



## **Andy Hill Cancer Research Endowment Board Meeting Minutes June 24, 2020**

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

Board Members Absent: Jim Hendricks

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

Guest Attendees: Sandra Adix (WA Assistant Attorney General), Julia Terlinchamp (WA Department of Commerce)

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Wednesday, June 24, 2020, 2:00—3:00 p.m. (PST)

### **1. Welcome**

The meeting was called to order at 2:03 p.m. A quorum was confirmed with a roll call of the board by the Chair.

### **2. CARE Fund Update**

Laura Flores Cantrell provided a CARE Fund update:

- The program administrator contract between Empire Health Foundation (EHF) and Department of Commerce (COM) will be initiated on July 1, 2020.
- The Governor's Boards and Commission staff has changed. CARE Fund staff will work with the new contact in the Governor's Office to fill board vacancies and complete reappointment documentation.
- The board requested to be kept apprised of any dip in the funds held in the Bessemer account, from which the grants are paid. As of May 31, 2020, the CARE Fund balance in the Bessemer account is \$10.2 million. In order to maintain the low-risk profile in accordance with CARE's investment policy, we rely on short-term U.S. Government securities. Rates on those securities have dropped significantly since December of 2019 from 1.5% to 0.1%. Consequently, investment earnings have declined to the point where the fee rate exceeded the earnings rate. EHF worked out a temporary solution with Bessemer for a reduced fee to match the 0.1%. Laura will monitor the account and work with the Board Treasurer to reassess, as needed, and potentially bring a revised Investment Policy or other recommendation for board consideration should that seem prudent.
- As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, \$8.8 billion less in state revenue is projected through May 2023. The immediate impact of this on the CARE Fund is that Governor Inslee has directed state employee furloughs, which will result in longer lead time on

agency requests and less agency staff availability for certain meetings. The Governor may call a special session of the legislature to address the projected revenue shortfall.

- EHF has filled the financial analyst vacancy; the financial analyst will support the CARE Fund's finance and accounting needs. The CARE Fund is also planning to hire a Program Director, who will work with Laura in an external facing role.
- Laura thanked board members who assisted in outreach for the COVID-19 Response Grant.

### **3. Consent Agenda**

Fred Appelbaum presented the consent agenda for approval.

MOTION: Thomas Brown made the motion to approve the consent agenda items consisting of final draft April 22, 2020 board meeting minutes, final draft May 13, 2020 Special Board Meeting Minutes, final draft May 27, 2020 Ad Hoc Committee Meeting Minutes, final draft June 1, 2020 Ad Hoc Committee Meeting Minutes, and final draft Signatory Resolution, as presented; David Byrd seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

### **4. Distinguished Researchers Cohort 4 Award Decision**

Fred Appelbaum presented the AAAS Distinguished Researchers Cohort 4 (DR4) Summary of Applications and the AAAS Reviews of the DR4 Candidates. He reiterated to the board that this particular grant opportunity emphasized that the proposed research be focused on an area of cancer disparities. Two applications were reviewed by AAAS, of which one was highly recommended for funding and the other was not recommended. The highly recommended application is for an individual from the University of Washington seeking to implement a comprehensive health approach to address prostate cancer in Black men, an important area of cancer disparities.

Fred Appelbaum recused himself from the decision due to a potential or perceived conflict of interest due to his dual appointment at the University of Washington. David Byrd recused himself from the discussion and decision due to his potential or perceived conflict of interest due to his employment with the University of Washington.

Board members felt that the highly recommended application was strong and should be awarded. There was no further discussion regarding the application that was not recommended for funding by AAAS.

Although the highly recommended DR4 candidate requested \$400,000, the board discussed the funding level for past Distinguished Researcher awards, historically funded at \$500,000 each. The board discussed the prospect of approving an award of up to \$500,000 to provide the opportunity for the applicant to secure additional non-state matching funds at a minimum 1:1 match.

MOTION: Carol Dahl made the motion to approve an award up to \$500,000 for Dr. Nyame, University of Washington. The motion was seconded by Thomas Brown, and unanimously approved. David Byrd and Fred Appelbaum recused themselves from the vote.

Board members suggested that if the researcher is awarded at the \$500,000 level, it may be valuable to recommend the researcher utilize the additional funds to bring on collaborators with expertise in qualitative research and patient decision-making approaches, to address peer reviewer comments on the proposal.

## **5. COVID-19 Response Grant Award Decision**

Fred Appelbaum presented the Summary of Applications and the Scientific Reviews of COVID-19 Response Grant Applications for discussion. Despite the short time frame between the RFP and the application closing date, the CARE Fund received a total of 21 applications for the COVID-19 Response Grant. This is the largest pool of applicants for any CARE Fund grant cycle. The board had anticipated funding about five grants at approximately \$100,000 per award. Laura Flores Cantrell relayed that a private family foundation expressed interest in potentially funding one or two additional grants in this cycle. The board discussed funding the top five ranking applicants, and award the sixth and seventh ranking applicants contingent on the availability of external funding.

MOTION: Carol Dahl made the motion to 1) definitively fund the top five projects; 2) fund the sixth and seventh projects contingent on an external source of funding; 3) fund each application as requested up to a maximum of \$100,000 per award. Thomas Brown seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Board members discussed strategies to best convey the unique and additive value of the CARE Fund to stakeholders. The CARE Fund has been able to support research projects that may not have initially garnered investments from other grantmaking organizations.

## **6. COVID-19 Statewide Cancer Data Project**

The CARE Fund board decided at the May 13, 2020 Special Board Meeting to authorize Empire Health Foundation as the Program Administrator for CARE to contract up to \$1,000,000 to gather data related to the impact of COVID-19 on cancer patients, particularly minority, low socioeconomic status, and rural populations. The data will be used by the CARE Fund Board to inform future grantmaking and possible approaches to alleviating the impact of COVID-19 on cancer patients. Laura Flores Cantrell provided an overview of the process used by EHF to implement the board's directive for the COVID-19/Cancer Statewide Data Project contract.

EHF announced the availability of the contract simultaneously with the COVID-19 Response Grant. EHF engaged an external consultant to ensure that the opportunity was broadly distributed and proposals were scientifically evaluated. The consultant conducted outreach, coordinated communication with potential bidders, managed the bids, conducted a scientific assessment with an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of each bid, negotiated collaborations, and made a recommendation on selection of the final winning bidder.

EHF received bids from three entities: (1) Fred Hutch, (2) Seattle Cancer Care Alliance (SCCA), and (3) MultiCare as the lead partner on a bid submitted by Community Cancer Fund (CCF). Originally, there were a few different inquiries from Fred Hutch, which were ultimately consolidated as a collaborative effort under the leadership of the strongest bidder, Dr. Ramsey's proposal through Hutchinson Institute for Cancer Outcomes Research (HICOR). The SCCA bid was from Dr. Kit Wong, whom Dr. Ramsey agreed to bring into the project. The CCF/MultiCare original proposal had some strengths, including the geographic footprint. However, a major weakness of the CCA/MultiCare proposal was that it did not specifically identify a Principal Investigator, making it difficult to fully assess feasibility. After some negotiation, CCF/MultiCare was invited to collaborate with Dr. Mendoza, with Dr. Ramsey as the lead. As a result, the CCF/MultiCare proposal has changed significantly, and the final scope of work will be provided to the board in a future board packet.

EHF will cover \$19,000 from nonstate funds for administrative costs that will allow for a single contract, inclusive of a full subcontract obligated to the collaborating entity. Per the consultant and individual board member guidance, the purpose of awarding the project as a single contract rather than splitting it up is to enable project cohesion and provide a single point of accountability on the deliverables.

The final result of this process is a \$1,000,000 CARE Fund investment (\$750,000 to Fred Hutch; \$250,000 subcontract to CCF/MultiCare) in a statewide cancer data project. HICOR will create a statewide patient-level data repository that will include information on care, outcomes, and patient experiences for cancer patients of Washington during the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey will include validated questions concerning health equity, and the World Health Organization (WHO) COVID-19 survey. This data project will be known as the Washington State COVID-19 and Cancer Research Data Repository.

The research team will present the project in more detail at a future board meeting, when the board will have an opportunity for questions and dialogue. Laura asked the board for particular areas of interest that the research team may be able to address. The board discussed that a gap in the data project is data on the uninsured population. Board members further discussed how the CARE Fund could address this gap in information, as the number of individuals who do not have insurance may only continue to grow throughout the course of the pandemic.

## **7. CARE Fund Allocation Plan**

Laura Flores Cantrell introduced the CARE Fund Allocation Plan to the board, noting that in accordance with RCW 43.348.040, the CARE Fund is required to provide a plan for fund allocation every year.

It was agreed upon that at the upcoming board retreat on July 8, board members would further discuss the allocation plan and potential funding commitments for the year.

## **8. Board Retreat**

Due to COVID-19, to safeguard the health of attendees, the CARE Board decided to conduct the board retreat as a virtual meeting in lieu of an in-person meeting at the University of Washington's Center for Urban Horticulture.

**9. Public Comment**

No members of the public were present to provide comment.

**10. Adjourn**

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:04 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 September 25, 2020.

DocuSigned by:  
*Eunice Hostetter*  
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Eunice Hostetter, CARE Board Secretary

11/18/2020  
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Date