

**MINUTES OF THE
MARYLAND STEM CELL RESEARCH COMMISSION**
Monday, April 11, 2023
Virtual Meeting

Members:

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

Staff:

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

The Commission meeting was called to order at 2:09 p.m.

Ms. Diane Hoffmann, Commission Chair, welcomed and introduced Dr. Ruchika Nijhara as the new Executive Director of the MSCRF, effective April 10, 2023. The Commission is looking forward to supporting Dr. Nijhara's leadership towards the growth, expansion, and impact of the MSCRF within the stem cell community. Dr. Nijhara expressed her enthusiasm to serve.

I. Approval of Meeting Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the January 9, 2023 meeting. A motion was made and seconded to approve the meeting minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

II. TEDCO/MSCRF Office Relocation - Update

Mr. Ira Schwartz indicated that TEDCO is currently in negotiations to relocate the main office to a business park outside of Columbia, MD. The new office space will be configured to accommodate the hybrid working model for all staff, several large and small conference rooms, common areas and more. The official move is expected to occur by the end of the calendar year. In the interim, TEDCO has vacated the 2nd floor of the current building and moved to the 5th floor until no later than the end of the calendar year.

Mr. Schwartz will keep the Commission informed.

III. Duplicate Application Submission Discussion (2023 Post-Doctoral Fellowship)

During the 2023 2nd application cycle, MSCRF received a nearly identical application submission of a previously awarded Post-Doctoral Fellowship project, with the same mentor but a different PI and title. Dr. Antebi and Dr. Richters indicated that the original PI left the institution, and the award was terminated early.

Dr. Antebi indicated that after careful review, a decision was made to withdraw the new application from consideration and opened the floor to discuss if additional action should be taken. During discussion, various options were discussed as to how to address the issue, including reporting this to the Office of Research Integrity at the institution.

A motion was made and seconded to send a formal letter to the applicant, mentor, and institution setting out the facts of the case and leaving it up to the institution to investigate and take any additional steps they deem warranted. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. MSCR Commission Member Vacancies - Discussion

The Stem Cell Act stipulates that Commission members may continue to serve until their replacements have been appointed. Commission members who have reached the end of their appointment term are asked to continue to serve until they are replaced.

Ms. Hoffmann indicated that the Commission currently has three vacancies that will need to be filled: two for Patient Advocates, and one for an individual with expertise in the field of biomedical ethics as it relates to religion. Any recommendations to fill the vacancies should be forwarded to Diane, Ruchika, or Ben for consideration.

The meeting adjourned at 3:18 p.m.