

**MINUTES OF THE
MARYLAND STEM CELL RESEARCH COMMISSION**
Wednesday, September 17, 2025
(10960 Grantchester Way, Suite 120, Columbia, MD 21044)

Members:

Scott Bailey, Vice Chair
Rachel Brewster, Chair
Margaret Conn Himelfarb
Christopher Dreisbach
David Moser
Barbara Nsiah
Linda Powers
Avram Reisner
Ira Schwartz

Staff:

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

The Commission meeting was called to order at 10:32 a.m.

I. Approval of Meeting Minutes

The Commission reviewed the meeting minutes from the July 14, 2025 and August 6, 2025 Commission meetings. A motion was made and seconded to approve both 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.

General Provisions Article §3-103(a)(1)(i):

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

TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED:

The discussion will concern a review of operational and related considerations impacting the administration of the MSCRF.

REASONS FOR CLOSING:

The Commission believes that the aforementioned administrative matters 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 **10:38 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 five of the current categories of grant funding (Manufacturing Assistance, Clinical, Launch, Validation, and Commercialization Applications). All applicant names and affiliated institutions were 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>
Launch	5	\$1,749,324.00
Commercialization	4	\$1,600,000.00
Manufacturing Assistance	2	\$1,357,818.00
Total	11	\$4,707,142.00

During the closed session, the Commission briefly discussed ongoing administrative and strategic matters, including updates on the MSCRF website, and the upcoming Stem Cell Symposium, which will be co-hosted with Johns Hopkins University and USM on October 16-17, 2025. Aside from the application review and the awarding of new grants, no additional actions were taken.

Meeting adjourned at 4:23 p.m.