

MINUTES OF THE MARYLAND STEM CELL COMMISSION

Monday, November 13, 2006
Sheraton Inn, Columbia, MD

Members in attendance:

Brenda Crabbs
Diane Griffin
John Kellermann
Gloria Marrow
Suzanne Ostrand-Rosenberg
Linda Powers, Chair
Karen Rothenberg
Steven Salzberg
Jeremy Sugarman
Bowen Weisheit
Joel Zaiman

Members absent:

Joseph Capizzi
Jack Chow
Murray Sachs
Jack Schwartz

Others in attendance:

Steven Fritz, TEDCO
Renee Winsky, TEDCO

The Commission meeting was called to order at 2:10 p.m.

I. Development of Conflicts of Interest Rules

A. Commission

The conflict of interest policies of the National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, Delaware Corporate Code, and the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine to the Commission were distributed. Commission members were asked to review the models and be prepared at the next meeting to finalize the Commission's conflict of interest policy by consensus or vote.

After extensive discussion regarding recusal issues, a motion was made and seconded that the members of the Commission would be able to share in the discussion

of the recommended applicable projects, but leave prior to a vote if there is a discernable conflict of interest. A friendly amendment was added that Stem Cell Commission members should more thoroughly disclose to each other relevant conflicts of interest. The motion was further amended to become an agreement in consensus pending a meeting with State Ethics Commission.

The motion was withdrawn. However, the Commission agreed that it gathered a sense of the issues and conflicts they will face when this issue is brought forth at the next meeting.

II. Scientific Peer Review Committee and Process

Commission members were urged to submit by email any potential candidate names they may have for the Scientific Peer Review Committee. It was noted that several prior requests for names had also been made. It was also noted that there had been a plan to have an ad hoc working group relating to the Scientific Peer Review Committee, and that when Commission members signed up in the summer the members who had expressed interest then were Mr. Capizzi, Mr. Sachs and Ms. Ostrand-Rosenberg. It was emphasized that at this point the lead time for obtaining peer reviewers was extremely short, and the Commission would be lucky to get many reviewers at all. It was also noted that a commissioner had recently been asked to serve on an unrelated review committee in March and that that was a “last-minute” request. It was strongly requested that TEDCO take a leading role in the development of the Peer Review Committee for the Maryland stem cell program. Substantial discussion of that request ensued. In addition, the following topics were discussed and decided in preparation for the next meeting.

A. Size of Committee

Suggestions of between five and fifteen Committee members were made, as well as doubling that amount and excusing those not needed. It was repeatedly mentioned that time constraints may limit the number of candidates, as they may be committed to other projects.

B. Reimbursement and Compensation

The Commission stated a preference that the Scientific Peer Review Committee meet in person, but realizes that time and logistical constraints may necessitate participation by telephone by some Review Committee members. The group felt that all Review Committee members should be paid the same honorarium whether or not they show in-person. The Commission felt that the honorarium should be based on what is necessary to obtain the reviewers needed. The Commission acknowledged that the honorarium would need to be higher than what NIH

pays (\$200 per day), but was unsure how much higher would be necessary. The Commission directed that TEDCO explore this and determine what amounts are necessary.

C. Selection and Recruitment

TEDCO has begun to compile a list of possible Committee members, and others will be added by suggestion of Commission members. The Commission deferred to TEDCO to contract with an experienced SRA, and to continue recruiting Scientific Peer Review Committee members.

D. Organization and Processes

Discussion was held that the SRA have administrative and scientific experience to lead the Peer Review Committee. The consensus was that there will be one principal SRA, perhaps an independent contractor/consultant. Compensation and selection of the SRA will be explored by TEDCO.

E. Rankings, Reports/Feedback to Commission

Discussion was held regarding the Peer Review Committee's rankings, reports and feedback to the Commission; however, no consensus or decisions were made. A lot of further discussion and consideration will be needed at other meetings to develop these plans and procedures.

III. Reporting Requirements

A "Summit" style event to brief legislators is being planned by the Maryland Families for Stem Cell Research coalition for January. The purpose will be to brief legislators at the beginning of the next legislative session on the current status of stem cell research, and certain other subjects including the progress to date of the Commission to date. It was reported that the Commission has an opportunity to be a co-organizer and co-participant in this briefing for legislators, along with the Maryland Families coalition. A member objected to the Commission doing so and expressed the view that the Commission should not lobby or otherwise seek further funding – it should focus entirely on administering the funding already allocated. Other discussion ensued about the extent of reporting the Commission should do about the grant applications that will be received in early January. TEDCO staff cited the Maryland stem cell statute requires reporting as of January 1st of each grantee that received funding, the amount of funding awarded to each grantee, and a description of the type of stem cell research to be performed by the grantee. Commissioners expressed concern that applications are confidential and that only aggregate information should be made public.

IV. Next Meetings

The Commission was reminded that the agenda for the next meeting will include discussion of ethics and recusal guidelines. The Commission agreed not to meet in December, and to wait until January to meet again. However, a motion was made and seconded by that recruitment of the Scientific Peer Review Committee should proceed in the meantime, as quickly as possible. The motion passed unanimously. Commission members were again reminded to submit potential candidate names. In 2007, it is anticipated that the Commission will meet monthly during January through April.

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.