

May 4, 2017  
9:00 AM to 10:00 AM



Conference call # (888) 670-3525  
Conference code 5311418626

Biomedical Research Advisory Council  
**Meeting Minutes**

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**Board Members Present:**

Daniel Armstrong (Chair)  
Richard Nowakowski (Vice Chair)  
David Decker  
Charles Evans Wood  
Stephen Gardell  
Barbara Centeno  
Allison Eng-Perez

**Board Members not in Attendance:**

Susan Vadaparampil  
John Wingard  
Abubakr Bajwa

**Department of Health Staff:**

Bonnie Gaughan-Bailey, MPA, ASQ-CQIA, Administrator, Biomedical Research Section  
Teresa Mathew, MSW, MPA, Advisory Council Liaison, Biomedical Research Section  
Kaitlyn Barningham, MPH, Biomedical Research Zika Program Specialist  
Will Crowley, MS, MPA, Biomedical Research Program Specialist

A quorum was present. The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. Board members received all pertinent meeting materials. Board members participated via conference call and could actively and equally participate in the discussion.

**I. Meeting Minute Approval**

Dr. Armstrong called for a vote on the prior meeting minutes. Dr. Nowakowski made the motion to approve the April 6, 2017 minutes. Dr. Gardell seconded the motion. Total votes for approval: (Total members voting: 6) Affirmative: 6, Negative: 0, Recusal: 0.

**II. Introductions and Meeting Overview**

Dr. Armstrong provided an overview of the meeting agenda.

**III. Update on Peer Review Vendor Contract Renewal**

Bonnie Gaughan-Bailey and Teresa Mathew presented a brief update on the progress of the amendment and renewal of the peer review vendor contract.

Teresa relayed a question from Oak Ridge Associated Universities (ORAU) regarding the time frame the BRAC would need to finalize the panel focus areas. Dr. Armstrong proposed that

ORAU would develop some options for panel focus areas in cooperation with Department staff and the BRAC chair. These panel focus areas would then be presented to the BRAC during a conference call for their final determination.

#### **IV. Discussion of \$250,000 in Administrative Funds Available for one Bankhead-Coley and One James and Esther King Grant**

There is a total of \$250,000 in administrative funds available to fund one Bankhead-Coley grant and one James and Esther King grant. These funds will need to be encumbered in grants before the end of the fiscal year (June 30, 2017). The BRAC received a list of possible options for awarding these funds.

The remaining proposals on the pay-if list for Bankhead-Coley are all for grants with budgets from \$750,000 to \$1.5 million. The amount of money available to award is not enough to get any of these projects started. One possible option is to award the full \$125,000 to the grant that was originally on the pay-if list and ended up getting funded at less than half of its original budget. Another option is to give \$100,000 of it to a Bridge grant and not award the remaining \$25,000. There are two remaining Bridge grants that were not funded. One of them received an average overall impact score of 3.67, with a cancer-relatedness score of 3.67. This grant was submitted to the Health Disparities priority, with a focus on breast cancer. The other proposal received an average overall impact score of 4.00, with a cancer-relatedness score of 2.33. This grant was submitted to the Prevention and Treatment priority, with a focus on breast cancer. Alternatively, the funds could be split between the two bridge grant proposals at \$62,500 each.

For James and Esther King, there were no remaining unfunded Bridge grants. One option would be to award the full amount to the first grant on the pay-if list. This grant has a total budget of \$389,506. It received an overall-impact score of 2.67 and a cancer/tobacco relatedness score of 1.33. It is a Discovery Science grant submitted to the Tobacco Use priority.

Dr. Nowakowski moved that the \$100,000 of the Bankhead-Coley funds go to the Health Disparities Bridge grant. Dr. Wood seconded the motion. Total votes for approval: (Total members voting: 6) Affirmative: 6, Negative: 0, Recusal: 0.

Dr. Nowakowski moved that the remaining \$25,000 in Bankhead-Coley funds go to the one pay-if that ended up being funded. Dr. Gardell seconded the motion. Total votes for approval: (Total members voting: 6) Affirmative: 6, Negative: 0, Recusal: 0.

Dr. Nowakowski was in favor of giving the James and Esther King funds go to the top pay-if grant. Dr. Gardell asked whether this grant would be able to accomplish anything with less than half of their asking budget. Dr. Armstrong suggested that the funds could go to the top pay-if for one year, and then let them be considered for funding during the next funding cycle without having to reapply. Bonnie Gaughan-Bailey said that this is a possible option. Dr. Nowakowski made a motion supporting Dr. Armstrong's suggestion. Dr. Decker seconded the motion. Total votes for approval: (Total members voting: 6) Affirmative: 6, Negative: 0, Recusal: 0.

## **V. Lessons Learned from the FY 2016-2017 Funding Cycle/Planning and Preparation for the Release of the FY 2017-2018 Bankhead-Coley and James and Esther King FOAs**

The additional information that was provided during the in-person meeting was helpful. BRAC members agreed that the additional information did not create a conflict of interest, or open the door for them to be able to identify any of the applications.

Dr. Armstrong suggested that all applications be required to identify the type of cancer focus. This can be added to the application, and the next FOA can be modified to indicate that applicants will be required to provide this information.

Dr. Nowakowski suggested that the BRAC take a closer look at funding trends during the funding recommendation meeting so that they can consider which research priorities are underrepresented.

For the FY 2017-2018 FOAs, Dr. Armstrong suggested that applications in the Health Disparities priority be encouraged. Applications in this area that are reviewed and assigned exceptional scientific merit will be considered for preferential funding. Dr. Decker, and Dr. Nowakowski agreed that this would be a positive change. Dr. Decker made the motion to adopt this language. Dr. Nowakowski seconded the motion. Total votes for approval: (Total members voting: 6) Affirmative: 6, Negative: 0, Recusal: 0.

Dr. Armstrong also suggested that the same language be adopted for the Research Infrastructure mechanism. Grants of high quality that can support research in more than one research institution will be encouraged and will be considered for preferential funding. Dr. Nowakowski moved to adopt this language. Dr. Gardell seconded the motion. Total votes for approval: (Total members voting: 6) Affirmative: 6, Negative: 0, Recusal: 0.

The FY 2017-2018 Bankhead-Coley and James and Esther King FOAs will be routed for Department approval with these changes.

## **VI. Public Comment**

None.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 a.m.