

Minutes of the RSC Meeting:

November 15, 2013

**Present:** Michael Harold, Gregory Marinic, Pradeep Sharma, Haluk Ogmen, Gangbing Song, Maria Solino, Stuart Long, Karl Titz, Robert Palmer, Alessandro Carrera, Jack M. Fletcher, Gregg Roman, T. Randy Lee, Stuart Dryer, Alan Burns, Richard Bond, Luis Torres, Abdelhak Bensaoula, Driss Benhaddou, Roth Bose, Mark Clarke, Mary Ann Ottinger, Christie Peters, Cris Milligan, Selesta Hodge, Ashley Merwin, Rozlyn Reep

**Absent:** Wynne Chin, Ezemenari Obasi, Michael Zvolensky, George Zouridakis, Allan Jacobson, Jacqueline Hawkins,

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:38 pm.

**Welcome by the Chair:** Dr. Harold welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for any comments or changes to the minutes from October's meeting.

**Review and Approval of October 18, 2013 Minutes:** Dr. Lee and Dr. Ogmen requested a change to the minutes to state that the "subcommittee", not Dr. Lee or Dr. Ogmen, will rewrite the award guidelines. Dr. Harold noted the changes and asked for a motion to accept the minutes. Dr. Ogmen then made the motion to accept the minutes, and Dr. Dryer seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

**Status Report by VC/CP Dr. Bose:** Dr. Harold asked Dr. Bose to give a status report. Dr. Bose gave the following update:

- DOR is undergoing major structural changes to meet demands.
- Dr. Ottinger will assist faculty with writing grants. She will also develop collaborations with NASA and help bring in research funds.
- Dr. Bose is in the process of creating a position for management of fiscal compliance in order to alleviate confusion with post award & pre-award financial services. He is close to filling the position. This individual will help provide seamless grant administration.
- DOR will be partially financing the Health and Biomedical Sciences Building project. The project will increase the number of floors in HBSB.
- DOR continues to work on increasing building space. Dr. Bose has asked the Deans to release their unused equipment in storage. The equipment will be moved to a secure location. Dr. Bose will continue to work with Dr. Carlucci to come up with a plan for laboratories before new faculty arrive in 2014.

Dr. Harold expressed two concerns regarding new space: Cost and time. Dr. Bose expressed similar concern with regards to time as well as high construction bids (due to the large amount of construction in Houston) and high turnover. Once Dr. Bose gets a list from the Deans, he will request their priorities for renovation. Dr. Bose will take the top 3 priorities of each Dean to Carlucci.

### Subcommittee Updates:

**Small Grants/New Faculty:** Dr. Torres proposed that the subcommittee follow the same procedure as last year. They will assign reviewers and once the proposals are ranked, they'll set up face-to-face interviews. Awards will be announced December 20.

Dr. Harold reminded the committee that 2013-2014 faculty are exempt from the start-up fund restriction in the Small Grant/New Faculty guidelines since the grants were factored into their contracts and planning.

**Excellence & Research:** Dr. Lee's subcommittee is working on language for the guidelines and announcement. They will encourage nominations from the entire campus.

**GEAR Program:** Dr. Ogmen's subcommittee would like to change the guidelines and forms for GEAR. In the past, proposals were submitted to the RSC for review, then sent to colleges, and then sent back to the committee. According to Dr. Ogmen, the system works for most colleges except for NSM & Engineering. The subcommittee would like for the pre-proposals to go to the colleges first. Once the colleges have selected applicants, the RSC will review the full proposals. This will prevent applicants from having to write full proposals for the "pre-proposal" submission.

Dr. Harold asked the committee for a vote to approve the new guidelines. The guidelines were approved.

**Centers & Institutes:** Dr. Fletcher and his subcommittee have 2 proposals to review: Cell Signaling Group (CNRCS) & Airborne Laser Group (NCALM). The committee is working on the reviews and will have recommendations at the next meeting. They will also begin working on language to replace the current cluster language.

**Resources & Core Facilities:** Dr. Burns and his subcommittee are working on guidelines for the Core Facility proposal. The current guidelines are located on the DOR website.

Dr. Burns met with Dr. Ottinger and went over the existing guidelines and made a draft of suggestions which was sent to the subcommittee. The subcommittee's suggestions were added to the draft and sent to Dr. Ottinger and Dr. Bose for review. Dr. Burns will give an update with more details at the next meeting.

**Core Facility - Gene Sequencing:** Dr. Roman stated that there are individuals within his department that use gene sequencing as part of their research. He raised the question of how the Core Facility was going to be established, maintained, and funded. One concern raised was the purchase of new sequencers. Unless a department has support from the University to reduce charges for this service, faculty will send their analyses elsewhere. He also mentioned that bioinformatics support is needed.

Dr. Bose stated that last April there was a recommendation by the RSC to convert CBMEG (Center for Biomedical and Environmental Genomics) to a Core Facility. He worked with Dr. Fofanov on this project before he left. After Dr. Fofanov left, two employees remained and all of the sequencing equipment was consolidated into one Core Facility. The Dean provided a list of major users of gene sequencing in NSM, which included Dr. Schwartz, Dr. Gunaratne, and Dr. Gustafsson. Dr. Bose also went outside NSM to locate other users of sequencing (Optometry, Pharmacy, etc). The Dean and Dr. Schwartz recommended people for an advisory group, including Dr. Bradley McConnell, Dr. Deborah Otteson, and Dr. Richard Willson. This group had recommendations, which were supported by NSM Dean Wells, who asked Dr. Bose to move forward with the project.

Dr. Dryer stated that the process Dr. Bose used was the right choice and believes he handled the situation correctly; however, he does not agree with the advisory group's recommendations. He believes the Core Facility will not be a financially viable center and is concerned with the bioinformatics.

Dr. Bose believes we need bioinformatics people and has made this recommendation to the Deans and Department Chairs.

Dr. Bose suggested that if departments have potential users, he will forward their names to the Advisory Board so they can be part of the decision making process. The Advisory committee is not a closed committee, and any major users should be included. That includes any new hires within the departments.

**Conflict of Interest & Compliance:** Dr. Burns said the Conflict of Interest and Compliance committee looks to see if there's a conflict of interest. If there is a conflict of interest, the committee will look to see if there is a plan in place. There are quite a few forms to evaluate and a lot of paperwork, but the transparency is very beneficial.

**IDC Distribution:** Dr. Bose gave an update on IDC distribution. He said that when he first arrived at the University of Houston the IDC policy was very confusing. Currently 52.5% of IDC is sent back to colleges, and 26-28% goes to the Division of Research. He stated that every Center and Institute is unique and believes we need to have a transparent formula.

Dr. Fletcher pointed out that there is no standard transparent policy in place and it differs from college to college.

Dr. Harold suggested that RSC representatives give recommendations to the IDC Distribution Policy Committee.

IDC expenditures can be viewed on the web at:

[http://www.uh.edu/af/committees/idc\\_uhdata.htm](http://www.uh.edu/af/committees/idc_uhdata.htm)

**Reduction in Force:** Dr. Harold met with the HR Director (Joan Nelson) in regards to the incident Dr. Dryer encountered with the Reduction in Force policy. He was told that the situation was not common and a solution was for PI's to write to HR outlining their issues. He would like to bring the HR director to a future RSC meeting to discuss the hiring of post docs.

Dr. Clarke and Dr. Bose both suggested that a post doc policy be developed.

Dr. Harold asked that the committee make a motion for the RSC to develop a policy. Dr. Fletcher made the motion and Dr. Solino seconded. The motion passed.

**Sick Leave Policy:** Dr. Ottinger gave an update on the sick leave policy. The policy will form a central pool via funds from a .5% added to grants. The policy is not complete but in progress.

It was recommended that the policy stay on the RSC agenda until resolved.

The meeting adjourned at 3:05 pm.