

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

Thursday, January 17, 2013

UMB BioPark

No Action Items

Members in attendance:

Margaret Conn Himelfarb, Chair
Brenda Crabbs
Kevin FitzGerald
Marye Kellermann
Sharon Krag
Debra Mathews
David Mosser
Linda Powers
Ira Schwartz
Avram Reisner
Noel Rose
Suzanne Ostrand-Rosenberg
Karen Rothenberg
Curt Van Tassel

Others in Attendance:

Dan Gincel, TEDCO
Rob Rosenbaum, TEDCO
Sabrina Spinner, TEDCO

The Commission meeting was called to order at 2:03 PM

I. Approval of Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the September 27, 2012 meeting. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes as circulated. The motion passed unanimously.

II. Administrative Report

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

A. Sherley v. Sebelius Supreme Court Appeal

The U.S. Supreme Court has declined to hear an appeal of Sherley v. Sebelius, a case upholding the current executive order allowing federal funding to support embryonic stem cell research. Ongoing updates will be provided as they become available.

B. 2012 Annual Symposium Recap

The 2012 Annual Maryland Stem Cell Symposium day-and-a-half event was held on October 4-5, 2012 at The DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in Annapolis Maryland. The Symposium was a great success that attracted close to 350 registrants, including many Commission members. There was great feedback on the agenda, particularly regarding the Kellermann Memorial Lecture, interactive workshops, plenary sessions, and the three concurrent sessions of scientific presentations from the MSCRF awarded researchers.

C. 2013 Annual Symposium Update

2013 Annual Maryland Stem Cell Symposium may be held in Baltimore City. Requests for venue proposals will be solicited from prospective venues. The program structure is in development. Ongoing updates will be provided in future meetings.

D. World Stem Cell Summit

In December 2012, Dan Gincel spoke on an RFA Clinical Trial Panel at the World Stem Cell Summit, which was held in West Palm Beach, FL. There were approx. 1,100 attendees which included a large number of Maryland participants. Dan Gincel indicated that Maryland is regarded as a national leader in the field of stem cell research.

C. 2013 Grant Application Update

The Commission received 171 grant applications for FY 2013 and issued a press release with the breakdown by category (5 Clinical/Preclinical, 29 Investigator Initiated, 91 Exploratory, and 42 Postdoctoral Fellowship). The total application number does not include the third year MSCRF/CIRM pilot program applications, which are due by February 4, 2013.

D. CIRM Collaboration

For a third consecutive year, MSCRF researchers have the opportunity to collaborate with California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM) awardees. This year the execution of the CIRM agreement was delayed; therefore the Commission waived the LOI requirement for collaborative applicants and extended their application deadline until February 4th, 2013.

During the first two years of this pilot program, three Investigator Initiated collaborative grants were awarded to Maryland PIs, augmenting their collective \$2,070,000 in State funds with a total of \$9,066,237 from CIRM projects. This fiscal year, eligible collaborations are from CIRM's Basic Biology IV and Disease Team II programs. Disease Team II awardees receive up to \$20 million per project.

CIRM Survey: The Commission is developing a brief survey for all participating MSCRF/CIRM collaborators to evaluate the success of the collaborative pilot program. The collected feedback will help the Commission determine effective methods to facilitate interdisciplinary research and enhance research productivity.

CIRM Symposium: Dan Gincel and MSCRF collaborating PIs have been invited to participate on a speaker's panel for CIRM's annual symposium, which will be held in California in March 2013.

E. Future Meeting Update

The next Commission meeting will be held at the TEDCO Office on Monday, May 13, 2013 from 9:30am to 5pm. During this meeting the Commission will review the applications recommended for funding by the Scientific Peer Review Committees.

III. 2013 General Assembly Session

The 2013 General Assembly Session has begun. MSCRF is budgeted for \$10.4 million for FY2014, which is level funding from FY2013. 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 22, 2013 and before the House Subcommittee on February 28, 2013. Margaret Himelfarb, 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 an electronic update as they become available.

IV. Eligibility of Federal Labs

Through the MSCRF's existing RFAs Federal facilities and employees are ineligible to receive funding. In January 2013 the Commission received a few applications from independent federally affiliated foundations comprised of federal employees or non-federal employees working in federal labs. Dan Gincel and Ira Schwartz disclosed the federal affiliations for both applicants and opened the floor for discussion. The Commission discussed various concerns such as:

- the structure / governance of the foundations
- policy issues
- limited resources
- potential disadvantages
- leveraging
- beneficial gains
- potential implications

There was further discussion regarding the distinction between independent funded entities and independent federally affiliated entities. The Commission reached a consensus that such foundations are formed at the behest of Congress and under the aegis of the federal government. They therefore differ from private independent organizations and are ineligible for MSCRF funding. However, such federal affiliated entities are eligible to collaborate in MSCRF funded projects without utilizing MSCRF resources.

A suggestion to establish a written policy was raised. Several Commission members indicated that the existing eligibility criteria should be more precise regarding federally affiliated entities. The Commission agreed to adhere to the existing policy and revisit the issue at a future meeting. Dan Gincel will modify the existing RFA FAQs will to clarify the eligibility independent federal affiliated entities.

V. MSCRF Economic Analysis

In 2009, the Sage Policy Group conducted an economic analysis on the impact the MSCRF program has within the State of Maryland. Margaret Himelfarb emphasized the importance of continual self-evaluation and made a recommendation to conduct a new and broader analysis that will measure:

- the economic impact within Maryland
- the MSCRFs ability to attract and retain stem cell researchers within Maryland
- the MSCRFs ability to advance the field of stem cell science in general.

The results of this endeavor will help inform the legislature and the public about the economic benefits and value of the Fund. It was agreed to explore hiring an economic analyst consultant or an expert economist to help develop the metrics and add credibility to the final report. The Commission formed a subcommittee charged to develop the criteria for the evaluation and to determine an effective approach utilize and present the resulting information. Commission members David Mosser, Sharon Krag, Kevin FitzGerald and Noel Rose all agreed to serve on the sub-committee and Dan Gincel will join the meetings.

VI. Graduate Student Intern

During the September 27, 2012 The Commission supported the suggestion to recruit a graduate student to serve as a part-time paid intern, charged with collecting, compiling and analyzing metrics to measure the impact of the MSCRF programs. The internship may run from June 2013 through August of 2013. Commission members felt strongly that to attract the best possible candidates this position must be posted ASAP at various area business schools. Dan Gincel with the subcommittee will develop and release a job description.

VII. Regenerative Medicine vs. Stem Cell Therapy Terminology

Dan Gincel indicated that prevailing terminology in the field of stem cell research has shifted away from the term "regenerative medicine" to "cell therapy." After a brief discussion, there was a consensus to revise the language in all MSCRF RFA's to reflect this change. The Commission deferred further discussion and action until the July 2013 meeting.

VIII. Acknowledging Former Commission Members

The Commission would like to pay homage to retired Commission members, acknowledging their dedication and invaluable service to the Commission. Hereafter retiring Commission members will be:

- thanked for their services in a letter signed by the Chair and the Executive Director of the Commission, and, if possible, a second letter signed by the Governor ;
- invited in to the Annual Research Symposium at no charge;
- and listed in the Symposium program and on the MSCRF Web site

IX. Other Business:

A. Commercialization Report:

Dan Gincel conducted an informal analysis of the MSCRF 258 projects to determine the potential for commercializing technologies funded through the MSCRF and presented the report to the Commission for review. Although the report was intended to be an internal, it was shared with the State budget analyst. The report depicts a direct correlation between funding level and commercialization potential on a year-to-year basis. Furthermore, the analysis determined that it is critical to fund both basic and translational research in all disease areas.

B. Maryland Innovation Initiative Program- Announcement

The Maryland Innovation Initiative (MII) was created as a partnership between the State of Maryland and five Maryland academic research institutions. The program is designed to promote commercialization of research conducted in the partnership universities and leverage each institution's strengths.

C. Governor's Delegation to Israel

Dan Gincel received an invitation to travel to Israel for Governor O'Malley's nine-day Economic Delegation /Trade Mission in April 20, 2013. Representing the Commission, Dan Gincel will attempt to establish collaborative research agreements with Israeli institutions, modeled after our MSCRF/CIRM pilot program and work to promote Maryland as a place for Israeli stem cell companies to establish sites. The Commission felt that this mission provides a good opportunity for Dan Gincel's professional development on behalf of the Commission and could benefit the MSCRF politically.

A motion was made and seconded to authorize Dan Gincel to travel to Israel on behalf of the Commission to participate in Governor O'Malley's nine-day Economic Delegation/Trade Mission using \$8,000-not to exceed \$12,000 of MSCRF administrative funds to sponsor the trip. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05pm.