

June 6, 2016
3:00 PM to 4:00 PM



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

Biomedical Research Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present:

Daniel Armstrong (Chair)
Charles Evans Wood
Stephen Gardell
Richard Nowakowski
Paul Jacobsen
Abubakr Bajwa
John Wingard
Allison Eng-Perez
Barbara Centeno

Board Members not in Attendance:

David Decker

Department of Health Staff:

- Bonnie Gaughan-Bailey, MPA, ASQ-CQIA, Administrator, Biomedical Research Section
- Teresa Mathew, MSW, MPA, Advisory Board Liaison, Biomedical Research Section
- Donald Morgan, MS/MPA Candidate, Public Health Intern, Biomedical Research Section

Members of the Public:

None

A quorum was present. The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.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. Nowakowski made a motion to approve the March 25, 2016 meeting minutes as presented.

Dr. Centeno seconded the motion. Total votes for approval: (Total members voting: 9)

Affirmative: 9, Negative: 0, Recusal: 0

II. Current State of FOAs

Teresa Mathew provided an update on the current state of the FOAs. The FOAs received approval from Department of Health (Department) leadership and were posted to the program website. Department staff sent out announcement and reminder emails to the distribution list. The next step in the process is to open up the Letter of Intent (LOI) online application. The dates listed on the FOA state that the LOI will not open until June 23, however Department staff could open up the LOI earlier. The BRAC members asked that Department staff open up the LOI as soon as possible. Teresa will arrange for the LOI to open by the end of the day and send out an email to inform BRAC members and Sponsored Research Officials when the LOI is available.

III. Update on Long-Term Assessment Survey

Bonnie Gaughan-Bailey provided an update and overview of the findings from the data collected through the Long-Term Assessment Survey. BRAC members received a PowerPoint file and a two-page summary. Although the survey only had a 10% response rate, these results provided a snapshot of the long-term impact of this funding. Respondents reported that they have developed new drugs, and published peer-reviewed research. One textbook resulted from receipt of funds. Permanent and non-permanent, hourly jobs have resulted from this funding. Several respondents reported that they have opened clinics and start-up companies. Of particular interest is the follow-on funding that researchers have received. Although this figure is based upon responses from only 10% of awardees, it demonstrates the magnitude of additional funds being brought into Florida as a result of Program funding. The Department will reopen the survey and resume data collection in order to gain a more thorough portrait of the long-term impacts of funding.

Dr. Wingard asked whether it is made clear to awardees in the Terms and Conditions that they will be expected to provide follow-up reports to the Department. Bonnie answered that the Terms and Conditions state that awardees must inform the Department when they have new publications or advancements, however the language could be made more explicit in conveying the Department's expectations. Dr. Wingard responded that yes, the language should explicitly state that the Department will require reporting of new patents, publications, follow-on funding, etc. He also said that there should be some penalty for not providing feedback. He suggested that if an institution failed to provide the required information, then they would not be considered for future funding from the Department. Dr. Armstrong asked that Bonnie make a note of this suggestion and ask the Department's General Counsel if such a condition could only be added prospectively, or if it could also be retrospective to include awards from previous years. This issue will be added to the next BRAC meeting agenda, and members will make a decision based upon input from General Counsel.

Dr. Nowakowski asked if information could be pulled from the survey results to show follow-on funding by funding mechanism. Department staff agreed that it would be possible to provide that information. Dr. Armstrong also suggested that some of the other results, such as patents, be analyzed by funding mechanism. The BRAC members were asked to look at the preliminary findings and formulate additional questions that could be analyzed and discussed at the next meeting.

IV. CCRAB Follow-Up

Dr. Armstrong provided a follow-up report on the CCRAB meeting. Dr. Tom George has stepped down as the CCRAB Chair. The new Chair is Dr. Christopher Cogel of the University of Florida. The new Co-Chair is Dr. Clement Gwede of the Moffitt Cancer Center. The new chair is a former Bankhead-Coley grant recipient.

In the fall, the Joint Committee is to reconvene to discuss the Cancer Centers of Excellence Award. Every three years, the award performance measures, rating system, and rating standard are to be reviewed by the Committee.

CCRAB members raised the question of how to measure the impact of accomplishments in terms of changes in mortality and morbidity. The draft cancer measures, in a dashboard format, was reviewed and input was provided. A Department team will work on finalizing the measurement tool for the next CCRAB meeting. Bonnie will participate in the Department team.

The Legislature approved increased funding to the Cancer Data System which will aid in the analysis of big data. Data from the VA will now be brought into the Cancer Data System. This will further bolster the robustness of the available data in tracking these changes

Dr. Armstrong used some of the preliminary data from the Long-Term Assessment in his presentation to CCRAB. Matt Hudson was in attendance and was very outspoken in his support of what BRAC funding has accomplished.

V. Discussion of Key Words, Research Priorities, Grant Mechanisms, and General Audience Abstracts

In a previous meeting, BRAC members had requested that Department staff provide them with brief profiles of several grant applications from the previous funding cycle. In the future, this information may be provided to members to assist them in their funding decisions. Members received profiles containing the key words, research priorities, grant mechanisms, and general audience abstracts for 12 grant applications from FY 2015-2016. All identifying information was redacted before these profiles were distributed to BRAC members.

Dr. Nowakowski commented that including the key words and research priorities is very helpful. He said that he could not recognize the profiles, even with the general audience abstracts.

Dr. Armstrong emphasized that the members should consider whether they could identify the applicant based upon the information provided. All members agreed that they could not identify the applicants based upon the information provided.

Dr. Armstrong made the suggestion that Department staff do a thorough review of the applications that receive a score of three or higher and compile profiles of these applications for review by the BRAC. Department staff would remove identifying information before distribution. This information would only be used by BRAC members to help them make their funding decisions.

Dr. Armstrong asked that Department staff obtain General Counsel input as to whether or not this information would need to be in the Sunshine. The review is protected by statute, but it would be good to know if the discussion of this information would also be protected. Dr. Armstrong said that if the discussion of profiles is protected by statute, then the BRAC would have additional information on applications for recommending awards to the State Surgeon General. Department staff will follow-up with General Counsel to gain legal input on this issue.

VI. Procedural Guidance Regarding Reallocation of Reverted Funds

Bonnie provided background information regarding this issue. If Bankhead-Coley, or James and Esther King Research Grant Funding is returned to the Department, these funds must be reallocated and encumbered in grants before the end of the fiscal year or then the program loses the funds. The funds cannot carry over to the next fiscal year. The BRAC was asked to recommend a procedure for allocating additional funds, if they become available.

Several members stated that having a "Pay-if" category would be a good option. This would be a list of alternate grants that would receive an award if funds were reverted to the Department. The "Pay-if" list would also be provided to the State Surgeon General when grant awards are finalized. Each March, BRAC should determine if additional funds will be awarded.

Dr. Armstrong suggested that the procedure be determined during the funding decision meeting each fiscal year based upon the pool of applications.

Dr. Nowakowski made a motion to approve Dr. Armstrong's suggestion. Dr. Bajwa seconded the motion. Total votes for approval: (Total members voting: 9) Affirmative: 9, Negative: 0, Recusal: 0

VII. Update on ORAU

The BRAC asked the Department in a previous meeting to find out if ORAU could conduct panel reviews of applications rather than individual reviews. Bonnie reported that ORAU can provide that review format and will be implemented.

Public Comment: None

The meeting concluded at 4:05 PM