

**MINUTES OF THE
MARYLAND STEM CELL RESEARCH COMMISSION**
Tuesday, January 18, 2011

No Action Items from January 18, 2011

Members in attendance:

Brenda Crabbs
Kevin Fitzgerald
Margaret Conn Himelfarb, Chair
Marye Kellermann
Sharon Krag
Suzanne Ostrand-Rosenberg
Linda Powers
Avram Reisner
Noel Rose
Karen Rothenberg
Steven Salzberg
Ira Schwartz
Bowen Weisheit, Vice Chair

Others in attendance:

Dan Gincel, TEDCO
Rob Rosenbaum, TEDCO

The Commission meeting was called to order at 9:15 a.m.

I. Approval of Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the October 18, 2010 meeting and requested typo corrections. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes with the addition of these corrections. The motion passed unanimously.

II. Management Report

Dan Gincel presented the Administrative Report that focused on the following items:

A. CIRM Collaboration

The agreement with CIRM has been signed and a supplement to the Investigator-Initiated and Exploratory RFAs has been posted online. The pilot program with CIRM has already generated interest from scientists on both coasts.

B. Application Update

The Commission received 180 grant applications for FY 2011, a record number, and issued a press release with the breakdown by category (42 Investigator Initiated, 97 Exploratory, and 41 Postdoctoral Fellowship).

C. Funding Briefings

Dan Gincel and other TEDCO staff have conducted a number of funding briefings for scientists at multiple sites, including a monthly funding briefing at the TEDCO office.

D. Annual Report

The 2010 Annual Report has been submitted The Department of Legislative Services Library and Information Services Division and posted online at www.mscref.org.

E. Scientific Peer Review Meetings

Dates for the Scientific Peer Review meetings have been scheduled for mid March and over 90% of the reviewers already have been identified.

F. Future Meetings Update

Dan Gincel reported the summary of past and future meetings and events he will attend representing the Fund and the Commission.

III. 2011 Legislative Session

The Commission discussed State support for the MSCRF in the context of the current economic climate. The 2011 Legislative Session has begun. TEDCO we will be called to testify on our annual budget and for bills related to Commission matters. Dan Gincel will provide an electronic update of key events. Margaret Conn Himelfarb has already met with a member of the Governor's staff to bring the administration up to date on the achievements of the Commission and the progress of the research, emphasizing the economic benefits. She, Rob Rosenbaum, and John Wasilisin will continue to meet with members of the legislature while Dan is out of the country.

IV. Other Nontraditional Funding Sources

Maryland is currently the third largest state-funder of stem cell research, behind California and New York. The Commission discussed several potential new, non-traditional funding sources that could increase MSCRF funding, help Maryland remain competitive with other states, and provide resources for additional awards. Ideas included a check-box on the Maryland tax return form, accepting donations on the MSCRF Web site, estate and foundation gifts, forming strategic partnerships, and providing sponsorship opportunities.

Concerns were expressed that it is a hard time to raise money, that the Commission is not a tax deductible organization, and that such efforts might compete with the endeavors of other academic institutions. Ira stated that nothing in the regulations prevents the Commission from seeking additional sources of funding.

It was agreed that the Commission will look into more partnership opportunities like the one with CIRM, investigate some of the TEDCO funding models and revisit this issue at a future meeting.

V. Measuring Success of the MSCRF Programs

The Commission discussed several benchmarks that will allow it to measure the success of the program. Ideas include the number of: diseases addressed, disease models developed, drugs developed, publications cited, clinical trials initiated, post-doctoral fellows who remain in Maryland and continue to work in stem cell research and, ultimately, the amount of revenue MSCRF funding has generated. Other measurements already being tabulated include the number of: new intellectual property applications granted, publications reported, further funding awarded from other sources and jobs created. It was agreed that the Commission would ask postdoctoral fellows who stay in the field to report back for three years after their MSCRF funding has ended.

VI. Other Issues

The list of Scientific Review Committee members will be available upon request, and review scores will be included in the responses to applicants.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.