

CONNECTICUT STEM CELL RESEARCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Minutes – Regular Meeting
Tuesday, March 20, 2012

A regular meeting of the Connecticut Stem Cell Research Advisory Committee “Advisory Committee” was held on Tuesday, March 20, 2012, at the offices of Connecticut Innovations, 865 Brook Street, Rocky Hill, Connecticut.

Call to Order: Noting the presence of a quorum, Jewel Mullen, Chairperson of the Advisory Committee and Commissioner of the Department of Public Health, called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. Members present: Richard H. Dees (by phone); Gerald Fishbone, M.D (by phone); Myron Genel, M.D; David Goldhamer, Ph.D; Ronald Hart, Ph.D. (by phone); Jewel Mullen, M.D., M.P.H., M.P.A; Paul Pescatello, J.D., Ph.D., and Milton B. Wallack, D.D.S.

Advisory Committee Members Absent: Treena Livingston Arinzeh, Ph.D., Ph.D.; Anne Hiskes, Ph.D.; and Ann Kiessling, Ph.D.

Other Attendees: Isolde Bates (UCONN); Terri Clark (CASE), Sara Donofrio (CI); Marianne Horn (DPH) (by phone); Emily Smith (CI); Rick Strauss (CASE); and Paula Wilson (Yale).

Opening Remarks:

Dr. Mullen acknowledged and thanked Attorney Horn for the work she has done at DPH and for the Stem Cell Research Advisory Committee, especially in light of Mr. Wollschlager’s retirement.

Approval of Minutes – January 17, 2012 Meeting

The Advisory Committee members were asked to consider the minutes from the January 17, 2012 meeting. In response to a question, Attorney Horn noted that the Power Point presentation from the November bidder’s meeting at the Capitol is on the DPH Website.

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Dr. Wallack, seconded by Dr. Goldhamer, the Advisory Committee members voted in favor of adopting the minutes from the January 17, 2012 meeting as presented. VOTE: 6-0-0 (Dr. Genel and Dr. Pescatello were not present for the vote).

Changes to Agenda:

Dr. Mullen asked the Advisory Committee members to consider changing the order of the agenda.

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Dr. Wallack, seconded by Dr. Genel, the Advisory Committee member voted unanimously in favor of changing the order of the agenda. VOTE: 8-0-0.

Update on Planning for Grant Review Meeting:

Attorney Horn indicated that the grant review meeting has been scheduled for Monday, June 11, and if needed, Tuesday, June 12, at the Farmington Marriott from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Dr. Mullen stated that she will do everything possible to try to finish the reviews in one day. The review process will be discussed at the next meeting. Any questions or concerns should be directed to Attorney Horn.

Legislative Update on Collaborative Funding Agreement Authority:

Attorney Horn mentioned that legislation has been introduced to authorize DPH to enter into agreements with other states to share science and provide more opportunities to collaborate and expand the use of funding. She mentioned that testimony has been provided in support of the legislation.

Membership Update:

Attorney Horn stated that five names of potential Advisory Committee members have been forwarded by Dr. Mullen to the legislature for consideration. If all five candidates are approved, there will be one vacancy on the Advisory Committee. DPH will follow up to try to get the appointments made as soon as possible and in advance of the grant review meeting.

Update on 2012 Grant Applications and Timeline for Review Process:

Attorney Horn noted that the timeline for the review process by the Advisory Committee will depend on the Peer Review process. Assignments for reviews of the grants by the Advisory Committee members will be made and access to the grants will be provided.

Statement of Financial Interest Filings:

The Statement of Financial Interests filings are due no later than May 1, 2012 to the Office of State Ethics. A link to the Website was provided by DPH, and paper copies are also available.

Revisions to Request for Proposals:

Dr. Wallack asked the Advisory Committee to consider making a major change to the Request for Proposals (“RFP”) for the next round of funding. Considering the changes in stem cell research and the opportunities with the Jackson Laboratory, Dr. Wallack noted the need for the Advisory Committee to expand its RFP to including genomics and induced pluripotent stem cells (“iPS”). He also noted the opportunity and need to investigate the Advisory Committee having oversight for the approximate \$100,000,000 of funding to subsidize the Jackson Laboratory research. Attorney Horn stated that it is likely that legislation would be necessary if there is a significant shift from the intent of the enabling legislation for the Advisory Committee. Since the legislative session is a short session, both Attorney Horn and Ms. Smith indicated that it is probably too late to introduce new legislation that makes significant changes. Ms. Smith noted that it may be possible to submit minor amendments to existing legislation. A suggestion was made to expand the RFP for 2013 to include technologies such as iPS. There was general consensus that it is important to incorporate and emphasize the newest technologies and applications in the next RFP which may not necessarily be stem cell research. The Advisory Committee members discussed the funding remaining and how to aim at a new scope of work connected to what has already been done. The funding from the \$10,000,000 allocated by the legislature each year for stem cell research will continue through 2015. However, the Stem Cell Research Advisory Committee will have oversight of the grants beyond 2015 and until each of the grants end. In response to a question, Ms. Smith indicated that she could follow stem cell research as a legislative item and report back to the Advisory Committee at the next meeting.

StemConn13:

The Advisory Committee members referred to the success Maryland has had involving the business community and the excellent conferences hosted by Maryland. It was noted that Maryland has a dedicated staff to work on stem cell research.

Six-Month Fiscal Reports:

Ms. Smith noted that the reports for grant 09-SCB-WESL-26, Dr. Naegele, Principal Investigator, and grant 09-SCB-UCON-18, Dr. Rasmussen, Principal Investigator, were not received in time to be reviewed at the January meeting. She indicated that the reports are for informational purposes, and no action is required by the Advisory Committee.

Annual Reports:

Ms. Smith stated that the annual reports for grant 08-SCB-UCHC-011, Dr. Zecevic, Principal Investigator, and grant 08-SCB-UCON-06, Dr. Loturco, Principal Investigator, have been reviewed by CI and appear to be in order. CI recommends acceptance of the annual reports. In response to a question, Ms. Bates clarified the salaries for the research assistant and the post-doctorate fellow for grant 08-SCB-UCHC-011.

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Dr. Pescatello, seconded by Dr. Genel, the eligible Advisory Committee members voted in favor of accepting the annual reports for grant 08-SCB-UHC-011, Dr. Zecevic, Principal Investigator, and grant 08-SCB-UCON-06, Dr. Loturco, Principal Investigator. VOTE: 7-0-1 (Dr. Goldhamer abstained from the vote).

Final Reports:

Ms. Smith indicated that final reports were received for the following grants.

09-SCA-UHC-14, Dr. Chamberlain, Principal Investigator
09-SCA-UHC-34, Dr. Schumacher, Principal Investigator
09-SCA-Yale-39, Dr. Li, Principal Investigator
09-SCA-UHC-13, Dr. Antic, Principal Investigator
06-SCB-UHC-14, Dr. Xu, Principal Investigator

Ms. Smith noted that the reports were provided for informational purposes, and no action is required by the Advisory Committee members.

The Advisory Committee members asked that the lay summaries for grant 09-SCA-UHC-34, Dr. Schumacher, Principal Investigator, grant 09-SCA-UHC-13, Dr. Antic, Principal Investigator, and 06-SCB-UHC-14, Dr. Xu, Principal Investigator be revised so that non-scientists understand. It was noted that the lay summary for grant 09-SCA-Yale-39, Dr. Li, Principal Investigator, is a good example of how the summary should be written. A discussion ensued on the lay summaries. It was noted that the lay summaries should include information on how the project is important for research, health, cures and treatments. Ms. Smith will discuss this issue with the institutions and principal investigators.

Rebudgeting Requests:

Ms. Smith stated that CI reviewed the proposed rebudgeting requests for the following proposals, and all the requests appear to be in order:

- 08-SCB-UHC-022, Dr. Li, Principal Investigator
- 10-SCA-YSME-22, Dr. Rodeheffer, Principal Investigator
- 10-SCB-02, Dr. Rizzolo, Principal Investigator
- 09-SCB-Yale-06, Dr. Kocsis, Principal Investigator

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Dr. Dees, seconded by Dr. Fishbone, the eligible Advisory Committee members voted in favor of authorizing the rebudget request for grant 08-SCB-UHC-022, Dr. Li, Principal Investigator, VOTE: 7-0-1 (Dr. Goldhamer abstained from the vote).

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Dr. Dees, seconded by Dr. Fishbone, the eligible Advisory Committee members voted in favor of authorizing the

rebudget request for grant 10-SCA-YSME-22, Dr. Rodeheffer, Principal Investigator, VOTE: 7-0-1 (Dr. Genel abstained from the vote).

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Dr. Dees, seconded by Dr. Fishbone, the eligible Advisory Committee members voted in favor of authorizing the rebudget request for grant 10-SCB-YALE-02, Dr. Rizzolo, Principal Investigator, VOTE: 7-0-1 (Dr. Genel abstained from the vote).

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Dr. Dees, seconded by Dr. Fishbone, the eligible Advisory Committee members voted in favor of authorizing the rebudget request for grant 09-SCB-Yale-06, Dr. Kocsis, Principal Investigator, VOTE: 7-0-1 (Dr. Genel abstained from the vote).

Carryover Request:

Ms. Smith stated that CI has reviewed the request to carry over funding for grant 08-SCB-UCON-06, Dr. Loturco, Principal Investigator, and the request appears to be in order.

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Dr. Wallack, seconded by Dr. Fishbone, the eligible Advisory Committee members voted in favor of authorizing the carryover of funding for grant 08-SCB-UCON-06, Dr. Loturco, Principal Investigator. VOTE: 7-0-1 (Dr. Goldhamer abstained from the vote).

No-Cost Extension Requests:

Ms. Smith stated that CI has reviewed the requests for no-cost extensions for grant 10-SCA-29-UCON, Dr. Filipovic, Principal Investigator, and grant 08-SCD-YALE-004, Dr. Lin, Principal Investigator, and recommends acceptance of the requests.

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Dr. Fishbone, seconded by Dr. Wallack, the eligible Advisory Committee members voted in favor of authorizing a no-cost extension for grant 10-SCA-29-UCON, Dr. Filipovic, Principal Investigator, to October 1, 2013. VOTE: 7-0-1 (Dr. Goldhamer abstained from the vote).

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Dr. Fishbone, seconded by Dr. Wallack, the eligible Advisory Committee members voted in favor of authorizing a no-cost extension for grant 08-SCD-YALE-004, Dr. Lin, Principal Investigator, to August 31, 2012. VOTE: 7-0-1 (Dr. Genel abstained from the vote).

Annual Audit Report Received:

Ms. Smith mentioned that the annual audit report was received from Wesleyan University and was provided for informational purposes. No action is required.

Report on Peer Review Process:

Mr. Strauss from the Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering (“CASE”), provided an update on the Peer Review process. He indicated that more details will be available after April 4, the proposed deadline for review of the proposals by the peer reviewers. Mr. Strauss reviewed the process that was performed to select the peer review committee members. He mentioned that the selection process took longer than anticipated, but the final timeline should not be affected. Mr. Strauss discussed the process for reconciling scores for proposals where there is a significant difference in the scores between the primary and secondary reviewers. Reconciliations of scores and reviews should occur between April 4, 2012 and April 11, 2012, section reviews should occur between April 16, 2012 and April 20, 2012, and the final results will be provided to DPH and CI by April 27, 2012. Mr. Strauss distributed copies of the evaluation sheets that will be used by each of the peer reviewers to evaluate each of the proposals.

The Advisory Committee members asked that the applicants be reminded that lay summaries should be written so that non-scientists can understand the aims of the project. Mr. Strauss asked whether the Advisory Committee members wanted the Chair of the Peer Review Committee to attend the Grant Review meeting with the Advisory Committee. There was general consensus that it is important to keep the Peer Review process separate from the Advisory Committee grant review and approval process. Dr. Mullen asked whether the Advisory Committee members have any questions or concerns to bring to the attention of the Chair of the Peer Review Committee.

Public Comment:

Mr. Strauss talked about bills now in the general assembly about workforce alignment. He noted the importance of a continuum of education for preschool through college to make sure the workforce is prepared for jobs in Connecticut. Mr. Strauss spoke about the need to link the echo system and innovation together. He stated that when debating the relationship of genomics, stem cells and biomedical research, the Advisory Committee should consider how everything links to the economic well-being and long-term best interests of the state.

Next Meeting Date:

The Advisory Committee members discussed when to meet next. There was general consensus that if there is validity in trying to make changes to the next RFP, the Advisory Committee should meet in April to discuss the issue in further detail. Dr. Wallack, with the assistance of Dr. Goldhamer, was asked to put together talking points about the proposed changes to the RFP to be reviewed by the Advisory Committee in advance of the next meeting.

Adjournment

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Dr. Fishbone, seconded by Dr. Pescatello, the Advisory Committee members voted unanimously in favor of adjourning the meeting at 2:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Dr. Jewel Mullen, Chair