

**MINUTES OF THE  
MARYLAND STEM CELL RESEARCH COMMISSION**  
Monday, November 7, 2022  
Virtual Meeting

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**Members:**

Mary Armanios  
Scott Bailey, Vice Chair  
Rachel Brewster, Vice Chair  
Margaret Conn Himelfarb  
Diane Hoffmann, Chair  
Debra Mathews  
Linda Powers  
Avram Reisner  
Ira Schwartz  
Curt Van Tassell

**Staff:**

Ben Antebi, MSCRF  
Troy LeMaile-Stovall, TEDCO  
John Richters, MSCRF  
Sabrina Spinner, MSCRF

The Commission meeting was called to order at 2:06 p.m.

**I. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the September 7, 2022 meeting. A motion was made and seconded to approve the meeting minutes as submitted. The motion passed (*8 in favor -1 abstention*).

**II. Assistant Director Report**

Dr. Ben Antebi presented the Assistant Executive Director's Report, which focused on the following:

**A. Operational Updates**

We are continuously engaged with our current awardees through individual meetings and various cohorts regarding research activities, milestone progress, budgets, and project timelines. Additionally, we have been working with potential applicants for the next round of funding. We are also tracking well on budget for fiscal year 2023.

**B. FY 2023 RFAs (2<sup>nd</sup> Funding Cycle)**

The Request for Applications (RFAs) for all 7 funding programs for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Funding cycle of 2023 were released. The application deadline is January 19, 2023. The Scientific Peer-Review Committee will review the applications in March 2023 and the Commission Review meeting will be held in May 2023.

**C. 2022 Annual Report- Update**

Dr. Antebi presented a number of metrics for 2022 and indicated that the MSCRF team is currently working on the annual report, which is due by the end of December 2022.

### **III. MSCRF Executive Director Search - Update**

Mr. Ira Schwartz indicated that the Commission's Hiring & Compensation Committee drafted the job announcement for the MSCRF Executive Director position and shared the draft with the Commission for feedback. After discussion, there was a consensus to refine the text, with any suggested revisions or additional advertising media to be submitted within 48 hours, and to publish the final version as soon as possible. The Committee will manage the application screening process and will keep the Commission updated on the recruitment progress, with a view towards presenting several finalists for the position to the Commission following initial interviews.

### **IV. 2023 Scientific Peer Review Meeting - Discussion**

In 2020, the MSCRF transitioned all its internal/external meetings from in-person to virtual due to the COVID pandemic. As the CDC and NIH loosened restrictions on indoor meetings, Dr. John Richters (Scientific Review Officer) indicated that many of the reviewers expressed their interest in an in-person format. Recruiting and retaining reviewers can be potentially challenging if the peer review meetings remain virtual. While Dr. Richters emphasized the importance of adhering to the CDC guidelines, he believes communication between reviewers is more effective and MSCRF's efforts are better served by convening in-person than virtually.

There was a consensus that the MSCRF Staff and the Commission are in favor of convening the upcoming March 2023 peer-review meeting in person with a virtual option to accommodate reviewers who are unable to attend in person.

The meeting adjourned at 3:42 p.m.