



CANCER PREVENTION & RESEARCH
INSTITUTE OF TEXAS

**Oversight Committee Meeting Minutes
July 31, 2020**

NOTE: CPRIT conducted this meeting by videoconference in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 418.016. Governor Abbott suspended various provisions that require government officials and members of the public to be physically present at a specified meeting location. Unless the information is confidential, the reports and presentations referenced in the minutes are available at <http://ocmeetings.cprit.texas.gov> in the "Oversight Committee Board Packet" section for the corresponding meeting date.

Call to Order – Agenda Item 1

A quorum being present, Presiding Officer Dee Margo called the Oversight Committee to order at 9:03 a.m.

Roll Call/Excused Absences – Agenda Item 2

Committee Members Present

David Cummings, M.D.
Ambrosio Hernandez, M.D. (joined the meeting in progress at 9:49 a.m.)
Donald (Dee) Margo
Will Montgomery
Mahendra Patel, M.D.
Cindy Barberio Payne
Bill Rice, M.D.
Craig Rosenfeld, M.D.

Public Comment – Agenda Item 3

Presiding Officer Margo recognized Mr. Dana Bacon to speak on behalf of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. Mr. Bacon discussed the tremendous medical and economic challenges posed by COVID-19, noting that it is especially disrupting cancer patients who now find it harder to access screening services and treatments. He noted CPRIT funded researchers at UT Health Science Center San Antonio and The University of Texas at Austin announced separate discoveries related to COVID-19 that will help other scientists to develop anti-viral drugs and vaccines. With those contributions and continued work against cancer, Mr. Bacon stated that CPRIT's value to Texas is greater than ever before.

Legislative Appropriations Request for the 2022-23 Biennium - Agenda Item 4, Tab 1

Presiding Officer Margo recognized Chief Operating Officer Heidi McConnell to present the Legislative Appropriations Request (LAR) for the 2022-23 Biennium. Ms. McConnell explained that the agency had not yet received instructions from the Governor's Office and the Legislative

Budget Board to complete and submit the request, so CPRIT staff constructed a draft request based on past precedent with the substantive information that CPRIT expects to include in the CPRIT's 2022-2023 LAR.

Ms. McConnell highlighted that CPRIT will be requesting the full \$300 million per year in General Obligation Bond Proceeds for the next biennium.

She presented the first exceptional item necessary to maintain level funding for grant review and award operations, which requires a \$2.7 million annual budget adjustment to address an ongoing annual shortfall for peer review honoraria, product development research grant application due diligence services, outsourced pre- and post-award grant management support services, and grant revenue asset management services. Ms. McConnell noted that the second exceptional item adds 8 new grant program, compliance and accounting support staff totaling about \$600,000 per year to address grant reporting compliance needs. She also discussed the modification of Rider 4 to allow CPRIT to notify the Legislative Budget Board about transfers among budget line items within the limits allowed all other state agencies instead requesting permission to transfer funds among budget line items.

Ms. McConnell responded to an Oversight Committee member's question about whether this was a request for additional money or just the ability to shift how CPRIT uses the bond proceeds. She explained that these requests allow CPRIT to shift how it uses the bond proceeds. She directed members to the meeting packet information demonstrating the shift.

In response to an Oversight Committee member's question, Ms. McConnell explained that "lapsed funds" refers to award funds that CPRIT would have used for awards that are declined by the recipients, such as recruitment offers that are not accepted. The bond funds allocated for declined awards are still available to the agency for other purposes.

Another Oversight Committee asked Ms. McConnell to explain why the administrative budget for FY 2021 did not change even though CPRIT will have fewer review cycles. She responded that while peer review panel meeting costs will not be as much because CPRIT will only hold one major grant cycle for academic research and product development applications in FY 2021, the grants management support contract budget is staying at roughly the same amount as previous years because CPRIT's third party grant management contractors will be implementing and maintaining needed grants management system enhancements.

Mr. Roberts added that there are reductions in some areas while other areas are increasing in cost. He clarified that CPRIT will keep the same number of review cycles for the prevention program and recruitment reviews. Although the number of standard review cycles will decrease for the academic research and product development programs each will have a single "super" cycle and CPRIT expects to fully award all available grant funds appropriated for the year.

Ms. McConnell responded to an Oversight Committee member's question about CPRIT's administrative percentage in the FY 2022-23 biennium, indicating that CPRIT's overhead will be 6.8% of the appropriations. Mr. Roberts explained that for years CPRIT has maintained a low overhead for CPRIT of about 6% of the annual budget. However, considering the overhead costs in the context of the 500+ active grants totaling \$1.4 billion that CPRIT manages, the actual

administrative costs associated with grant management is about 1.3% of the total active award portfolio amount. He explained that CPRIT is using its funding efficiently, but at some point, it is difficult to promote low administrative costs if it is not enough to safeguard CPRIT's grant investments. The additional personnel requests are critical to ensure that CPRIT continues to adequately monitor active grants. He does not anticipate a significant increase in overhead costs.

Mr. Roberts explained the request for a 10% increase to the Chief Scientific Officer exempt position cap from \$553,500 to \$608,850.

MOTION:

On a motion by Dr. Rice and seconded by Mr. Montgomery, the Oversight Committee voted 6 to 1 to approve the Legislative Appropriations Request for the 2022-23 Biennium subject to final review by the Audit Subcommittee, if necessary. Dr. Cummings voted against the motion. Dr. Hernandez was not present at the meeting when the Board voted on this item.

Academic Research Program – Agenda Item 5, Tab 2

Presiding Officer Margo recognized Dr. Willson to present the Academic Research Program's proposed FY 2021 grant award plan and timeline, including proposed FY 2021 requests for applications.

Dr. Willson referred members to Tab 2 pages 2-4 of the meeting packet and presented the proposed Academic Research Program RFAs for FY 2021. He noted that CPRIT has previously issued three of the proposed FY 2021 RFA mechanisms - Core Facility Support Awards, High Impact/High Risk Research Awards and Early Clinical Investigator Awards. However, CPRIT has never released three of the proposed FY 2021 RFAs - Clinical Trials Network Award, Texas Clinical Trials Participation Program Award and the Texas Regional Excellence in Cancer Award. Dr. Willson provided an overview of each RFA mechanism.

An Oversight Committee member asked if the Clinical Trials Network Award RFA would duplicate funds already supported by other entities such as the NCI Cooperative Groups. Dr. Willson responded that the CTNA is designed to provide oncologists and their patients who currently have limited access to cancer therapeutic trials with opportunities to participate in cancer trials and that access to trials sponsored by the NCI Cooperative Group trials does not reach the oncology practices and patients that the CTNA program targets.

Several Oversight Committee members commented that the CTNA grant mechanism addresses an important need in Texas and supported the RFA.

Approval Process – Academic Research Proposed FY 2021 RFAs

Presiding Officer Margo called for a vote on the proposed FY 2021 RFAs for the Academic Research Program. Dr. Rosenfeld requested that the Oversight Committee vote separately on the Clinical Trials Network Award RFA.

MOTION:

On a motion made by Mr. Montgomery and seconded by Dr. Patel, Oversight Committee members voted 7 to 1 to approve the Clinical Trials Network Award RFA. Dr. Rosenfeld voted against the motion.

MOTION:

On a motion made by Dr. Rice and seconded by Mr. Montgomery, the Oversight Committee members voted unanimously to approve the following proposed FY 2021 RFAs: Core Facility Support Awards, Early Clinical Investigator Award, High Impact/High Risk Research Awards, Texas Regional Excellence in Cancer Award and the Texas Clinical Trials Participation Award.

Product Development Research Program – Agenda Item 6, Tab 3

Presiding Officer Margo recognized Chief Product Development Officer Dr. Cindy WalkerPeach to present the Product Development Program’s plan for FY 2021 grant awards and timeline. Dr. WalkerPeach presented the updated timeline and the FY 2021 Product Development Program RFAs. Dr. WalkerPeach noted that the Oversight Committee did not need to take any action because they had previously approved the FY 2021 RFAs. There were no questions.

Prevention Program – Agenda Item 7, Tab 4

Presiding Officer Margo recognized Chief Prevention Officer Ramona Magid to present the Prevention Program’s plan for FY 2021 grant awards and timeline.

Ms. Magid presented the updated timelines and the FY 2021 Prevention Program RFAs. Ms. Magid explained that the Oversight Committee already approved the FY 2021 prevention RFAs at its February meeting. There were no questions.

FY 2022 Program Priorities and CPRIT 2.0 Planning – Agenda Item 8, Tab 5

Presiding Officer Margo recognized Chief Executive Officer Wayne Roberts to present the revised project timeline for the FY 2022 program priorities and the CPRIT 2.0 plan. Mr. Roberts reviewed the revised timeline with members. There were no questions.

Future Meeting Dates and Agenda Items – Agenda Item 11, Tab 6

Presiding Officer Margo recognized Chief Executive Officer Wayne Roberts to provide an update regarding CPRIT’s next Oversight Committee on August 19. Mr. Roberts asked the members to allot up to 5 hours for a full agenda and large number of awards and contracts.

Consultation with General Counsel – Agenda Item 10

Presiding Officer Margo asked Mr. Roberts, Ms. Doyle, and Dr. WalkerPeach to join the Oversight Committee in closed session via a secure video channel to take up agenda item 10. Presiding Officer Margo moved into closed session pursuant to Texas Open Meetings Act Section 551.071 to seek

advice from counsel and convened the closed session at 10:18 a.m. He reconvened the open meeting at 10:30 a.m. The Oversight Committee did not act on this agenda item.

Adjournment – Agenda Item 12

MOTION:

There being no further business, the Oversight Committee unanimously voted to approve a motion to adjourn made by Presiding Officer Margo and seconded by Mr. Montgomery.

Meeting adjourned at 10:31 a.m.

Signature 

Date 8/19/20

