

**Health Research Science Board**  
**Minutes of the**  
**Regular Business Meeting**  
**Friday, October 19, 2012**  
**10:30 AM – 1:15 PM**

**Location**

**Albany:** NYS Department of Health, Wadsworth Center, Biggs Laboratory,  
D350 Conference Room, Empire State Plaza, Albany

**Board Members Present**

Beverly Canin (V)  
Douglas Conklin, PhD (V)  
Victoria Derbyshire, PhD (EO)  
M. Suzanne Hicks (NV)  
Russell Hilf, PhD (V)  
Diana E. Lake, MD (V)  
Gary Morrow, PhD (V)  
Robert Riter (V)  
Neeta Shah, MD, Acting Chair (V)  
Elinor J. Spring-Mills, PhD (V)  
Marc Wilkenfeld, MD (V)  
Margaret O'Neil (EO)

**DEC Staff Present**

Scott Menrath

**DOH Staff Present**

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

Bonnie Jo Brautigam  
Syni-An A. Hwang, PhD  
Lani Rafferty  
Mary Ryther  
Mary Thatcher

**Board Members Absent**

Santo DiFino, MD, Chair (V)  
Anthony Hay, PhD (EO)  
James B. Hicks, PhD (V)  
Arun Puranik (V)

**DOH Staff Absent**

Terry Ascienzo  
Carole Ju  
Diana Yang, Esq.

**Call to Order and Opening Remarks of the Chair**

The meeting was called to order at 10:56 a.m. by Neeta Shah, MD, Acting Chair. Dr. Shah took a roll call of board members present.

Dr. Shah announced that a new member has been appointed to the Board: James Hicks, PhD from Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory.

**Consideration of Minutes of June 22, 2012 Meeting**

Beverly Canin made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 22, 2012 meeting (Exhibit 1) without changes. Diana Lake, MD seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved (9-0).

### **Consideration of Bylaws Change**

Dr. Shah noted that according to Health Research Science Board (HRSB) Bylaw requirements, a notice to amend bylaws must be provided at one meeting, with further discussion and voting to be done at the next meeting. The proposed bylaws change was presented at the June 22, 2012 meeting.

Dr. Shah referred to Exhibit 2, the proposed change to the Bylaws, Section IV.3., which addresses meeting attendance and responsiveness to inquiries regarding availability and scheduling of future meetings. She noted that existing language has not proven to be effective in maintaining an active membership, and that adopting this new language should assist staff with improving Board operations and increasing the success of the program.

Dr. Lake made a motion to approve the Bylaws change as stated in Exhibit 2. Russell Hilf, PhD seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved (9-0).

### **Consideration of Draft 2011-2012 Biennial Report**

Dr. Shah asked board members to turn to Exhibit 3, a draft copy of the 2011-2012 HRSB Biennial Report. This report represents the activity of those two calendar years and must be submitted to the Governor and Legislature by January 1, 2013.

Dr. Shah noted that the Board would be voting today to approve the report's general construction and content, and authorize the staff to update it to reflect activities occurring between today and the end of the calendar year, without further action by the Board.

Bonnie Brautigam provided an overview, stating the Biennial Report is fashioned after previous Biennial Reports approved by the Board. She noted that the report includes:

- an overview of the Board and Committee structure and membership;
- a summary of meetings held during the biennial period;
- a report on the status of program funds;
- a description of the major activities of the Board and the program including requests for applications issued, the resulting awards and recommendations made for scientific and educational breast cancer research projects, and the important contributions to the field of breast cancer research and education that have been made by our contractors.

By law, the report also contains:

- recommendations regarding the reporting of pesticide applications by residents within their homes;
- a summary of requests made for research purposes to obtain confidential pesticide application data; an evaluation of the basis, efficiency and scientific utility of the information derived from pesticide reporting; and
- a summary of comments and recommendations made by the public during public hearings (to be updated if additional comments are made during today's public hearing).

Ms. Brautigam informed the Board that over \$966,000 was contributed via the income tax check-off mechanism during the period covered by the Biennial Report. In addition, proceeds from the sale of Drive for the Cure specialty license plates amounted to more than \$66,000. The total, more than \$1,032,000, is matched by State funds.

Ms. Brautigam gave a brief report on the progress of the scientific and education research conducted by contractors over the past two years.

Dr. Shah then deferred to Syni-An Hwang, PhD for an overview of the pesticide-related activities. Dr. Hwang noted that during 2011-2012, there were no new requests for use of confidential elements of the Pesticide Sales and Use Reporting database.

Gary Morrow, PhD urged that New York State's match of donated funds be more widely publicized by HRSB.

Ms. Canin noted that at the bottom of page 15 it states that two articles were published during 2011-2012, but the publications are not listed anywhere in the Report. Lani Rafferty agreed to add the list of publications to the report. Dr. Hilf requested that the board be provided a running bibliography of all publications from all Biennial Reports. Ms. Rafferty agreed to provide this, although Ms. Brautigam cautioned that contractors' progress reports don't always include publications, and that contractors don't always cite HRSB as the funding source.

Dr. Hilf made a motion to approve the 2011-2012 Biennial Report. The motion was seconded by Dr. Lake. A roll call vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved (9-0).

### **Program Update**

Ms. Brautigam noted that since the draft Biennial Report summarizes the last two years, she would focus the Program Update on future activities.

### **Board Operations**

Ms. Brautigam asked Board members to identify potential HRSB members for gubernatorial appointment, and to give contact information to Ms. Rafferty. She reminded the Board that the Senate and Assembly are responsible for making their nominations and appointments directly.

Dr. Hilf asked how many nominees were waiting to be vetted. Ms. Brautigam responded that there are five voting and two non-voting vacancies at this time:

- Two scientists (V)
- Prostate cancer or testicular cancer survivor (V)
- New York City breast cancer survivor/advocate (V) (nominated; awaiting appointment)
- Central New York breast cancer survivor/advocate (V) nominated; awaiting appointment
- Western NY breast cancer survivor/advocate (NV) (nominated; awaiting appointment)
- Long Island breast cancer survivor/advocate (NV)

M. Suzanne Hicks asked how many voting members needed to be appointed and who they were. Ms. Brautigam informed the Board that nominations were needed as follows: a scientist to be nominated by Senate Minority Leader, a scientist to be nominated by the Assembly Speaker, a prostate or testicular cancer survivor to be appointed by the Governor, a regional Breast Cancer Survivor from Central New York to be nominated by the Assembly Speaker.

Dr. Morrow asked what could be done to speed up the appointment process. Ms. Rafferty noted that staff cannot do anything about filling the Assembly and Senate seats.

### Program Funding

Ms. Brautigam referred the Board to Exhibit 4. She explained that the Pending RFA section sets out the Board's plan for the issuance of Requests for Applications (RFAs). The Peter Rowley scientific RFA is slated to be issued later this year, and on an annual basis, at \$3.6 million per issuance. The plan is that the Patricia Brown education RFA will also be issued later this year and in even-numbered years, going forward, and the Healthcare Practitioner education research RFA in 2013 and future odd-numbered years. The schedule of dates for each RFA cannot be established until the required Departmental approvals are in-hand. The RFP section indicates the need to secure a contractor for independent peer review services within the next 11 months.

Ms. Canin asked why the next issuance of the Brown RFA is still awaiting approval. Ms. Brautigam responded that most of the delays are due to the fiscal crisis, but that staff is working to get approvals. Ms. Canin stated that advocacy groups have expressed a lot of concern about the use of program funds, then asked why are there delays in approval if there is \$8 million in reserve for HRSB. Victoria Derbyshire, PhD stated that DOH is very supportive of the program, and informed the Board that every aspect of procurement is reviewed very carefully.

Ms. Brautigam emphasized that the desire is for potential applicants to be able to count on a regular issuance of RFAs. She added that the Governor's office has mandated a new, centralized contracting system that should streamline the process.

### Committees

Ms. Brautigam noted that the work and success of each committee is essential to the other. She said that with the plan for issuing the RFAs, the Committee on Funding and Outreach should be prepared to recommend additional ways to publicize the program and increase contributions, in order to support excellent scientific and education research projects in breast cancer in the future.

She also noted that the Committee on Program Needs and Effectiveness should start thinking about conducting an evaluation of the program's success. The Committee's recommendations for an evaluation process will be brought to the Board. Once an evaluation is conducted, the results will be returned to the Committee so it can make further recommendations to the Board to inform ongoing strategic planning for the future of the program.

Marc Wilkenfeld, MD inquired why the Board funds only \$3.6 million in contracts if the program has \$8 million in research funds remaining. Ms. Brautigam reminded the Board that they voted to award \$3.6 million to the Patricia Brown award and the additional funds will be for two educational research RFAs that will be issued in the future. Ms. Canin stated that the Board should continue to be apprised of funds that come in to the program and funds that are being used.

Dr. Wilkenfeld stated that there has been tremendous improvement over the past few years in the organization of Board meetings. He suggested that the best way to get the legislators to nominate and appoint Board members would be to have the advocates call their offices and inform them of the critical need.

Douglas Conklin, PhD asked if the funded researchers report if HRSB funding has allowed them to move into new research with federal funding. Ms. Brautigam confirmed that this information is requested from contractors in progress reports.

## **Public Hearing**

### Report to the Board: Efficiency and Utility of Pesticide Reporting

Maggie O'Neil, from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), gave a report to the Board on the Efficiency and Utility of Pesticide Reporting. A copy of the report is attached.

Dr. Wilkenfeld asked how many people have utilized the data. Ms. O'Neil stated that two entities have used the confidential pesticide data. Dr. Wilkenfeld stated that it doesn't seem logical or cost-effective to capture these data. Ms. O'Neil stated that while there have only been two requests for the confidential data, a number of people have used the public data. Dr. Wilkenfeld inquired as to the amount of money that has been spent on the program. Ms. O'Neil informed the Board that over \$42 million has been spent on this program since its inception.

Ms. Hicks asked if the data collection is mandated by legislation. Ms. Brautigam noted that it is; the Board must hear a report about it during the annual public hearing, and the board is to make recommendations about its collection. Dr. Morrow suggested that this data is unusable and with little evidence that it is used elsewhere, wondered if this was a once-good idea that is no longer worthwhile. Dr. Wilkenfeld suggested that this money could be better spent elsewhere in public health.

Dr. Wilkenfeld asked what the options are if these data are unusable. Ms. Brautigam replied that the Board may make recommendations in the biennial report which goes to the Governor's Office and Legislature. Dr. Lake noted that based upon the inadequacy of the data, it defeats the purpose of keeping track of it. Elinor Spring-Mills asked to see the original charge of this committee. Ms. Hicks noted that many are not familiar with the original legislation and suggested that maybe one of the committees should take a look at the program and see why it was established and whether it is doing what it is supposed to do. Ms. Rafferty directed the Board to the Biennial Report for the original charge on page 23.

Dr. Hilf made a motion to have the Committee on Program Needs and Effectiveness review and evaluate the efficiency and utility of collecting the pesticide application data as soon as possible, to be acted on at the next full Board meeting. Dr. Wilkenfeld seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and unanimously passed (9-0).

### Public Comment

Margaret Roberts of Capital Region Action Against Breast Cancer! asked if the Board is mandated to have in-person meetings. Ms. Brautigam responded that generally the Board Meetings are held via video-conference, but for the public hearing the meeting is usually held in one location. There were no other public comments.

## **Meeting Planning**

Dr. Shah asked for agenda items for the Spring meeting. Ms. Brautigam noted that there would likely be a report and recommendation from the Committee on Program Needs and Effectiveness about pesticide data collection.

Dr. Lake volunteered to join the Committee on Program Needs and Effectiveness. Dr. Morrow agreed to serve on both committees.

Dr. Shah noted that the next tentatively scheduled meeting would be March 1, 2013 and June 14, 2013 and asked if there were any conflicts with these dates that would prevent the Board from having a quorum. Dr. Morrow stated that he may have a conflict with the March meeting.

Dr. Shah reminded the Board members that staff will send out an e-mail confirmation of these dates. Ms. Rafferty noted that if there is a problem obtaining a quorum on the scheduled dates, staff will canvass Board members for alternative meeting dates.

## **Presentations**

### **True Burden of Breast Cancer Education and Demonstration Project**

Margaret Roberts of Capital Region Action Against Breast Cancer!, the recipient of the 2009 Patricia Brown educational research award, gave a presentation titled “True Burden of Breast Cancer Education and Demonstration Project”.

### **A Quantitative Immunofluorescence Based Approach to Classification of Intermediate Recurrence Risk Early Stage Breast Cancer Patients**

Yuval Kluger, PhD of New York University gave a presentation via webinar on his project “A Quantitative Immunofluorescence Based Approach to Classification of Intermediate Recurrence Risk Early Stage Breast Cancer Patients”. Dr. Kluger was a recipient of a 2009 Peter Rowley research award.

## **Meeting adjourned**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:05 p.m.