

**James & Esther King Biomedical  
Research Advisory Council (BRAC)  
Meeting Minutes**

**1/10/2005  
8:30 AM to 3:30 PM  
Florida Dept. of Health Conference Room  
Tallahassee, Florida**

<b>Attendees:</b> Ed Block Richard Bookman Karen Dow Clyde McCoy, Chair Sigurd Norman Richard Schoephoerster Douglas Schocken Derya William Susan Phillips Chuck Wells	<b>Guests in Attendance:</b> Secretary Agwunobi – Florida DOH Hope Davis – Lytmos Group Jim Francis – Florida State Board of Admin. Nancy Humbert – Florida DOH Brenda Olsen – American Lung Association Mike Paredes - Director, Legislative Affairs, Florida DOH Peggy Shults - Lytmos Group Nikole Souder-Schale – American Heart Association	<b>Not attending:</b> Jane Gibson, Vice- Chair
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**Council Discussion Highlights**

**Secretary Department of Health Comments:** Dr. Agwunobi expressed both evaluative and forward-looking views regarding tobacco-related biomedical research in Florida, and shared information about statewide initiatives, including plans for the A.G. Holley campus. He emphasized the need to spend available dollars in sustainable programs.

**Staff Introduction:** Susan introduced new department staff members Chuck Wells, Coordinator, Research Programs/Services, and Marcia Reed, Coordinator, Administration Services.

**Status of Lawton Chiles Trust Fund:** Jim Francis provided an accounting of fund performance through November, 2004 and described changes in the payout structure that are intended to better meet the fund preservation target.

***Action item:** Jim will investigate and report on the proportional growth difference between biomedical and non-biomedical distributions since 2001.*

**Legislative Update:** Hurricane response and recovery issues are expected to dominate state legislation during the coming year, according to a presentation by Mike Paredes. More information on how related costs will be accommodated is expected after the Governor's budget is released in late January.

**Eligibility Policies:** The Council held a discussion regarding the members' collective desire to avoid any perception of conflict of interest.

**Resolution:** Effective immediately, Council members may not fill any named role in a grant application for program funds, regardless of remuneration status.

Council opinions were sought in an attempt to clarify citizenship and residency requirements in determining applicant eligibility. A motion to consider conditional acceptance of applicants far along in the pursuit of Lawful Permanent Residency failed to gain Council support.

***Action item:** The citizenship/immigration status of all current grantees will be evaluated and reported to the Council.*

Council opinions were sought regarding a potential salary cap for all personnel receiving grant funds, similar to published NIH policy.

**Resolution:** Beginning with applications received in response to the 2005-2006 Call, an

annual salary limitation will apply for all individuals receiving grant funds equivalent to the current published Executive Level I of the Federal Executive Pay Scale. This salary limitation is intended to exclude fringe benefits and indirect costs. For 2005 this rate is \$180,100.

**Public Comment:** Brenda Olsen commended the Council on the progress being made by the program, including the addition of new staff, and offered thanks on behalf of the American Lung Association. This feedback was echoed by Nikole Souder-Schale, representing the American Heart Association.

**Lytmos Update and Peer Review Planning:** Peggy Shults reported that the 2004 Annual Report is in internal DOH review, and an electronic copy is expected to be ready for delivery to the legislature by February 1. Thirty-five applicant registrations had been received by January 7<sup>th</sup>, and Lytmos has made several key contacts to further promote program awareness throughout the state. Resumes of individuals who have agreed to serve as peer reviewers were circulated; general approval was offered by the Council, with recommendations to increase the number of reviewers with cardiovascular and biomedical engineering expertise. Peggy described additional reviewer recruiting, orientation, and application assignment plans. The Council discussed options for managing peer reviews of TSP applications, arriving at a consensus recommendation that seven reviewers be assigned to each TSP application, with each reviewer evaluating the complete application. It was further recommended that the honorarium paid for a TSP review be set at \$350.

**Action item:** *Lytmos will modify peer review questions per Council feedback and provide Council members and DOH program staff with system access to test peer review process.*

The Council endorsed the concept of arranging peer reviews of grantee progress reports to monitor progress and provide technical support, and provided feedback on associated forms and reporting frequency. The Council advised that the initial progress report be collected nine months into the funded research, with annual reports solicited thereafter for multi-year grants. Council members recommended that, when possible, peer reviews of progress reports be performed by reviewers who participated in the initial application evaluation. Proposed Lytmos performance measures were shared with the Council.

**Review of Strategic Plan:** The Council briefly considered the Final Draft of the Strategic Plan for the program developed in October, 2003, and noted the need to develop measurable outcomes and goals. There was general agreement that this topic would be addressed in the next meeting.

**Pre- and Post-doctorate Grants:** Susan solicited feedback from the Council regarding the possibility of supplementing the current program offerings with new grant mechanisms for beginning researchers. No consensus was reached in the meeting, but it was suggested this topic be included as part of upcoming strategic planning activity.

**Next BRAC meeting:** The next meeting will take place in Orlando on Thursday, May 12, 2005. (Note, after this meeting, it was decided that the next meeting will be two days, May 12 & 13 and will include strategic planning discussions.)