

**MINUTES OF THE
MARYLAND STEM CELL RESEARCH COMMISSION**
Monday, May 6, 2024
(10960 Grantchester Way, Suite 120, Columbia, MD 21044)

Members:

Scott Bailey, Co-Vice Chair
Rachel Brewster, Co-Vice Chair
Margaret Conn Himelfarb
Mamta Gautam-Basak
Diane Hoffmann, Chair
Debra Mathews
David Mosser
Avram Reisner
Ira Schwartz Curt
Van Tassell

Staff:

Ben Antebi, MSCRF
Ruchika Nijhara, MSCRF
Sabrina Spinner, MSCRF

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

I. Approval of Meeting Minutes

The Commission reviewed the meeting minutes from the March 4, 2024 Commission meeting. A motion was made and seconded to approve the meeting minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

III. Statement for Closing the Meeting

A motion was made and seconded that the Commission go into closed session. The motion stated the following:

STATUTORY AUTHORITY TO CLOSE SESSION

General Provisions Article §3-108(a)(5):

A public body may meet in closed session ... to consider the investment of public funds.

General Provisions Article §3-108(a)(13):

A public body may meet in closed session ... to comply with a specific constitutional, statutory, or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter.

TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED:

The discussion will concern the implementation of the Commission’s previously adopted criteria for grant funding. The Commission will discuss which applications to fund, given the scientific rankings and other relevant factors. The discussion will likely also relate to the characteristics of specific applications.

REASONS FOR CLOSING:

Paralleling the NIH process for considering funding of grant applications (as contemplated by its enabling legislation), the Commission believes that confidentiality is essential to protect the sensitive information about plans and processes that applicants divulge, to avoid a chilling effect on future submissions, and to enable the most candid Commission discussion of how best to invest limited resources.

The motion passed unanimously. The Commission went into a closed session at 9:25 a.m.

In the closed session, the Commission reviewed the scientific peer review ranking of, and key information about, the applications recommended for funding in all of the current categories of grant funding (Manufacturing Assistance, Clinical, Launch, Validation, Discovery, Commercialization, and Post-Doctoral Fellowship Applications). All applicant names and affiliated institutions had been redacted. The Commission focused on applications that received competitive, meritorious scientific scores, giving priority to applications that included collaborations, regenerative medicine, translational research, and underfunded areas of research.

<u>RFA Type</u>	<u>Recommended Awards</u>	<u>Total</u>
Discovery	21	\$7,159,146.16
Launch	8	\$2,797,553.26
Commercialization	4	\$1,692,428.47
Clinical	2	\$1,650,000.00
Post-Doctoral Fellowship	10	\$1,300,000.00
Validation	2	\$500,000.00
Manufacturing Assistance	1	\$344,402.00
Total	<u>48</u>	<u>\$15,443,529.89</u>

The Commission returned to open session at 3:13 p.m.

IV. Nominations and Officer Election

Dr. Nijhara presented the following officer nominations: Commissioner Rachel Brewster – Chair and Commissioner Scott Bailey – Vice Chair. Both nominees expressed their willingness to serve. A motion was made and seconded to approve the nominations as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

V. RFAs for the first cycle of FY25

Dr. Nijhara presented a summary of FY’24 applications, the remaining funds for FY24, and award metrics. She made a recommendation and provided rationale for including the Manufacturing Assistance program in both funding cycles per year, beginning with the first funding cycle for FY’25. A Motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.