

**New Mexico Bioscience Authority (BSA) Board of Directors  
Regular Meeting  
September 21, 2023, 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM  
317 Commercial St. NE, Suite 311, Albuquerque, NM**

**Present:** Dale Dekker (Chair), Greg Byrnes, Dana Catron, Tom Kieft, Paul Laur, Francisco Pallares, David Perkins, Nora Sackett, Tanner Schaub, Prisca Tiasse

**Absent:** Christos Christodoulou

**Staff Present:** Stephanie Tofighi, Sterling Nichols, Ryan Cangiolosi, Anne Laure Schmitt-Olivier

#	Agenda Items	Board Actions
1.	Call to order and Confirmation of Quorum	The Chair called the meeting to order at 11:30 AM. A quorum was confirmed.
2.	Approval of Minutes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aug 17<sup>th</sup>, BOD Meeting</li> </ul>	<p>The Chair called for a motion to approve the August 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting minutes.</p> <p>A motion was made by Francisco Pallares to approve the minutes with a second from Nora Sackett.</p> <p>A roll call vote of all board members was called with nine in the affirmative, none in opposition, one in abstention and one absent. The vote was as follows:</p> <p>Byrnes-Affirm, Catron-Abstain, Christodoulou-Absent, Dekker-Affirm, Kieft-Affirm, Laur-Affirm, Pallares-Affirm, Perkins-Affirm, Sackett-Affirm, Schaub-Affirm, Tiasse-Affirm</p>
3.	Announcements and Chair's Report	<p><b><u>Chair's Report: September</u></b></p> <p>The Chair stated that there has been an increase in investment and promotional activity in New Mexico for the month of September. The Chair made a point to recognize former NMBSA board member Stuart Rose who currently serves as a venture partner at Tramway Ventures, a Life Sciences focused Venture Capital firm based in</p>

Albuquerque. Rose and the Tramway team were able to acquire a \$40 Million commitment from the State Investment Council (SIC) to allow more venture capital available to New Mexico Bioscience companies. The Chair also recognized Spaceport America of New Mexico for its promotional efforts in completing a recent launch into outer space that was successful. In the near future, The Chair proposed to host a New Mexico Bio Science Authority (NMBSA) board meeting at Spaceport of America with the permission of Francisco Pallares, who is the Business Development Director at Spaceport and also sits on the board of the NMBSA.

The Chair then opened the floor for NMBSA Director Paul Laur to provide an update on the new developments at Mercury Bio of Santa Fe given the recent announcement of their receipt of the Ben Luján Award.

**Mercury Bio of Santa Fe**

Director Laur who serves as the Chief Operating Officer of Mercury Bio said they had received the Ben Lujan award from the New Mexico Small Business Assistance program for having the best project between Los Alamos and Sandia National Labs. Laur said it was a project conducted in the previous year that utilized the lab’s machine learning and computational science division to write algorithms that predict the geometry of small interfering Ribonucleic Acids (RNA’s) which silence genes. Mercury Bio has been working on silencing these essential genes in the SARS Covid-2 Virus. This technology has existed for 25 years and is now being used considering the mRNA vaccines that Pfizer and Moderna developed who are pushing the technology forward. Laur said that Mercury Bio has introduced the technology to the public by presenting to the **mRNA-Based Therapeutic Summit in Boston**; July 26-27. At the summit, all of the major pharmaceutical companies were in attendance who expressed enthusiasm, along with attendees, for the various RNA therapeutics. Laur concluded stating he thinks Mercury Bio is in the right place at the right time as the company is going through a Series A Round of funding while hiring three new scientists and a facility expansion at the Santa Fe Business Incubator.

		<p>Following the update on Mercury Bio, The Chair welcomed remarks from NMBSA Director Nora Sackett regarding the New Mexico Economic Development Department’s (EDD) recent announcement of the expansion of the Science and Technology Office.</p> <p><b><u>EDD’s expansion for Science and Technology Office</u></b></p> <p>Director Sackett informed the BOD that the EDD is exited to expand the capacity of the office. In the past, she said, the Science and Technology Office was a team of multiple people, but in recent years, the office was reduced to one person following the succession of a few administrations. Sackett, said that the department is happy to return to its former capacity having multiple staff. Sackett said Jeff Hall, formerly of the New Mexico Small Business Assistance Program, will serve as the Program Coordinator as he is well connected within the Science and Technology Ecosystem. The Science and Technology Office is also in search of an Entrepreneurship Coordinator who will offer services to any industry and serve as first point of contact for any New Mexico Entrepreneur seeking resource information. Sackett made a point to emphasize that out of the nine target industries in the EDD’s development plan, five will be from the Office of Science and Technology.</p> <p>Before conclusion of the Announcements and Chair’s Report, new NMBSA board member Dana Catron made a brief introduction to the BOD.</p> <p><b><u>Dana Catron</u></b></p> <p>Catron is the Deputy Director at New Mexico State University’s Arrowhead Center. Catron’s background is in Animal Science with a focus in Bovine Genomics and in Rhetoric and Professional Communication. Catron’s membership on the board will provide insight on some of NMSU Arrowhead’s programs involving Incubators and Accelerators as well as their activities that relate to bioscience. Catron currently serves on the Advisory Committee of the University of New Mexico ASCEND</p>
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		<p>Initiative. Catron expressed her enthusiasm to serve on the board.</p> <p>Following Dana Catron’s introduction to the BOD, the Chair thanked Executive Director Stephanie Tofighi for her efforts to establish an increased Social Media Presence on LinkedIn and Facebook which makes the BSA a part of the social media ecosystem that connects entrepreneurs, businesses, people and other entities throughout the state.</p> <p>The Chair concluded his report.</p>
4.	Executive Director’s Report	<p>Executive Director Stephanie Tofighi provided an update on the following for the September Executive Director Report:</p> <p><b><u>NMBSA Intellectual Property Specialist</u></b></p> <p>Executive Director (ED) Tofighi announced the recent hire of Intellectual Property Specialist Anne Laure Schmitt Olivier. Olivier comes to the BSA as a joint hire between the University of New Mexico’s (UNM) Vice President For Research Office, UNM Provost Office and the Health Sciences Center Vice President For Research Office. 30% of her time will be committed to working with the BSA.</p> <p>Olivier recently relocated to New Mexico from Miami. Olivier’s expertise is in Intellectual Properties in which she has worked for the last seven years. Olivier also holds a Master’s Degree in Chemistry.</p> <p>ED Tofighi said Olivier’s hire arrives at the most opportune time as the BSA is scheduled to be awarded funding for the Small Business Administration (SBA) Stage 2 Growth Accelerator Fund Competition. Olivier will provide support in the creation of the planned rural ecosystem for the SBA Stage 2 Growth Accelerator competition.</p> <p><b><u>Rural New Mexico Biotech Ecosystem Kickoff Meeting</u></b></p> <p>ED Tofighi announced that the Rural NM Biotech Ecosystem Kickoff Meeting is scheduled for November 3,</p>

		<p>2023 in Socorro, New Mexico with a possible planned tour of Spaceport America following the Kickoff Meeting.</p> <p>The Rural Ecosystem meeting will present an opportunity for the BSA to introduce the ecosystem partners and engage in networking activities while Tech Transfer representatives from the all of the contributing research universities and national labs will attend to answer questions that have been raised by small businesses regarding how to work with them. Tofighi plans to have quarterly meetings for the rural ecosystem in its first year.</p> <p>ED Tofighi concluded the September Executive Director’s Report.</p>
5.	Presidents Report	<p>For the September President’s Report, Dr. Perkins followed up on his conversations he had with legislators who said that they were in support of the BSA. Perkins had the opportunity to talk with these legislators expressing interest during his statewide promotional tour for UNM in August. In further conversations with key people since August, Perkins identified two key aspects of the legislative strategy that need to be addressed going forward into the 2024 Legislative session.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Perkins said there appeared to be a concern for strong personalities on the board. Perkins said that this issue can be avoided going forward.</li> <li>2. In the previous year, there were people outside of the BSA who presented different messaging about the Co-investment which caused concern with some legislators.</li> </ol> <p>Perkins suggested for the BOD to plan a really strong coordinated ask for 2024 which would satisfy any concerns for personality conflicts and avoid any misrepresentation by making sure everyone is on the same page with one clear and consistent message. He asked if a committee should be formed to formulate an approach for the 2024 Legislative session. Director Prisca Tiasse said it would a good idea to discuss these concerns to clarify what the BSA is asking for and how the BSA could ask in an efficient way that would demonstrate advocacy. President Perkins and the Chair agreed with Tiasse’s suggestions to present a</p>

		<p>clear understanding for the coordinated ask. The Chair suggested that a Task Force be formed to further discuss plans for the next legislative cycle. He articulated that at the 2023 Legislative session, Director Paul Laur performed exceptionally well on advocating for the bill that was proposed said the Chair. The Bill was passed by both houses of the legislation unanimously demonstrating an understanding of the value of a Co-Investment fund to enhance and accelerate investment for bioscience in New Mexico. For 2024, he indicated that we need to have a coordinated approach so the correct message is delivered. Presenting to interim committees, addressing comments from the Governor’s veto in the new legislation, and having strong sponsorship like Senators Munoz and Hickey will be important steps. Discussion ended with the expectation to revisit this issue at the next Executive Committee meeting.</p> <p>President Perkins concluded his report.</p>
6.	Presentation on HealthTech Rx	<p><b><u>HealthTech Rx Presentation</u></b></p> <p>Angelica Maestas, Founder and CEO of HealthTech Rx presented on HealthTech Rx’s commitment for bridging health disparities through innovation and investment.</p> <p>Through screen share, Maestas presented an overview on HealthTech Rx.</p> <p><b>HealthTech Rx</b></p> <p>Seeks to bridge health disparities through innovation and investment. HealthTech Rx also looks for potential collaborations in New Mexico’s startup ecosystem.</p> <p><b><u>A Little About Me</u></b></p> <p>Maestas is a UNM Alumni with a Bachelors degree in Finance from the UNM Anderson School of Management.</p> <p>Maestas is also a local entrepreneur who has spent her career in health care with the last six years in Health Technology. HealthTech Rx is Maestas’ third venture.</p>

	<p>Health equity has been of particular interest to Maestas as it has defined her professional career. Maestas grew up in an urban environment in Stockton, California and understands homelessness and violence and its affect on the community which also has an impact on their ability to receive equitable access to healthcare.</p> <p><b>Maestas as Entrepreneur</b></p> <p>Maestas believes entrepreneurship needs more support for those wishing to embark on that journey, especially for female entrepreneurs.</p> <p>Maestas hosts a podcast; <u><i>“She’s ambitious AF”</i></u> which talks openly and candidly about the challenges of entrepreneurship.</p> <p><b><u>Introducing HealthTech Rx</u></b></p> <p>HealthTech Rx believes the path to innovation is through technology although the commercialization of technology is more complicated than what it seems. The method of support HealthTech Rx is building is a combined accelerator investment fund as well as providing advisory support.</p> <p><b><u>Healthtech Ignitor</u></b></p> <p>The current offering of HealthTech Rx for Health Tech founders is a:</p> <p><b>4-Week Virtual Accelerator Program:</b></p> <p>The program is geared toward <b>‘the founder’</b> who has not had the benefit of spending their career in healthcare and have no knowledge of the complex healthcare ecosystem such as identifying stakeholders, where products belong and how to engage with stakeholder audiences.</p> <p>The program also benefits <b>‘the founder’</b> who have spent their careers in healthcare as a clinician or technician and have a great idea. They are typically not the ones to do</p>
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		<p>business development strategy or understand how to lead commercialization.</p> <p>What HealthTech Rx does is provide support for these two types of founders in its four-week program. The program is taught by a list of seven guest instructors from various domains: Healthcare Executives, Product Venture Capitalists that support the main pillars of the program</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Healthcare Ecosystem</li> <li>2. Product Strategy</li> <li>3. Operational Foundations for Scalable Growth</li> <li>4. Launch &amp; Implementation Strategy</li> </ol> <p>The Program is open to anyone in the US.</p> <p>The first cohort launch is in October with a second planned for the spring.</p> <p><b>Innovation in New Mexico</b></p> <p>The Innovation that HealthTech Rx is bringing to New Mexico is the Accelerators-Investment Fund.</p> <p>Health Equity Innovation Hub:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b><i>State of New Mexico</i></b></li> <li>➤ <b><i>Payers</i></b></li> <li>➤ <b><i>Healthtech Rx</i></b></li> <li>➤ <b><i>Health Systems</i></b></li> <li>➤ <b><i>Bioscience Authority &amp; UNM</i></b></li> <li>➤ <b><i>Academic &amp; Research Institutions</i></b></li> </ul> <p>The Health Equity Innovation hub is the framework HealthTech Rx is looking to bring together. Not all of the participants would be direct investors. What HealthTech Rx is doing is mimicking a model that has been deployed in the state of Arkansas named <b>'Health Tech Arkansas'</b>. What they did was gather the state's health Institutions to contribute and participate into the fund said Maestas. The funds are then invested into the startups that go through the accelerator program with the health institutions having</p>
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		<p>a stake in equity for each of the startups. What it led to was economic development and workforce development.</p> <p>The Innovation Hub is a collective of New Mexico’s stakeholders in Healthcare and Bioscience to come together to support a level of technological innovation centered on advancing health equity.</p> <p><b>How we can work Together</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-<b>Educating the Founders</b> by explaining the healthcare ecosystem and assisting with commercialization and business development strategies</li> <li>-<b>Propelling advocacy.</b> HealthTech Rx can provide support by assisting with data</li> <li>-<b>Opening the door</b> to more collaborations.</li> </ul> <p>Following the HealthTech Rx presentation, the floor was opened to field questions from the BOD:</p> <p>Director Prisca Tiasse asked how does HealthTech Rx recruit for their cohorts and where do they advertise. Founder and CEO Angelica Maestas said that their first cohort scheduled for October 2023 was advertised by word of mouth. Also, their network shared HealthTech Rx posts on social media which was how they retained their first founders. From the word of mouth promotion, HealthTech Rx is receiving new applications for the next cohort scheduled in the spring. HealthTech Rx also provides thought leadership to the ‘Health Nerds’ forum. The cohorts usually come from various organizations where HealthTech Rx serves on a board or for organizations HealthTech Rx serves as a mentor.</p> <p>The Chair concluded the HealthTech Rx Presentation.</p>
7.	Executive Committee Report	<p>The Chair presented the September Executive Committee Report with updates on the following:</p> <p><b><u>Economic and Rural Development and Policy Committee Presentation</u></b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic and Rural Development and Policy Committee Presentation (October 12<sup>th</sup> –Los Alamos)</li> <li>• NMBSA Annual Report (Due Oct 1<sup>st</sup>)</li> <li>• Recommend Budget Increase &amp; Justification Task Force Creation</li> </ul>	<p>The Presentation will be on October 12<sup>th</sup> in Los Alamos, New Mexico. The time of the presentation has not yet been determined, however the Chair will update the BOD on the time when it is decided by the committee. The Presentation will include a PowerPoint overview on the BSA followed by a Question and Answer session.</p> <p><b><u>NMBSA Annual Report</u></b></p> <p>As a requirement by the BSA’s enabling legislation, each year an annual report is to be submitted on the first of October. Executive Director Stephanie Tofighi stated a draft of the report will be available for review by the board by Monday September, 25<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p><b><u>Recommend Budget Increase &amp; Justification Task Force Creation</u></b></p> <p>The creation of the Task force was discussed at the September 12<sup>th</sup> Executive Committee Meeting. The Committee determined that in order to achieve the mission of the BSA there is a need to approach the legislature and make a request for a larger operating budget to accomplish the programming objectives. Director Prisca Tiasse has agreed to Chair the Task force with the purpose of evaluating the current budget, make recommendations for increases to present to the legislature and develop the justifications for said increases. The Task Force will demonstrate that the budget increase is an investment by the state, and what that return on investment would look like, relative to building the bioscience cluster and how it would play a role in diversifying the state’s economy that is consistent with New Mexico Economic Development strategy.</p> <p>The Current Budget &amp; Justification Task Force was presented to the BOD:</p> <p><b>Director Prisca Tiasse (Chair)</b>  <b>Director Greg Byrnes</b>  <b>Director Dana Catron</b>  <b>Director Dale Dekker</b></p>
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8.	<p>Finance Committee Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly Financial Statement Review: August</li> </ul>	<p>Executive Director Stephanie Tofighi presented the August Monthly Financial Statement via Screen Share</p> <p><b><u>Monthly Financial Statement Review: August</u></b></p> <p>Executive Director Stephanie Tofighi stated that there were no significant changes to the budget for the month of August. Tofighi alerted the BOD of the recent <b>'Foundation Surcharge'</b> that was included in the budget that the BSA was not made aware of prior to the charge. At present Strategy and Policy Director Ryan Cangiolosi is in communication with UNM Health Sciences Center Finance Department and UNM Main Campus for an explanation of the charges. Updates would be shared with the Finance Committee as soon as new information was made available.</p> <p>The Chair called for a motion to approve the August Financial Statement.</p> <p>A motion was made by Nora Sackett with a second from Francisco Pallares.</p> <p>A roll call vote of all board members was called with nine in the affirmative, none in opposition, none in abstention and two absent. The vote was as follows:</p>

	<p>NMBio 2024 Funding Request</p>	<p>Byrnes-Affirm, Catron-Affirm, Christodoulou-Absent, Dekker-Affirm, Kieft-Absent, Laur-Affirm, Pallares-Affirm, Perkins-Affirm, Sackett-Affirm, Schaub-Affirm, Tiasse-Affirm</p> <p><b><u>NMBio 2024 Funding Request</u></b></p> <p>Director Greg Byrnes named the organizations who have committed to the New Mexico Pavilion at the upcoming 2024 International BIO Conference in San Diego, CA; June 3-6 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-<b>University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center</b></li> <li>-<b>NTx BIO (Nature’s Toolbox)</b></li> <li>-<b>Q Biotech</b></li> <li>-<b>Sandia Bio</b></li> <li>-<b>AWS</b></li> <li>-<b>Sandoval Economic Alliance</b></li> </ul> <p>Byrnes said there are strong prospects from; Sandia National Labs, <b>Los Alamos National Labs, New Mexico Consortium, Albuquerque Regional Economic Alliance (AREA)</b> and hopefully the state can be lobbied for a contribution. Also, there is a push for Biotech startups to apply for STEP Grants which open up in December. Overall, we are hoping to have a very large and diverse contingent to represent New Mexico at the BIO conference he said.</p> <p>ED Tofighi confirmed with Director Byrnes that the cost for the BSA’s participation at the conference would be \$6,500. As the BSA moves forward, Director Prisca Tiasse asked if the BIO Conference was something that occurs annually and could this be something to request funds for every year since the BSA has a Budget Task Force. In terms of visibility, we can have promotional material to market the BSA at these events. The Chair agreed with Director Tiasse’s assessment. ED Tofighi added that from a programmatic perspective, the budget can be increased to include funds for events such as the AREA MedTech Conference in which the BSA’s participation was also requested. Tofighi said the BSA’s Finance Committee could not recommend the BSA’s participation at the AREA MedTech Conference because sufficient funding was</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SBA Eco Map Technologies Contract &amp; Kickoff Meeting Costs</li> </ul>	<p>lacking. The Chair stated that for future reference, if there are conferences that the BOD thinks would benefit the bioscience industry in New Mexico by having representation from New Mexico, to include said conference(s) in the budget as well.</p> <p>The Chair called for a motion to approve the NMBio funding request in the amount of \$6,500 for the BSA’s participation at the 2024 BIO Conference as recommended by the NMBSA Finance Committee.</p> <p>A motion was made by Paul Laur with a second from Tanner Schaub.</p> <p>A roll call vote of all board members was called with eight in the affirmative, none in opposition, one in abstention and two absent. The vote was as follows:</p> <p>Byrnes-Abstain, Catron-Affirm, Christodoulou-Absent, Dekker-Affirm, Kieft-Absent, Laur-Affirm, Pallares-Affirm, Perkins-Affirm, Sackett-Affirm, Schaub-Affirm, Tiasse-Affirm</p> <p><b><u>SBA Eco Map Technologies Contract &amp; Kickoff Meeting Costs</u></b></p> <p>ED Tofighi explained that EcoMap Technologies was chosen because of its data collection and management capabilities. EcoMap is able to use Artificial Intelligence with human oversight. Tofighi said based on her experience with Databases and Data collection portals, EcoMap’s offering is an excellent choice. It is a way to collect data organically and also to have that human overlap to verify the data is correct after being collected. In addition, it allows a mechanism to be able to input data manually. With EcoMap we want to see what it looks like, how we can educate others on its utilization and how to use the technology to identify gaps while sharing resources that are available. For the SBA Stage 2 Growth Accelerator, EcoMap Technologies was included as a member of the Rural Ecosystem partnership.</p>
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		<p>Through Screen Share Tofighi presented the annual contract.</p> <p>The Ecomap contract is an annual format for the amount of \$18,750. Director Prisca Tiasse asked if the contract is subscription based or once EcoMap has established a functioning database, will the BSA need to continue to pay for retaining the model that was curated. ED Tofighi said that she would contact EcoMap regarding Tiasse’s question. Director Dana Catron added that she is in agreement with Tofighi’s selection of EcoMap in that the NM CERG program is using the same platform to map out the state’s energy ecosystem. Before seeking the BOD’s approval, Tofighi confirmed the funds that will be utilized to pay for the EcoMap platform are from the SBA Stage 2 Growth Accelerator Fund Competition. Also, a Sole Source Justification will be processed through the UNM Procurement system.</p> <p>The Chair called for a motion to approve the SBA EcoMap Technologies Contract.</p> <p>A motion was made by Nora Sackett with a second from David Perkins.</p> <p>A roll call vote of all board members was called with eight in the affirmative, none in opposition, none in abstention and two absent. The vote was as follows:</p> <p>Byrnes-Affirm, Catron-Affirm, Christodoulou-Absent, Dekker-Affirm, Kieft-Absent, Laur-Affirm, Pallares-Affirm, Perkins-Affirm, Sackett-Affirm, Schaub-Affirm, Tiasse-Affirm</p> <p>Director Greg Byrnes and Director Paul Laur left the meeting at 1:00 PM.</p>
9.	Mission Accomplishment Committee Report	<p><b><u>Rural NM Biotech Ecosystem Kickoff Meeting Details</u></b></p> <p>On behalf of Director Kieft who had left the meeting earlier, ED Tofighi informed the BOD that the NMBSA Finance Committee asked the BSA Staff to coordinate the meeting’s logistics. The MAC will discuss the logistics and additional details for the Kickoff meeting at their October</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rural NM Biotech Ecosystem Kickoff Meeting Details</li> </ul>	<p>11<sup>th</sup> meeting with the Finance Committee approving a budget at their October 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. The Kickoff meeting will be held on Friday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023. ED Tofighi confirmed she will send out formal invitations to be placed on the BOD’s calendars.</p>
10.	Adjourn	<p>The Chair called for a motion to Adjourn the meeting.</p> <p>A motion was made by Prisca Tiasse with a second from Nora Sackett.</p> <p>A roll call vote of all board members was called with five in the affirmative, none in opposition, none in abstention and five absent. The vote was as follows:</p> <p>Byrnes-Absent, Catron-Affirm, Christodoulou-Absent, Dekker-Affirm, Kieft-Absent, Laur-Absent, Pallares-Affirm, Perkins-Absent, Sackett-Affirm, Schaub-Absent, Tiasse-Affirm</p>

Respectfully submitted by Sterling Nichols and Stephanie Tofighi