Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the president, Dr. Tiffany Seagroves, at 12:07 PM on June 2, 2014, in the Coleman building, Room A101.

Attendance

The following members were present:

Martin A. Croce, MD, Martin Donaldson, DDS, Bob Foehring, PhD, Scott Jackson, DVM, Rebecca Anne Krukowski, PhD, Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD, William R. Morris, MD, Linda Myers, MD, Kaushik Parthasarathi, PhD, Fruz Pourmotabbed, PhD, Larry Reiter, PhD, Renate Rosenthal, PhD, Tiffany Seagroves, PhD

The following guest(s) was (were) present:

David Stern, MD, Susan Senogles, PhD

Approval of minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as written. Minutes had previously been distributed by electronic means.

Business

The first focus of discussion concerned DFAC election process. Dr. Haavi Morreim, DFAC secretary, explained the process that has been used for online voting, which was followed by a more general discussion about DFAC election procedures. Although no vote was taken, DFAC members expressed a consensus that, since DFAC elections must be announced at least two weeks prior to the annual meeting, the election should signaled by a CoM-wide email specifically devoted to announcing that the annual election of officers has been opened, rather than combining this message with other announcements in the same email.

Secondly, it was proposed that options be explored for online voting, e.g., perhaps via a survey instrument (with online login using standard Net ID and password) or Blackboard. Although there have been no indications of voting improprieties, such a system could simplify and enhance the voting process if it could be done in a way that preserves the privacy of voting.

Third, DFAC members expressed a consensus that those who agree to run for office should be invited to provide a paragraph or two, including a brief bio and a statement of what that person's focus would be if elected. This information should be distributed in the email that announces that voting in COM is open for the two-week period.
The next issue concerned recommendations for funding translational research, as described by Dr. Reiter at the May 5 DFAC meeting. Dean Stern responded that all research proposals that appear to be reasonable will be considered by the COM, and emphasized that at present, anyone who comes forth with a fundable proposal, from a credible investigator or team of investigators (i.e., with a fundable NIH CV, and history of extramural funding), will receive serious consideration. Proposals should be one-page, with Biosketches and an outline of how the project will lead to additional future funding. He suggested that the translational research proposal mechanism developed by Dr. Reiter and the DFAC subcommittee should be worked into the CTSA initiative headed up by Dr. Jon McCullars. Dr. Reiter emphasized that the subcommittee would like to promote projects that will have impact and synergy, not just science. A source of reserved funding for such projects would provide faculty with an avenue other than directly asking the dean, if they believe they have a worthwhile research project.

Dean Stern noted that departments will likely be another source of research initiatives and funding. For instance, the new chair of surgery will have a package, so that he or she will be able to pursue appropriate research projects. Dr. Stern emphasized the need, going forward, to have fewer people, who are more engaged, not only in teaching, but also on the research side. Additionally Dean Stern observed that it is important for the investigators themselves to have "some skin in the game," and that pilot studies can too easily be done and yet go nowhere. Dean Stern clarified that “skin” in the game means, as one example, that no personnel would be covered 100% through the funds provided by the Dean’s office, for example.

Further DFAC discussion pointed out that it can be difficult for faculty to know who is doing what, elsewhere on campus. Dean Stern discussed whether the Faculty Portal could be used to stimulate new research projects and collaborations on campus. Other attendees proposed that collaboration requires personal interaction, not just someone's written description of research interests. Dr. Seagroves also suggested creating a faculty club/meeting space. The Dean said that discussions are in progress to create such a space near the Chancellor’s office, but that interested parties should approach Ken Brown to discuss in further detail.

Also, it can be challenging to find out just what equipment is available on campus, and at costs that can be affordably worked into research budgets, since although the Cores on campus are subsidized, the fees are higher than several other institutions. Dr. Seagroves proposed a survey be sent to faculty requesting input on current core use, feedback on core service, including fee structures, and which pieces of equipment/what technologies the faculty are interested in obtaining that are not currently available for campus use. Dean Stern recommended that Dr. Seagroves approach Dr. Pfeffer to generate and to distribute a survey from the VC of Research office.

Pending no emergency business, there will be no meetings in July or August 2014.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the committee will be held on September 8, 2014, at 12:00 Noon in the Coleman building, Room A101.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:00 PM.
Respectfully submitted,

E. Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD
Secretary