

**New Mexico Bioscience Authority (BSA) Board of Directors
Regular Meeting
September 18, 2025, 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM**

Draft Meeting Minutes

Present: Paul Laur (Chair), Dana Catron, Tom Kieft, David Perkins, Alex Koglin, Francisco Pallares, Nora Sackett, Tanner Schaub, Prisca Tiasse

Absent: Greg Byrnes, Christos Christodoulou, Dale Dekker, Lisa Kuuttila

Staff Present: Stephanie Tofighi, Sterling Nichols, 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: August 21, 2025, BOD Meeting	The Chair called for a motion to approve August 21, 2025, meeting minutes. A motion was made by David Perkins to approve the August 21st meeting minutes with a second from Alex Koglin A roll call vote of all board members was called with five in the affirmative, none in opposition, two in abstention and six absent. The vote was as follows: Byrnes-Absent, Catron-Absent, Christodoulou-Absent, Dekker-Absent, Kieft-Absent, Koglin-Affirm, Kuuttila-Absent, Laur-Affirm, Pallares-Abstain, Perkins-Affirm, Sackett-Abstain, Schaub-Affirm, Tiasse-Affirm
3.	Announcements and Chair's Report	NMBSA Chair Paul Laur provided his update for the month of September. <u>New Mexico Biotechnical and Biomedical Association (NMBio) Lunch & Learn Event; September 4, 2025</u> BSA Staff and leadership attended the Lunch & Learn event with keynote speaker, Rob Black, the New Mexico Economic

		Development Department Secretary. Black addressed some of the important developments occurring in New Mexico such as quantum computing, and the state's plan for accelerated economic growth. Black met with the Chair to discuss the BSA's role in developing the state's infrastructure for 2025-2026. <u>Current New Mexico Economic Development Department Technology & Innovation Office (TIO) Grants for Infrastructure Development</u> The Chair reported that TIO has introduced two new grants to support Technology Commercialization and Entrepreneurship. <i>1. Innovation Hub Grants – Program provides funding to develop, expand and/or improve physical spaces fostering innovation, entrepreneurship, and technology commercialization.</i> <i>2. Entrepreneurship Programmatic Support Grant – Supports the operational needs of entrepreneurship-focused organizations in the state including accelerators, incubators and venture studios.</i> The Chair concluded his report.
4.	Executive Director's Report	NMBSA Executive Director (ED) Stephanie Tofighi provided an update on the following items for the month of September. <u>NMBSA's UNM Rainforest Office Location</u> The BSA's contract with the Rainforest location will be an important location for the public as there are plans for hosting networking and curricular events and established office hours. The BSA will have its logo displayed on the Rainforest building. <u>BSA Student Intern Commercialization Program Update</u> ED has met with representatives from New Mexico State University (NMSU) and New Mexico Tech (NMT) for plans to

		initiate the proposed Bioscience Commercialization Student Intern program in Fall 2026. Tofighi and the university reps discussed scheduling monthly office hours in which ED Tofighi will hold regular office hours for 1 calendar date each month at NMSU and NMBSA Intellectual Property Specialist Anne-Laure Schmitt Olivier will follow the same schedule at NMT. In addition to the NMSU and NMT locations, Tofighi expressed enthusiasm to collaborate with NMBSA Director Prisca Tiasse, located in Los Alamos, New Mexico. <u>NMBSA Communications & Industry Outreach Manager (CIOM) Position Update</u> The BSA Hiring Committee reviewed 40 applications for the CIOM position and selected four finalists for interviews. From the four finalists, the committee has moved forward with the hiring process by initiating an offer to the top candidate, who has accepted the terms of the position. <u>UNM Quantum Research & Technology Luncheon, September 3, 2025</u> ED Tofighi attended the UNM Quantum Research luncheon held at the Rainforest Building in coordination with the IEEE Quantum Week Conference being held the first week of September at the Albuquerque Conference Center to learn how quantum computing can be applied to bioscience. At the luncheon, Tofighi met with Robert Ledoux; Director of the Quantum New Mexico Institute who will attend the October 16th board meeting to provide an overview on the principles of <i>'Quantum Bio'</i> and how it can be applied to the biosciences. Executive Director Tofighi concluded her report.
5.	President's Report	NMBSA President Dr. David Perkins presented his report for the month of September <u>Addressing Challenges for Rural Medicine in New Mexico</u> Dr. Perkins returned from a recent trip where he met with professionals to discuss current issues facing rural medicine

		and how it could affect New Mexico with some of the recent cuts to funding. President Perkin's concluded his report. Director's Dana Catron and Tom Kieft joined the meeting at 11:45 AM
6.	Aurum Tech Introduction	NMBSA Director Franciso Pallares introduced the Executive Leadership for the currently El Paso based company, Aurum Technologies to the BOD. Joshua Ortiz, PhD Chief Executive Officer Gabriel A. Garcia, Chief Operating Officer Aurum Technology Executives: Garcia and Ortiz joined the September 18th meeting to discuss the principles of transforming waste through the utilization of industrial biotechnologies. Executives Ortiz and Garcia have over 25 years of scientific delivering sustainable solutions that have real world impact. Through screen share, Ortiz and Ortiz presented Aurum Technologies' commitment for transforming waste with assistance from current biotechnologies, Genetics, Sequencing and Biotech Engineering. Aurum Technologies: Transforming Waste into Gold through Industrial Biotech Aurum Technologies was founded by three principles: 1. Waste Management – as populations increase, there is an increase in waste. 2. Water Shortages – as populations increase, there are water shortages which occur with differing severity in various locations like New Mexico and the '<i>Borderplex</i>' region where Aurum Technologies is located in El Paso. 3. Soil Desertification – with water shortages, populations face soil desertification.

		Aurum Technologies is an Industrial Biotech Startup company with two divisions that enhance each other <u>Manufacturing</u> – utilizes ‘Biochar Production’. Biochar is 95% - 99% carbon. The manufacturing process involves transforming various waste streams into the biochar. Aurum Technologies current waste streams are pecans, wood, and coffee grounds. <u>Biotechnology</u> – Production is enhanced with a ‘Directed Evolution’ platform. Microbes are placed in differing stressors in which different applications are assigned to these microbes for varying industries. Aurum Technologies current industry foci are Agriculture, Defense and Aerospace. AURUM’S PROCESS Aurum Technologies’ current process involves collecting different waste streams that go through advanced manufacturing to produce Premium Biochar. Biochar has a spongelike quality for filtering impurities and is used as a soil supplement. Benefits of ‘Biochar’ <i>Waste Repurposing</i> -Reduces landfill use, landfill leachate, and landfill emissions <i>Soil Regeneration and Water Conservation</i> -Water conservation accounts for up to 40% less water use -Crop yield increase 5-10% -Increased soil regeneration <i>Forestry & Carbon Credit Management</i> - Aurum Technologies waste management allows wood to be sourced ethically while reducing forest fire severity and frequency
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		Why this matters to New Mexico NM Faces Urgent Challenges -Wildfires, flooding, water scarcity, reliance on oil & gas -Bioscience is the state's most patent rich sector Aurum Offers -Soil Health + Food Security -Carbon Sequestration -Space Innovation NM Bioscience Authority + Aurum Fit Aurum stands as a unique biotech industry startup in the Southwest Borderplex region. Aurum Technologies targets multiple industries which is aligned with the economic development plan for New Mexico: -Agriculture -Defense -Aerospace -Environmental Resilience Aurum Technologies Services and Products -Soil Analysis -Microbial Sequencing & Crop Design -Biomass Conversion -Premium Biochar -Quality Assurance Program Future Solutions: Microbial Cataloguing and directed Evolution, Extraterrestrial Terraforming, Radiation Exposure Mitigation. With Aurum Technologies microbial cataloguing and directed evolution, Terraforming is advanced. Aurum's Terraforming Project has received Small Business Institute
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		Research support. The project consists of collecting degraded soils and transforming them into arable land. The Radiation Exposure Mitigation Program allows microbes to be run through a direct level distribution platform to consume radiation. Exploring Partnerships Aurum Technologies is currently exploring partnerships that align with their future plans that are in favor with investors. Aurum Technology Executives: Garcia and Ortiz concluded their presentation. Board directors thanked Garcia and Ortiz for their presentation and went on to discuss some potential benefits if Aurum Technology makes the move to relocate to New Mexico.
7.	Executive Committee Report Communication and Industry Outreach Manager Hire Introduction	NMBSA Executive Committee (EC) Chair Paul Laur presented his report for the month of September. <u>Communication and Industry Outreach Manager Hire Introduction (CIOM)</u> The NMBSA Hiring Committee reviewed 40 applications for the CIOM position and selected four finalists for interviews. From the four finalists, the committee selected Irene Gray for the position. Gray was selected for her marketing expertise and proven ability to launch several outreach programs through her work at UNM and general enthusiasm for the position. Her work at UNM includes Director of the Alumni Program at the UNM Health Sciences Center School of Pharmacy (SOP) connecting students with local businesses and SOP Alumni, Communications Manager for the UNM College of Arts and Sciences, and Public Relations Specialist at Project ECHO. Gray has accepted the CIOM offer and her official start date is October 13, 2025. NMBSA CIOM Hiring Committee NMBSA Chair Paul Laur

	NM Governor's Economic Development Conference Sponsorship Discussion Special Meeting with NMBio; December 2, 2025, Announcement	NMBSA President Dr. David Perkins NMBSA Strategy and Policy Director Ryan Cangioli NMBSA Executive Director Stephanie Tofighi NMBSA Intellectual Property Specialist Anne-Laure Schmitt Olivier NMBSA Program Specialist Sterling Nichols <u>NM Governor's Economic Development Conference Sponsorship Discussion</u> The BSA will attend the Governor's Economic Development Conference; September 24-25; 2025. The BSA is also listed as a sponsor for one of the conferences' Break Out Educational Sessions. <u>Special Meeting with NMBio; December 2, 2025 Announcement</u> The special joint meeting with the BSA and the New Mexico Biotechnical Association (NMBio) will occur on Tuesday, December 2, 2025, 1:30 PM – 3:00 PM at UNM Rainforest Innovations. The meeting will allow the BSA and NMBio to discuss strategy for advancing the state's bioscience industry while defining specific tasks to avoid redundancy The Chair concluded his report. Director Tanner Schaub left the meeting at 12:15 PM.
8.	Finance Committee Report Monthly Financial Statement review (August)	NMBSA Finance Committee Chair (FCC); Alex Koglin presented the August Finance Committee Report. Through screen share, Koglin presented the 2025 August Financial Statement <u>August 2025 Financial Statement</u> Chair Koglin reported there were no significant changes to the budget for the month of August except for a request to include a budget narrative for future Financial Statements. The narrative will explain expense details for individual line items.

	The Chair called for a motion to approve the August Financial Statement. A motion was made by Prisca Tiasse to approve the 2025 August Financial Statement with a second from Dana Catron. A roll call vote of all board members was called with eight in the affirmative, none in opposition, none in abstention and five absent. The vote was as follows: Byrnes-Absent, Catron-Affirm, Christodoulou-Absent, Dekker-Absent, Kieft-Affirm, Koglin-Affirm, Kuuttila-Absent, Laur-Affirm, Pallares-Affirm, Perkins-Affirm, Sackett-Affirm, Schaub-Absent, Tiasse-Affirm • NMBSA Rainforest Office Suite Furniture & Equipment Cost Approval <u>NMBSA Rainforest Office Suite Furniture & Equipment Cost Approval</u> Following UNM Procurement guidelines, the Chair presented the breakdown cost estimates of proposed office suite furniture and equipment needs at the BSA's UNM Rainforest Office location. Purchase of the furniture and equipment will be facilitated by a pre-negotiated contract with UNM showing that the furniture and other items selected are within the cost range of negotiated guidelines and the desired furniture matches the layout for the designated office space. The first furniture quote was submitted to UNM Purchasing by Executive Director Stephanie Tofighi. UNM Procurement will send a bid for a second quote reviewing the proposed office suite furniture and layout. The cost estimate for the complete furnishing and equipment needs for the NMBSA's Rainforest Building space is \$20,000. Chair Koglin called for a motion to approve the maximum cost estimate for the furnishing and equipment requirements.
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	NMBio Knowledge Fair Sponsorship Discussion	A motion was made by Paul Laur to approve the maximum cost of \$20,000 with a second from David Perkins. A roll call vote of all board members was called with eight in the affirmative, none in opposition, none in abstention and five absent. The vote was as follows: Byrnes-Absent, Catron-Affirm, Christodoulou-Absent, Dekker-Absent, Kieft-Affirm, Koglin-Affirm, Kuuttila-Absent, Laur-Affirm, Pallares-Affirm, Perkins-Affirm, Sackett-Affirm, Schaub-Absent, Tiasse-Affirm <u>NMBio Knowledge Fair Sponsorship Discussion</u> Before beginning the conversation, Chair Laur announced to the Board members that because of the conflict of interest that he and Director Sackett had with being members of the NMBio Board of Directors too, they would be abstaining from the conversation and the vote. The Finance Committee Chair then proceeded to outline the proposed BSA sponsorship for the NMBio Knowledge Fair event on September 24, 2025. He shared that at their September 11th committee meeting, it was determined that there was an overlap of events with the Governor's Economic Development Conference happening the same day, September 24. With conflicting dates, the Committee acknowledged the possibility of low attendance at the Knowledge Fair. A suggestion was made to move the proposed September 24th date to a specific time in October or November to which Executive Director Stephanie Tofighi confirmed that she presented the committee's suggestion to NMBio. The BOD reviewed the Finance Committee's suggestion and determined that the minimum level of support that should be given would be the \$500 Friend of NMBio which would provide a table for the NMBSA to share relevant material and would include their logo on the event's materials. Director Francisco Pallares proposed a sponsorship at the level of \$500 to meet this minimum amount given the conflicting dates and expected low participation.
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		Chair Koglin called for a motion to approve the recommended sponsorship for \$500. A motion was made by Francisco Pallares to approve the \$500 Sponsorship with a second from Tom Kieft. A roll call vote of all board members was called with five in the affirmative, one in opposition, two in abstention and six absent. The vote was as follows: Byrnes-Absent, Catron-Affirm, Christodoulou-Absent, Dekker-Absent, Kieft-Affirm, Koglin-Affirm, Kuuttila-Absent, Laur-Abstain, Pallares-Affirm, Perkins-Affirm, Sackett-Abstain, Schaub-Absent, Tiasse-Oppose Director Perkins left the meeting at 12:25 PM.
9.	Mission Accomplishment Committee Report NMBSA Programming Update	Mission Accomplishment Committee (MAC) Chair Tom Kieft presented the MAC Report for the month of September. <u>NMBSA Programming Update</u> At the September 11, 20205, MAC meeting Strategy and Policy Director Ryan Cangiolosi provided an update on the proposed plan for the \$1 Million allocated to the BSA for Fiscal Year 2025. Cangiolosi said the strategy would be to ask permission to spend the \$1M allocated funds over a period of two years in place of one. Chair Kieft asked if the BOD can review the \$1M proposed plan for spending over a period of two years. BSA Chair Paul Laur agreed with Kieft's suggestion and confirmed that the BOD will revisit the BSA's Operating Budget to see how the proposed spending for the \$1M will impact other programming endeavors such as the BSA Student Internship program. ED Tofighi added that a discussion on the proposed \$1M 2-Year spend is needed to ensure funds are not retracted on June 30, 2026, when the BSA's Summer Internship Program is occurring. Chair Kieft concluded his report.

10.	Other NMBSA Related Business Discussion	The Chair announced there were no NMBSA related Business announcements for the month of September. Director Dana Catron left the meeting at 12:55 PM
11.	Adjourn	The Chair called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made by Alex Koglin to adjourn the meeting with a second from Nora Sackett. A roll call vote of all board members was called with six in the affirmative, none in opposition, none in abstention and seven absent. The vote was as follows: Byrnes-Absent, Catron-Absent, Christodoulou-Absent, Dekker-Absent, Kieft-Affirm, Koglin-Affirm, Kuuttila-Absent, Laur-Affirm, Pallares-Affirm, Perkins-Absent, Sackett-Affirm, Schaub-Absent, Tiasse-Affirm The meeting adjourned at 1:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Sterling Nichols and Stephanie Tofighi