

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
MASSACHUSETTS LIFE SCIENCES CENTER**

DATE: September 30, 2020
TIME: 2:00 p.m. EST
PLACE: Via WebEx: Meeting number: 132 666 4160
<https://massachusettslifesciencescompany-qs.my.webex.com/massachusettslifesciencescompanyfqs.my/j.php?MTID=mc869c0ef356997ac7a07686194c57bec>

DIRECTORS Connected: Stuart Abelson
Julie Chen (designee for Marty Meehan)
Mark Fuller (designee for Secretary Michael Kennealy)
Jacqueline Grant
Catharine Hornby (designee for Secretary Michael Heffernan)
Gary Kearney
Pam Randhawa

1. Call to Order

Mark Fuller called the meeting of the Board of Directors (the “Board”) of the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (the “MLSC” or “Center”) to order at 2:04 p.m. The meeting, having been duly convened, was ready to proceed with its business.

2. Approval of Minutes

The Board then reviewed the minutes of the June 17, 2020 Board meeting. Upon motions duly made, seconded and carried, the Board adopted the resolutions to approve the minutes.

3. Chairs’ Updates

Mr. Fuller reported the Commonwealth continues to grapple with the COVID-19 pandemic while also continuing to pursue the reopening strategy. Mr. Fuller shared transmission rates continue to fall and stabilize and as a result, the Commonwealth will continue to move through the reopening phases and protocols. Mr. Fuller then praised the MLSC staff for their COVID-19 initiatives and partnerships, which have been extremely helpful in the Commonwealth’s response to the pandemic.

Ms. Catharine Hornby reported the Commonwealth is in the process of filing the FY20 budget closeouts. She shared it had been a difficult year and the Commonwealth had managed to end the year with no major changes from the state budget side, but that a consolidated net surplus transfer is not anticipated for the MLSC in FY20. Ms. Hornby further shared that although the next couple years will also be difficult, the Commonwealth is collectively doing the right thing from a public health perspective, and is also making good decisions to keep the integrity of the social safety net at an even keel through difficult times.

4. CEO Update

Mr. Cox, Interim President and CEO, thanked the Board of Directors for their participation in various meetings and committees, stating their contributions make the organization a better place. Mr. Cox then enthusiastically praised the MLSC staff for their great work in the midst of the pandemic, further sharing the MLSC staff has been resolute in keeping with the mission of the organization through these unprecedented times.

Mr. Cox then shared personnel changes that occurred since the last Board meeting in June. These included the retirement of Beth Nicklas, General Counsel for the MLSC, and the addition of Jonathan Cosco, General Counsel of EOHED and team to oversee the Center's legal matters until a new General Counsel is found. Mr. Cox reported the search for a new General Counsel has started and candidates are being reviewed. Mr. Cox then reported on the MLSC CEO search, sharing the committee had met and is currently reviewing candidates. Further sharing he had submitted his name for consideration for the CEO role, leading to his recusal from the CEO search committee.

Mr. Cox then shared his excitement for MLSC's newest effort around COVID-19 testing, which entails an RFP around testing and supply chain bottlenecks. He informed the proposal was sent and approved through the command center and is currently awaiting final approval for release from the Governor's office, noting a favorable response was expected soon.

Mr. Cox also reported on the Center's Diversity and Inclusion efforts in response to George Floyd's murder and the race and equity issues in the Life Sciences. Further sharing his participation in signing MassBio's CEO Pledge for a more equitable and inclusive Life Sciences industry. Mr. Cox then noted various Board members' additional efforts for diversity and inclusion and informed of a grant that is being processed to support an effort by the United

Negro College Fund that will underwrite a seminar in November that will connect students from HBCU's to the Life Science sector in Massachusetts.

3. Women's Health Innovation Grants

Dr. Jennifer Griffin, Vice President of Industry Strategy and Investments, started her presentation reminding the Board of two prior women's health initiatives that had been brought to the Board for approval, the First Look Awards and the Women's Health Capital Call. Dr. Griffin then made her case for the proposed third program, which will provide Innovation Grants in the women's health space. She then reviewed a high level historical timeline that highlighted the lack of research that has led to the lack of innovation and development of novel solutions to treat conditions that disproportionately effect women. Dr. Griffin further informed that the proposed Innovation Grants would address the translational gap in the women's health pipeline by furthering early stage research in women's health within the Commonwealth.

Dr. Griffin then shared the dynamic structure of the Innovation Grant by identifying eligibility characteristics from similar programs like those of the federal R21 grants and small institution grants that would allow a focus specifically around women's health. Dr. Griffin then provided a sample grant's award structure that would provide a recipient up to \$100k from the investment dollars along with \$200k in capital dollars for a two year long project, with a target of funding about ten projects in total.

Dr. Griffin then requested an allocation of \$1 million dollars for the Women's Health Innovation Grants to support non-profit researchers that are studying gender biology and diseases that primarily, differentially, or exclusively affect women, noting this funding would be coupled with \$2 million in Capital funding. Dr. Griffin closed her presentation by sharing potential candidates from various research institutions and women's health centers that would benefit from the program. Upon opening the floor for questions, Mr. Fuller inquired whether the capital investments associated with the projects would be consumables or if it would be equipment that would live beyond the scope of the two year project, and if after the two year term, would these investments be used exclusively for the studies around women's health or would they be circulated out to the broader MLSC mandate. Dr. Griffin responded, she is anticipating a 50/50 consumable to equipment ratio with the standing requirement that the equipment is accessible to everyone in the Commonwealth and that it is not anticipated that the larger pieces of equipment

will be highly specialized women's health equipment. Ms. Randhawa then thanked Dr. Griffin for her presentation and focus in women's health. Ms. Randhawa then inquired if increasing the investment dollars vs. the capital dollars should be looked into due to the higher need for human resources/payroll dollars needed by these researchers to run the equipment. Dr. Griffin agreed that would be ideal, but noted the challenge for the MLSC is the availability of funding for the investment fund. Ms. Randhawa also inquired if there was an idea of what the current Women's Health pipeline held, in order to assess the balance between basic researchers vs. translational researchers. Dr. Griffin noted better qualitative data was available and had been gathered vs. quantitative information. She then invited Anne Walsh, Senior Program Associate, to contribute additional comments.

Upon a motion duly made, seconded and carried, the Board unanimously adopted the resolution to approve \$1,000,000 from the MLSC's investment fund for the Women's Health Innovation Competitive Grant Program.

4. Randolph Public School District Grant

Ryan Mudawar, Senior Director of Education and Workforce Partnerships, presented an opportunity to support the Randolph public school district with funding for STEM equipment and professional development training. He noted this is the eighth and final grant as part of the MLSC's District Initiative. Mr. Mudawar provided an overview of the program that has been in operation since 2011 and that has awarded \$18 million to date to 200 schools, impacting 30% of the Commonwealth's public middle and high school students. Mr. Mudawar noted that from FY12-FY18 there were five open calls in which any eligible school could apply. He then shared that although the program was having a transformative impact on the schools that were awarded, unfortunately it was seen that other high need schools did not apply and were not being awarded, and that their districts were not involved in the process or aware of the program. Mr. Mudawar further shared, the current pivot in the program was created to provide a more targeted and strategic district-centric approach to better serve the high need schools and provide funding for the under-resourced and underfunded districts. He also noted they worked very closely with the districts to provide input and guidance while they created a comprehensive plan that included curriculum implementation and STEM equipment and training, along with professional development. The district award led to the support of professional development for teachers

across multiple schools, vertical curriculum alignment across the middle and high school levels and the ability to address inequities across the district.

Mr. Mudawar informed of the district selection criteria that was used to select the awardees and the financial breakdown of previous rounds. Mr. Mudawar then requested an allocation of \$91,973 in capital funding for equipment and supplies along with \$45,200 from the Investment Fund for professional development and to support the implementation of MassBioEd's curriculum at both of Randolph's middle and high schools. The grant is expected to impact approximately 1,312 students annually. Upon opening the floor for questions, Ms. Catherine Hornby praised the program and the use of public funds in a way to create new opportunities for students who might not otherwise have them.

Upon a motion duly made, seconded and carried, the Board unanimously adopted the resolution to approve up to \$91,973 in capital funding and \$45,200 from the Investment Fund to support the Randolph Public School District.

5. COVID-19 Response Update

Dr. Jennifer Griffin provided an update on MLSC's COVID-19 response, reminding the Board of the three-phased approach created in response to the COVID-19 global pandemic. Dr. Griffin shared a high level overview of the final recipients of the Phase I grants totaling \$3.96 million, which focused on responding to the imminent public health need for reducing COVID-19 transmission through a partnership with the Massachusetts Emergency Response Team (M-ERT). She noted, the M-ERT was a coordinated response by the Commonwealth's leading academic, industry and government stakeholders to help manufacturers pivot and scale their operations to provide PPE and other critical items.

Dr. Griffin then explained Phase II consisted of understanding the SARS-Cov-2 and COVID-19 virus. Further explaining, Phase II was a partnership with the Massachusetts Consortium on Pathogen Readiness (MassCPR). Dr. Griffin shared the multi-institutional research collaboration was a great success with more than 450 submissions received and \$2.3 million in funding deployed for applicants with a clear potential for scientific and clinical impact targeting the pandemic in the next 12 months. She then identified the seven applicants that had been chosen for funding from the 4 out of 6 working groups the MLSC had participated in.

Dr. Griffin then shared the Phase III focus on accelerating the development of COVID-19 testing and provided a preview of the proposal. She informed, the MLSC is proposing to launch an RFP which would aim to improve testing solutions and address supply chain logistics and bottlenecks during this critical time. Also noting, the concept had been born out of a M-ERT like working group: the Testing, Tracing, and Supported Isolation (TTSI) Strategies Group. Dr. Griffin noted the group shared the understanding of two recurring themes: the diversification of testing modalities and novel approaches for rapid turnaround are necessary for the safety of the constituents, and supply chain bottlenecks are emerging for molecular testing, along with impeding factors limiting large scale testing capabilities. Dr. Griffin then explained the RFP criteria and shared the proposals would be evaluated by the MLSC team along with assistance from an advisory panel. She then shared the proposed application process, noting the online score card and weekly discussion panels along with an interoperability review with the MA-TTSI team. Dr. Griffin then concluded her update.

6. Capital Fund Program Update

Dr. Carla Reimold, Director of Industry Strategy and Investments, began her update by sharing with the Board the current open Competitive Capital Programs and their funding scopes. These included the Novel Therapeutics Delivery, Women's Health, Bits to Bytes, Research Infrastructure and NIIMBL programs. Dr. Reimold then explained the project call requirements for each themed competitive capital program, which included the following criteria: project teams (at least one principal investigator from a non-profit institution and at least one MA company), a 2-3 year project scope, and a required letter of commitment from an industry partner with a minimum salary of support for one new postdoctoral scientist, along with additional forms of in-kind or financial project support. She then noted the project call features, which included providing up to \$750k in capital funds to a non-profit partner for projects that focus on answering pressing life science questions with the program goal to drive industry and academia partnerships, drive translational research, develop technical workforces, and ultimately lead to company formation/growth and improved patient outcomes. Dr. Reimold then proceeded to share the evaluation process for the themed capital calls and the overall goal which she noted to be a collaborative effort between not-for profits and industry to generate large dataset or acquire needed equipment infrastructure to advance scientific projects that answer pressing questions.

Dr. Reimold then highlighted the Research Infrastructure program's requirements, concluding her update with the NIIMBL program launch date and expected goals.

Adjourn

Mark Fuller, Board Co-Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:29 p.m.

List of Materials and Exhibits Used During Meeting:

- Board Agenda
- Minutes from June 17, 2020 Board Meeting
- Motion: to Approve June 17, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes
- Presentation of the Women's Health Innovation Grant
- Motion: Approval of the Women's Health Innovation Grant
- Presentation of the Randolph School District Grant
- Motion: Approval of the Randolph School District Grant
- Presentation COVID-19 Response Update
- Presentation of MLSC's Capital Program Update