

Health Research Science Board
Minutes of the
Regular Business Meeting
Friday, April 19, 2013
10:00 AM – 12:30 PM

Location

Syracuse: NYS DOH Central NY Regional Office, Room 3 A, 217 S. Salina Street
Albany: NYS DOH Wadsworth Center, Biggs Laboratory, Sturman Conference Room, Empire State Plaza
Rochester: University of Rochester Medical Center, School of Medicine and Dentistry, Conference Room 1-7438, 415 Elmwood Avenue
New York City: NYS DOH Metropolitan Area Regional Office, Conference Room 4 A/B, 90 Church Street

Board Members Present

Santo M. DiFino, MD (Chair, V) – Syracuse
Beverly Canin (V) – Albany
Douglas Conklin, PhD (V) – Albany
Victoria Derbyshire, PhD (EO) – Albany
M. Suzanne Hicks (NV) – Albany
Diana E. Lake, MD (V) – NYC
Gary Morrow, PhD (V) – Rochester
Margaret O’Neil (EO) – Albany
Robert Riter (V) – Syracuse
Neeta Shah, MD (V) – NYC
Elinor J. Spring-Mills, PhD (V) – Syracuse
Marc Wilkenfeld, MD (V) – NYC

Staff Present

Bonnie Jo Brautigam – Syracuse
Carole Ju – Albany
Grace Farrell (DEC) – Albany
Scott Menrath (DEC) – Albany
Mary Rogers – Albany
Mary Thatcher – Albany
Diana Yang, JD – Albany

DOH Staff Absent

Terry Ascienzo
Syni-An A. Hwang

Board Members Absent

Russell Hilf, PhD
Arun Puranik, MD
James Hicks, PhD

V = Voting member
NV = Non-voting member
EO = *Ex-officio*, non-voting member

Call to Order and Opening Remarks of the Chair

The meeting was called to order at 10:46 a.m. by Chair, Santo DiFino, MD.

Consideration of Minutes of October 19, 2012 Meeting

Dr. DiFino asked if there were any comments on Exhibit 1, the minutes from the October 19, 2012 regular business meeting. There was no discussion.

ACTION

Elinor Spring-Mills, PhD made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 19, 2012 meeting (Exhibit 1) without changes. Robert Riter seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved (9-0).

Consideration of Recommendation from HRSB's Committee on Program Needs and Effectiveness

Dr. DiFino noted that during the October 2012 public hearing, the Board heard a report regarding the basis, efficiency and scientific utility of the information derived from pesticide reporting pursuant to sections 33-1205 and 33-1207 of the Environmental Conservation Law. The Board authorized the Committee on Program Needs and Evaluation/Effectiveness to address the issue about the utility, efficiency and scientific usefulness of this material.

Dr. DiFino referred to Exhibit 2, which provides the following recommendation to the Board: *"The Committee has found that the pesticide database no longer meets its primary purpose, to provide scientifically useful information regarding the relationship between pesticide use and human health, and recommends that the database should be abolished."*

Dr. DiFino asked if there were any questions. There were none.

ACTION

Gary Morrow, PhD made a motion to eliminate the reporting of pesticide sales and use data as recommended by the Committee. Marc Wilkenfeld, MD seconded. A roll call vote was taken and the motion was passed unanimously.

Dr. Morrow left the meeting at 11:00 and a quorum was lost.

Program Update

Biennial Report

Bonnie Brautigam reported that the 2011-2012 Biennial Report has been submitted to the Department for review and will then go to the Governor's office and the legislative leaders, and be posted on the program website. The outcome of today's vote on the Pesticide Sales and Use database will be sent through those channels and incorporated into the 2013-2014 Biennial Report as well.

Ms. Brautigam then noted that the Governor has made a significant commitment to the non-profit community to streamline the contracting process from RFA development and issuance through contract close-out. A new website called the Grants Gateway will include all New York State RFAs in one place and provide for electronic application submission to streamline the application process.

Program Funding and Committees

Ms. Brautigam referred to Exhibit 5, and informed the Board that under the heading of "Current and Pending Contracts" there are four Rowley contracts ending later in 2013. She noted that the 10 award recommendations that the Board made in June 2012 have not yet been approved. B1184s (documents requesting authority to expend cash) have been submitted for the awards to the Division of the Budget, but they have not yet been approved. The Department continues to follow up.

Ms. Brautigam reminded the Board that the start date for the Rowley contracts was slated for January 1, 2013. It has communicated with all those recommended for award that they will be notified as soon as approvals are given. Beverly Canin asked if there is any sense of when the Division of Budget will act on the Rowley Contracts. Ms. Brautigam noted that there was not.

Ms. Brautigam added that approval has been given by the Division of Budget regarding the plan for the current fiscal year but permission has not been given to issue the RFAs that would occur in future fiscal years. The schedule continues to be modified as time elapses, but the overall plan remains the same: as approvals are received the scientific RFA would be issued, then the Pat Brown RFA issued every other year going forward, and the Healthcare Practitioner's education research RFA in the alternating years. Staff has also been developing an RFP to secure a contractor for independent peer review services, as the current contract ends this fall. She noted that issuance of the RFAs could take place in the fall and Board recommendations could occur in June 2014.

Ms. Brautigam suggested that the Board focus on the critical work of the Committees. She noted that continuous outreach and successful fundraising, on-time RFAs, contracts and vouchers, quality peer review, significant scientific and education research projects, and an evaluation effort to quantify and demonstrate the successes of the program are all necessary.

Ms. Brautigam noted that the Committee on Funding and Outreach currently has only two members, Dr. Spring-Mills and Dr. Morrow, and is missing the important perspective of the advocacy community.

Dr. DiFino regretfully announced his intent to resign from the Board after 16 years of service once the meeting is adjourned and noted that there are still better things ahead for the Health Research Science Board.

Board Operations

Ms. Brautigam distributed a handout of the vacant positions on the Board which include:

- Four scientists/researchers/physicians (V)
- One statewide prostate cancer or testicular cancer survivor (V)
- One regional breast cancer survivor/advocate, from Long Island (NV)
- One regional breast cancer survivor/advocate, from New York City (V) (nominated; awaiting appointment)
- One regional breast cancer survivor/advocate, from Central New York (V) (nominated; awaiting appointment)
- One regional breast cancer survivor/advocate, from Western NY (NV) (nominated; awaiting appointment)

Ms. Brautigam asked if anyone could identify potential members to please send their names and contact information to Mary Rogers, who would then forward them to our Office of Governmental and External Affairs to start the process.

Diana Lake, MD noted that she could ask some of her patients if they would be interested in serving on the Board. She then asked what the requirements were for serving on the Board as an advocate/survivor. Ms. Brautigam informed her that they must be a New York State resident, a US citizen, and a breast cancer survivor active in a community based organization.

Public Comment

Public Comment was not solicited.

Meeting Planning

Ms. Brautigam stated that the Board generally seeks dates in October in recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month to include the annual public hearing. She added that the bylaws state that the Board may elect one of its members to preside in the absence of a chair. Dr. DiFino suggested that a motion be made to elect a presiding Chair, however there was not a quorum to conduct board business.

Ms. Brautigam asked Counsel, Diana Yang, JD, what options the Board had in electing a presiding Chair in the event the Governor has not appointed a new chair before the October meeting. Ms. Yang informed the board that no action can be taken until there is a quorum.

The meeting was paused for a break at 11:22, and reconvened at 12:05.

Ms. Yang informed the Board that a meeting can be convened as long as there is a quorum. The bylaws do not specifically state that the Chairperson must call the meeting. With a quorum, the Board can meet, vote on the Chair designee and that person can then take on the responsibility of the general supervision of the work of the Board according to the bylaws.

Meeting adjourned

Dr. Wilkenfeld made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Neeta Shah, MD seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 p.m.