

Breast Cancer Research Council Meeting Minutes
September 25, 2009: Council Meeting
Oakland, CA

Members Present: Lisa Barcellos, Barbara Brenner, Terri Burgess, Moon Chen, Laura Fenster, Jim Ford, Karren Ganstwig, Carlina Hansen, Shelley Hwang, Klaus Porzig, Jeanne Rizzo, Donna Sanderson, Mary Alice Yund

Members Absent: Roxanna Bautista, Chris Bowden, Susan Braun, Sherie Smalley

Guests: Steven Beckwith

Staff: Lyn Dunagan, Larry Fitzgerald, Claudia Grossmann, Mhel Kavanaugh-Lynch, Katherine McKenzie, Lisa Minniefield, Catherine Thomsen

I. Call to Order: Jim Ford called the council meeting to order at 8:00am and initiated introductions.

II. Minutes: The council reviewed the minutes from May 15, 2009.

MOTION: Moon Chen moved (Karren Ganstwig seconded) that the council approve the May 15 minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

III. Announcements: Mhel Kavanaugh-Lynch announced that Claudia Grossmann would be leaving the Program in two weeks and that Janna Cordeiro is expected to return to the Program to help with priority setting. Further changes in personnel were under review.

IV. Cycle 16 Update: Larry Fitzgerald presented the application submission schedule and described the application process, deadlines, eligibility requirements, review, and funding timeline.

V. Update on ORGS: Steve Beckwith presented an update on the Office of Research and Graduate Studies (ORGS) reorganization process, the Non-Advocate Review (NAR), and the 2009-2010 goals and budget. He reminded the council of UC's intent to eliminate steps in the business process and other cost-reduction measures, and described some of the processes and the intended timeline for setting up the Program Award Administration Center (PAAC). Council members asked if there was a mechanism to evaluate the PAAC, but one is not yet in place.

Steve discussed with the council various aspects of the NAR, including cost of the meeting and the selection process for the expert panel, and invited input. Council members requested a public health expert be added to the NAR panel and suggested specific names after the meeting. Steve shared the NAR meeting schedule and will share the panel's report. He said that changes will be decided by consensus. Additional discussion included technologies that may reduce review committee costs, such as iLink video-conferencing, which council members agreed may work well in some meetings.

Steve discussed UC's budget issues and said that some changes, such as staff furloughs, were unalterable. As another effort to bridge its budget gap, UC will be recovering rent and overhead costs that it has previously subsidized for the Program. The NAR panel's recommendations will further impact the budget. Council members expressed concerns about staying within the mandated 5% administration cap and executing the Program's mission while paying additional fees to UC, particularly with the as-yet-unknown recharges for the PARC and PAAC.

At the conclusion of Steve's presentation, the council went into executive session.

VI. Special Research Initiatives Update: Catherine Thomsen presented a progress report of all SRI projects. The California Chemicals Policy project is making excellent progress and will lead a plenary session at next September's research symposium. The Demographics project is also progressing well. The Survival project team has met and will return with a proposal; members discussed their concerns and hopes that the team returns with a truly innovative direction. Catherine is also working with the Teachers Study group to develop criteria for a full proposal. The RFPs for the Immigration and Chemicals Testing projects will be ready soon.

VII. Community Initiatives Update: Katie McKenzie reported that the CRC Call for Applications has been posted to the Program's website and circulated electronically. There was a significant decrease in outreach last year; she is working with Marj Plumb to expand efforts and has been receiving more inquiries this year. Marj has conducted two webinars to date, with triple last year's participants, and an additional webinar is planned for next month. Additional technical assistance will be available to help applicants strengthen their CRC review plan.

VIII. Meeting Calendar: Members discussed their availability for upcoming meetings and selected the following dates:

- December 3 - 4
- March 5 – 7: Retreat (Friday afternoon through Sunday noon)
- May 14: Funding meeting

Members suggested options for the retreat meeting site.

IX. Meet a Member: Mary Alice Yund presented an overview of her background.

X. Priority Setting

A. Refresher: Claudia Grossmann presented an overview of the Program's approach, goals, timeline, and history, as well as a refresher on the collection and discussion of data thus far.

B. Presentation – Non-Duplicative: Jim Ford presented a portfolio analysis and comparison between the Program's funding and that of other breast cancer research funders. The priority-setting committee's recommendation is to establish a Special Research Initiative on Prevention. Council members discussed the impact of such a mechanism and determined the need to form an ad-hoc sub-committee to clarify the Program's definition of prevention. Jeannie Rizzo, Susan Braun (in absentia), Shelley Hwang, and Jim Ford volunteered to be on the sub-committee.

C. Presentation – Disparities: Shelley Hwang presented a portfolio analysis and comparison. The committee recommends no change at this time, other than to stress the importance of continued support for Community Research Collaboration awards. The portfolio analysis data does not include 2009's drop in CRC participation because comparison data (from IUCRP) only runs through 2006. Council members requested further trending data of the Program's funding in this category through 2009.

D. Presentation – Innovation: Karren Ganstwig presented summary data of innovative awards. The committee tested a hypothesis that junior investigators were better suited to the intent of the award to move new investigators into breast cancer, but they found that the hypothesis was not supported by the data. Therefore, the committee recommends keeping the award as is, available to both junior and established investigators. Council members discussed their concerns about the award duration for IDEA-competitive renewals. Final recommendations will be made at the retreat in March.

E. Presentation – Career Development: Terri Burgess summarized the committee's discussions and invited council members to review the data in their packets. The priority-setting committee has three recommendations: (1) to continue funding dissertation awards, with the additional recommendation of increasing targeted outreach about funding postdoctoral fellowships in order to encourage younger researchers to stay in California and stay in breast cancer research; (2) to continue funding postdoctoral fellowships, with the added recommendation of addressing issues about qualifying mentors; and (3) to investigate developing a new career development award type to promote careers in translational research. Jim Ford volunteered to gather data at an upcoming meeting that will help inform whether this is an actual or perceived need.

XI. Joining Forces Conference Award: Laura Fenster reported on the outreach committee's discussion and concerns regarding the application. The committee requested input from the council, but they feel positive about involvement with this project. The council discussed questions about the project's relationship to breast cancer. The committee will go back to the applicant for more information and present their response to the council at the December meeting.

XII. Director's Report: Mhel discussed possible legislative changes that would change the Program's annual report to a quintannual report.

MOTION: Karren Ganstwig moved (Jeannie Rizzo seconded) that the staff prepare an Annual Report to the Legislature. The motion passed unanimously.

A draft report will be provided to council members between meetings; staff will incorporate comments before the final draft is submitted.

The Compendium of Annual Funding has been prepared; council members were invited to comment before the report is posted.

XIII. Final Announcements: New members were invited to join subcommittees.

XIV. Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 3:34pm.