by conference call and emails and will report their recommendations to the Commission during the September 2009 meeting.

#### **VI. Statement for Closing the Meeting**

A motion was made and approved unanimously for the Commission go in to a closed session. The motion stated the following:

##### **Statutory Authority to Close Session**

##### **State Government Article Sec.10-503(a)(1)(i):**

This subtitle does not apply to a public body when it is carrying out an administrative function.

##### **State Government Article Sec.10-508(a)(5):**

A public body may meet in closed session to consider the investment of public funds.

##### **State Government Article Sec.10-508(a)(13):**

A public body may meet in closed session to comply with a specific constitutional, statutory, or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter.

## REASON FOR CLOSING:

To open the floor for the nomination and election of a new Chair.

To discuss rescission of some grant awards and which applications to consider in their place.

In closed session the Commission voted to reelect Karen Rothenberg as Chair for term until July 2010.

## **V. Closed Meeting Notes**

TEDCO informed the Commission of one Exploratory and two Post-Doctoral grants that were withdrawn from consideration. The Commission conditionally pre-approved 3 research projects as replacements.

The Commission re-elected Karen Rothenberg for another full year as the Commission Chair.

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.