



Andy Hill Cancer Research Endowment Board Meeting Minutes February 24, 2021

The following board members, constituting a quorum, were present: Fred Appelbaum, Elaine Albert, Leslie Alexandre, Cliff Berkman, Thomas Brown, David Byrd, Carol Dahl, Steve Harr, Eunice Hostetter, and Jennifer Kampsula Wong

Board Members Absent: None

CARE Staff Attendees: Laura Flores Cantrell, Peter Choi, Sarah Hiller, Sooyoun Park

Guest Attendees: Allegra Calder (BERK Consulting); Erica Hallock (Empire Health Foundation Government Affairs Liaison); Julia Terlinchamp (WA Department of Commerce); Scott Ramsey, Judy Nelson, Karma Kreizenbeck, Catherine Fedorenko, and Laura Panattoni (Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center)

Wednesday, February 24, 2021, 3:00–5:00 p.m. (PT)

1. Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 3:01 p.m. A quorum was confirmed with a roll call of the board by the Chair.

2. Annual Public Hearing

Fred Appelbaum opened the public hearing at 3:02 p.m. With no members of the public present to participate or provide comment, the public hearing was adjourned.

3. Consent Agenda

Fred Appelbaum presented the consent agenda for approval.

The consent agenda was composed of the November 18, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes, December 2, 2020 Board Ad Hoc Committee Meeting Minutes, and February 11, 2021 Board Ad Hoc Committee Meeting Minutes.

MOTION: Carol Dahl made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Jennifer Kampsula Wong seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. [Thomas Brown and David Byrd were not present at this point in the meeting.]

4. CARE Program Administration Update

[David Byrd entered the meeting.]

Laura Flores Cantrell provided a program administration update.

- There are currently three board member vacancies in the process of being filled. The position requirements for the vacancies are as follows: 1) Health care delivery services (previously Thomas Brown); 2) Nominations submitted by the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Seattle Cancer Care Alliance, and Seattle Children's Research Institute (previously Jim Hendricks); and 3) Public representative (previously Lori Brown). Laura noted that the Governor's office would like three recommendations from the board for the public representative seat. The board discussed the qualities and attributes of potential nominees to the public seat. Suggestions included individuals with health information technology expertise (clearly defined), public health experience, and/or representative of the diversity in the state.
- Washington State Department of Commerce will issue a Request for Proposals for the CARE Fund program administrator contract this Spring 2021. The current program administrator contract with Empire Health Foundation expires on June 30, 2021.
- As required in the CARE Fund statute (43.348.060 Revised Code of Washington), the CARE Fund is undergoing a performance audit to review the program, strategic plan, and program administrator. The Department of Commerce has selected Milliman as the contractor to conduct the performance audit; a final audit report is expected by June 30, 2021.

As a best practice and particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, and Executive Director Emergency Succession Policy was presented for board consideration. The purpose of the policy is to ensure continuous coverage of executive duties critical to the ongoing operations of the CARE Fund in the event of an unplanned and extended absence of the Executive Director.

MOTION: Leslie Alexandre made a motion to approve the Executive Director Emergency Succession Policy as presented. Elaine Albert seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. [Thomas Brown was not present at this point in the meeting.]

Laura Flores Cantrell highlighted her high-level goals for 2021 and expressed that she will continue to seek out performance feedback from the board throughout the year. She also informed the board that strategic planning for Fiscal Year 2022–2023 is starting and the consultant for strategic planning is Allegra Calder with BERK Consulting. Strategic planning will be discussed at the April board meeting. Lastly, a video project with Dr. James Heath (Institute for Systems Biology) is under development. Leslie Alexandre volunteered to provide input on the initial design concepts and messaging.

5. COVID-19/Cancer Data Project Update

Fred Appelbaum introduced Dr. Scott Ramsey, a physician, cancer researcher, health economist, and the co-director of the Hutchinson Institute for Cancer Outcomes Research (HICOR) at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. Laura Flores Cantrell thanked Dr. Ramsey for presenting preliminary findings to the board in order for the CARE Fund to learn more about the progress of the COVID-19/Cancer Data Project. Dr. Ramsey introduced the HICOR team. He described the COVID-19/Cancer Data Project aims as follows: 1) create a Washington State COVID-19 and Cancer Research Data Repository, a database that links healthcare claims data

with cancer registry and COVID-19 registry data; 2) conduct a population health assessment survey to evaluate cancer-related behaviors, screening adherence, access to care, and social determinants of health during the pandemic; 3) conduct focus groups with African-American, Latinx, and rural patients to understand cancer patients' experience of care during the pandemic; and 4) survey Washington State oncology clinics to understand the impact of COVID-19 on care delivery.

Key preliminary findings of the research included the following:

- Overall, fewer patients were diagnosed with cancer during the pandemic, but those who were diagnosed had more advanced disease.
- Initial care showed greater use of advanced imaging and chemotherapy.
- Medicaid-insured patients had fewer office visits that were not replaced by telemedicine visits.
- More patients died at home than in the hospital, but hospice use did not keep pace.

Dr. Ramsey highlighted two limitations, the lack of data on the uninsured patient population and populations from Eastern Washington. In the future, Dr. Ramsey and his team hope to understand the factors behind the shift to later stage of cancer diagnoses during the pandemic, as well as the COVID-19 related disparities in telehealth and office visit use. The research team will also research interventions to improve end-of-life care for low-income populations, tools to understand the patient experience in real time, and the role of telehealth in cancer care.

A board member commented that these findings were what was hoped for when the board decided to make an investment in the data project.

Following a questions and answers session, Fred Appelbaum thanked Dr. Ramsey and his team for the presentation. [Dr. Ramsey and his team left the meeting.]

[Thomas Brown entered the meeting.]

6. Legislative Update

Erica Hallock provided a brief legislative update for the board. She shared that the decision-making processes of the legislative session have been impacted by the limitations of a nearly all-virtual session. Erica provided updates on the status of the budget process.

7. Finance and Financial Planning Working Group

The finance and financial planning working group was established by the board at the November 18, 2020 board meeting. Working group members Steve Harr, Carol Dahl, and Tom Brown met on January 22, 2021. The working group reviewed and discussed key financial indicators and strategies to help develop recommendations to the full board. With their feedback and input, CARE Fund staff created an overview of the current and projected revenue and commitments, as well as a priorities framework outlining possible uses of projected revenue.

Sarah Hiller presented the summary financial information included in the board packet.

Options for revising the FY21 Allocation Plan will be presented at the April 28, 2021 board meeting. Laura Flores Cantrell requested authority to explore and negotiate with the current program administrator the establishment of a board-designated fund. The results of the discussion will be presented to the board for approval before any such fund is established.

MOTION: Carol Dahl made a motion to authorize Laura Flores Cantrell to explore and negotiate with the program administrator the establishment of a board-designated fund. Thomas Brown seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

8. COVID-19 Response Grant Cycle 2 Award Decision

Fred Appelbaum provided a brief summary of the COVID-19 Response Grant Cycle 2, noting applicants applied under one of two tracks: (1) Basic/clinical research or (2) Population-based research, for grant award of \$100,000 each over a one-year period. The maximum total awards amount for the COVID-19 Response Grant is \$500,000 per the board-approved FY21 Allocation Plan.

COVID-19 Response Grant: Population-Based Research Track

Fred Appelbaum identified the three Population-Based Research applications and institutions to be discussed. Two of the three applications were from Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center (Fred Hutch) and one was from the University of Washington (UW). Board members were asked to disclose any conflicts of interest.

Fred Appelbaum disclosed a conflict of interest related to the Fred Hutch applications due to his employment with Fred Hutch. David Byrd disclosed a conflict of interest related to the UW application due to his employment with UW. Fred Appelbaum and David Byrd each recused himself from the discussion and abstained from the vote.

Per established grant review process guidelines, the remaining board members considered the reviews provided by the AAAS scientific peer review committee. Of the three applications, one was rated “Recommended”, one was rated “Worthy of Consideration”, and one was rated “Not Recommended” by the AAAS reviewers. The board discussed the two applications rated “Recommended” and “Worthy of Consideration”. The application rated “Not Recommended” was not discussed, as it was not eligible for an award.

MOTION: Thomas Brown made a motion to award a COVID-19 Response grant to Dr. Garnet Anderson “Assessing COVID-19 related cancer care disparities among an aging population: A population-based study” (Fred Hutch), which received the “Recommended” rating, for the Population-Based Research Track. Leslie Alexandre seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. Fred Appelbaum and David Byrd each abstained from the vote.

COVID-19 Response Grant: Basic/Clinical Research Track

The board then discussed the three COVID-19 Response grant Basic/Clinical Research Track proposals. Fred Appelbaum identified the three Basic/Clinical Research applications and institutions to be discussed. One application was from Institute for Systems Biology (ISB), one

application was from the UW, and one application was from Washington State University (WSU). Board members were asked to disclose any conflicts of interest.

Fred Appelbaum disclosed a potential conflict of interest related to the UW application due to his appointment at the UW. David Byrd disclosed a conflict of interest related to the UW application due to his employment with UW. Cliff Berkman disclosed a conflict of interest related to the WSU application due to his employment with WSU. Tom Brown disclosed a conflict of interest related to the ISB application due to his affiliate faculty relationship with ISB. Fred Appelbaum, David Byrd, Cliff Berkman, and Tom Brown each recused himself from the discussion and abstained from the vote.

Of the three COVID-19 Response Grant Basic/Clinical Research track applications, one was rated “Recommended” and two were rated “Worthy of Consideration.” The board discussed the applications, taking into consideration the reviews of the grant applications by AAAS.

MOTION: Carol Dahl made a motion to award Dr. Wei Wei “Discerning the dysfunctional immune response to SARS-CoV-2 infection in patients with chronic lymphocytic leukemia” (ISB), rated “Recommended”, and Dr. Chaitra Ujjani “Efficacy of the SARS-CoV-2 vaccine in CLL” (UW), rated “Worthy of Consideration”, for the Basic/Clinical Research Track. Elaine Albert seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. Fred Appelbaum, David Byrd, Cliff Berkman, and Thomas Brown each abstained from the vote.

The board reiterated the value of the CARE Fund staff sharing the scientific reviews with the grant applicants that did not receive an award, per the normal grant process.

9. Distinguished Researchers Cycle 5 Award Decision

Fred Appelbaum provided an overview of the Distinguished Researchers Grant Cycle 5. There was one application for this cycle from the University of Washington. The award is for up to \$500,000 per researcher for a two-year period. Board members were asked to disclose any conflicts of interest.

Fred Appelbaum disclosed a conflict of interest related to the UW application due to his appointment at the UW. David Byrd disclosed a conflict of interest related to the UW application due to his employment with UW.

The board began discussing AAAS’s review of the application. A critique of the proposal was that it was unclear if the research sufficiently focused on a cancer disparity. This was particularly of concern for the board because this cycle of the Distinguished Researchers Grant stated goals and criteria for research focusing on cancers that: i) *disproportionately affect Washington State*; ii) *address cancer disparities*; and iii) *involve collaborative and/or cross-disciplinary or multi-sector approach*.

The board asked CARE Fund staff to update the Distinguished Researchers Program Request for Proposals (RFP) to extend the period of recruitment/eligibility (to approximately 18 months) to better accommodate the extenuating circumstances of recruiting during the COVID-19

pandemic. The staff agreed to bring an updated program description to the board for discussion at the April 28, 2021 board meeting.

MOTION: Carol Dahl made a motion to not award the proposal for the Distinguished Researchers Grant. Due to difficult circumstances resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, revise the RFP and prepare to re-issue the cycle. Leslie Alexandre seconded the motion. Fred Appelbaum and David Byrd each abstained from the vote. The motion passed.

[Elaine Albert and David Byrd left the meeting.]

10. Breakthrough Research Continued Funding Award Decision

Fred Appelbaum presented the AAAS review of the Breakthrough Research Grant Year 3 Continued Funding application for “Proactive Cancer Immunotherapies for Initial and Recurrent Disease” (ISB, Principal Investigator: Dr. James Heath). The continued funding award is for \$3,000,000 for a one-year period. Board members were asked to disclose any conflicts of interest.

Thomas Brown disclosed a conflict of interest due to his affiliate faculty relationship with ISB.

[Cliff Berkman and Steve Harr left the meeting, and the meeting fell short of quorum. Laura made a request to the Vice Chair, David Byrd, to rejoin the meeting. David Byrd rejoined the meeting and quorum was re-established.]

MOTION: Carol Dahl made a motion to approve Year 3 funding for the Institute for Systems Biology Breakthrough Research Project, as recommended by AAAS. Leslie Alexandre seconded the motion. The motion was approved by consensus. Thomas Brown abstained from the vote.

11. Adjourn

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

I certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes approved by the CARE Board of Directors at a regular meeting of the board on April 28, 2021.

DocuSigned by:

Eunice Hostetter

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Eunice Hostetter, CARE Board Secretary

5/3/2021

Date