



## Maine Innovation Economy Advisory Board January 29, 2009, 1-4 pm

**Members present:** Jim Atwell, Steve Von Vogt, Rita Heimes, Whitney King, Hemant Pendse, Janet Hock, Patricia Hand, Mike Eckhardt, Jim Atwell, Bob Peacock, Graham Shimmield, Dale Syphers, Habib Dagher, Peter Murray, Pete Merrill, Jack Kartez, John Wright, John Burns, John Wise, Jacque Carter, Cathy Renault, Betsy Biemann and Chair Miles Theeman. **Members absent:** Karin Gregory, Bill Harris, Robert Lad, Jane Sheehan, Chris Davis.

**Guests:** Claire deSelle, Maine Institute for Human Genetics & Health; Jill Goldwaite, Jackson Labs; Sally Southwick, Bates College; Mark Kaplan, CEI Ventures; Tim Ford, UNE.

**Other:** Jennifer DeChant, Office of Innovation; Jim Damicis, PolicyOne; Erik Pages, EntreWorks.

### Meeting Minutes

#### **I. Presentation of 2008 R&D Evaluation and Innovation Index (1:10-2:30 pm)**

The Report by PolicyOne Research team members presented their annual report to the BRED Committee. After the presentation, MIEAB reconvened in Room 105, Cross Building.

#### **II. Introductions and 2008 R&D Evaluation and Innovation Index Q&A**

A. Members expressed concern that the report sends a message that Maine isn't doing enough to grow R&D companies. Also members noted that there are conflicting definitions of "high-tech" companies.

B. A question was raised as to how much difference MTI investments make in business growth. MTI funded companies showed growth during the same period of overall decline. Members stressed the importance of underscoring the return on investment and framing the argument beyond one year employment numbers.

C. Another aspect discussed was the cultural issues around workforce development and business expansion. Members agree that we need to emphasize entrepreneurship for students and increase stipends to attract grad students.

D. When asked what to focus on, the consultants recommended tech transfer assistance and adapting the role of the tech centers. There is an opportunity to promote the 1:12 ratio of economic impact from R&D investment; higher wages that exist in tech-related jobs; and acknowledge the reality that other states are making more investment in research and development.

#### **III. Old Business**

##### **A. MTI Update (Betsy Biemann)**

1. MTI has received 50 applications for the second round of Maine Science and Technology Action Fund (MSTAF) with requests at the same level as first round. Decisions are expected by June.
2. MTI's Expanded Cluster Initiative has two deadlines a year for funding up to \$500,000. There are \$50,000 awards made on a rolling basis for planning. The first funding decision of the revised program is expected by the end of February.

3. MTI will expand seed grant and development award criteria so that funds can be used for tech transfer support and attaining patents. Details on these programs can be found at [www.mainetechnology.org](http://www.mainetechnology.org)
4. Betsy also announced that MTI will embark on updating their strategic plan.

## B. EPSCoR

1. NSF EPSCoR Proposal Update (Michael Eckhart)
  - a. NSF EPSCoR RII Track 1 - Maine's Sustainability Science Initiative is for up to \$30M over 5 years (\$20M by NSF with a required 50% state match). The outcome is expected before 31 March 2009.
  - b. NSF EPSCoR Track II proposal entitled North East Cyberinfrastructure Consortium is a 3-year grant for up to \$1.35M over 3 years (also requires a 50% match). This grant is part of a consortium made-up of Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Delaware. It was submitted on 5 January 2009, and preliminary feedback is expected by the end of March.
  - c. Patricia Hand announced the upcoming deadline to submit proposals for COBRE is April 10.
2. DEPSCoR and NASA EPSCoR (Jennifer DeChant)
  - a. The DEPSCoR program review has been completed. A summary of the report findings were distributed. Members interested in reviewing the entire document should contact Jennifer DeChant.
  - b. NASA EPSCoR review of two proposals is scheduled for Feb. 5.

## C. Budget and Legislative Update (Cathy Renault)

1. The legislature passed the Supplemental Budget with \$450,000 of curtailment cuts impacting MTI and the tech centers. Next is work on the biennial budget.
2. OOI submitted 2 recommendations for bonds to the Governor's office: 1) Recapitalize Small Enterprise Growth Fund for \$10m; 2) R&D fund to allocate \$150m over 3 years. Bond package expected by the end of February.
3. Office of Innovation submitted a bill to change the language around the tech centers to be more consistent with the recommendations of the R&D evaluation. These proposed changes should not impact the tech centers which are currently funded; instead, with more funds available, the services will expand beyond the walls of the incubators.
4. The Governor has requested details on how to implement recommendations around increasing the capacity around tech transfer and how to attract graduate students with competitive stipends. The recommendation will be to create funding for patent and tech transfer assistance conducted through the OOI.

## D. Other

Don Perkins, co-chair of the Governor's Task Force on Ocean Energy announced the Task Force will make some recommendations to the legislature in April; make an announcement at Ocean Energy Conference in June; and submit its final report by Oct. 20, 2009. [www.maine.gov/spo/specialprojects/OETF/index.htm](http://www.maine.gov/spo/specialprojects/OETF/index.htm).

#### **IV. New Business**

##### **A. Tasks for 2009**

###### **1. Progress Report**

Cathy has circulated the draft report for comments. We expect to finalize and submit to the BRED committee as directed by statute. (March 1, 2009)

###### **2. 2010 Science and Technology Action Plan**

Cathy distributed the action plan for developing the next plan based on feedback from a wide variety of stakeholders from business, the research community and related service providers. Focus groups will be planned to dig deeper into the issues and work on identification of strategies.

#### **V. 2009 meetings (All will be at Maine Hospital Association, 33 Fuller Road, Augusta, ME):**

Thursday, April 30, 2009. 1-4 pm

Wednesday, July 29, 2009. 1-4 pm

Wednesday, October 28, 2009. 1-4 pm

##### Contact information:

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