

**Florida Biomedical Research Advisory
Council (BRAC) Special Session
Meeting Minutes**

**June 20, 2006
10:00am – 4:30pm
Marriott Tampa Airport
Tampa International Airport
Tampa, FL 33607**

Council Members Present:

Dr. Edward Block
Dr. Richard Bookman, Interim
Chair
Dr. Myra Hurt
Mr. Al Latimer
Dr. Penny Ralston
Dr. Mary Lou Sole
Dr. Herb Weissbach
Mr. Don Webster, in place of
Dr. Sigurd Normann

Council Members Absent:

Dr. Nikolaus Gravenstein
Dr. Sigurd Normann

Program Staff Members Present :

Ms. Mary Bernard – Lytmos Group
Ms. Eburn Grimes - DOH
Ms. Stephanie Jackson - DOH
Dr. Susan Phillips - DOH
Ms. Peggy Shults – Lytmos Group
Mr. Chuck Wells - DOH

Guests in Attendance:

Dr. Clarence Brown – M.D. Anderson Cancer
Center Orlando
Dr. Peter Blumencranz – Florida Cancer
Council
Mr. Paul Hull – American Cancer Society
Dr. Jimmy Jones – Florida Cancer Council
Ms. Nicole Souder-Schale – American Heart
Association

Welcome and Call to Order: Dr. Bookman called the meeting to order and welcomed Council members, staff and guests.

Consent Agenda: Minutes of the last meeting were presented to the Council; it was recommended that the record be amended to correct the omission of Dr. Herb Weissbach in the list of Council members in attendance. Dr. Ed Block made a motion that, *with this change, the minutes as submitted be approved*. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Public Comments: Mr. Hull stated that the passage of a \$36 million package over four years demonstrated the high level of legislative support for the new Bankhead-Coley Cancer Research Program, which he attributed to the lawmakers' confidence in the Council and the Department of Health based on their collective track record of building capacity. He also encouraged the Council and Staff to look at the 2010 review as an opportunity, and expressed optimism that by that time the new Program would be similarly successful to the James & Esther King Biomedical Research Program. As a member of the public, he went on to project what the 2010 review process may consist of, based on his previous experience as a committee analyst. In his opinion, the committee will compare the statutory language regarding the types of grants offered and the legislative intent; he specifically directed the Council to heed the special emphasis on moving clinical trials forward.

Staff Report: Mr. Wells announced that HB1027 was signed into law on June 13th, with a July 1st effective date. He noted the need to define two Calls for Applications for the Bankhead-Coley Cancer Research Program during FY07, which he termed Release 1 (the inaugural grants to be awarded as soon as possible during the coming year) and Release 2 (the awards to be made beginning in July, 2007). He also pointed out the ceiling of 10% per year on administration costs, and noted the need for creative solutions to manage these simultaneous requirements during the first program year. In concluding his introductory remarks he asked the Council to keep in mind, over the course of the day, the Department's desire to map the mechanisms to the statutory goals and establish metrics to measure Program outcomes. He went on to relay to the Council the feedback he received during June 9th meeting with the Florida Dialog on Cancer, including: a concern that funding for cancer related projects would be diminished in award decisions made for the James & Esther King Biomedical Research Program; support for a bridge grant

mechanism in order to retain Florida research capacity; and a request to consider mechanisms for more experienced investigators. He also reported on information submitted by BRAC members in response to his prior request for input in preparation for this meeting. Finally, he polled the Council regarding their preferences for logo alternatives for the Bankhead-Coley Cancer Research Program. While none were enthusiastically endorsed, the Council agreed they were willing to accept one of the three presented.

After a discussion of the need to maintain a clear association with the State of Florida when promoting the new Program and clarify its relationship with the James & Esther King program, Dr. Weissbach moved *that, for marketing purposes, we refer to our programs as the Florida Biomedical Research Program, and contained within that are the two programs [the Bankhead-Coley Cancer Research Program and the James & Esther King Biomedical Research Program], which are separate and distinct.* This motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

House Bill 1027 & Florida Statutes 381.920 and 381.921: Referring to copies of these statutes provided to the BRAC, Mr. Wells pointed out the goals enumerated in the bill: 1) expand cancer research capacity, 2) increase participation in clinical trials networks, and 3) reduce the impact of cancer on disparate groups, and noted that each goal is accompanied by a list of specific means. As part of a Council discussion regarding the opportunities and challenges for mechanisms supporting translational research, Dr. Bookman recommended that Council members refer to a recent relevant publication by the Association of American Medical Colleges titled *Promoting Translational and Clinical Science: The Critical Role of Medical Schools and Teaching Hospitals*, available for free download from https://services.aamc.org/Publications/index.cfm?fuseaction=Product.displayForm&prd_id=150&prv_id=176

Bankhead-Coley Cancer Research Program Planning for 2006-2007 Inaugural Grants: After considering several options for grant mechanisms to be offered in the first Program year, the Council first focused on a bridge grant for Florida investigators at all experience levels who have submitted highly meritorious cancer-related projects to federal agencies (as determined by national scientific peer review) that have been unfunded due to budgetary limits. The basic Council recommendations for this mechanism, tentatively called the *Bridge Grant*, included awards of up to \$150,000 for 1 year, with no more than \$5,000 to be spent on equipment, and including up to 5% of indirect costs. NIH pay scale caps would apply, and salary must be commensurate with effort. Dr. Ralston moved *to adopt these recommendations for a bridge grant*; this motion was seconded and unanimously approved. After further discussion about this mechanism, Dr. Sole later moved *that the bridge award limit be raised to \$200,000 a year, not to exceed the annual budget of the federal application.* This motion was seconded, and after further discussion Dr. Hurt moved that the motion be amended to include *that the Program will consider requests from new investigators who have never been funded previously with an NIH R-type grant for two years of funding through the bridge mechanism, with the expectation that the first year progress report will include a resubmitted federal application.* This motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

The Council also agreed on a recommendation for a second mechanism, tentatively called a *Shared Instrument Grant*, intended to address infrastructure needs to support future cancer research. The consensus of the Council was in favor of a one-year award of up to \$500,000 for equipment to be purchased on a single purchase order, and a limit of two applications per institution. Applications will be peer reviewed. While no institutional match should be required, the evaluation criteria would include the institution's plan for sustainability of the resource over the useful life of the equipment, as well as the number, quality, and purposed of investigators who would use the equipment for cancer-related research and education. As a measure of return on investment, the Council agreed that the terms for these awards should include a

requirement for recipient institutions to report the impact of this resource for three years following the award on cancer research, such as a citation of papers published and subsequent grants received as a result of cancer research conducted with the benefit of this equipment.

Because of the nature of the bridge grant mechanism, Council members challenged Staff to accelerate as much as possible the operational processes supporting the award of these grants. As funding decision support, the Council would like Bridge Grant applications to be subject to an additional abbreviated peer review by three independent experts to confirm the cancer-relatedness of each application as well as the appropriateness of the designated investigator effort for the specific work plan committed for the Bankhead-Coley Cancer Research Program grant.

2007-2008 Bankhead-Coley Cancer Research Program Planning: The Council expressed general agreement that the funding calendar for the second year of awards for this program should coincide with that planned for the James & Esther King Biomedical Research Program for the same period. While no conclusions were reached regarding grant mechanisms, the Council heard and endorsed input from Dr. Blumencranz and Mr. Webster emphasizing the importance of addressing translational research and clinical trials. It was agreed that specific grant mechanisms would be determined during the next regular BRAC meeting.

Future Meeting Schedule and Closing: Given the magnitude of topics for the agenda, it was suggested to and accepted by the BRAC that the next meeting would be scheduled for two days, and tentative plans were made to meet on August 29th and 30th in Miami.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of Dr. Richard Bookman, Interim Chair

Chuck Wells, Program Manager
June 20, 2006