

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

Wednesday, January 7, 2015  
University of Maryland Bio Park  
Baltimore, MD

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**Action Items from January 7, 2015**

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- 1. The next Commission meeting for mid-February will be scheduled via email.**
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**Members in attendance:**

Rachel Brewster  
Margaret Conn Himelfarb  
Marye Kellermann  
Sharon Krag  
Debra Mathews  
David Mosser  
Linda Powers  
Avram Reisner, Chair  
Noel Rose  
Ira Schwartz  
Curt Van Tassell  
Bo Weisheit

**Staff in Attendance:**

Dan Gincel, TEDCO  
Sabrina Spinner, TEDCO  
Robert Rosenbaum, TEDCO  
John Wasilisin, TEDCO

**The Commission meeting was called to order at 2:04 p.m.**

**I. Approval of Minutes**

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the September 9, 2014 meeting. A motion was made and seconded to approve the meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

**II. Chairman's Report**

Avram Reisner, Chair, reported that the FY2015 RFAs were released. Currently, the MSCRF is budgeted for \$10.4 million for FY2015, which is level funding from FY2014. Due to the State budget deficit the FY2015 budget may be reduced by the Administration.

The Commission chair indicated the importance of educating key members of the new Administration, as well as key legislators, on the importance of preserving the budget for the MSCRF programs. Commission member Margaret Himelfarb and Dan Gincel presented an outline of talking points to aid the effort to educate on behalf of the Commission.

The Commission Chair indicated that he and the Commission Vice-Chair David Mosser will accompany TEDCO management during the General Assembly Sessions to testify at the budget hearings and attend legislative meetings prior to the hearings. To support this effort, his testimony will include economic benefits generated by the Fund, and its role in advancing cutting-edge science. The Fund's Executive Director is currently working to find potential witness/ patient advocate testimony for additional support. All Commission members are encouraged to attend. Letters of recommendation and support are always welcome.

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

Dan Gincel presented the Administrative Report, which focused on the following items:

#### **A. 7<sup>th</sup> Annual MSCRF Symposium- Recap**

The 7th Annual Maryland Stem Cell Research Symposium, hosted by the Commission, was held on Tuesday, December 2, 2014 at the Silver Spring Civic Center. The event was a great success that attracted over 300 registered researchers and companies, and included many Commission members. A highlight of the event was the keynote lecture by Dr. Lorenz Studer, founding Director of the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Center for Stem Cell Biology, who delivered the John L. Kellermann Memorial Lecture. Overall, there was great feedback on the event, particularly for the company presentations, along with poster and scientific presentations from the MSCRF-funded researchers.

#### **B. MSCRF Annual Report**

On or before January 1 of each year, the Commission must report to the Governor on the progress of state-funded stem cell research conducted through the Fund. The 2014 Annual Report is now available. This report identifies each of the 2014 MSCRF grant awards including: grantee, PI names, project titles, the awarded budgets, and abstracts of the research to be performed. The report also includes final summaries of the MSCRF funded projects that ended during this calendar year. A digital copy is available to view on the MSCRF website.

([http://mscrf.org/ media/client/pdf/2014AnnualReport.pdf](http://mscrf.org/media/client/pdf/2014AnnualReport.pdf))

#### **C. Stem Cell Meetings**

Dan attended and presented at the annual WSCS meeting on behalf of the Fund and the Commission in San Antonio, TX on December 3-5, 2014. Overall, there was great feedback on his presentation and on the program.

#### **D. CIRM Collaboration**

As reported during the September 9, 2014 Commission meeting, CIRM confirmed their interest in continuing the collaborative program, along with the concept of expanding the scope of joint research. This effort is still a work in progress. Ongoing updates will be provided in future meetings.

#### **E. Company Site Visits**

A new policy is being implemented to conduct site visits with MSCRF-funded companies prior to continued funding. To date, the site visits have proven to be an efficient approach to confirm compliance with the grant agreement terms and to determine if other MSCRF or TEDCO resources will be beneficial for the company's continued success.

#### **IV. New Administration and FY2015 & FY2016 Budget Discussion**

John Wasilisin reported the State budget deficit is estimated at \$1.2 billion (\$400 million - FY2015; \$800 million- FY2016). Gov. Martin O'Malley proposed a budget cut of \$400 million to the state's current-year (FY2015) operating budget. TEDCO's budget cut from the proposal is \$381,000. Currently, TEDCO is awaiting confirmation on which TEDCO programs will be impacted by the proposed budget cut. The FY2016 budget will be released on January 23, 2015.

TEDCO will be called to testify on the MSCRF annual budget before the House Subcommittee on February 4, 2015, and before the Senate Subcommittee on February 5, 2015.

#### **V. State Audit Update**

Dan reported that once every three years, the State audits TEDCO, including the MSCRF program, This year we will be audited on the preceding three years. Since the last State audit, Dan has implemented a new policy to internally audit a percentage of random awards each year in an effort to verify proof of expenditures as specified by the grant application and approved by the Commission. Ongoing updates regarding the audit will be provided as they become available.

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

Dan and Ira Schwartz are monitoring all proposed legislative bills regarding the Commission and the Fund. Ongoing updates will be provided as they become available.

#### **VII. Appointment Requirements**

Dan reminded the Commission that the Stem Cell Act stipulates that Commission members continue to serve until their replacements have been appointed. Commission members who have reached the end of their appointment term are asked to continue to serve until replaced.

#### **VIII. Other Issues**

The Commission agreed to meet in February 2015 to further discuss the FY2015 – FY2016 program budget, and to strategize effective methods to improve and strengthen the program. The next meeting date will be scheduled via email.

Meeting adjourned at 3:22 p.m.