

Boston University Medical Campus

Community Liaison Committee (CLC)

National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratories (NEIDL)

MEETING NOTES

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

9:00 am. * 620 Albany Street

ATTENDING

Dolly Battle (CLC); Chris Brayton (CLC); Robert Francis (CLC Chairperson); Michael Koza (CLC); Linda Lukas (CLC Co-Chairperson); Kate Vander Wiede (South End News); Jamie Fay, President, Fort Point Associates; Ronald Corley, Associate Director, NEIDL; Kevin Tuohey, Executive Director, Research Compliance, BU; Jack Murphy, Director, NEIDL; Michelle Consalvo, Executive Director, Government and Community Affairs, BU; Raysa Tapia, Director, Community Outreach, BU

ADMINISTRATIVE

Minutes of the October 18, 2011 meeting and an agenda developed by the CLC on the November 15, 2011 conference call were distributed.

The November 15, 2011 conference call was attended by all six members of the CLC and Kevin Tuohey from BU. On that conference call:

- Jim Keeney and Chris Brayton reported on the presentation to Blackstone/Franklin Square Neighborhood Association on November 8, 2011. The presentation addressed community benefit and the safety features constructed into the NEIDL and attendees expressed interest in hearing about training and precautions to prevent mistakes or to deliberately sabotage research.
- The CLC agreed that the 12/13 meeting should include discussion on the Blue Ribbon Panel/National Research Council meeting and a status update on the MEPA waiver process and that plans for outreach should be driven by progress on the regulatory front.
- The CLC agreed that the Chairperson should reach out to the South End News to respond to a request to attend CLC meetings and confirmed that the CLC will discuss a request to have meetings made open to the public when it meets in December.

Chairperson Francis began the meeting by asking all attendees to introduce themselves and asked if there were any comments on the October 18, 2011 minutes that were previously approved via e-mail.

REGULATORY

Jamie Fay talked about the November 2, 2011 meeting where the Risk Assessment was presented to both the National Research Council (NRC) and the NIH Blue Ribbon Panel by the Tetra Tech team performing that work. Fay reported that that meeting was positive and productive and that the work was moving forward.

Fay also reported on the status of the request for a waiver to allow BSL-2 and BSL-3 research that had been submitted to the MA Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. Fay reported that the response was to allow BSL-2 work and that decision is not final yet as it is a public comment period.

Francis asked about the work with Tuberculosis that BU proposes doing in the NEIDL and asked for examples of how that could be done at BSL-2 and what concerns would move it to BSL-3 or BSL-4.

Murphy described the differences in risk, potential for exposure and availability of treatment as they relate to different biosafety levels.

CLC members asked why the process for requesting a waiver had not been done sooner and suggested that the phased approach may be very effective in assuring the community of a safe operation. BU representatives agreed and replied that in hindsight it may have been a better approach.

Kozu asked if BU was in the process of submitting for approvals to operate the lab. Murphy described how the lab would be opened level by biosafety level due to training and competency requirements and would be done so in concert with permitting needs. Tuohey described the permit process that is currently followed for BSL-3 labs and reported that BU could not submit for permits until the building is approved for use. Both responses reflect an approach that does not warrant submitting for approvals for higher level research at this time.

Battle suggested moving the process forward step by step one level at a time and to ensure that the issues the community is concerned about be addressed. Murphy responded that it is essential that those levels of confidence be earned from regulators, peers and the community.

OPERATIONS

Murphy presented an organizational chart reflecting revisions to the NEIDL structure emphasizing safety and providing a more flattened organization. Murphy described the how the role of Associate Directors is to work collaboratively to design both administrative and scientific operations and how they interact.

Murphy provided an example of the significance of these changes by describing a group that includes him and representatives of safety, facilities management and research who will meet daily to review and ensure that all safety requirements are in place. This group will not allow operations to proceed without consensus and any one member can veto the operation of labs based on a safety concern.

Francis asked how that or other kinds of events would be reported to the CLC Murphy replied that it would be reported, would be a subject of discussion at meetings, and would be addressed in meeting minutes such as the CLC and Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) minutes.

The CLC discussed the request for permitting public access to meetings. The discussion centered on maintaining the effectiveness of meetings while ensuring transparency and managing productivity. CLC members expressed support for permitting public access to meetings but agreed that more discussion needs to take place on the structure of such meetings and if they should invite community leaders' versus the general public. . The discussion included when and where future meetings might take place., The CLC agreed that they would want to have more discussion and time to discuss the issue of opening meetings Francis suggested that he would appoint a sub-committee to provide recommendations on guidelines and a plan to move forward that would be presented at the January 2012 meeting.

The next CLC meeting is scheduled for January 17 at 9:30 am.

Meeting adjourned at 10:45 am..