

**MINUTES OF THE
MARYLAND STEM CELL RESEARCH COMMISSION**
Wednesday, September 7, 2022
Virtual Meeting

Members:

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

Staff:

Ben Antebi, MSCRF
Amritha Jaishankar, MSCRF
Sabrina Spinner, MSCRF

The Commission meeting was called to order at 12:05 p.m.

I. Approval of Meeting Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the August 18, 2022 meeting. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes with minor language modifications. The motion passed unanimously.

II. Executive Director Report

Dr. Amritha Jaishankar presented the Executive Director's Report, which focused on the following:

A. Administrative Updates

The MSCRF team is working to finalize the FY'23 RFA drafts for the 2nd funding cycle. 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 are working with potential applicants for the next round of funding.

B. Marketing and Business Development - ongoing

Dr. Jaishankar briefly highlighted MSCRF's collaborations, press releases, and articles released within the past month. The team will continue to showcase MSCRF awarded scientists through various campaigns to highlight advances in stem cell research, technologies, treatments, and cures.

III. New Open Meetings Act Provisions

Mr. Schwartz provided an overview of Maryland's Open Meetings Act and shared the recent changes that will become applicable to the MSCRF Commission, effective October 1, 2022.

IV. 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 Sec.3-103(a)(1)(i):

This subtitle does not apply to ... a public body when it is carrying out ... an administrative function.

General Provisions Article Sec.3-305(b)(5):

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

General Provisions Article Sec. 3-305(b)(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 recommend for funding, given the scientific rankings and other relevant factors. The discussion will likely also relate to the characteristics of specific applications and confidential information included therein.. Time permitting, the discussion may also concern administrative issues surrounding the implementation of the new MSCRF Manufacturing Assistance Program.

REASON FOR CLOSING:

Paralleling the NIH process for considering funding 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 its limited resources. The Commission also believes that administrative issues surrounding the implementation of a new program do not fall within the scope of coverage of the Open Meetings Act.

The motion passed unanimously. The Commission went into a closed session at 12:27 p.m.

In the closed session, the Commission reviewed the scientific peer review ranking of, and key information about, the applications recommended for funding within four of the current categories of grant funding (Clinical, Validation, Launch, and Commercialization 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. It voted to fund the following awards:

<u>RFA Type</u>	<u>Recommended Awards</u>	<u>Total</u>
Clinical	2	\$1,266,246
Validation	5	\$1,149,986
Launch	5	\$1,749,093
Total	12	<u>\$4,165,325</u>

The meeting was adjourned at 2:41 p.m.