

Boston University Medical Campus

Community Liaison Committee (CLC)

National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratories (NEIDL)

MEETING NOTES

TUESDAY JANUARY 29, 2013

6: 00 PM * 620 Albany Street

ATTENDING

Robert Francis, Chairperson, CLC; James Eliscar, CLC; James Keeney, CLC; Kenneth Nwosu, CLC; Valerie Shelley, CLC; Robert Timmerman, CLC; Chayla White, CLC; Matthew White, CLC; Valeda Britton, Executive Director, Community Relations/Medical Campus, BU; Elizabeth Leary, Associate Director, Government and Community Relations, Charles River Campus, BU; John Murphy, Interim Director, NEIDL; Ronald Corley, Associate Director, NEIDL; Kevin Tuohy, Executive Director, Research Compliance, BU; Jamie Fay, Fort Point Associates

ADMINISTRATIVE

Co-chairperson Francis opened the meeting @ 6:10pm. Minutes of December 20, 2012 were approved. He then introduced Ms. Britton.

Ms. Britton announced that the BU Fitness and Wellness Center at the Blackstone Community Center will open on February 1, 2013. President Brown and Mayor Menino will officially open and dedicate the facility during February school vacation week.

BU has been asked to participate in the annual Job Shadow Day sponsored by the Boston Private Industry Council (PIC). Four students from the Boston Public Schools will arrive on the Medical campus on 2/1/13 and shadow professionals from Community Relations, IT, Facilities and Environmental Health and Science.

Ms. Britton reminded the group that a Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Report (SFEIR) filing pursuant to MEPA had been made on 1/9/13 to the Secretary of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA). On or about this time, CLC members received a copy of the SFEIR filing and other relevant documents. She also stated that letters of support could be sent to the Secretary prior to 2/22/13. She handed out sample letters and encouraged CLC members to submit letters if they were comfortable doing so. Members asked that an electronic version be sent out to the members.

To elicit further support for the NEIDL, Mr. Francis encouraged BU to host more community meetings to discuss the NEIDL and its important research. It was suggested that the presentation and slides that Drs. Murphy and Corley gave to the CLC during the December meeting, would be appropriate and well received by community groups, including the neighborhood safety task forces, which Mr. Francis chairs, and board members and personnel at neighborhood health centers. Mr Eliscar supported outreach to church communities. Ms. Shelley suggested that a presentation at the Orchard Gardens tenants meeting should be considered as well as other housing developments.

Mr. Francis then introduced Mr. Jamie Fay from Fort Point Associates to give an overview on the SFEIR filing. Mr. Fay stated that the NEIDL was part of the Biosquare Phase II project that first underwent MEPA review in 2003. In 2004 the Secretary issued a certificate finding that the NEIDL complied with MEPA. Litigation ensued at the state court level and the judge vacated the

Certificate and remanded the matter back to the Secretary for further action. The Secretary issued a Remand Certificate and required that a Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Report (SFEIR) be prepared.

In summary, the SFEIR was created to address the following concerns:

1. Alternative feasible sites for the NEIDL;
2. Evaluate potential public health impacts from a contagious pathogen release, either accidentally or malevolently, at the NEIDL and at the alternative locations;
3. Mitigation measures to avoid or minimize the potential impacts/risks of a release to both laboratory workers and the public.

The SFEIR, filed on 2/9/13, was prepared to comply with court decisions and to respond to Remand Certificate. Public comments must be received by the Secretary no later than 2/22/13. The Secretary will issue a response or certificate on the SFEIR on 3/1/13. Once the certificate is issued, research at BSL-3 and BSL-4 will be allowed to proceed only following receipts of all required federal, state, and local approvals.

In response to a question about the status of the State Court case, Mr. Fay mentioned that it had been on hold pending the completion of the Final Supplementary Risk Assessment, which was published on 7/6/2012 and the SFEIR. If either the plaintiffs or the defendants object to the Secretary's decision on the SFEIR, the Court will decide whether to dismiss the case or continue it.

Mr. Eliscar then asked about evacuation procedures in the event of an outbreak of an infectious disease. He explained that the Cholera epidemic in Haiti had made the Boston Haitian community more concerned about these matters. NEIDL personnel discussed evacuation vs. quarantine/shelter, as well as occupational health plans established to promptly recognize potential exposures and laboratory acquired infections. If an infection occurred, Boston Public Health Commission would be in charge of follow up activities, including determining how to deal with any persons whom the infected lab worker may have come into contact with, with the ultimate goal of minimizing the possibility of secondary infections to researchers and the public. It was also noted that many BSL-2 and BSL-3 pathogens are more contagious than BSL-4 pathogens.

Ms Britton talked about suggested CLC operating guidelines. Topics included the role of CLC members, membership terms of appointment, vacancies, attendance and meeting rules. Mr. Francis asked that Ms Britton email the draft operating guidelines to the members for comment and approval at the next CLC meeting.

Dr Corley gave an update on research at the NEIDL. He stated that researchers continue to do their BSL-2 research fully suited in BSL-4 gear, using this as an opportunity to practice BSL-4 SOPs and test emergency response scenarios.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.