



Andy Hill Cancer Research Endowment Board Meeting Minutes March 12, 2025

The following CARE Board Members, constituting a quorum, were present: Cliff Berkman, Thomas Brown, Marc Cummings, Nancy Davidson, Sara Hurvitz, Alicia Klein, Beth Lawlor, Libby Mongue-Wymore, and Bobbie-Jo Webb-Robertson

Board Members Absent: Carol Coram, Gary Kaplan, and Maura Little

CARE Staff Attendees: Peter Choi, Tasha Florez, Pam Fujita-Yuhas, Kryszy Keller, Jennifer Puttuck, and Joseph Sparacio

Guest Attendees: Sandra Adix (Washington State Office of the Attorney General), Lyset Cadena (Cadena Consulting), Beth Harvey (Evergreen Social Impact), Molly O'Connor (Rivkin Center for Ovarian Cancer Research), and Susie Van Den Ameele (Life Science Washington)

Wednesday, March 12, 2025, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. (PT)

1. Welcome and Summary of Key Action Items

Beth Lawlor, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m., Quorum was established and confirmed. Beth welcomed new board members Sarah Hurvitz and Alicia Klein.

Beth summarized the key action items for the meeting.

Marc Cummings introduced Susie Van Den Ameele, Executive Administrator from Life Science Washington.

2. Consent Agenda

Beth reviewed the Consent Agenda, composed of drafts of the November 6, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes and the December 12, 2024 Standing Committee on Grants Meeting Minutes.

MOTION: Nancy Davidson made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Thomas Brown. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. Rivkin Center/Care Fund Awards (Cycle 2)

Beth reminded the Board that the Rivkin Center/CARE Fund partnership was authorized at the August 2, 2023 board meeting to co-fund grants for ovarian cancer research in Washington. The CARE Fund investment is to provide up to \$500,000 over two years, with Rivkin Center providing the nonstate match. Prior to board discussion and action on the Cycle 2 Rivkin/CARE Fund Awards, Beth introduced and invited Molly O'Connor, Rivkin Center's Chief Executive Officer, to provide organizational updates about the Rivkin Center.

Molly provided an overview of the Rivkin Center's milestones over the past three decades. She stated that, last year, the Rivkin Center Executive Committee resolved to seek a merger partner to strengthen its sustainability and impact. This resulted in the relationship with the Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance (OCRA), an organization with a longstanding commitment to ovarian cancer research. Molly described the key terms of the merger agreement. The merger will be effective on April 1, 2025.

Molly then turned the floor to Beth Lawlor.

Beth invited Thomas Brown to provide additional comments.

Thomas disclosed he also served on the Board of the Rivkin Center.

Thomas then turned the floor to Beth Lawlor.

Beth turned the floor to Assistant Attorney General (AAG), Sandra Adix.

AAG Adix provided an overview of the proposed CARE Board actions, including voting on approval of the Rivkin Center/CARE Fund Cycle 2 grant awards and making decisions regarding the assignment and amendment of the Collaborative Agreement with the Rivkin Center and OCRA. AAG Adix advised the CARE Board of its delegation authority. Due to timing, AAG Adix recommended the Board delegate authority to the Chair to approve an assignment document and an amendment of the agreement between the CARE Fund and the Rivkin Center.

A discussion followed.

[Molly left the meeting.]

Beth then turned the floor to Peter Choi, CARE Fund Director of Program Design & Evaluation, to present an overview of the Rivkin Center/CARE Fund Cycle 2 grant opportunity and external scientific review results.

Peter provided an overview of the funding opportunity and external scientific review process.

Peter stated three applications have met the eligibility criteria for funding by CARE Fund, as determined by the majority vote of each scientific review panel. The Rivkin Center approved co-funding the two leading applications and increasing the award amount to \$300,000 per award.

Peter then turned the floor to Beth Lawlor to facilitate a discussion and motion.

A discussion followed.

Beth asked Board members to disclose any affiliations and any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest. She reminded the Board that grants are awarded in accordance with the CARE Fund statute and Board policies.

Beth Lawlor disclosed her affiliate appointments with the University of Washington (UW) and the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center (FHCC). Nancy Davidson disclosed her employment with FHCC and affiliate appointment with the UW. Sara Hurvitz disclosed her employment with the UW and FHCC.

MOTION: Thomas Brown made a motion to approve Rivkin Center CARE Fund Award (Cycle 2) grant awards to University of Washington, Nora Disis and Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center, Megan Shen as requested, or up to \$300,000 per award contingent on awardee's submission of a supplemental funding request and revised budget. The motion was seconded by Cliff Berkman. The motion was approved unanimously. Beth Lawlor, Sara Hurvitz, and Nancy Davidson recused from the vote.

Beth requested the Board consider implications of the Rivkin Center/OCRA merger on the ongoing management of the grants for Rivkin Center/CARE Fund Award (Cycle 1 and Cycle 2). She reminded the Board that during the first year of the CARE Fund's partnership with the Rivkin Center, the Rivkin Center held responsibility for administering the grant awards associated with this partnership. Furthermore, she inquired if any Board members had questions.

A discussion followed.

MOTION: Thomas Brown made a motion to approve the Rivkin Center's assignment of the Rivkin Center/CARE Fund Award (Cycle 1) grant administration for the University of Washington, Elizabeth Swisher and Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center, Holly Harris from the Rivkin Center to Rivkin Center's successor organization, Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance (OCRA). The motion was seconded by Alicia Klein. The motion was approved unanimously.

AAG Adix presented an explanation regarding CARE Board action pertaining to the delegation of the Chair's approval for the assignment and amendment of the Collaborative Agreement between CARE Fund and the Rivkin Center, as well as the potential entry into a new Collaborative Agreement with OCRA. She delineated three essential points that must be included at a minimum.

A discussion followed, resulting in the inclusion of the three essential points described by AAG Adix plus an additional point specifying grant awards are to be utilized in compliance with the CARE Fund statute.

MOTION: Nancy moved to approve to delegate to the Chair approval of assignment and amendment of the Collaborative Agreement between CARE Fund and Rivkin Center entered into on September 6, 2023, and/or authority to enter into a new Collaborative Agreement with Rivkin Center's successor organization Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance, as may be recommended after legal review and as approved by the Board Chair for the purpose of clarifying terms and conditions under the Collaborative Agreement, including but not limited to: 1) formalizing CARE Fund grant award administration for Rivkin Center/CARE Fund Award (Cycle 2) grant agreements, 2) renaming of the grant award, 3) providing for the deposit of matching funds to the Andy Hill CARE Fund endowment, and 4) confirming that the grant awards will be spent in compliance with the CARE Fund statute. The motion was seconded by Sara Hurvitz. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. Standing Committee on Grants Report

Committee Chair Nancy Davidson presented an update on the Committee's activities. She reminded the Board that the Standing Committee on Grants was established through Resolution 12.0 and briefly summarized the authority delegated to the Committee by the CARE Board. She then provided an overview of the Committee's activities from its December 12, 2024 meeting. Nancy reminded the Board that during the CARE Board November 6, 2024 meeting, staff reported it was drafting a CARE Board policy regarding appeals, and staff would work with the grants committee and consult with the AAG to develop a final draft policy for consideration at a future CARE Board meeting. As drafted, the proposed policy regarding appeals would be incorporated into the general award decision policy. The Standing Committee on Grants undertook a thorough review and discussion of the proposed revised policy, provided direction to staff regarding the Committee's edits, and voted to recommend Board approval of the final draft revised general award decision policy, contingent upon review by the AAG.

Nancy then turned the floor over to Peter to provide an overview of the proposed revisions to the previous policy and AAG Adix's recommendations.

Peter provided an overview of the revised policy and notable modifications since the Committee's review based on the AAG's review.

Peter then turned the floor to Board Chair Beth Lawlor to facilitate a discussion and vote.

A discussion followed. AAG Adix noted that the purpose of an appeal process as a state funding entity is to protect the integrity of the solicitation process. This process affirms the decision of the scientific review committee.

MOTION: Thomas Brown made a motion to approve POL 09.1 Grant Award Decisions and Applicant Appeals as presented. The motion was seconded by Nancy Davidson. The motion was approved unanimously.

5. Implementation and Outcomes Research (Cycle 1) Award Decisions

Nancy reminded the board that at the November 6, 2024 board meeting, the Board approved an allocation of \$9.87 million for the Implementation and Outcomes Research (IOR) grants for Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25).

Nancy described outcomes from the December 12, 2024 meeting of the Standing Committee on Grants, that included Committee review of external peer review committees' scores from the American Institute of Biological Studies (AIBS). Each applicant received an overall impact score after a panel discussion. Panel 1 evaluated 21 applications related to Screening, Detection, and Treatment. Panel 2 assessed 4 applications in Population Health. The 25 applications were rated as: (1) Highly Recommended, (2) Recommended, or (3) Not Recommended. Nancy pointed out that awarding the seven Highly Recommended applications would commit nearly \$7.5 million of the \$9.8 million total allocation. A three-way tie among the subsequent highest-scoring applications would commit an additional \$2.8 million, leading to a potential overspend of \$386,000 above the targets approved in the Allocation Plan. The Committee recommends awarding grants to the top ten scoring applications, totaling \$10,256,298.

Nancy then turned the floor to Beth Lawlor to facilitate a discussion and vote.

Beth noted the potential challenges encountered by grantee organizations related to federal funding and policies. In light of these considerations, the Board may consider action to mitigate the potential challenges.

A discussion followed.

MOTION: Acknowledging the uncertainty in federal scientific research funding and priorities, Alicia Klein made a motion to further strengthen the state's commitment to invest in the state's cancer research facilities and talent, notwithstanding POL 6.2 Grant Match and Allowable Costs, the CARE Board shall rely on the applicant's federally negotiated indirect cost rate agreement at the time of the IOR Cycle 1 application in making IOR Cycle 1 awards. The motion was seconded by Cliff Berkman. The motion was approved unanimously.

MOTION: Nancy Davidson made a motion to approve for Implementation and Outcomes Research Cycle 1 grant awards made, total project budget changes that reduce the requested amount by 25% or less may be approved by CARE Fund staff, project budget changes that reduces the requested amount by more than 25% must be reviewed by the American Institute of Biological Sciences and receive approval of the reviewer(s) to execute an award agreement. The motion was seconded by Thomas Brown. The motion was approved unanimously.

Beth then introduced discussion of the ten grants to be considered individually. She asked Board members to disclose any affiliations or actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest (COI).

Beth Lawlor disclosed that her laboratory has established a collaboration with Talus Biosciences; however, the collaboration is not related to the IOR application currently under review. She asked AAG Adix whether this situation might be deemed a COI. AAG Adix clarified that while this does not meet the standard of a conflict that requires recusal it could be perceived as an apparent conflict and, therefore, it is prudent to disclose this information. Thomas Brown disclosed Seattle Children's Hospital employs his spouse and Bobbie-Jo Webb-Robertson disclosed a subcontractor affiliation with Seattle Children's Hospital, unrelated to the IOR applications. AAG Adix further clarified that these instances represent apparent conflicts and not a conflict that requires a recusal.

Beth reminded the Board that it may generally vote to take one of the following actions: 1) Approve; 2) Approve with one or more contingencies; or 3) Decline the applications for a grant.

MOTION: Cliff Berkman made a motion to approve a grant award of up to \$265,460 to Dotquant for the project "A Three-in-One HER Family Targeted RNA Drug for Breast Cancer" contingent on the availability of the applicant's project funds. The motion was seconded by Nancy Davidson. The motion was approved unanimously.

MOTION: Cliff Berkman made a motion to approve a grant award of up to \$1,321,898 to the University of Washington for the project "RNA Therapeutics: Bridging the Gap Between Research and Translation" contingent on the availability of the applicant's project funds. The motion was seconded by Alicia Klein. The motion was approved unanimously. Nancy Davidson, Sara Hurvitz, and Beth Lawlor recused from the vote.

MOTION: Marc Cummings made a motion to approve a grant award of up to \$708,432 to the University of Washington for the project “Workplace Cancer Prevention and Screening: Scaling Up Connect to Wellness for Employees in Low-Wage Industries Across Washington State” contingent on the availability of the applicant’s project funds. The motion was seconded by Cliff Berkman. The motion was approved unanimously. Nancy Davidson, Sara Hurvitz, and Beth Lawlor recused from the vote.

MOTION: Marc Cummings made a motion to approve a grant award of up to \$1,499,378 to Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center for the project “Partnering with Washington State Tribal Communities to Develop Culturally-Tailored Nutrition Resources and Reduce Cancer Health Disparities” contingent on the availability of the applicant’s project funds. The motion was seconded by Alicia Klein. The motion was approved unanimously. Nancy Davidson, Sara Hurvitz, and Beth Lawlor recused from the vote.

MOTION: Marc Cummings made a motion to approve a grant award of up to \$1,177,435 to Wayfinder Biosciences Inc. for the project “Developing Novel Small Molecule Therapeutics for MYC-Driven Cancers Using Wayfinder Biosciences' Proprietary RNA-Drugging Platform” contingent on the availability of the applicant’s project funds. The motion was seconded by Cliff Berkman. The motion was approved unanimously.

[Lyset Cadena joined the meeting]

MOTION: Marc Cummings made a motion to approve a grant award of up to \$1,000,000 to Seattle Children's Research Institute for the project “Advanced Platform for Developing Conditionally Stable Sensors and Effectors for Cancer Applications” contingent on the availability of the applicant’s project funds. The motion was seconded by Alicia Klein. The motion was approved unanimously. Beth Lawlor recused from the vote.

MOTION: Marc Cummings made a motion to approve a grant award of up to \$1,479,768 to Seattle Children's Research Institute for the project “Converting an Immunotherapy Resistance Mechanism into a Vulnerability Using Slow-Release Local Immunotherapy” contingent on the availability of the applicant’s project funds. The motion was seconded by Cliff Berkman. The motion was approved unanimously. Beth Lawlor recused from the vote.

MOTION: Marc Cummings made a motion to approve a grant award of up to \$1,303,927 to the University of Washington for the project “Advancing Merkel Cell Carcinoma Management: Improved Recurrence Detection and New Approaches for Immunotherapy-Refractory Disease” contingent on the availability of the applicant’s project funds. The motion was seconded by Alicia Klein. The motion was approved unanimously. Nancy Davidson, Sara Hurvitz, and Beth Lawlor recused from the vote.

MOTION: Marc Cummings made a motion to approve a grant award of up to \$500,000 to Talus Bioscience, Inc. for the project “Development of a Direct Inhibitor of the Brachyury Transcription Factor for Chordoma and Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer” contingent on the availability of the applicant’s project funds. The motion was seconded by Nancy Davidson. The motion was approved unanimously.

MOTION: Marc Cummings made a motion to approve a grant award of up to \$1,000,000 to the University of Washington for the project “Phase II Randomized Controlled Clinical Trial evaluating a Scalable, Personalized Home-Based Activity Intervention with ExerciseRx in Survivors with Nonmuscle-Invasive Bladder Cancer: The EMPOWER Trial” contingent on the availability of the applicant’s project funds. The motion was seconded by Thomas Brown. The motion was approved unanimously. Nancy Davidson, Sara Hurvitz, and Beth Lawlor recused from the vote.

Beth Lawlor articulated that certain awardees possess federal matching funds; however, the availability of the federal matching funds remains uncertain due to policy changes at the federal level. Awardees are afforded the option to request a reduction in their award size or to decline the award in its entirety. She indicated that the Board may consider the possibility of approving contingent awards in case any of those awarded are unable to proceed or receive reduced funding. These proposals would be approved for awards, pending the availability of funds. Furthermore, the Board may impose restrictions on the minimum payline and establish an upper monetary limit for the awards. To date, the total amount awarded stands at \$10,256,298. Beth asked the Board to review the approval of applications that are to be “awarded but not funded” based on awarded grantees declining or receiving reduced funds.

A discussion followed.

AAG Adix reiterated that other boards provide the amount which becomes available to the subsequent applicant on the list, leaving it to the applicant to either accept or decline. Given the motion adopted by the CARE Board earlier at today’s meeting, in instances where there is a variance in project budget exceeding 25%, the applicants will submit revised budget and project information that will be reviewed by independent scientific reviewers to determine if the funding recommendation holds.

MOTION: Thomas Brown made a motion to approve an award for the next four highest scoring grant applications that received a “Recommended” rating (overall impact score of 3.7–4.2) up to their requested amounts contingent on the availability of the Implementation and Outcomes Research allocation up to \$10,256,298 and availability of the applicant’s project funds. Thomas Brown further moved that projects would be fully funded as requested sequentially from highest to lowest scoring application. The motion was seconded by Cliff Berkman. The motion was approved unanimously. Nancy Davidson, Sara Hurvitz, and Beth Lawlor recused from the vote.

6. Communications Update

Joseph Sparacio, CARE Fund Deputy Director, provided an update regarding increased and enhanced communication activities thus far in FY25.

Joseph then turned the floor to Beth Lawlor.

Beth acknowledged the substantial work completed and, owing to time constraints, will allocate time to return to the topic at the retreat in May 2025 to engage in further discussions.

7. Board Chair’s Update

Beth reminded the Board that the next Board meeting will be a retreat scheduled for May 28, 2025, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the University of Washington Arboretum and provided an overview for travel logistics. She also noted a venue in Spokane has been reserved for the Board meeting on August 20, 2025. Lastly, Beth informed the Board that the transition to OnBoard and the CARE Fund email addresses has been successfully completed.

8. Government Relations Update

Lyset Cadena provided an update to the CARE Board regarding government relations.

A discussion followed.

9. Annual Public Hearing

No members of the public were present to provide comment.

10. Adjourn

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 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 May 28, 2025.

Signed by:
Marc Cummings
Marc Cummings, CARE Board Secretary

6/6/2025
Date