



**ESAA Board of Directors  
Teleconference  
June 21, 2017**

**In attendance:** Colleen Bell, Julie Brimble, Kathy Cunningham-Roy, John Fabelo, Jane Flynn, Janet Gray, Judi Hunter, Donna Jordan, Susie Kerwin-Bush, Dave Mates, Carl Necker, BJ Parsons, Anna Quigley, Julie Quirk, Coleen Raber, Ross Rice. Guests: Michelle Raisor, Denyce Verti, Kathy Mellis.

The meeting called to order at 8:30 PM EST.

Janet reviewed the ground rules and procedures for this conference call that had been sent to everyone Monday, June 19, 2017.

Dee Verti spoke for 10 minutes, summarizing the background of how the recommendations came about regarding the research projects by Dr. Strain and Dr. Petroff.

- One concern expressed was that she was not aware that Dr. Michelle Raisor, Health and Genetics chair, was also looking at projects for funding.
- Another concern expressed was that she was not aware that projects needed to be CHF projects [which they do not need to be].
- She does not understand why so much time had passed between the time the Board initially voted on the projects, and the present time.
- Dee Verti and Kathy Mellis have stepped down from the Health Clinic due to embarrassment as a result of the delay in the funding by ESAA.
- No one communicated to Kathy and Dee, as the persons who sought out these projects.

In response, Ross Rice reviewed the funds ESAA had available in the CHF fund and in the Health and Genetics fund.

- Ross reminded everyone that he did not feel, when all the projects were proposed, that ESAA had the funds for all of the projects at that point in time.
- Janet reminded everyone that we thought the \$22,000 in the CHF fund was fully available.
- B.J. Parsons questions why \$35,000 was requested when it was already fully funded.
- Dee replied that the lapse in time resulted in the initial project being fully funded, but it was not at the time of the proposal.

Kathy Mellis spoke for 10 minutes. She again reviewed the timeline of the March 3 meeting when funding was approved by the Board.

- Dr. Strain contacted Kathy, informing her that funds had not been disbursed. He also contacted Michelle Raisor regarding the same.
- At the Board meeting of May 3, several Board members indicated they would not have voted to approve the research projects had they known they were not CHF approved.

- Dr. Petroff has had several projects supported by CHF, including some of the AIRE studies. His upcoming pilot study is one that has not yet been approved by CHF.

In response, Ross Rice asked who contacted Dr. Petroff and Dr. Strain informing them that ESAA was funding the projects. Michelle Raisor was contacted by email, as well as by Dave Mates, that the funds were approved, and Dave wanted to know where the checks should be sent.

- The question arose regarding whether the Board had a policy that projects had to be CHF approved. The ESAA Board has no such policy. However, any funds that come out of our CHF funds must, of course, be a CHF approved study.
- Money coming from H&G membership donations and the ESAA National raffle do not have to be CHF approved.

Janet thanked both Kathy Mellis and Dee Verti for taking the time to participate in the conference call.

Following the conclusion of Dee and Kathy's involvement in the call, Janet reviewed the background, beginning with the initial proposal when the ESAA Board thought the Strain and Petroff studies were both CHF approved. She checked with Michelle Raisor, who informed her that her H & G report indicated they were not CHF approved to the best of her knowledge, but she suggested at that time that Janet check with Samantha Wright of the Canine Health Foundation.

- Janet received a communication from someone about how upset Dr. Strain was at the delay in funding, and how embarrassed this individual was about ESAA's delay in this.
- Janet contacted Samantha Wright to ask if English Setters could be added to Dr. Strain's study in an expedited matter.
- During a phone call on another matter, Janet shared with Julie Quirk that she found out Dr. Strain and Petroff's studies were not CHF approved
- Janet takes full blame for allowing these studies to come to a Board vote without going through the review of Health and Genetics chair, Michelle Raisor.

Michelle Raisor spoke about how grants happen, and how ESAA typically funds our recommended grants.

- Most of our grants go through the Canine Health Foundation. All of their grants go through peer review to be sure the study is worthy.
- There are administrative fees taken off the top of every research grant, whether a private grant to a university, or CHF.
- Michelle also clarified that researchers are used to delays in funding, and such delays do not have an effect on the progress of their research projects.
- She clarified that neither of the researchers had to "start from scratch" in rewriting any projects for CHF or ESAA

Susie wanted to know where the communication breakdown occurred.

- Michelle explained that she gives the Board recommendations twice a year. However, she realizes that she needs to have a more "visible presence" to the ESAA membership so they can express concerns they have about issues they would like to see funded. She can then check into possible projects that she deems worthy of recommendation to the Board.
- Susie indicated that the ESAA Board needs to fix this lapse in communication so it does not happen again.
- Donna mentioned that these kinds of issues need to go through Michelle in the future, and not have a direct recommendation from other individuals.

- It was questioned why all the confusion, because the H & G report recommended these studies referred to by Dee and Kathy.
- Michelle explained that we had previously given \$10,000 to a study, and had requested a progress report which we have not yet received after two years. This is why an organization like CHF, who has the ability to do peer review, is advantageous.
- The portion of the minutes of the March 7, 2017 meeting were reviewed regarding the suggested methods of funding.
- Kathy Cunningham-Roy asked if Michelle would, going forward, be the one making contact with the researchers.
- Ross Rice explained how money goes in to the CHF fund from Purina, currently \$25,000. The health and genetics fund is a restricted fund coming from Purina, member donations, and the National raffle.
- We could have funded the Strain study back in March, which would have prevented a lot of fuss, but we could not have used CHF funds to do so. Unfortunately, the Board is not able to go back to that date and correct that oversight.

A Mates/Quigley motion was made that any health and genetics funding in the future must go through the Health and Genetics chair, with the chair making all contacts with researchers and making all recommendations to the Board. Any confusion by the Board will be referred back to the chair for clarification, with his/her participation in any Board meeting where health and genetics issues need to be clarified. By roll call vote, this motion was passed with 15 approvals and no objections.

Michelle will be in contact with Dr. Petroff to find out what the timeline will be for review approval and exactly what funds are needed for his studies on thyroid, since there are several studies on which he is working, with varying kinds of funding needs.

The Board will discuss whether or not we want to require future grants to be CHF approved at our face-to-face meeting in September. As of now this is not a requirement, except where ESAA's CHF funds are used.

Ross commented that he appreciated the education on the funding process shared by Michelle with the Board, and suggested that Michelle write an article for the e-newsletter informing ESAA members about the process of funding.

Michelle shared several reports with the Board.

- An osteosarcoma study by the University of Penn that had been funded by ESAA is experimenting with a vaccine that has been extending the life span of dogs, and has huge implications for human research.
- She also reported on another research project ESAA has supported for incontinence in bitches. One researcher has had success in taking stem cells and injecting them into the sphincter to correct this problem. Before this, some breeders were having these bitches put down due to their incontinence.
- ESAA is also supporting 5 grants on hemangiosarcoma, which is another condition that has really affected the life span of our breed.

Michelle requested that a thank you being sent to Dee and Kathy for all the work they put into these research projects.

Some concerns were expressed regarding this year's health clinic at the National. This year's National health clinic is fully staffed and ready to go. Dave Mates assured the Board that he and Mary Nowak are prepared to take care of any situations which might arise regarding the health clinic.

Coleen Raber will summarize the discussions from the last two meetings for distribution by the Vice Presidents to the membership.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:42 on a Quirk/Mates motion.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Coleen M. Raber*

Coleen M. Raber  
ESAA Secretary