The National Deafness and Other Communication Disorders Advisory Council convened on January 27, 2017 in Building 31, Conference Room 6, National Institutes of Health (NIH), Bethesda, MD. Dr. James F. Battey, Jr., Director, National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD), served as Chairperson. In accordance with Public Law 92-463, the meeting was:

Closed: January 27, 2017: 8:30 a.m. to 9:55 a.m. for review of individual grant applications; and Open: January 27, 2017: 10:10 a.m. to 1:45 p.m., for the review and discussion of program development needs and policy.

Council members in Attendance:

Ms. Lisa Adams
Dr. Sarah Blackstone
Dr. Diane Bless
Dr. Susan Ellis-Weismer
Dr. Judith Gierut
Dr. Sue Kinnamon
Dr. David Lee
Dr. M. Charles Liberman
Ms. Nanci Linke-Ellis

Dr. David Myers
Dr. Christoph Schreiner
Dr. Elba Serrano
Dr. H. Steven Sims
Dr. Richard Smith
Dr. Debara Tucci
Dr. Monte Westerfield
Dr. Donald Wilson

Council members absent:

Dr. Jian-Dong Li

Council ex-officio members in Attendance:

Dr. Judy Schaffer for Dr. Lucille Beck

Council ex-officio member(s) absent

Ms. Christa Themann

The complete Council roster is found in Appendix 1.

1For the record, it is noted that members absent themselves from the meeting when the Council is discussing applications (a) from their respective institutions or (b) in which a real or apparent conflict of interest might occur. This procedure applies only to individual discussion of an application and not to "en bloc" actions.
NIDCD employees present during portions of the meeting:

Dr. Kathy Bainbridge
Mr. Jim Burton
Dr. Laura Cole
Dr. Judith Cooper
Dr. Janet Cyr
Ms. Susan Dambrauskas
Mr. Hoai Doan
Dr. Amy Donahue
Dr. Nancy Freeman
Ms. Maria Garcia
Dr. Andy Griffith
Dr. Steven Hirschfeld
Ms. Debbie Holmes
Ms. LaTanya Holmes
Ms. Nikki Howell
Dr. Eliane Lazar-Wesley
Dr. Chuan-Ming Li
Ms. Lonnie Lisle
Dr. Castilla McNamara
Ms. Phalla Messina
Dr. Roger Miller
Dr. Elyssa Monzak
Ms. Kristen Mullsteff
Mr. Eric Nunn
Dr. Amy Poremba
Ms. Lisa Portnoy
Dr. Kausik Ray
Dr. Alberto Rivera-Rentas
Mr. Mark Rotariu
Dr. Elka Scordalakes
Dr. Lana Shekim
Dr. Kathy Shim
Dr. Sheo Singh
Ms. Nanette Stephenson
Dr. Susan Sullivan
Dr. Jean Tiong-Koehler
Dr. Bracie Watson
Ms. Ginger Webb
Mr. Timothy Wheeles
Mr. Baldwin Wong
Dr. Doris Wu
Mr. Chad Wysong
Dr. Shiguang Yang

Other federal employees present during portions of the meeting:

Dr. Biao Tian, CSR
Dr. Nick Gaiano, CSR
Dr. Wind Cowles, CSR
Dr. Ying-Yee Kong, CSR
Dr. Bruce Reed, CSR
Dr. Bill Elwood, OD
Dr. Walter Koroshetz, NINDS
LTC. Kristen Casto, DOD

Members of the public present during open portions of the meeting:

Ms. Kelly Koran, AAA
Dr. Christopher Platt
Ms. Laura Friedman, Hearing Health Foundation
CLOSED SESSION

I. Call to Order and Opening Remarks ............................................ Dr. James F. Battey, Jr.

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Battey, Director, NIDCD, who expressed appreciation to the entire Council for their service and advice.

II. Council Procedures .............................................................................. Dr. Craig A. Jordan

Procedural Matters

Dr. Jordan discussed important procedural matters, including requirements imposed by the Government in the Sunshine Act and the Federal Advisory Committee Act. The necessity of members to avoid conflict of appearance thereof was stressed, as was the need to maintain confidentiality concerning the proceedings and materials related to the closed portion of the meeting. Dr. Jordan announced that the Council meeting would be closed for consideration of grant applications during the morning session, but would be open to the public at approximately 10:00 a.m.

III. Council Consideration of Pending Applications

A. Research Project Grant Awards

1. Consideration of Applications: On the Council’s agenda was a total of 123 investigator-initiated R01 grant applications; 107 applications had primary assignment to NIDCD, in the amount of $34.8 million first-year direct costs. It is anticipated that, of the applications competing at this Council, NIDCD will be able to award grants to R01 applications scoring up through the 13th percentile.

B. Special Programs Actions

1. Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award (NRSA) Institutional Research Training Grant (T32): Council recommended support of top 6 applications.

2. Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award (NRSA) Short-Term Institutional Research Training Grant (T35): Council recommended support of one application.

3. Clinical Investigator Award (K08): The Council recommended support of one application.

4. NIH Mentored Patient-Oriented Research Career Development Award (K23): The Council recommended support of one application.

5. NIH Pathway to Independence Award (K99): The Council recommended support of two applications.

6. NIH Support for Conferences and Scientific Meetings (R13): The Council recommended support of one application.

8. NIH Exploratory/Development Research Grant Award (R21): The Council recommended support of eight applications.

9. NIDCD Early Career Research (ECR) Award (R21): The Council recommended support of thirteen applications

10. NIDCD Clinical Center Research Grant (P50): The Council recommended support of one application.

11. NIH Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Phase I (R41): The Council recommended support for one application.

12. NIH Small Business Innovation Research Awards (SBIR): The Council recommended support for four Phase I (R43) applications.

13. NIH Small Business Innovation Research Awards (SBIR): The Council recommended support for four Phase II (R44) applications.


OPEN SESSION

IV. Opening Remarks ......................................................................................................................... Dr. Battey

Dr. Battey welcomed additional staff and visitors to the open session of the meeting.

Recognition of New Members

Again, it’s my pleasure to welcome and introduce our new members.

- Ms. Lisa Adams is Founding Member and President of the Massachusetts Hearing Aids for Children Coalition and a Legal Decision Writer for the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination. She received her Bachelor degree from the University of Massachusetts and her Law Degree from Suffolk University Law School. Her major professional interests are in the areas of legal issues affecting labor and employment. She was key in the hearing aid legislation in Massachusetts where she helped draft a bill requiring local insurance providers to cover hearing aids for children. Ms. Adams is involved in volunteer work such as Massachusetts A.G. Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing where she serves as Director of Bell’s Kids and a board member. Ms. Adams has held other positions such as a Labor Legal Counselor for state agencies; Contract Attorney; and President, Founding Chapter of Massachusetts Mothers of Twins Association, Inc.

- Dr. Judith Gierut is Professor Emerita at the Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences and Program in Cognitive Science at Indiana University. She received her doctoral degree in Speech and Hearing Sciences from Indiana University. Her research examines children’s acquisition of the phonological system of the native language, with special emphasis on preschoolers who exhibit functional speech sound delays. The work is grounded in linguistic and psycholinguistic theories, and serves as a test case of these models. Participants receive clinical intervention to advance their phonological systems and research outcomes inform the efficacy of clinical treatments. Dr. Gierut has received several research honors
and awards such as Honors, American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) in 2015 and appointment as an ASHA Fellow. She is a member of many professional organizations including ASHA and the International Clinical Phonetics and Linguistics Association. She is published widely and has served on many editorial boards such as Clinical Linguistics and Phonetics. Dr. Gierut is a frequent mentor and has made many presentations at national and international meetings.

- Dr. Susan Ellis-Weismer is the Oros-Bascom Professor of Communication Sciences and Disorders in the Waisman Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She received her doctoral degree in Child Language Development and Disorders from Indiana University. Her research has focused on investigating the developmental course of language processing in typically developing children, late talkers, and children with specific language impairment. Dr. Ellis-Weismer’s recent work has focused on characterizing early language abilities of toddlers on the autism spectrum and examining the overlap between late talkers with and without autism to evaluate the ‘distinct category’ versus ‘dimensional’ accounts of language disorders. Dr. Ellis-Weismer has received many honors including the Honors of the Association, American Speech-Language-Hearing Association in 2013. She is a member of numerous professional organizations including the International Society for Autism Research and is a frequent presenter at national and international meetings. She has a wide array of publications and has served on editorial and peer review boards.

- Ms. Nanci Linke-Ellis is a consultant at Ellis Consultancy and Partner at Captionfish. She is a hearing loss and disability consultant to movie studios, theatres, and the film industry. Ms. Linke-Ellis is an experienced captioning advocate and has interest in projects such as Caption West, an entity to bring live theatre and opera and all forms of captioned entertainment to the deaf and hard of hearing communities. She has formed a new company called SightLine Media along with a group of partners to bring to market an innovative wireless captioning technology designed for deaf and blind audiences. Ms. Linke-Ellis has received various awards such as the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) National 2015 Keystone Award for continued success on behalf of HLAA and People with Hearing Loss and the World Institute on Disability 2014 Media Access Award for her continued efforts on behalf of the hearing loss community. She is a member of many professional organizations including HLAA and the Directors Guild of America. Ms. Linke-Ellis founded the Santa Monica chapter of HLAA and has provided numerous presentations/publications regarding “Accessibility”.

- Dr. H. Steven Sims is Associate Professor at the Department of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery at the University of Illinois Medical Center and Director of the Chicago Institute for Voice Care. He received his medical degree from Yale University School of Medicine. His professional interests include voice and airway disorders and otolaryngology. He has special interest in cough, hoarseness, swallowing disorder and vocal cord paralysis. He is outspoken on issues that impact a person’s ability to use their voice such as vocal fatigue, reflux disease, paralyzed vocal folds, and chronic hoarseness and has treated hundreds of local and national entertainers with voice disorders or injuries. Dr. Sims has received honors and awards such as Chicago Defender, Men of Excellence 2014 and frequent requests to speak on radio and television shows. He is a member of professional organizations including the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery Foundation, Inc., and The Voice Foundation. Dr. Sims is published widely and has made many presentations at national scientific meetings and media venues.
Consideration of Minutes of the Meeting of September 9, 2016

Dr. Battey called the members’ attention to the minutes of the September 9, 2016 meeting of the Advisory Council. The minutes were approved as written.

Confirmation of Dates for Future Council Meetings

Dates for the Council meetings through September 2018 have been established. A list of these meetings was distributed to the Council members and posted on the web site prior to this meeting. The next meeting of the Council is scheduled for Friday, May 19, 2017, in Building 31, Conference Room 6 on the NIH campus, Bethesda, Maryland.

V. Report of the Director, NIDCD ............................................................................. Dr. Battey

Budget Update

Dr. Battey began his presentation by pointing out that the administration has changed and that we await the HHS Secretary’s nomination. There is no certainty about where the budget will go when it is next discussed. The current continuing resolution (CR) expires on April 28.

The House and Senate Appropriations Committees have reported-out bills which would provide significant increases over the President’s request – this is the good news. The other news is that the government will likely begin the next fiscal year under a CR. We remain hopeful that eventually the Congress will enact a budget that includes an increase for NIH and NIDCD. There is much uncertainty about when our annual budget will be determined. The biggest budgetary challenge in FY 2017 for NIDCD is the large increase in noncompeting Research Project Grant (RPG) costs, driven by increased FY 2016 funding for competing RPGs. Consequently, NIDCD is following a conservative path, that allows funding of R01 applications up through the 13th percentile for this Council.

[A copy of the slides Dr. Battey used for this budget presentation is included in Appendix 2.]

Dr. Battey reported that the NIDCD Strategic Plan for 2017-2021 has been finalized and posted. The Plan serves as a guide to identify areas of research opportunity for NIDCD over the next five years. He thanked the Council members who served on the Working Group especially Dr. Charlie Liberman who chaired the Working Group. The URL for the Strategic Plan is: https://www.nidcd.nih.gov/about/strategic-plan/2017-2021

VI. Report of the Director, Division of Scientific Programs .......................Dr. Judith Cooper

Dr. Cooper gave a tribute to Dr. Amy Donahue who is retiring this spring. She noted Dr. Donahue’s accomplishments as the Coordinator for the Hearing and Balance Program, highlighting her exceptional work on behalf of children and adults with hearing loss. She was instrumental in creating model systems for identifying neonatal hearing impairment. She has been a remarkable colleague and friend. In December we honored her with the NIDCD Award of Excellence as a tribute to her career, service, and achievements. We consider this a prestigious award for NIDCD staff members who have made significant contributions to the NIDCD mission. The award recognizes Amy’s “sustained support of the NIDCD mission.”

We will miss Amy very much; please join me in thanking her for her years of service and wishing her all the best.
Dr. Donahue thanked Dr. Cooper for her kind words and recognition. She spoke about NIDCD as a great place to have spent most of her career citing Dr. Battey for his leadership, Dr. Cooper and her fellow Division of Scientific Programs colleagues, and her Scientific Review colleagues both at NIDCD and CSR. A summary quote from her comments was, “It has been my privilege to be part of NIDCD; its honorable mission, committed staff; and a workspace of mutual respect and appreciation.”

VII. BRAIN Initiative Update ............................................................... Dr. Walter J. Koroshetz

Walter Koroshetz is the Director of the National Institute on Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) and serves as one of the Co-Chairs of NIH’s BRAIN Multi-Council Working Group. Dr. Koroshetz accepted our invitation to update the Advisory Council on the BRAIN Initiative, launched by President Obama in 2013.

Dr. Koroshetz provided an analysis of the U.S. Burden of Disease from 2010 with neuropsychiatric disorders having the highest impact on Disability-adjusted life years (DALYs). He illustrated just how big the NIH support of neuroscience research is, when one looks across the many different NIH Institutes and Centers. The high health impact of neuropsychiatric disorders helps to justify the BRAIN Initiative’s focus on circuit structure and function. He recounted progress since the BRAIN Initiative was first announced in April 2013. Seven high priority research areas were identified and have led to multiple Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOAs) and serve to map the investments across time. Current funding has increased, but lags the funding recommendations provided by the Advisory Committee to the Director (ACD) Workgroup. The ACD WG has recommended increasing annual budgets reaching $500M in FY2019. The recently passed 21st Century Cures Act contains funding for the BRAIN Initiative that would help reach those goals.

Currently, over 160 publications have emerged from the NIH Brain Initiative. Dr. Koroshetz highlighted several research projects across areas of language, odor discrimination, rhythmic motor control, 3D neural reconstruction, optoelectrode development, and other exciting developments in imaging and beyond.

The Brain Initiative has spread across the globe with more foreign performance sites each year; more than 20 countries and growing. He highlighted an array of efforts to stimulate interactions across projects, across U.S. funding agencies, and across international efforts. Just one of those efforts is the BRAIN Initiative Alliance which is composed of federal and non-federal members and affiliates. Dr Koroshetz closed with a list of major challenges including:

- Data solutions to serve projects well and enable open data sharing;
- NeuroEthics and societal implications of new technologies;
- Balancing “Big Team Science” vs. individual lab(s) “Discovery Science;”
- Wise integration with EU’s Human Brain Project; and
- Diversifying pool of applicants.

VIII. Report of the Director, Division of Extramural Activities ............................... Dr. Jordan

Dr. Jordan brought the Council Operating Procedures to the group for a vote noting that there were no changes from the 2016 version. Council endorsed the Operating Procedures for another year.

Next, he highlighted two notices impacting the community. The first was NOT-OD-17-002: Adjustment to Stipend Levels for Postdoctoral Trainees and Fellows on Ruth L. Kirschstein
National Research Service Awards (NRSA). The notice provided instructions for requesting one-time supplemental funding to cover the stipend increase for active postdoctoral trainees or fellows with 0, 1, or 2 years of experience as of December 1, 2016. The supplemental request would cover stipend increases from 12/1/16 until the time of award termination or when the FY17 award is issued, whichever comes first. As of 1/19/17, NIDCD has received 21 requests for these supplements and has awarded ~$41K.

The second was NOT-OD-17-022: NIH Implementation of Final Research Progress Reports (Final RPPR). This implementation of this reporting requirement will bring NIH in alignment with other Federal research agencies to provide Project Outcomes at end of each competitive segment. The requirement is being implemented as a new module within the eRA Commons and became effective January 1, 2017. The Final RPPR includes a new requirement to report on Project Outcomes. This section will be made publicly available, similar to the public posting of Project Summary/Abstract already done for all applications. Project Outcomes are to be written for the public in clear, concise, and comprehensible language; suitable for dissemination to the public. When an application is competing for renewal funding (Type 2 application), the Project Outcomes narrative is submitted as part of the Interim-RPPR. Official Guidance on Interim-RPP is available in: NOT-OD-17-037.

IX. Scientific Presentation.................................................................................................................. Dr. Doris Wu

Dr. Doris Wu is the Chief of the Section on Sensory Cell Regeneration and Development in NIDCD’s Division of Intramural Research. One broad goal of her lab’s research is to identify the molecular mechanisms underlying the formation of the inner ear’s complex structure. Dr. Wu accepted our invitation to discuss her research in a presentation entitled “The Making of an Inner Ear.”

The orientation of the stereociliary bundle (hair bundle) on top of sensory hair cells provides directional sensitivity and dictates whether a hair cell can respond to sensory inputs such as sound, head position and water pressure from a given direction. Each hair bundle is comprised of specialized microvilli known as stereocilia that are arranged in a staircase pattern tethered to a single cilium, the kinocilium. Only deflection of the hair bundle towards its kinocilium opens the mechano-transduction channels located on the tips of stereocilia and activates the hair cell. Deflection of the hair bundle away from its kinocilium results in channel closure and hair cell inactivation.

Based on this property of the hair bundle, each sensory organ of the inner ear exhibits a specific pattern of hair bundle orientation that is tailored to its function. Notably, a line of polarity reversal (LPR) exists within the two maculae (vestibular organs of the inner ear), across which hair bundles are oriented in opposite direction to each other. A similar type of hair cell arrangement is observed in the neuromast of the zebrafish lateral line, which functions to detect changes in water pressure. The establishment of this abrupt change in hair bundle polarity in both maculae and neuromasts is not known. Using gene expression analyses and both gain- and loss-of function mutants, our results indicate that the LPR is generated by the transcription factor, Emx2, expressed only in one side of the LPR. Within its expression domain, Emx2 reverses hair bundle polarity by 180 degrees, opposite from hair bundle orientation on the other side of the LPR. This role of Emx2 in reversing hair bundle orientation of sensory hair cells is conserved in neuromasts of zebrafish as well. Our results reveal a key mechanism for establishing the structural basis for directional selectivity in sensory hair cells.

The transcription factor Emx2 is required for establishing stereociliary bundle polarity in sensory hair cells.
Abstract Authors: Tao Jiang\textsuperscript{1,3}, Katie Kindt\textsuperscript{2} and Doris K. Wu\textsuperscript{3}

Author Affiliations: \textsuperscript{1}Program in Neuroscience and Cognitive Science, University of Maryland, College Park, MD, 20742, \textsuperscript{2}Section on Sensory Cell Development, and Function, \textsuperscript{3}Laboratory of Molecular Biology, National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD, 20892

X. \textbf{Double-Loop Learning and Improved Customer Service} \textit{.........Mr. Timothy J. Wheeles}

Mr. Timothy Wheeles is the NIDCD Executive Officer. He accepted our invitation to describe NIDCD’s process that supports the Institute’s many missions/goals. He entitled his talk, “Double-Loop Learning and Improved Customer Service”.

Mr. Wheeles defined the role of the Executive Officer and the Administrative staff of NIDCD as providing great customer service with an eye toward the NIDCD’s scientific mission. That objective is approached through strategic planning, establishing a shared vision with employee engagement, and a process that allows continuous improvement with shared responsibility and accountability. He highlighted the many different administrative components of the Institute and introduced Branch Chiefs responsible for Administrative Services, IT Services, Science Policy & Planning, Communications & Public Liaison, and the Budget Office. The administrative management culture at NIDCD is targeted at creating a learning organization and does this by following some principles of Chris Argyris, a well-respected business theorist. The goal is to have members of the organization reflect on whether the rules/processes themselves should be changed, not only on whether deviations have occurred and how to correct them. This charge to the staff to “Question the operating norms” is the ‘second loop’ that allows an organization to move beyond standard bureaucracy. Staff are challenged to identify recurring problems and fix them now, so that the process improves, even if only incrementally. Mr. Wheeles described and gave examples of several of tools that are used to reach these goals including the NIDCD Administrative Strategic Plan, Management and Leadership Training, Flow Charting Processes, Data Dashboard development, and Project Planning/Tracking tools. The Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) is another tool that he highlighted, showing that NIDCD staff are highly engaged and highly satisfied with their jobs and their organization. The FEVS is used annually to help identify and target areas for organizational improvement. Maintaining engaged and productive NIDCD staff is always an important goal, even more so now in the face of significant leadership changes at NIDCD, the NIH, and the higher administration.

Next, Mr. Wheeles introduced Mark Rotariu, the NIDCD Budget Officer. He thanked Mr. Rotariu for his years of exceptional service, announced that he would be retiring in the next few months, and asked him to provide a brief budget retrospective.

Mr. Rotariu chronicled the NIDCD’s budget over the years of 2003 through 2016. Those years were impacted by three major budgetary events: the NIH doubling (1999-2003), the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, and the Sequestration in 2013. He provided graphs to demonstrate the impact on current dollars, constant dollars, grant application numbers, grant awards, and the success rate. He closed his presentation by pointing out all the change that is impacting the future NIH and NIDCD budgets including: new President, new Secretary HHS, new Director of OMB, new Congress and Committee/Subcommittee Members. His prediction is that it will likely take a full budget cycle for these changes to settle in and reveal the future level of support that will exist for the NIH Budget.
XI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m. on January 27, 2017.
XII. Certification of Minutes

We certify that, to the best of our knowledge, the foregoing minutes and attachments are accurate and correct.

4/7/2017 /Craig A. Jordan/
Craig A. Jordan, Ph.D.
Executive Secretary
National Deafness and Other Communication Disorders Advisory Council

4/7/2017 /James F. Battey, Jr./
James F. Battey, Jr., M.D., Ph.D.
Chairman
National Deafness and Other Communication Disorders Advisory Council

Director
National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders

Ginger Webb
Council Assistant
NDCD Advisory Council

2 These minutes will be approved formally by the Council at the next meeting on May 19, 2017, and corrections or notations will be stated in the minutes of that meeting.
APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1  NIDCD Advisory Council Roster ................................................................. 12
APPENDIX 2  NIDCD Director’s Report Slides ............................................................... 14
Roster

National Deafness and Other Communication Disorders Advisory Council
(Terms end on 5/31 of the designated year)

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Executive Secretary

JORDAN, Craig A., Ph.D.
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COLLINS, Francis S., Ph.D., M.D.
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NIDCD Director’s Budget

James F. Battey, Jr., M.D., Ph.D.
NIDCD Advisory Council Meeting
January 27, 2017
National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders
January 2017 Council
FY 2017 Budget Levels

**FY 2016:**
Operating Level $422,350,505 *

**FY 2017:**
President’s Budget Request $422,936,000
House Appropriations Bill $434,126,000 **
Senate Appropriations Bill $441,778,000 **
Continuing Resolution – annualized $421,256,000 ***

* Reflects Secretary’s transfer of $585,495.
** As reported-out by the Full Appropriations Committee.
*** Reflects Secretary’s transfer of $971,000. CR expires on April 28, 2017.