

## **MEETING MINUTES – EXECUTIVE RETREAT 2016**

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MEETING CHAIR:	Dr. Samuel Weiss
MEETING:	Executive Retreat 2016
DATE & TIME:	December 8, 2016, 8:30am – 4:00pm
LOCATION:	Valley Ridge Golf Club
ATTENDEES:	Drs. Samuel Weiss, Keith Sharkey, Cam Teskey, Rajiv Midha, Bev Adams, Wally MacNaughton, Richard Walker, Benedikt Hallgrimsson, Jong Rho, Oury Monchi, Mr. Carlos Arenas, and special guest Dr. Paul Schnetkamp
REGRETS:	Drs. Nathalie Jetté and Keith Dobson
RECORDED BY:	Ms. Brandi Chuchman

### **Year In Review – Dr. Weiss**

Dr. Weiss welcomed the Executive Committee to the HBI 2016 Executive Retreat. This is our annual opportunity to reflect on key issues to continue improving and elevating the Institute. We also hope to achieve increased engagement and have ample opportunity for discussion. Both the leadership group and members of the HBI are a talented group, and we want to continually work to give our researchers and trainees the best opportunities to shine. We will begin with a snapshot of our achievements and progress in 2016.

We are continuing to carry out the goals we set in our 2015 strategic plan. The NeuroTeams launched in 2015, and are progressing extremely well. This year has focused on the launch of the NeuroTechnology Platforms; all four platforms will be approved and launched by the end of the calendar year. The platforms include both clinical and basic science focused technologies, and the human resources essential to the success of applying these platforms to new research questions. We are also working across the campus to engage a wider range of faculties in the Brain and Mental Health research strategy. A Town Hall was held on Nov 21, and funding for the four successful NeuroTeams' interdisciplinary projects were announced by the VP-Research. We are working at the grassroots level to bring more people into the BMH strategy, especially in allied faculties such as Nursing, Social Work, Kinesiology, and the Department of Psychology. We have also begun discussions regarding the launch of an Emerging NeuroTeam in Neurodevelopmental Disorders. This new team will have especially strong interactions with the Mental Health NeuroTeam. While philanthropy adds to our capacity for success, HBI members have been hugely successful at bringing in strong research funding. In 2016, HBI members were awarded nearly 50% of the CIHR research revenues awarded to the University of Calgary.

We are all proud of the prominent role of Education in our Institute. HBI trainees continue to be extremely successful at external funding competitions. We are attracting fantastic students from Canada and abroad, which speaks to the quality of the training program. Dr. Weiss expressed his thanks and kudos to Dr. Teskey for his leadership in these achievements. The REALISE program has been growing in breadth and depth under the leadership of Director Dr. Sarah MacFarlane.

In Community & Partnerships, we are putting increasing emphasis on engaging the lay community in brain and mental health, and we have seen a huge appetite for this engagement with all of our many public engagement events sold out. We are having more examples of research in action, such as the demonstration of the exoskeleton at a donor cultivation event held at Rouge restaurant in September 2016. Dr. Weiss expressed the enormous amount of work required for all of our internal and external events, and gave his kudos and thanks to

the HBI staff members. This year we also launched new fundraising initiatives championed by community members, to help achieve long-term financial sustainability for the Institute.

We continue to work with like-minded international partners. The next joint international symposium will be held at the HBI on May 1-2, 2017 on the topic of epilepsy, in partnership with the University of Melbourne and the Florey Institute. The HBI is also playing a major leadership role in the development of a new Canadian Brain Research Strategy. This strategy would provide value-added investments and a strategic focus to improve Canada's ability to achieve outcomes in brain and mental health, as well as to join the other international brain initiatives that have already been launched.

### **Session 1: HBI Member Leadership and Engagement – Dr. Weiss**

Dr. Weiss led Session 1 on HBI Member Leadership and Engagement. It is important that as an Institute, we remain greater than the sum of our parts. During the HBI's first five years, the institute established the need for stronger alignment between the Institute and the Departments, and adopted a distributed leadership model. These changes helped to allow everybody to feel that they were part of something bigger. Now we ask what we can do to ensure involvement and engagement over the Institute's next 5 years. We have a strong Executive Committee, and a large number of program leaders. However, many of the same people are taking on multiple leadership roles, and these are also the same people who present at donor and partnership meetings, sit on selection and review committees, present at Town Halls, take part in international activities, etc. We want to discuss possible strategies to engage more members, especially young investigators, in learning and Institute leadership – both in the HBI and in Brain and Mental Health. Following this retreat, we hope to have defined action items to increase engagement. Dr. Weiss provided a few example action items to begin discussions. Participating in the institute's events and other activities is a large part of this. Contribution from members to the Institute is equally important as the support the Institute provides to the members.

#### **Session 1 Discussion:**

The committee members agreed this question of engagement is about the spirit of the Institute, not enforcing a 'code of conduct'. Both PIs and trainees tend to be highly selective about what events they attend. But we see huge value in broader participation and awareness of the activities and other research programs. The committee discussed several possible tactics to increase member engagement, ranging from formal leadership training for young investigators, to creating a shared online calendar between the Institute and the Departments, to updates from the NeuroTeams at the Friday Seminar Series. The committee discussed that more senior research leaders have a responsibility to promote the CSM and the Institute in a positive light, and to help mentor the upcoming generation of researchers and trainees. As a next step, we will create a set of proposals that we will bring to the January Executive meeting, including how we would implement these tactics and measure their success.

### **Session 2: Recruitment Strategy – Dr. Weiss**

The goal of Session 2 is to create a strategic plan for how to manage recruitments involving the HBI for the next 5-10 years to ensure sustainability. There were five recruitments completed in 2016 in partnership with multiple Departments and Faculties, and a further 14 positions currently active or to be advertised within the next year. Committee members were provided a comprehensive updated list of current recruitments and their status. Drs. Weiss and Sharkey are personally involved in all of the search and selection committees for these positions. There are an additional three new positions in Psychiatry, in addition to the 3 positions included in the recruitments summary document.

There are numerous considerations beyond salaries for recruitments, including startup funding, space restrictions, time and human resources to sit on selection committees, conduct interviews and site visits, etc., mentorship once they arrive, and properly support the research and grant efforts of the new recruitments. The Institute needs to work with the Departments to be very strategic, and make decisions on what they will and will not be able to support, with a mindset that the future of the Institute is to continue to get better, not necessarily just bigger. We cannot predict all possible future outcomes (such as unexpected departures), but we must develop a sustainable, strategic recruitment plan. This may include greater interaction with other allied Faculties, such as partnerships with Computer Sciences for recruitments in informatics. If a recruitment is not in an area of strategic importance to the Institute, we cannot continue supporting these positions, but we also try very hard to support the recruitment needs of the Departments. The interdisciplinary nature of recruitments is also important moving forward. We want to recruit more researchers who have training in areas such as chemistry, physics, engineering, computer sciences, etc., in addition to neurosciences.

### **Session 2 Discussion:**

The committee discussed possible recruitment models, including pairing clinician and basic scientists, the right balance of protected research time, and an education-focused faculty recruitment stream. All committee members were in agreement that the Institute must become more strategic in its allocation of space, time, and startup funding.

The committee agreed in principle on the following tenants regarding recruitment:

- All recruitments supported by the HBI must contribute to the Institute's strategic plan, other than very exceptional cases.
- Both space and time dedicated to research must be strategically allocated.
- We want to encourage interdisciplinarity amongst all of our recruitments, including backgrounds in the hard sciences (physics, engineering, chemistry, computer science, mathematics).
  - o This may be achieved via co-recruitments with the Faculty of Sciences.
- Education, training and outreach may need to be the significant focus for a small number of recruits, demonstrating to our contributions to knowledge dissemination and engagement.
- A diversity strategy must be included as part of the recruitment strategy.
  - o This may include amending job advertisements to highlight elements of the UCalgary work environment that would make positions more attractive to a wider diversity of hires.

### **Session 3: Current and Future Space Needs – Dr. Sharkey**

To open Session 3, Dr. Sharkey welcomed Dr. Paul Schnetkamp, leader of the CSM Space Committee, and thanked him for attending the Retreat to present on the space usage and needs across the Cumming School of Medicine. Dr. Schnetkamp opened his presentation with the space management policy of the CSM. This includes four main tenants:

1. Institutes will be allocated a footprint that will be periodically reviewed and adjusted based on the priorities of the CSM and on the success of the Institute according to generally agreed principles.
2. The level of research funding and evidence of the need for the space will be important factors in determining the amount of laboratory space that is allocated.
3. Office space is assigned by the Cumming School and is not part of Institute, Centre or Department footprints – though Dr. Schnetkamp noted that office space is usually assigned by Institutes in practice.

4. Not all research space will be allocated to Institutes. Currently, most space is allocated to Institutes except for parts of the HSC basement.

In planning for the CSM 25 recruitments, all Institutes were asked to carry out a space audit. Looking at this data, it appears that we can accommodate all of the CSM 25 recruits. However at that point, the school may be at capacity. The Dean's office is asking Institutes to analyse space utilization. There are a total of 12 recently completed, ongoing, or planned renovation projects across the CSM. The HBI's Healthy Brain Aging Lab renovation is completed, as is ACHRI 2<sup>nd</sup> floor HSC renovation. The biobank in HSC B156 is being renovated to remove the need for freezers in hallways and address health and safety issues. The Snyder Germ-Free Facility in the HSC basement is currently underway – it is approximately 900 square metres, and will be completed by the end of June. In February, the renovation of HMRB 431 for Veterinary Medicine will begin. Beginning in June, the Charbonneau Institute is renovating the 3rd floor east wing of HMRB – this project will significantly influence the HBI's space beneath this floor, including the RUN facility, due to construction noise. A new Genomic Bioinformatics centre will be constructed in HSC 1151, and a Health Informatics centre will likely be located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of TRW. This initiative is led by Dr. Cello Tonelli. The HBI proposal to use part of the HSC basement to develop into an optogenetics and behaviour facility is also being planned. This would eliminate all available space in the basement. The new Cancer Hospital will result in new space, however there are questions regarding the amount of research space that will be available in the hospital. Finally they are also addressing fire code issues in the HSC basement.

Dr. Sharkey thanked Dr. Schnetkamp for his presentation. The committee discussed that an open lab concept, such as that used in the Healthy Brain Aging labs, has the advantage of being able to expand and contract research space of individual PIs as needed. The committee raised the idea of new buildings, however there are no concrete plans. The only location where a building could possibly be added is on top of the McCaig Parkade – there is no other space left on the Foothills campus. The committee also raised that there is a need for a human resources plan and an academic strategy to accompany the bioinformatics and health informatics space planning.

Dr. Sharkey next presented the results of the HBI Space Utilization Study. He noted that no new space above ground is available within the Foothills campus. An incoming new Director for the HBI in the next 3-4 years will further exacerbate the Institute's space needs. The HBI has undertaken a space utilization study. In addition to the need to accommodate new recruitments, there is also a need for space for the expansion of the research programs of highly successful junior investigators. There is additionally an opportunity to approach the Cumming Medical Research Fund again in 2 years for another new program or platform, which would necessitate additional space needs. Data is needed for the Institute and the Departments to work together to assess space usage, and the HBI's space utilization study provides some of this data. The Institute is committed to working together with the Departments to identify creative solutions to our space needs, for the benefit of all members. In the HSC Basement, a new space is available, and the HBI has discussed with Dr. Schnetkamp's office to develop a new facility for optogenetics and animal behavioural studies. However we will lose a small amount of this space to mandatory fire egress routes.

### **Session 3 Discussion:**

The committee discussed additional areas in need of renovation, including the second floor of HSC, and the challenges this space presents. The committee also agreed that it is also important to gain the input of young investigators on these issues. The committee members suggested that there may be benefit in the HBI sharing its space utilization assessment process with the other Institutes, as they could all benefit and possibly present a united proposal to the Dean. The committee also discussed future space needs of the Institute.

## **Closing Remarks**

Dr. Sharkey noted that this is Dr. Teskey's last Executive Retreat in his role as HBI Education Director, and the committee thanked Dr. Teskey for all of his work and support. One of the spring 2017 meetings (March-June) will be focused primarily on Education. The committee briefly discussed opportunities for upcoming education initiatives, including the possibility of collaborating with the Faculty of Science.

Dr. Weiss expressed that this has been a productive retreat because we have focused our conversations on three strategic areas. We now have action items for all three areas – these will be placed in the context of the strategic plan as well as the context of the 2017/18 budget, and presented at the January Executive meeting. The January meeting will also include a critical discussion of the budget. Dr. Weiss expressed his appreciation for the input and support both today and throughout the year from all of the committee members.