



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

DATE: April 29, 2026
TIME: 2:00 p.m. EST
PLACE: MGB 399 Revolution Drive, Ste. 999 Conf. Rm. 9W27
Somerville, MA 02145

Members Present: Secretary Eric Paley
Bran Shim, Designee for Secretary Gorzkowicz
Christopher Coburn
Valerie Fleishman
Brian Johnson
Dana Mendenhall

Members Connected: Julie Chen, PhD, Designee for UMass President Marty Meehan
Thea James, MD

Members Absent: Pam Randhawa

Call to Order

Secretary Eric Paley, Executive Office of Economic Development

The meeting was called to order. The meeting, having been duly convened, was ready to proceed with its business. Attendance was noted by roll call, as recorded above.

Approval of Minutes

Allyson McLaughlin Huntington, General Counsel and Board Secretary

The Board reviewed the minutes of the March 25, 2026. Upon motions duly made, seconded and carried, the Board adopted the minutes.

Co-Chairs' Updates

Secretary Eric Paley, Executive Office of Economic Development

Bran Shim as designee for Matthew Gorzkowicz, Executive Office of Administration and Finance

Secretary Paley provided remarks on the Mass Wins Bill, noting that Mass Leads was a full bond bill and Mass Wins is a policy bill that builds on the foundations set by the Mass Leads Act. The main themes of Mass Wins includes Global MA – MA as a player in the global economy; talent retention – including removing the surplus barrier to the intern tax incentive established by Mass Leads; competitiveness – supporting the Competitiveness Counsel that has been formed; affordability – because all of MA needs to thrive. The MLSC specific sections of Mass Wins includes an alignment of all tax incentive programs under EOED, and the enhancement and support for cross-agency collaboration.

Secretary Paley and Bran Shim, designee for Secretary Gorzkowicz, gave a brief overview of the anticipated timeline for the legislature to take up the Mass Wins bill, noting that the bill was welcomed by senior members of the legislature. Mr. Shim added that FY2027 budget is currently under review.

VOTE: 2026 M2D2 \$200K Challenge Awards

Cinar “Efe” Sumer, MSc, Senior Investment Associate, Scientific Innovation & Strategic Investments, proposed two M2D2 \$200K Challenge prize awards resulting from the pitch challenge: Lithe Medical and Highland Instruments as MLSC. Discussion focused on the following: how is Lithe a unique innovation, reviewing how it is unique to MA as it is manufactured in MA even though it is not unique globally; whether a technology scan is conducted to see if any of the awarded projects are duplicative; and how the “win” for MA is building the ecosystem and geographic expansion, as well as representing superb IP and significant Phase I data.

There being no further questions, and upon motions duly made, seconded and carried, the Board resolved to certify Lithe Medical and Highland Instruments, each as a certified life sciences company pursuant to M.G.L. Ch 23I. One board member abstained and one board member voted in favor, with comment.

ARC Awards

Audrey Byrne, PhD., Program Manager, Scientific Innovation and Strategic Investments, introduced the programs in the tracks of ARC (Accelerating Research through Collaboration), which includes Bits to Bytes, Novel Therapeutics Delivery, and Women’s Health Collaboration and represents the path of discovery-data-development. Dr. Byrne highlighted program successes and outcomes, with a spotlight on Tufts University and Anodyne Nanotech, a recipient of a FY21 Novel Therapeutic Delivery grant that successfully raised over \$6 million in follow-on research funding, and Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a FY21 awardee for the Women’s Health Collaboration grant that has received around \$19 million in follow-on funding. Dr. Byrne provided an overview of the application, review and selection processes that is common to all three of the themed ARC grant programs, with a review of each program track and proposed 12 ARC awards.

2026 Bits to Bytes

The significant outcome of the Bits to Bytes program is the D.A.T.A. repository which captures certain metrics, including users who access the data sets and the aggregate data. The Board members asked follow-up questions about D.A.T.A. and access to the data sets. Details on the proposals for the Bits to Bytes program were reviewed. Board discussed the recommended awardees selected by the independent review panel. Dr. Byrne proposed 4 awards in the total amount of \$3,268,540.

2026 Novel Therapeutics Delivery

Dr. Byrne proposed seven project awards, providing details for the proposed awardees as selected by the independent review panel. The Board discussion focused on access to data sets and the infrastructure that users can access, as well as how each project may be “unique to MA” Dr. Byrne proposed seven NTD program in the total amount of \$1,439,299.

2026 Women’s Health Collaboration

Dr. Byrne proposed 1 Women’s Health Collaboration award in the amount of \$1,500,000, providing details on the proposed project. There was no additional discussion on the program beyond the overall ARC discussion.

There being no further discussion, the Board moved to a vote. Upon a motion duly made, seconded and carried by roll call vote, the Board resolved to approve the allocation to the 12 ARC awardees as presented.

Strategic Context and Process

Elizabeth Graham, Chief Operating Officer,
Kirk Taylor, MD, Chief Executive Officer,

The status of the Strategic Plan exercise was provided by Dr. Taylor and Ms. Graham, including CEO and ecosystem surveys and discussions that focused around common themes: competition from other regions both domestically and OUS, and where there are challenges or benefits for MA.

Dr. Taylor raised the issue of clinical trials and the challenges confronting MA life sciences technology. The important issue of health equity was raised during the Board members discussion, specifically that if there is an entire demographic missing

from clinical trials then health equity is not being addressed. Additional concerns regarding clinical trials that were raised included OUS competition, and if the MLSC is to focus on clinical trials, then defining the “why” clinical trials should be a focus and specifying why it is important to the MA ecosystem.

Ms. Graham then provided detailed status on the strategic plan: where do we align, what problem are we trying to solve? As a result of surveys and research, “Science, Speed, Scale” resonated with the constituents of the MA life sciences ecosystem. Key state comparisons were discussed, including metrics around spinouts and NIH funding, and additional regions were recommended to include in the comparisons. Ms. Graham committed to revising the comparison to include additional state competition for the next strategy status update to the Board.

Ms. Graham discussed clear opportunities in front of us right now: right to win and drive wide-scale change for MA, and where MA/MLSC can help MA companies reach value inflection points. The concept of “brand identity” was discussed, with an agreement that brand identity is important and we need to tell the MA story better.

Ms. Graham showed the Board how the current MLSC portfolio of programs that serve science, speed and scale are currently “U” shaped in funding and the portfolio needs to be rebalanced. Discussion around what parts of the program portfolio could/should be discontinued or reduced and where it should be enhanced followed. The Board acknowledged that MA early-stage companies need more support within the MA life sciences ecosystem.

Next steps were identified, and the strategy plan will be reviewed and discussed at the next meeting of the MLSC Board of Directors.

Other Business:

Adjourn

Materials Used During Meeting:

Agenda

Minutes of the March 25, 2026 Board of Directors Meeting

2026 M2D2 \$200K Challenge Award presentation

FY26 Accelerating Research Through Collaboration Awards Presentation

MLSC CEO Report

Strategic Context and Process presentation