VERBATIM PROCEEDINGS

STEM CELL RESEARCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE
COMMISSIONER JEWEL MULLEN, CHAIRPERSON
MARCH 20, 2012

CONNECTICUT INNOVATIONS
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Verbatim Proceedings of a meeting of
the Stem Cell Research Advisory Committee held on March
20, 2012 at 1:02 p.m. at Connecticut Innovations, 865
Brook Street, Rocky Hill, Connecticut. . .

CHAIRPERSON COMMISSIONER JEWEL MULLEN:
Okay. Shall we begin? Those were opening remarks. Hello
everyone. I missed the last meeting and -- but the work
has gone on in many different ways. And I’ll acknowledge
Marianne, who is on the phone, and just thank you for all
that you’ve been doing within the Department to
collaborate with the Advisory Committee and with
Connecticut Innovations to keep this going. Your
leadership is such that I know that Warren did a lot, and
as Commissioner I haven’t noticed that we skipped a beat
once he left.

MS. MARIANNE HORN: Thank you. I
appreciate it.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: You’re welcome. So,
we can start with the approval of last month’s, last
time’s minutes.

DR. MILTON WALLACK: I’ll move the
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approval. One thing, I mean are we going to hand out
David’s PowerPoint from the meeting of November?

MS. HORN: It is posted on-line and I can
make copies of it, but it’s on the DPH Stem Cell website.

DR. WALLACK: Okay, okay.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Okay?

DR. WALLACK: So with that question I’ll
move approval.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Do we have a second?

DR. DAVID GOLDHAMMER: I’ll second.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Okay. All in favor?

ALL VOICES: Aye.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Okay. Now, opposed?

That’s a reminder that in my opening remarks I could have
at least thanked everyone who is on the phone and asked
you to just say who is there.

DR. RICHARD DEES: Richard Dees.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Hi.

DR. RON HART: Ron Hart.

DR. GERRY FISHBONE: Gerry Fishbone.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Hi. And Marianne,

Okay. So, here we are. Marianne, would you like to do
the update on the application timeline, etcetera?

MS. HORN: I think I’d like to -- a little
bit, if I could, by doing an update on the grant review meeting planning.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Okay.

MS. HORN: Which is No. 12. And there were a few folks who typically come in from out of town and spend the night before the meeting at the Marriott in Farmington since that’s what we did last year. And I will say that the contact information that you will, if you are interested in coming in, that make your own reservations at the government rate and be reimbursed under your contract with DPH. So that is about it. I believe it’s already posted on the website from 8:30 to 5:00, June 11th, and if necessary going into June 12th at the Farmington Marriott. And it will pretty much follow the same routine as last year. I didn’t hear too many complaints about the setup for the food. So without complaints we’re going ahead. It’s pretty much what we did last year.

So if you do have any questions or concerns, or things that felt were missing from last year let me know and we can try to accommodate that. So any questions so far as our grant review?

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: I guess my one comment will be I’ll do what I can to see whether or not we can
actually accomplish it in one day rather than having to flow into the second day.

MS. HORN: Great.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: That’s the way we managed last year.

MS. HORN: I think one thing that will help is at our next meeting, whenever we decide to have that, to do a run through as we did last year and sort of establish the process we’re going to use and how we’re going to manage the 70 or so grants. Terri Clark will speak more about the peer review process.

Let’s see, I wanted to do a little update on the next --

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: -- yes.

MS. HORN: I’ll now speak on revisions to request for proposals and Stem -- 13. We’re both on that committee, but he could do it more justice than I. And that’s -- it’s a funding agreement authority. It is moving along in the Public Health Committee. And that will authorize DPH to enter into an agreement such as the one that has been offered to us from California. Not to give us money, but to allow our scientists more opportunities to collaborate with one another and to do this on a full time -- and hopefully expand the use of our dollars into
research. (Inaudible -- on phone)

Let’s see the membership update. Thank you to everybody who has contributed -- we are down a number of folks, as you know, and Commissioner Mullen has submitted five names to the legislature. I think that leaves us just one short if they all get appointed. So I will follow through and see if I can’t get those people appointed as quickly as possible so that they will be on board in time to do the reviews. With another month slippage that was going to be difficult to have happen. That will leave 10 of you to do 70 grant reviews.

DR. MYRON GENTEL: It would be nice to have more help.

MS. HORN: Definitely, yes. We’re down one from last year. I think it will all come out in the wash because I think Ann Hastings was not able to attend. Oh, no, she did come back, anyway. I think we’re down one from last year.

So, in terms of the update on the 2012 grant applications, No. 10, and the timeline for the review process that’s -- that will depend a little bit on where the peer review process is. And assuming that they are kicking along, and then we get the pairings for the Advisory Committee done, and access to them, the grants to
review. So I won’t say anything more on that at this point.

And, finally, the statement of financial -- which are due May 1, 2012 to the Office of State Ethics. I’ve included the link to the Office of State Ethics’ page. I do have a link to a paper copy if anybody would like me to send that to them let me know. And if you have any issues with the electronic filing system, please, let me know and I can put you in touch with people to work that through. But they’re fairly strict about that May 1st deadline so I don’t want anybody to get messed up with that.

Okay, I think that’s it for me.

MS. SARAH DONOFRIO: So, we’ll move on to Agenda Item No. 8.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Before we do, I know that as Marianne was speaking Dr. Wallack had a comment, question.

DR. WALLACK: Yes. Marianne, we sort of touched on Maryland and you alluded to it also having an arrangement with California.

MS. HORN: Yes.

DR. WALLACK: Is it possible for us, and this is just an extension of what we had talked about
before, is it possible to have our own arrangement with
the people in Maryland? I mean can that be explored at
all?

MS. HORN: Absolutely. This ability to
contract will allow us to do it not just with California,
but with anybody who comes along.

DR. WALLACK: Great, okay.

MS. HORN: So that would certainly
authorize us to do it with Maryland.

DR. WALLACK: They seem to be running a
really great program as ours is and I think that there are
many similarities. So, I would be enthusiastic, at least
for that exploration, to be opened at an appropriate time.

MS. HORN: That’s great. I think you’re
volunteering.

DR. WALLACK: If you wanted me to I
certainly will.

MS. HORN: No, that’s great. I think it is
definitely worth it.

DR. WALLACK: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Okay, thanks. And just
for the group, we do have hard copies. Sarah, thank you of
the statement of financial interest forms right on the
DR. WALLACK: She alluded to the 2013. Do you want that to be discussed now, or later, or what?

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Do you want to do that while we have you on the phone?

MS. HORN: Sure. Let me think -- I was kind of in and out of that first --

DR. WALLACK: -- okay. I think that what directed some of the thinking, at least, was the expanding realm of regenerative medicine in Connecticut. And certainly with Draxon, and certainly with what’s going on in genomics, what’s going on with IPS cells, David’s commented upon that at some point in that past, that our RFP we might want to for 2013 consider if we want to really take a dramatic shift in how we present our RFP to specifically include items like I just alluded to, a consideration of genomics and research in that area. IPS specifically, we don’t really address that in any profound way, at this point.

And one of the other reasons that I’m thinking that this might be something that we might want to explore is that with Draxon, and with supposedly 100 million dollars of research monies that will be going for that kind of research, the oversight of the distribution
of the state money somehow, I think, should be addressed by an agency like ours. And perhaps it’s our Advisory Committee here, since we’ve done so well with what we’ve done in the past, that it would be something that we might want to look at and have it part of what we’re all about.

And frankly the other reason for thinking about this is that it -- there is probably going to be an increase pool of dollars because of the dollars specifically assigned to genomic research, research involving genomics. And I would hope that this would all be a manner, a way to expand the overall dollars for genomics as well as cell therapy, cell research. So I think that there may be some value in looking at a real significant redirection in the RFP. I think that is pretty much what we discussed so far, Marianne, is that right?

MS. HORN: Well, I think one thing we really have to look at is what the legislation ratio we have right now would report. So I think some of what you’re talking about there would need to have some different legislation if we’re switching directions away from stem cells.

DR. WALLACK: Or adding to stem cell, right. And you’re right that was something that you had
pointed out in earlier conversations. And so it would be
appropriate for us to perhaps have a dedicated discussion
on this whole subject. We’re not going to do it at this
moment, obviously, but sometime maybe in the next month of
two, literally, and see if we can, picking up on what you
said, Marianne, have legislation that would involve us in
a more expansive way.

MS. HORN: Well, just recognize that the
timeline of the legislative session, at this point.

DR. WALLACK: Right.

MS. HORN: It’s a short session and I think
we’re probably not able to introduce legislation at this
point. I’m not sure. Commissioner, you probably have a
better sense of the timelines than I do right now.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: It’s a little late to
introduce legislation depending on the complexity of
things you could always try to get an amendment to
something, but this sounds a little bit more complex than
that process would allow.

DR. WALLACK: So maybe it’s not going to
impact 2013 as much as it might 2014.

MS. HORN: Correct. It is a dramatic shift.

I think when we talked earlier we were talking about some
changes to the existing RFP that might move us more toward
regenerative medicine type of applications, which probably would be doable within the existing legislation. But a dramatic shift, I think, obviously is going to bring new funding strings and --

DR. WALLACK: -- right.

MS. HORN: Much more complicated.

DR. WALLACK: So, maybe, we can look at doing exactly that, do the thing we can do currently. And if we’re going to do the more dramatic shift, if we feel it’s necessary to do so pick up on that, the easy things for 2013 and the more expansive for 2014.

DR. GOLDHAMMER: No, I think these are important things to discuss and the key is to start this process early and not -- because it will take a series of meetings and discussions to -- I mean I guess we could discuss this more in later. I mean genomics clearly is a very important tool. I just kind of see it as a little separate than stem cells. There is an intersection between stem cells and genomics and it’s an incredibly important tool. So I guess that’s something to discuss is whether we really wanted to kind of fundamentally change how the RFP is written, which would take more, adjustments to the legislation. Or -- and as you said, the easy thing to do would be to expand, or to modify, and kind of make all
more inclusive the RFP to include these technologies that are -- like IPS and so forth.

DR. WALLACK: Right.

DR. GOLDFISHER: But I agree that starting this really soon is going to be important to make a change for the next year.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: And I think it’s, as everyone has said, an important conversation for the group that pretty much embodies the Stem Cell Research Advisory Committee, which was also established with a pool of money for a specific purpose. And no matter how we look at it there are people with vested interests because we’re a potential funding source of them. So, at the same time that we look at how things might be aligned in the future, especially as we, in the past year, have talked about what our funding priorities ought to be for this year, and as we’ve tried to anticipate the dissipation of tobacco settlement dollars to support this, it actually sounds to me like a much bigger conversation about what else might happen in the future as part of this or as this could potentially fade out. So, there are lots of different ways of looking at it because it’s almost like a new scope of work.

DR. WALLACK: Yes.
CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: And I hear you identifying that new scope of work as being connected to a resource pool that is not stem cell money.

DR. WALLACK: Not entirely, right.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Um, hmm.

DR. WALLACK: One last part of it is that in November we had the Bidder’s Conference and part of that was -- and we really didn’t do it that well. It wasn’t that well attended from the standpoint of business and industry, but, Marianne, Maryland, again, has made -- Dan Ginsall has made, I think, some major steps in trying to connect with the business community. We’re talking about farmers and so forth. That might be another aspect of if we’re going to redirect some of our thinking and approach how do we do that as they’re trying to do in Baltimore because it’s going to attract possibly business in that regard. We might -- could we possibly be looking at that in the, in looking at the overall picture with this.

You know the reference I’m making to what Ginsall is doing down there with business, Marianne?

MS. HORN: Yes, absolutely. And I guess my first thought is the -- I hate -- they do have a dedicated person to do this kind of work. But he’s doing some
wonderful things and has a wonderful conference every year as well. They’re very professional.

DR. GENTEL: Remind me when does the current legislation expire?

MS. HORN: 2015.

DR. GENTEL: 15?

MS. HORN: 15, the funding --

DR. GENTEL: -- so that’s really two years.

MS. HORN: The Committee will have some oversights over the money that has already been given out until those 2015 grants are finished.

DR. GENTEL: Yes.

DR. WALLACK: And to that point, Mike, that’s exactly why I think that it’s really very appropriate for us to have that on our horizon for discussion and to see if we can’t begin to look past 2015 and that this would certainly take us in that direction.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: So, more for future discussion. Does anyone on the phone want to add anything?

DR. FISHBONE: This is Gerry Fishbone and I just have a question. Does anybody know how the legislature deals -- about everything that’s being -- (inaudible) --
MS. EMILY SMITH: -- I can honestly say I have not been following this as a legislative item. I’m happy to do that and report back at the next meeting, but I have not been doing that.

DR. WALLACK: Gerry, Emily having said that, the -- you would have to surmise that with the Governor and the administration having such an emphasis on bioscience you would have to surmise that we will probably be looked upon, at this particular point, fairly favorably or as favorably as we’ll be looked upon at any point in the future and that’s another reason, I think, why a more expansive viewpoint or involvement by us is timely and appropriate, I think. I mean that’s deductive reasoning, but I think there may be some grounds to feel that there is some substance to that.

DR. FISHBONE: (Inaudible)

DR. WALLACK: And while these are very attractive discussions I mean you’re bringing Jacks in. Jacks is going to be revving up. They’ve already hired architects and so forth. The building will be begun in the next six to nine months. And, yes, I think that’s exactly the point.

DR. FISHBONE: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: I don’t have any
insight either, but I do know that someone, it wasn’t the Department of Public Health, someone was proposing legislation this year advocating for more use of tobacco settlement monies to be used for chronic disease prevention and other core public health initiatives. So some -- another way to be see what the spirit is would be to track what happens with that proposed legislation.

DR. GOLDHAMMER: I guess the question is whether stem cells and genomics should be kind of legally, legislatively tied together. And I’m not sure how I feel about that, but it’s certainly something that we should start talking about to see if it makes sense or not.

DR. WALLACK: So, I know you want to get on to other things, maybe the only thing we leave it with right now is the idea that perhaps as your calendar permits, Commissioner, if we could put it on as a major item for discussion.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Um, hmm.

DR. WALLACK: Perhaps inviting appropriate people, as you see fit, to the table for this discussion besides ourselves.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Um, hmm.

DR. WALLACK: If you feel it’s necessary, if not just by ourselves, but at least to have some
dedicated time.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Yes, I think it would be important for the Committee to have some more discussion before inviting people in.

DR. WALLACK: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: I think there are some other issues that we might want to grapple with here first.

DR. WALLACK: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Before skipping to the next part of the discussion. And people are pretty quiet as they finish their lunch, so I’m not quite able to read the spirit of the room and the phone, much less tell you what the legislature is feeling right now. So, maybe we’ll figure that out in the meeting after the meeting or something.

DR. WALLACK: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: And figure out where to go. What do you think the best way would be to follow up on that, Sarah?

MS. DONOFRIO: Just --

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: -- okay, thanks. And then we’ll figure that out.

DR. WALLACK: Thanks.
MS. DONOFRIO: Any further comments? If not, we can move on to Agenda No. 8, report on the six month fiscal reports.

MS. SMITH: So these were two reports that we had not received in time for the last meeting. And we went back to both of the institutions and were able to get the reports. We included them in your packets as an FYI. There is no approval necessary for them, but you have them.

MS. DONOFRIO: And the next agenda item, the annual reports to be considered for approval.

MS. SMITH: There are two annual reports. They were included in your packets. We reviewed them. They seem to be in order and I would recommend approval and acceptance of the annual reports by the Committee.

DR. PESCATELLO: So moved.

DR. GENTEL: Remind me, was -- is it Zakovic, is that her name? Is that the investigator that asked us for a change in the -- it’s not. Because, as I recall, there is a -- okay, I’m thinking of somebody else. The total costs are substantially less. No, they’re not. I’m thinking of somebody else. Okay, withdrawn.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Okay, withdrawn. Any other comments, questions?
DR. DEES: (Inaudible) -- This is Richard Dees. So they kind of change who is working on the project. They changed from who is working as a -- yet somehow it ended up being more expensive. I’m just kind of puzzled by it, that’s all. (Inaudible)

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Any idea on your part?

MS. SMITH: No.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Shall we go back and ask?

DR. ISOLDE BATES: I can explain. Isolde Bates from UCONN Stem Cell Institute, Nicole Clinton Maya is a research assistant. She’s more expensive than a post-doctoral fellow.

DR. DEES: Okay, all right. (Inaudible)

DR. BATES: Which explanation are you looking at?

DR. DEES: Well, the explanation on the salary. (Inaudible)

DR. BATES: Yes.

DR. DEES: Was replaced by somebody else.

DR. BATES: Yes. Nicole was --

DR. DEES: -- (inaudible) the salary amount that was paid to $17,000 above the budget. So the person
who left got paid nearly twice as much money as the budget called for.

DR. BATES: I think that’s --

DR. DEES: -- (inaudible)

DR. BATES: It’s just the way internally our accounting system handles the salaries. And she was paid a total of -- she was the longest on the project.

DR. DEES: Okay.

DR. BATES: And the budgets are accumulative.

DR. DEES: Yes. I see the budget line for was (inaudible) -- I don’t think there is anything funny going on I was curious.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Okay.

MS. SMITH: So there’s a motion to accept these, to approve them.

DR. WALLACK: So moved.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: So, we’ve had -- I think we had moved and seconded, right?

DR. WALLACK: Right.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: We’ve had our discussion. Any other questions? Okay.

MS. DONOFRIO: So we’ll move onto to No. 8, I’m sorry, No. 9 -- I apologize, it’s No. 10, final
report received.

MS. SMITH: Okay. So we did receive final reports for these five projects. They were included in your packet. They are included as, for informational purposes. There is no approval needed on any of those. Did anyone have any comments on any of them? No comments, okay.

MS. DONOFRIO: The next item rebudgeting requests, No. 11.

MS. SMITH: Okay. So there were four rebudgeting requests submitted. We reviewed them with our finance folks and everything seemed to be in order and I would recommend approval of them by the Committee.

DR. DEES: So moved.

COURT REPORTER: I’m sorry, you need to identify yourselves.

DR. DEES: Richard Dee.

COURT REPORTER: Before you speak so I know who has seconded and moved, etcetera. Could we start that again, please?

DR. DEES: This is Richard Dees. I will move.

DR. FISHBONE: Second.

DR. WALLACK: That’s okay, Gerry. Dr.
Fishbone did.

COURT REPORTER: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Okay. Any discussion?

Further? Do we need a formal vote for these, by the way?


MS. DONOFRIO: Okay. The next agenda item, No. 12, carryover requests.

MS. SMITH: There was one carryover request. It was a UCONN project and we reviewed that. It seemed to be in order. I would recommend approval by the Committee.

DR. WALLACK: So moved.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Second?

DR. FISHBONE: Second, Gerry Fishbone.

MS. SMITH: Any discussion on that? Any opposition?

MS. DONOFRIO: Agenda No. 13, no cost extension request.

MS. SMITH: There were two no cost extension requests and we reviewed those. I’m just trying to see -- one was from the University of Connecticut. One was from Yale. So I reviewed both of those and would recommend approval by the Committee.

DR. FISHBONE: So moved, Gerry Fishbone.
DR. WALLACK: Second.

MS. SMITH: Any discussion? Anyone in opposition?

DR. DEES: Richard Dees, that would be fine.

MS. DONOFRIO: Moving on to No. 14, annual audit reports received from Wesleyan University.

MS. SMITH: So this was included in your packet for your information. If you recall at the last meeting we received the annual audit reports from both Yale and UCONN, but we were missing Wesleyan, so they did submit it. And it was submitted -- it was included in your packet. I don’t know if there were any questions about it. It seemed to be in order. So there is no approval necessary on that.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Um, hmm.

MS. SMITH: Thank you.

MS. DONOFRIO: And next we’ll move on to No. 15, update on the peer review process.

MR. RICK STRAUSS: Okay. I guess -- and the peer review process is moving along. I don’t know whether or not we’re moving along well or just moving along until around April 4th when we get all the reviews in from the reviewers. But in your packets you have a list
of the chair, co-chairs, and peer reviewers that make up the peer review team. We implemented the plan. We have Gary Stein as the chair. We have four co-chairs and ten peer reviewers. The co-chairs are assigned groups of grants, grant proposals to review in anticipation of them coming up for the study section. And also to prepare them in case they have to assist in the reconciliation of any proposal review.

So, also in the selection process, you know, we had a number of peer reviewers that carried forward. And then our search process yielded a number of potential reviewers. And as you may recall they were reviewed by our peer review selection committee and Milt represented the Advisory Committee on that with Gary Stein and one Academy member, Bill Trey. So, the Academy identified several and the Committee approved most of those or provided their consent to most of those. They did hold back recommendations on a couple. And then the balance were submitted to the Commissioner and thankfully the Commissioner approved all the ones that were submitted to her. So, that process seemed to work out pretty good.

The second document that you have is our timeline proposed and actual completed. The actual selection and approval of the reviewers, because of the
late start, took a little bit longer than we had anticipated. The proposals were signed. So they’re --
that is currently in process. We’ve kept with the proposed
due date for the proposal reviewer and April, as you can see, is a very busy month. A study section is scheduled
for April 27th. We’ll actually be going up to UMASS to be
with Gary and one or two other reviewers that will
actually be in the room. And the balance will be on the
phone especially those from Australia and Czechoslovakia,
so they’re going to not be joining us in the room. So it
will be an interesting telephone call. There is a very
finite window when you can have everybody in relatively
good shape based upon where they are around the world.

So, we’re scheduled to be done by the end
of April, which gives us a pretty good buffer, like six
weeks, seven weeks buffer in case we run into some issues
this year. So, we’re pretty confident that we’ll be able
to get the reviews -- you know, the reviews in and any
changes in the rankings of the proposals, you know, and
finalize our work to the Advisory Committee well in time
for the June 12th session.

I did want to pass out and we’ll provide
this electronically as well. You did receive copies of
the sheets that are being used by the reviewers to
evaluate the proposals. But this is what you will
actually see as like the cover sheet. So, it starts with
the initial review summary. And if there is a
reconciliation required that would be the next item that’s
identified here. So there is a primary reviewer, secondary
reviewer, reconciliation review. And if there is a change
in the score you’ll see that and then there will be a
statement there. And then that may then need to go forward
based on what happens through the -- to the co-chairs, if
the reviewers are unable to reconcile then the co-chair
gets involved to reconcile the proposal with a
reconciliation statement and then a comment by the chair.

And then the final step is to study section
review and if there is any change of the score as well as
any comment for why they made the change. So you’ll see a
full record of what’s happening moving from the initial
reviews, which you’ll get, to this study sheet. So,
hopefully it will be pretty concise and it will work out.
Hopefully there won’t be too many reconciliation stated,
but we’ll see.

DR. PESCATELLO: Bottom to top?

MR. STRAUSS: Bottom to top. We could make
it top to bottom, but we thought you’d be most interested
seeing the final proposal score so that’s at the top. And
then you can -- so you can track it either way whatever
your preference might be.

So, that’s pretty much it. We also assisted
Marianne in trying to identify a couple of people for the
Stem Cell Research Advisory Committee. So I don’t know
where that’s it.

MS. HORN: That was very helpful.

MR. STRAUSS: Okay, any questions for us?

DR. PESCATELLO: I’d just like to make a
quick comment. So when we get our packages with the
various proposals, this comes up every year, that the
layman’s description of -- I hope you guys really work on
that to really force them to come back with a three, four,
or five sentence description both for our use and for the
public’s when they look at these things. I think they’re
always not that great in terms of being able to
communicate to the relatively sophisticated public what
they’re proposing to do.

MR. STRAUSS: Okay. Well, we’re going to be
going out with a reminder to the reviewers and we’ll make
an added plea for that.

DR. PESCATELLO: And I would encourage you
to go back to it. It’s not -- you know, somebody on your
staff who doesn’t know anything about stem cell research,
but it a reasonably intelligent looks at it and still
couldn’t explain to somebody, a peer, their own non-
science peer what it was about then they should go back
and work on it. All the -- all the universities, they all
have communication staffs who could help on this.

   MR. STRAUSS: Well, we definitely have
staff that don’t know anything about stem cell research.
Now, regarding their smartness I can’t tell you whether we
are or we aren’t.

   DR. HART: This is Ron Hart. If it helps at
all, the goal in writing grants is usually to try to take
a reasonably intelligent -- (inaudible)

   DR. PESCATELLO: Okay.

   DR. GENTEL: Well, what we need are some
reasonably intelligent high school students to try to
understand it.

   DR. HART: Yes, they’re hard to find.

   MS. SMITH: Rick, on the timeline, I notice
you have the meeting to determine the funding as June
12th. I think it’s June 11th.

   MR. STRAUSS: Is it? June 11th. So 12th
is the backup.

   MS. SMITH: That’s the backup.

   MR. STRAUSS: Okay. We’ll make the change
on this.

MS. DONOFRIO: Further comments? Okay.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Just thank you. And I remember when we first talked about -- when we first met you, when I did, and then making Marianne, Marianne talk about having you really take this on this way and it’s made a big difference. So thank you.

MR. STRAUSS: Well, let’s see what the results are.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: That’s my opinion. Well, the process is already palpably different.

MR. STRAUSS: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: So thank you.

MR. STRAUSS: You know, just one question as to whether you think it would be at all valuable to have like Gary available on June 11th if there are any questions. Or whether it was Gary or a co-chair, you know, someone that, one of the members of the team or a couple of members of the team. I don’t know whether -- I’ve only been to one of the actual review sessions so I don’t know whether that would be a helpful thing. It just -- I just wanted to bring it up in case you thought it might be valuable.

DR. GENTEL: I’m ambivalent because I think
the process is intended to separate --

MR. STRAUSS: -- separating.

DR. GENTEL: You know, Advisory Committee review from peer review.

DR. GOLDHAMMER: And particularly because of this process in place, which is a real improvement from the past, I think anything that the chair could contribute he’s contributed to get to this point in terms of reconciliation and so forth. So I think, in my eyes, I’m a little bit ambivalent, but I think that probably it’s not in --

MR. STRAUSS: -- all right.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: One thing you make me wonder as I -- as we went through last year’s review it was an opportunity for people to also critique the reviewers. And some of the information that had come back. I don’t know if you all recall that, but I imagine there were some instances in which people said, I wish this had been imparted to us more clearly. So, I should ask the group whether or not there is anything that you want to send to Gary so that he has a good understanding of what we hope to get from them based on some previous experience with the reviews that have come to us. And it might be as simple as just looking back at the proceedings
from last June to do that. It might be unnecessary.

MS. DONOFRIO: The next agenda item, revisions to request for proposals.

MS. HORN: I think that was rolled into what Bill was talking about unless people want to get involved in revising the RFP today. It sounds like that might part of the bigger conversation that we have down the road.

MS. SMITH: All right.

MS. DONOFRIO: We can move on to No. 17, Stem Conn ’13.

MS. SMITH: That was the 2013.

MS. DONOFRIO: And next is public comment.

MR. STRAUSS: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Please identify yourself.

MR. STRAUSS: Rick Strauss, Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering. I just wanted to mention work on a project we’re involved in through the General Assembly, Workforce Alignment. Now, in a couple of months I might be able to tell you what that really means. We’re working on the definition with our committee. But basically -- and there are also several bills before the General Assembly this year dealing with this issue of
workforce alignment. And actually Paul is on our
committee. But it really looks at the connection between
the education continuum, the workforce employers, the
employees whether they’re just job seekers, whether
they’re dislocated workers, people that are unemployed, or
retraining. It really deals with the whole spectrum.

Now, a piece of where Connecticut is going
and how it aligns itself -- I mean really if you want to
start from the beginning this is really a pre-school to
after college and continued learning for making sure that
the workforce is prepared for the jobs for the future.
But it also deals with the state being ready for the
future with whatever is emerging. And the research
investments in the state, based on the 100 million, which
is a lot of money, or whatever other areas the state may
be looking at investing in like advanced manufacturing or
fuel cells, or other technologies, and the work of
Connecticut Innovations, and the Connecticut Energy
Finance and Investment Authority, they’re all kind of
linked.

So how this system -- the new term, I guess
is probably an old term by now, ecosystem and innovation
all fits together is really important. So when you’re
deliberating on, you know, genomics and relation to stem
cell, and what this group is doing it’s -- and then there is also the biomedical research grant program which, you know, is a smaller program and it doesn’t have the same visibility like with you people with the stem cells program. So you may want to think about all that and how it links up to what the real push is in terms of the economic well being of the state and moving the state into the future for the next 20 years and where we go.

It’s not easy and a lot of people are talking about it. And they’re looking at investing a lot of money and they’re moving fast perhaps without, in some areas because of the severity of the unemployment at 8 or 9 percent, assuming that’s bad, without necessarily a plan, but looking at pushing programs forward to reduce the unemployment rate not necessarily aligned with what might be in the long-term best interest of the state. I’m not saying whether they are not, but you definitely want to look at how this all fits into the bigger picture.

So, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Thank you.

DR. WALLACK: So, are you working with the Board of Regents also on this?

MR. STRAUSS: This study is for the Higher Education, Employment Advancement Committee, the Commerce
Committee, the Labor Committee, and the Education Committee. They’re the committees -- and it’s being done in consultation with -- and if you ask anybody what that means you have to -- it’s almost a Workforce Alignment -- but that is being in consultation with the Department of Labor, the Department of Economic and Community Development, the Board of Regents. And then we threw in the Department of Education because the General Assembly left them out. And the Office of Workforce Competitiveness is tied into the Department of Labor so they’re involved as well.

DR. WALLACK: So, Rick, you’re going to come out with a report of how to --

MR. STRAUSS: -- well, I didn’t -- our job is to try to evaluate, identify strategies or evaluate strategies that can be used to assess the effectiveness of workforce related programs so that the workforce is prepared for the jobs of the future. So, it gets into what kind of data and information is being used and how it is analyzed to direct state investments in certain areas to assure better alignment of education and training programs with employer needs. And it’s more complicated than just using the Department of Labor data because that’s -- although, you know, it’s a stable source of
information, it doesn’t necessarily provide you with
enough information to be able to look at what the trends
are in -- people are using more sophisticated and various
sources of data. So we’re trying to learn about that to
see what, you know, how others are doing it and what the
best practices are.

And then see how Connecticut might utilize
that in, you know, one, looking at where to make
investments because they could see what's emerging. But
also to help in determining when, what the results are for
the -- of the investments. And then when it’s time to
start moving in different directions so that you’re not
necessarily funding programs where there aren’t -- where
the demand isn’t there.

So, does anybody got any ideas?

DR. WALLACK: But what I really feel about
is this is that’s incredibly important because antitodally
we’ve heard stories, obviously, through the years that
manufacturing or whatever initiatives have gone out of
state because of a lack of adequate workforce. And this
would hopefully -- from what I gather this is exactly what
you’re trying to make recommendations so that dollars can
be put in the appropriate way for appropriate training and
so forth.
MR. STRAUSS: Yes. And, of course, one of the most important things is can you ready by third grade. So it’s --

DR. WALLACK: -- when is your report going to be coming out?

MR. STRAUSS: By January 2013. And if you -- we’re actually recording most of our study committee meetings with guest speakers. So we’ve had in the Education Commission of the States, they’re based on Colorado, for a presentation. We had an author in last week on the next -- he wrote a book on the next American economy and it deals with innovation and the whole workforce alignment issue. Next month we are having in the Georgetown Center for Education in the Workforce to talk about their use of data and information. In May we have in the four commissioners and the Office of Workforce Competitiveness to talk about what they’re doing and where they see the gaps, and there they think they’re aligned, and what the initiatives are in the state.

Along with hearing from some companies in April and also looking at global interest areas in May. And then in June we hope to hear from Nobel Laureate’s team, not him, from the University of Chicago on early childhood investments and their role and importance in
this whole issue. And then I don’t know what we’re going
to do after that, but that’s a start.

DR. WALLACK: One other thing, if I might,
you’re going to be look at current capacity vis a vie,
say, community colleges and so forth as well as part of
this? So you can then make appropriate recommendations or
no?

MR. STRAUSS: We’re really -- it’s hard --
we’re trying to not get into the weeds of determining what
all the programs are out there, but rather kind of like
where the -- what are the key points of where you need to
be aligned. And what are they doing to assure their
alignment. Like one of the things the community college
system and the Board of Regents did was to come up with
these articulation agreements. So that credits transfer
and you're not going -- students will not lose time and
credit by going from community college into the state
university system. So that’s like one of the momentum
points to make sure we can keep the students on track. So
they’re looking for better alignment in that area.

And then, you know, you have to take that
back into the high schools and you've got to bring that
down into the lower grades. But that’s over simplifying
it, of course, but there is certain points in the system
that need to be, perhaps, better aligned in order to achieve the results.

I mean one of the problems that you mention in advanced manufacturing is that, you know, the employers are complaining that they can’t CNC operators. Well, we have one employer that says, what they like to do is to find people that they think are good candidates that have good backgrounds. And they then want to train them in their systems and on their machines. Others say I need the guy to be able to work this CNC machine with this software and I need them tomorrow. I’m not sure they’re moving out because I’m not sure they’re going to get that same person anywhere else, but that’s kind of like the dilemma.

So, one of the pilot programs that was tried recently through Congressman Larsen was a job match program where it ran through CECAT and they started with let’s say 300 perspective people that were looking for jobs. And they looked at what their skills were and then they down selected those to a number of people that could have additional interviews. And then that went further down into 30 that were invited to attend this session with X number of employers and about 20 people got hired. Now, what did that do for the unemployment rate? Maybe 1,000th of a point.
But can that be -- can that program be leveraged and be built up to, in a way that could be productive for placing people and looking at what people need, and what kind of skills that they may not be aware of that they need that they could then get training for, and the training programs might be designed to do that. And within all of that what’s the state role, and what’s the employer’s role, and how could you do it most cost effectively? I don’t know if we’re going to get all of those answers.

But, anyway, it’s certainly challenging and there is a lot of people that are now working together. The Connecticut Employment and Training Commission is working on this, you know, in a number of areas including biotech, which is a big one. They’re looking at starting -- I think you’re involved, right, with the biotech cluster initiative through C-TECH or something or starting to be.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: A little bit.

MR. STRAUSS: So, anyway, it’s going all over the place.

MS. DONOFRIO: Any further comments?

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: So, can we back up?

MS. DONOFRIO: Sure.
CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: And we have revisions to the agenda, which was originally mailed out, and we just wanted to seek approval for a revision to the order.

DR. WALLACK: So moved.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: And a second?

DR. GENTEL: Second.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Any objections? Okay.

Discussion? Thank you very much.

Any other public comment?

DR. DEES: This is Richard Dees. I have a comment, a public comment.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Um, hmm.

DR. DEES: We went through the final report -- the discussion about lay summaries reminded me of some things in the final report that the lay summaries should be improved, shall we say, for the lay public.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Yes. All right.

MS. SMITH: I can pass that along to the institutions and let them know that a request has been made to improve the lay summaries.

DR. DEES: I mean I could be more specific. The Shoemaker report I thought could be made a lot more clear. The Antic report there were some technicalities that were hard to follow where some people wouldn’t know
anything about this. The same is true of the Zew report.

MS. SMITH: All right.

DR. DEES: And then I would like to say the Lee lay summary was actually pretty nice.

MS. SMITH: All right, that’s good. I will pass that on to the institutions.

DR. DEES: Thank you.

MS. SMITH: You’re welcome.

DR. GOLDHAMMER: And this will be passed on directly to the individuals as well because the institution, as a body, won't do anything to rectify this. It really has to be the individual investigator that takes responsibility for it.

MS. SMITH: Sure.

DR. DEES: In some of them they were still talking about what they were proposing to do in their lay summaries. They didn’t revise it for the final report.

DR. PESCATELLO: A lot of times, I mean more so in the past, but they’ve read like edited versions of the larger proposal request. And I would just make another comment -- I’ve already made this comment over and over again, but we also get -- there is a lot of understandable desire on the part of the public for how this research is connected to ultimate treatments and
cures. And so to the extent that in the lay summary that -- I would make a request -- you know, both what connection -- there is always a connection to ultimate treatments and cures, one way or the other. But also if at all possible -- because I’m a great believer in basic research and that that's you have to have it. There is really no shortcut to make a case for why this basic research is so important. And that kind of description is different from just editing your overall proposal.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Would it be helpful to have a little section why is this important to your help? Why does this matter?

DR. PESCATELLO: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: So that somebody who maybe would glaze over reading anything else will say, look at what they’re doing. Look at how this might benefit us.

DR. PESCATELLO: Yes. It’s a good idea.

MS. SMITH: So we will pass that along.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: In plain English.

DR. PESCATELLO: Right.

DR. DEES: So we’ll move onto the next meeting date. I think we would like to send a poll around regarding the April meeting to see if anyone felt we
needed to have that meeting or if we could wait until May.

   CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Um, hmm.

   DR. WALLACK: So if we meet in May it’s probably going to be in preparation of -- for the review process, right? If there is any validity in trying to have a discussion, as we talked about before, about new directions for the RFP for 2013 and then 2014, I might argue that we should have the April meeting and maybe devote a portion, a significant portion of that meeting with this discussion.

   CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: So why don’t we give Marianne a chance to tell us whether or not even based on the legislation that we work with now says we can go very far away from where we are, and finish that rest of that email discussion with the idea that if people come to some consensus that we need to continue the discussion in April there can be a meeting. Let’s do it that way. But let’s be sure first about whether or not there is a possibility. And it is a big discussion and I think that even if we start it in April it’s going to take months after that to land any place.

   DR. WALLACK: And that’s exactly, I think, why I said that because after June then we’re probably not going to meet until August, September or thereabouts. So
that discussion will happen way into 2012 if we don’t have it in April.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Have you talked with anyone at UCONN in the bioscience to see whether or not this is something they’re interested in?

DR. WALLACK: So, David, you can maybe talk more to this than -- better about this than I can. Certainly the whole area of IPS is -- I’m really beginning to be a convert to the idea that this is something that we really have to begin to emphasize in what we’re doing. And it impacts on what we’re doing with the core funding.

DR. GOLDHAMMER: I think if it’s a matter of just changing the language to make it more inclusive the new stem cell technologies, like IPS, that’s relatively easy to do with language changes. It’s the intersection of stem cells with genomics that we really revamp the program which is going to be a very serious discussion. As you know, I completely agree that we should change the RFP and include, make it very clear that IPS and other approaches that aren’t specifically written into the initial RFP are now included.

And we discussed this before the fact that when it was first -- when we first put out the RFP the emphasis was on human stem cell lines that could not
receive funding from federal sources. And now that’s more
of a mute point now. And so I think it’s time to really
expand the language a little bit and make sure that it
incorporates the newest -- it emphasizes the newest
technologies and approaches and isn’t so specifically tied
to the more narrow focus that we began with.

DR. WALLACK: And there is the -- so I
totally agree with what David said and while it’s subtle
in the rewording of it, it’s pretty significant from the
standpoint of where we’ve come from. The other thing is
when we talk about the larger discussion, and more
substantive discussion, it’s also consistent, I believe,
with what NIH is doing. From what I gather they have
formed a new institute on regenerative medicine. And --

DR. HART: -- yes, they have.

DR. GENTEL: It’s a center, isn’t it?

DR. WALLACK: Yes, right.

DR. GENTEL: Within NICHD.

DR. WALLACK: So, Ron, do you want to
comment on it?

DR. HART: We’ve actually been negotiating
with them to provide repository sources for them. But the
-- they’re trying to consolidate several projects that
take advantage of -- and to have some uniformity. But the
big advantage of including IPS is the immediate access to
disease and applications. Whereas embryonic stem cells
are largely created from embryos for which we don't know
what their -- types and diseases -- are -- stem cells can
be made from patients with specific conditions and
specific unitypes. So if the goal is to get toward
treating diseases quicker IPS makes the most sense.

DR. GOLDHAMMER: And one more comment as
long -- if we’re taking a broader approach, and given the
changes in federal policy and so forth, we should also
have a discussion about adult stem cells or tissue
specific stem cells, which are in the legislation, but
they tend not to be emphasized by this Committee for very
good reasons in the past. But if we’re really looking for
the best therapies, the best research to get us to the
point of therapies tissue specific stem cells are every
bit as important as embryonic stem cells. And, in fact,
the only therapies available now with stem cells are with
tissue specific stem cells. And there is cases where it
would be much better to use a tissue specific stem cell
than an embryonic stem cell because of the problems
implied -- they’re also seen as advantages, but there is
also problems.

Anyway, this is a long way of saying that
as long as we’re expanding the scope that we should stick
with our goal of funding the best research and not
necessarily emphasize, in my view, embryonic stem cells
over others. And let the best science and the most -- and
the best science and applicability to human health dictate
what we find.

DR. WALLACK: And I’ve been a big proponent
of staying to our original goal of embryonic stem cell
research in the past. Buy by the same token, I mean we’re
not where we were when some of us, like myself, were
emphasizing that. And I think what’s really, really been
wonderful about what we’ve done here at the Advisory
Committee is that we’ve always been in the lead of what’s
been going on nationally or for that matter around the
world. And that’s why, I think, we have to be having this
kind of discussion and redirection of what we’re trying to
do because if we don’t we’re not going to any longer be in
the lead.

And so this is a long winded reason,
explanation about why the April meeting might be an
important discussion, opportunity for discussion
especially if Marianne is prepared -- I think she can be.
I think she can be prepared to indicate what the -- if we
need to go legislatively --
MS. HORN: -- um, hmm.

DR. WALLACK: But we don’t need to have that to make certain minor changes, but certainly, Marianne, can help us to guide us through what would be necessary. And, you’re right, Marianne, this is a short session, but certainly for 2013.

MS. HORN: Right. And maybe you and I, Milt, can have a conversation before I put that together. I think that we just need to know where the boundaries would be and then to sort of draw the sphere of what would be possible. I think the language does allow for quite a bit of flexibility.

DR. WALLACK: Right. I’d be more than willing to meet with you on that.

MS. HORN: Okay.

DR. WALLACK: And we can discuss if there is need, and there well might be, if you feel so, bring whoever else to the table for that discussion.

MS. HORN: Perfect. And then we can come back -- so I am hearing an April meeting would be a good time to have that discussion.

DR. GENTEL: Yes, a couple of comments. First of all, I think it’s important to maintain some sort of a central theme behind this. I worry if the program is
perceived as becoming too defuse it looses that concept of something that is a very, very central concept. I mean that was the nice thing and the beauty of a focus on stem cells is because there was a central focus. And I think if we get too far away from that we start -- we start to lose that sort of very, very central concept.

The other thing, I think, it might be useful if we’re going to meet in April is perhaps most people put together some sort of a concept paper or something that we can look at and consider in advance of the meeting.

DR. WALLACK: Thanks, Mike, you’re always very helpful, aren't you?

DR. GENTEL: Yes. Just talk into a Dictaphone and put it all those thoughts down on paper.

DR. WALLACK: No, I mean we can come in with certain talking points. And certainly, David, I mean you would be critical to this discussion, I think.

DR. GOLDHAMMER: I’m happy to do whatever prior to the meeting.

DR. WALLACK: Right.

DR. GOLDHAMMER: Except maybe not write a concept paper.

DR. WALLACK: You notice I turned to you.
DR. GOLDMAN: Yes. And that’s why I felt
I needed to loop back to you.

DR. GENTEL: I’m happy to criticize one.

DR. WALLACK: The last time -- twice I
remember he made the suggestion that led to major papers
on our part. Thank you, Mike.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: All the reasons I put
the discussion to the group since I won’t be doing any of
that.

DR. WALLACK: No, but it’s your oversight
and overview and bringing it together that becomes
absolutely critical. And it’s what you bring to the table
is very, very important to us for credibility.

MS. DONOFRIO: Any further comments or
items to discuss? I think we can move to adjourn.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Anybody want to rush
to move to adjourn? Anybody want to stay?

DR. WALLACK: Move to adjourn.

CHAIRPERSON MULLEN: Second. Thank you
everyone.

(whereupon, the meeting was adjourned at
2:13 p.m.)