

RHODE ISLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
MEETING OF THE SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY COUNCIL
PUBLIC SESSION

June 22, 2009

The Rhode Island Science & Technology Advisory Council (“STAC”) met on Monday, June 22, 2009 in Public Session at the offices of the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation, Providence, Rhode Island pursuant to notice of the meeting to all Members and public notice of meeting, a copy of which is attached hereto, as required by applicable Rhode Island Law.

The following Members were present and participated throughout the meeting as indicated: Dr. Timothy Babineau, Dr. Clyde Briant (Co-Chair), Dr. Pierre Corriveau, Dr. David Farmer (Co-Chair), Ms. Kimball Hall, Dr. David Hibbitt, Dr. Thomas Rockett, Dr. Jeffrey Seemann, Dr. Donald Stanford

Members absent were Dr. Peter Alfonso, Mr. Saul Kaplan, Dr. Margaret Leinen and Mr. Thomas Ryan.

Also present were Governor Carcieri and Senator Walaska and RIEDC’s staff.

Welcome

Dr. Briant called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. He thanked everyone for attending the meeting and welcomed speakers URI Commission Chair Robert Flanders and IBM Vice President Nick Bowen. He also welcomed new STAC members Dr. Timothy Babineau, President of Rhode Island Hospital and Dr. Pierre Corriveau, Chief Technology Officer, Navel Undersea War Center and thanked departing members Arthur Klein and Richard Nadolink for their dedicated service, guidance and contributions over the years.

Dr. Briant also introduced Dr. David Farmer, Dean of the Graduate School of Oceanography at the University of Rhode Island as the new STAC Co-Chair. Dr. Farmer replaces Dr. Seemann who will be relocating to Texas to become Vice President for Research at Texas A&M. Dr. Seemann will remain a member of the Council and fill a seat vacated by Paul Choquette. Dr. Briant also thanked Mr. Choquette for his dedicated service, guidance and contributions to the Council. The Governor thanked Dr. Seemann for his service to the state. Dr. Seemann stated it has been an exciting time period for science in Rhode Island and he looks forward to having the opportunity to continue to contribute to the work of STAC.

Approval of Minutes

Citing no changes, upon a motion duly made by Dr. Rockett and seconded by Dr. Babineau the minutes of the October 7, 2008 STAC meeting were accepted. Citing no changes, upon a motion duly made by Ms. Hall and seconded by Dr. Babineau the minutes of the January 28, 2009 STAC meeting were accepted. It was noted for the record that as there was no quorum for the January meeting and that the session was held as an information session and no business was conducted.

Public-Private Partnerships

Dr. Briant then introduced Dr. Nicholas Bowen, the Vice President of Technology at IBM. Dr. Bowen is responsible in driving the Technology Team, a group that reports to the Chairman of IBM, on technology strategy and business opportunities for the company. IBM has been working for over the past year with a number of Rhode Island stakeholders (government, universities, schools, hospitals, non-profit corporations, businesses, and other partners) to identify how they could work together to use high performance computing to address huge inefficiencies in energy usage, performance and storage. The project will focus on the creation of a green shared data center and will create an opportunity for a fundamentally new relationship between government, industry, and universities.

URI Commission for Research and Innovation

Dr. Farmer introduced URI Commission Chair Robert Flanders who presented a status report on the work of the Commission's Implementation Committee. In its report, the URI Commission urged state leadership to commit to making bold changes required to create the conditions necessary to significantly enhance research and innovation capacity at URI. The primary recommendation was the recruitment of a new President with demonstrated experience in building university-based research capacity, and who is capable of leading a transformative change effort at URI. The selection of Dr. David Dooley as the new URI president has met this goal. As the provost and vice president of academic affairs at Montana State University in Bozeman, Montana, Dr. Dooley has been a central figure in attracting research dollars to the school, championing research funding and helping to double that budget to \$100 million during his tenure. The university is now ranked among the top tier of research universities as classified by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. While expanding the research mission at Montana State, he has also worked with and supported the teaching responsibilities of faculty and promoted student success and has demonstrated a strong record in managing and overseeing technology transfer.

In the coming year, the Implementation Committee will work with Dr. Dooley to focus on the needed administrative and financial changes as the next step in implementation of our recommendations.

Status Report on EPSCoR Grant

Dr. Farmer next asked Dr. Seemann to update the Council on the status of our current NSF EPSCoR grant. Dr. Seemann reported that the Rhode Island had just completed year three of a \$6.75M three-year grant from NSF to help build our research infrastructure and to develop statewide programs for student training and outreach. The focus areas of the grant are genomics, proteomics and marine life sciences. Over the past three years, Rhode Island has made major strides in strengthening its statewide research platform with the addition of core facilities in these project areas. The federal funding has been leveraged by the annual investment of \$1.5M per year in state funding.

In the coming year (FY10), Rhode Island has been awarded bridge funding while its application for a 5-year \$20 million renewal grant award is reviewed. As the newly-appointed PI for the EPSCoR grant, Dr. Alfonso will lead the development and writing of the renewal grant. As part of the application process STAC will assist in the completion of a State Science and Technology Plan that establishes statewide goals and objectives and provides a framework to guide the state's utilization of resources.

New Business

There was no new business.

Adjournment

There being no further business in Public Session, upon a motion duly made by Dr. Corriveau and seconded by Dr. Seemann, the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Christine M.B. Smith
Secretary