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# **NEW JERSEY COMMISSION ON SCIENCE, INNOVATION, AND TECHNOLOGY**

**December 13, 2019**

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**RUTGERS UNIVERSITY  
WINANTS HALL, 7 COLLEGE AVENUE  
NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ**

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

Members of the Commission present: Public Members Debbie Hart, BioNJ, Vice Chair; David Pascrell, Gibbons, Treasurer; Charlene Brown, AT&T; Dr. Joel Bloom, NJIT; Ex-Officio Members: Commissioner Lamont Repollet of the Dept. of Education; Brian Sabina for CEO Tim Sullivan of the New Jersey Economic Development Authority; Diana Gonzalez for Dr. Zakiya Smith Ellis of the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education; and Non-Voting Members Assemblyman Andrew Zwicker, and Assemblyman Christopher DePhillips.

Members present via conference call: Senator Robert Singer, Non-Voting Member.

Members absent: Chairman Gunjan Doshi, and Non-Voting Members Dr. Robert Barchi, Rutgers University; Dr. Nariman Farvardin, President, Stevens Institute of Technology; and Senator Paul Sarlo, Legislative Member.

Also present: Chris Molloy, Chancellor, Rutgers University; Deputy Attorney General Elizabeth Tillou; Daniel Davidow, Office of the Governor; Kathleen Coviello, Executive Vice President, NJEDA, Fatou Jobe, Project Officer, NJEDA, and Muneerah Sanders, NJEDA.

Staff present via conference call: Danielle Esser, Deputy Chief of Staff, NJEDA.

Members of the Public present – Judith Sheft.

Vice Chair Hart called the meeting to order at 10:00 am with a quorum of the Commission present. Per the Chair's request, Deputy Attorney General Elizabeth Tillou read the Open Public Meetings announcement and performed the roll call of the Commission.

The next item was the approval of the September 27, 2019 minutes. On a motion by Mr. Sabina, and seconded by Dr. Bloom, the minutes were approved by the 6 voting members present.

### **UPDATE FROM HIRING COMMITTEE:**

The Members were presented with the Hiring Committee's recommendation of Judith Sheft for the position of Executive Director of the CSIT with a start date of January 13, 2020. On a motion by Mr. Sabina, and seconded by Dr. Bloom, the motion was approved by the 6 voting members present.

Several members of the Commission welcomed Ms. Sheft to the CSIT, stating that they were excited for her to get started.

Commissioner Repollet entered the meeting at this time.

## **UPDATE FROM THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE ON THE SBIR/STTR PROGRAM:**

### **NEW JERSEY SMALL BUSINESS INNOVATION RESEARCH (SBIR) AND SMALL BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER PROGRAM (STTR) GRANT PROGRAM:**

Ms. Coviello gave a presentation and overview on the New Jersey Small Business Innovation Research, and the Small Business Technology Transfer Grant programs, including the Notices of Funding, proposed evaluation methods and scoring criteria for the programs.

The Members were requested to approve the Notices of Funding for components 1 and 2; the Evaluation Method, and the Scoring Criteria to launch applications for the New Jersey Small Business Innovation Research and the Small Business Technology Transfer Grant programs. On a motion by Dr. Bloom, and seconded by Ms. Brown, the motion was approved by the 7 voting members present.

### **NJ SPARK PROGRAM PROPOSAL:**

Mr. Yair Harel, Executive Director, New Ventures and Commercialization Funding, Rutgers University provided a presentation and overview of the proposed NJ Spark Program. Mr. Harel covered the technology funding mechanisms at Rutgers (TechAdvance), the NJ Innovation Spark Fund concept and goals, as well as the potential process flow, benefits to New Jersey, and to the Evergreen Fund and its venture capitalists.

Mr. Harel stated that the Rutgers Tech Advance fund was in an early stage and seven tech companies have been funded from venture capitalists. Mr. Harel stated that participating universities could leverage the existing Rutgers TechAdvance platform, and potentially have specific projects funded 50/50 by the universities and NJEDA/NJCSIT. Mr. Harel also noted that the NJ Spark Fund could possibly serve as a feeder of investment opportunities for the Evergreen Fund.

Assemblyman Zwicker asked if they proposed funding from the private sector, or potentially from the state. Mr. Harel noted that rather than funding companies, the program is going a step earlier, to prepare research concepts and innovations to become startups. Assemblyman Zwicker stated that it implies that it can be administered from a university setting. Senator Singer urged fellow Commission members to not let the CSIT be purely additional funding for universities, and to ensure that programs are different enough (i.e., primarily supporting companies) or the Commission will risk not having a clear need for consistent funding. Dr. Bloom advised that New Jersey officials should be comparing New Jersey to its peer states, such as Massachusetts and New York that have similar platforms in place.

Mr. Harel discussed the potential process flow, method of identifying reviewers and reviewer compensation. With the Rutgers TechAdvance reviewers, there is a strong preference that the reviewers understand the technology, however; the team of three reviewers per project don't work together on their evaluations. All final TechAdvance funding decisions are made by Rutgers considering the reviewer evaluations.

Mr. Pascrell stated that he agrees with Senator Singer about the need to be able to effectively communicate how the CSIT funds are being programmed and used.



After discussion, the members decided that the NJ Spark program should be developed and reviewed further.

**STAFF UPDATES:**

Chairperson Hart asked NJEDA staff to present on the next agenda item, the request for approval of Directors and Officers Insurance for the CSIT.

Ms. Esser, who was present via conference call, provided an overview of the policies being recommended for the Commission's approval, including a C N A Policy for Property, General Liability and Hired/Non-owned Automobile Liability with an annual premium of \$549.89; and a Chubb Public Officials Liability Policy with an annual premium of \$5,160.78. On a motion by Dr. Bloom, and seconded by Mr. Pascrell, the motion was approved by the 7 voting members present.

The members were presented with a partial 2020 meeting calendar through April of 2020 and advised that they would be approved at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Chairperson Hart asked the members if they had any old business they wished to discuss.

Mr. Sabina stated that the State's Angel Investor Tax Credit Program had expanded from a 10% investment tax credit to 20% investment tax credit with an additional 5% bonus if a business is minority or women owned or located in an Opportunity Zone or New Market Tax Credit Area. He continued that now the work starts to ensure that businesses and investors are aware of the program. He asked the Commission members to publicize on social media, if possible.

Assemblyman DePhillips agreed that it was good to hear about success stories to promote the Commission.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

There was no public comment.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

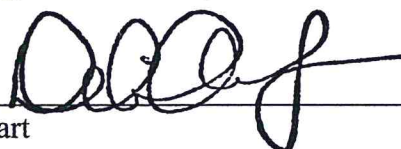
There being no further business, on a motion by Dr. Bloom, and seconded by Mr. Sabina, the meeting was adjourned at 12pm.

**NEXT MEETING DATE:**

The next meeting date for the Commission on Science, Innovation, and Technology was tentatively scheduled for Friday, January 31, 2020 at 10:00 am at NJEDA, Newark.

**CERTIFICATION:**

The foregoing and attachments represent a true and complete summary of the actions taken by the Commission on Science, Innovation, and Technology at its Meeting on December 13, 2019.

  
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Debbie Hart  
Vice Chair