

Commonwealth Health Research Board  
Meeting Minutes for December 5, 2024  
DRAFT

**Members in Attendance:**

**Members Absent:**

**In-Person**

Robert Downs, Jr., M.D., Chair  
Francis Farrell, Ph.D., Vice Chair  
Thomas Eppes, Jr., M.D.  
Tony Seupaul, M.D.

**Via WebEx Videoconferencing:**

Neelam Azad, Ph.D.  
Andrew Kohler, M.D.  
Ethlyn McQueen-Gibson, DNP, RN

**Others in Attendance:**

**Others in Attendance:**

**Scientific Consultants**

**Office of the Attorney General Representative**

**In-Person**

Arnold Revzin, Ph.D.  
Chuck Selden, Ph.D.

Robert Claiborne, Jr.

**Via WebEx Videoconferencing:**

Raya Mandler, Ph.D.  
Merrill Mitler, Ph.D.

**Call to Order:**

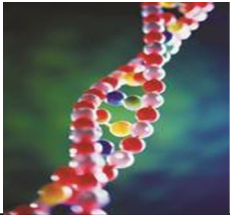
Chair, Robert Downs, Jr., M.D., called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. The meeting was held at the 101 N. 14<sup>th</sup> Street, James Monroe Building, in the Department of Accounts' George Washington Conference Room. A quorum was present for the transaction of business throughout the meeting.

**Approval of May 2, 2024 CHRB Meeting Minutes**

Administrator Pace stated that an edit was required to the May 2, 2024 meeting minutes as follows:

Page 5 under the heading, Recommendations for Second-Year Funding should exclude #274-05-22 Tang as second year funding was previously approved by CHRB Chair, Robert Downs, Jr., M.D. on November 9, 2023.

Chair Robert Downs, Jr., M.D. moved to approve the minutes of the May 2, 2024 meeting with the following change provided by Administrator Pace. Dr. Seupaul seconded the motion. The motion was voted upon and passed unanimously.



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**Virginia Retirement System (VRS) Financial Reports**

Administrator Sprouse provided the Activity Report for FY 2024/2025 with a CHRF balance of \$50,229,935 through September 30, 2024. [Source of document: VRS Finance Division] A copy of the VRS Investments report for the quarter ending June 30, 2024 was also provided which provides more detail on the total VRS fund performance and asset allocation.

**CHRB Financial Reports**

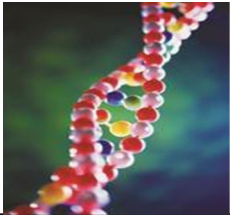
Administrator Sprouse provided the Board with FY 2023/2024 FINAL administrative and grant expenses through June 30, 2023 and FY 2023/2024 YTD through October 31, 2024: [Per the Commonwealth’s CARDINAL accounting system]

**FINAL FY 2023/2024 (July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024)  
CHRB Administrative & Grants Expenses**

**FY 2023/2024 Revenue and Cash Balance**

CHRB Revenue and Cash Balance as of June 30, 2024	<b>\$ 450,246.50</b>
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<b>FY 2023/2024 Approved Budget</b>	<b>Approved</b>	<b>FINAL Expenses as of June 30, 2024</b>
Administrative	\$550,723.78	\$512,654.14
Grants	\$1,541,750.00	\$1,608,869.62
Total	\$2,092,473.78	\$2,121,523.76



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**Year-to-Date 2024/2025 (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025)  
CHRB Administrative & Grants Expenses through October 31, 2024**

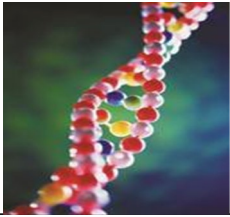
**FY 2024/2025 Revenue and Cash Balance**

CHRB Revenue and Cash Balance as of October 31, 2024	<b>\$ 692,286.73</b>
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**FY 2024/2025 Year to Date (YTD) Expenses**

FY 2024/2025 Approved Budget	Approved	YTD Expenses as of October 31, 2024
Administrative	\$585,814.61	\$148,299.87
Grants	\$1,431,173.00	\$1,417,331.28
Total	\$2,016,987.61	\$1,565,631.15

Administrator Sprouse stated that the significant cash balance is related to approval of no-cost extensions for ongoing grant awards. Although funds have been transferred to the Commonwealth Health Research Fund (CHRF), the funds have not yet been distributed due to these extensions, some for up to 12-months.



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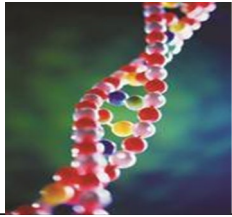
**Grant Funding Available for FY 2024/2025 CHRБ Grant Awards and Commonwealth Accounting and Financial Reporting (CAFR)**

Per the *Code of Virginia* § 32.1-162.28 E. : An amount not to exceed six percent of the moving average of the market value of the Fund calculated over the previous five years or since inception, whichever is shorter, on a one-year delayed basis, net of any administrative fee assessed pursuant to subsection E of § 51.1-124.36, may be expended in a calendar year for any purpose permitted by this chapter.

Administrator Sprouse provided updates regarding grant funding available for 2025/2026 Grant Awards:

Funds available for 2025 Grant Awards			
Calendar Year		Market Value as of 12/31/xx	
January 1 - December 31, 2019	Year 1	\$40,977,689.88	Source: VRS Finance Division Activity Report through December 31, 2019
January 1 - December 31, 2020	Year 2	\$43,250,731.05	Source: VRS Finance Division Activity Report through December 31, 2020
January 1 - December 31, 2021	Year 3	\$49,253,068.01	Source: VRS Finance Division Activity Report through December 31, 2021
January 1 - December 31, 2022	Year 4	\$45,642,877.03	Source: VRS Finance Division Activity Report through December 31, 2022
January 1 - December 31, 2023	Year 5	\$47,924,262.66	Source: VRS Finance Division Activity Report through December 31, 2023
	Total	\$227,048,628.63	
	Average Market Value	\$45,409,725.73	
Funds available for 2025 grants based on 5% of the average market value	5.00%	\$2,270,486	

Estimated grant funding and funding scenarios for FY 2025/2026 grant awards, ranging from 4% to 6%, was also provided to the members.



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**CLOSED SESSION: FY 2024/2025 CHRBR Grant Process**

**MOTION**

Dr. Farrell moved that the Board go into closed session in accordance with the provisions of Sections 2.2-3711 (A)(8), 2.2-3711(A)(30), and 2.2-3705.6 (17) of the Code of Virginia, for the purpose of:

Consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by the Board regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel regarding:

Information relating to a grant or loan application, or accompanying a grant or loan application, to the Commonwealth Health Research Board because disclosure of such information would (i) reveal proprietary business or research-related information produced or collected by the applicant in the conduct of or as a result of study or research on medical, rehabilitative, scientific, technical, technological, or scholarly issues, when such information has not been publicly released, published, copyrighted, or patented, and (ii) be harmful to the competitive position of the applicant. Virginia Code § 2.2-3705.6 (17).

Thomas Eppes, Jr., M.D. seconded the motion; which was voted upon and approved unanimously.

Dr. Farrell moved that the Board reconvene in open session. Thomas Eppes, Jr., M.D. seconded the motion. The motion was voted upon and passed unanimously. The Board adopted the following resolution by roll-call vote.

**CERTIFICATION** (After closed meeting; roll-call vote)

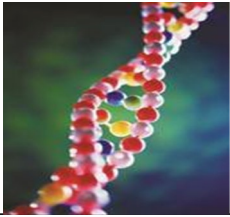
Dr. Farrell moved, and Thomas Eppes, Jr., M.D. seconded, the adoption of the following resolution:

**WHEREAS**, the Commonwealth Health Research Board has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of The Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

**WHEREAS**, Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by this Board that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Commonwealth Health Research Board certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the Board.

A roll-call vote of members present approved this resolution unanimously.



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Thomas Eppes, Jr., M.D. made a motion that 24 Concept Papers be developed into Full Proposals. Dr. Seupaul seconded the motion. The motion was voted upon and passed unanimously. Administrators Sprouse and Pace will contact these 24 Principal Investigators regarding the CHRB's request for a Full Proposal submission with additional guidance and instructions. Administrators Sprouse and Pace will also provide reviewer comments to those Principal Investigators from whom Full Proposal submissions will not be requested.

**CLOSED SESSION: Consultation with Legal Counsel regarding a Personnel Matter**

**MOTION**

Dr. Farrell moved that the Board go into closed session in accordance with the provisions of Sections 2.2-3711 (A)(8), and 2.2-3711(A)(1) of the Code of Virginia, for the purpose of

Consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by the Board regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel regarding: legislation pursuant to Virginia Code § 2.2-3711(A)(1).

Thomas Eppes, Jr., M.D. seconded the motion; which was voted upon and approved unanimously.

**CERTIFICATION** (After closed meeting; roll-call vote)

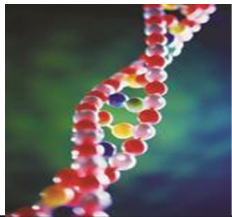
Dr. Farrell moved, and Thomas Eppes, Jr., M.D. seconded, the adoption of the following resolution:

**WHEREAS**, the Commonwealth Health Research Board has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of The Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

**WHEREAS**, Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by this Board that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Commonwealth Health Research Board certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the Board.

A roll-call vote of members present approved this resolution unanimously.



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As a result of the discussion during the closed session, Dr. Farrell made a motion that the Board delegate authority to CHRB Chair Robert Downs, Jr., M.D. and the CHRB Administrators to monitor the Governor's Budget Bill and to take any necessary action to work with legislative issues for the upcoming General Assembly session. Dr. Seupaul seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

### Other Business to come before the Board:

#### Proposed changes to CHRB Policies and Procedures related to:

Administrator Pace, in collaboration with Administrator Sprouse, proposed two changes to the CHRB Policies and Procedures, both to be effective January 1, 2025:

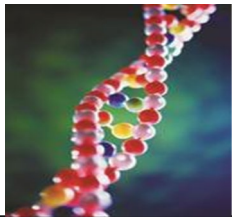
#### **A proposed change in the Institutional Official:**

If, during a grant period, a change in the Grantee Institution's or Grantee Organization's Institutional Official or authorized representative is anticipated, or if a Grantee Institution or Grantee Organization withdraws his or her authority to act on its behalf, or to make legally binding agreements upon its behalf, the Grantee Institution or Grantee Organization will so advise the CHRB in writing at least five business days before the anticipated change.

If prior notice is not possible, the Grantee Institution or Grantee Organization must so advise the CHRB in writing no later than 4:00 p.m. of the business day following the change. The Grantee Institution or Grantee Organization must provide the CHRB with a new letter of authorization for the new Institutional Official and/or authorized representative. ~~and an Addendum to the original grant agreement signed by the Principal Investigator and co-signed by the appropriate Institutional Official or the Organization's authorized representative utilizing electronic signatures.~~ The letter of authorization ~~and the endorsed addendum to the original grant agreement~~ must be provided to the CHRB no later than 4:00 p.m. of the business day following the first day the new Institutional Official, or authorized representative, serves the Grantee Institution or Grantee Organization in that capacity.

Currently, the CHRB Policies and Procedures require an addendum if there is a change in the Grantee Institution's or Grantee Organization's Institutional Official or authorized representative. However, based upon a review by our legal counsel, "CHRB could eliminate or narrow the circumstances where an addendum would be required by a change in institutional official/authorized representative." (Email dated July 23, 2024)

Approval of this change will result in greater efficiencies for the CHRB Administrator as an Addendum will not be required to document changes in the institutional official or authorized representative when an official letter from the Grantee Institution or Grantee Organization will suffice.



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### **A proposed change in the request for a No-Cost Extension:**

Requests for Grant Extensions Pursuant to a compelling justification, the CHRB Chair, after consultation with the CHRB Administrator and at least one of the scientific consultants, may permit an extension, for up to 12 months to complete the project without the CHRB's providing any additional funds.

Any extension request for up to a 12-month period must be made in writing by the Principal Investigator, and co-signed by the appropriate Institutional Official, i.e. the Director of the Office of Research or Office of Sponsored Programs, or the Organization's authorized representative, and received by the CHRB Administrator at least 30 days prior to the original deadline from which the extension is requested. The request must provide justification for the extension **along with a proposed detailed budget for the period of the no-cost extension**. Extensions are not granted merely because the Principal Investigator has unexpended funds.

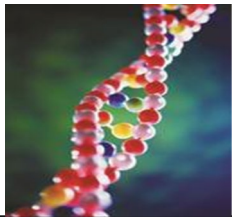
Decisions regarding requests for up to 12-month, no-cost grant extensions are communicated in writing by the CHRB Chair to the PI and the appropriate Institutional Official or Organization's authorized representative within 14 business days [excluding state holidays] of the CHRB Administrator's receipt of the written extension request. Decisions regarding any requests for up to 12-month, no-cost grant extensions are solely within the CHRB Chair's discretion and are final.

Approval of any no-cost grant extension will require an Addendum to the original grant agreement utilizing electronic signatures by the Principal Investigator and co-signed by the appropriate Institutional Official or the Organization's authorized representative. The CHRB requires that the same level of effort will continue for all project participants during the no-cost extension period unless a budget reallocation or other change has been approved as part of the no-cost extension.

Approval of this additional wording will document current practice in that the CHRB Administrators are already requesting a detailed budget for the no-cost extension period. Often, the most recent budget/expense information is not readily available when the no-cost extension is requested, and this is important information to have when making decisions regarding the no-cost extensions. In a small number of requests, the PI is requesting significant funds to be reallocated from nonpersonnel funds to personnel funds.

Thomas Eppes, Jr., M.D. made a motion to approve both proposed changes with a second by Dr. Seupaul. The motion was approved unanimously.





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### **Update on CHRB Evaluation and Leveraged Funding:**

Administrator Pace provided a brief overview of the CHRB Evaluation and Leveraged Funding efforts. Life-to-date awards total \$26.6 million for 306 grant awards. As a result of the initial grant awards, CHRB grant recipients have leveraged approximately \$93 million. This document also provides a history of the CHRB, specific accomplishments of the CHRB and how the CHRB measures success.

### **CHRB participation in Virginia Catalyst's Grant Round 17 Proposed CHRB participation in Virginia Catalyst's Grant Round 18:**

Administrator Pace gave a brief overview of the CHRB's participation in the Virginia Catalyst's Grant Round 17 and proposed participation in Virginia Catalyst's upcoming Grant Rounds 18.

### **Annual Financial Disclosure Forms due by February 1, 2025:**

The Virginia Conflict of Interest and Ethics Advisory Council has issued a reminder regarding the requirement that each of the CHRB's members submit an annual financial disclosure form. All disclosures must be submitted electronically through the on-line filing system. Administrator Sprouse will coordinate this process with the members.

### **VASEM Annual Summit notes:**

Administrator Sprouse gave a brief overview of her attendance at the Virginia Academy of Science, Engineering, and Medicine (VASEM) Annual Summit in October 2024. The most recent summit discussed "Bridging the Gap: Charting the Future of Sustainable Energy in Virginia". Administrator Sprouse will monitor VASEM communications for potential future topics relevant to the CHRB.

### **Next Meeting:**

Dr. Downs moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Francis Farrell, Ph.D., voted upon, and passed unanimously by the Board. The meeting adjourned at 12:55 p.m.

The Board's next meeting is planned for Thursday, March 27, 2025 at the James Monroe Building, 101 N. 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Department of Accounts, Richmond, Virginia 23219. The meeting will begin promptly at 10:00 a.m. At this meeting, as part of the 2025/2026 grant review process, the Board will review the recommendations of the review panel and determine which Full Proposals should be presented to the Board.

For planning purposes, please note that presentations to the Board are scheduled for Thursday, May 1, 2025 at the James Monroe Building, 101 N. 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Department of Accounts, Richmond, Virginia 23219. Depending on the number of scheduled presentations, the start time may be earlier than 10:00 am.