

## Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 27, 2025, 9 – 10 a.m. HT  
Zoom

### IN ATTENDANCE (ALPHA ORDER)

<b>Ellen Beckjord, PhD, MPH, FSBM</b> Immediate Past-President	<b>Christine Hunter, PhD, ABPP</b> President	<b>Robert Newton, Jr., PhD, FSBM</b> President-Elect
<b>Courtney Bonner, PhD</b> Member Delegate	<b>Lisa LaRowe, PhD</b> Chair, Advocacy Council	<b>Angela Pfammatter, PhD, FSBM</b> Chair, Membership Council
<b>Michael Diefenbach, PhD, FSBM</b> Chair, Development Council	<b>Sharon Manne, PhD, FSBM</b> Chair, Professional Advancement Council	<b>Linda Trinh, PhD, FSBM</b> Chair, Publications Council
<b>Lisa Goldman Rosas, PhD, MPH</b> Member Delegate		

\*quorum = 7 members

### REGRETS (ALPHA ORDER)

<b>Charles Jonassaint, PhD, MHS</b> Member Delegate	<b>Scherezade Mama, DrPH</b> Chair, Scientific Education Council	<b>Megan McVay, PhD</b> Secretary/Treasurer
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### STAFF AND GUESTS (ALPHA ORDER)

<b>Lindsay Bullock, CAE</b> Executive Director	<b>Amy Myers</b> Senior Communications and Membership Manager	<b>Emily Takerian</b> Communications Manager
<b>Eli Gonzalez-Rehorst, MS</b> Development Manager	<b>Andrew Schmidt</b> Senior Program Manager	

### CALL TO ORDER, CALL FOR DISCLOSURES, AND CONFIDENTIALITY REMINDER

Dr. Hunter called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. HT. No new disclosures were reported. She reminded the group that Board meetings are confidential.

### CONSENT AGENDA

**MOTION:** Dr. Manne moved to approve the May 15 Board of Directors meeting minutes; May 21 Board of Directors meeting minutes; Research!America sign-on letter urging Congress to reject the proposed 38% cut to the National Institutes of Health budget included in the president's FY26 budget request; and Coalition for Health Funding sign-on letter to Congressional leadership in support of NIH. Dr. Diefenbach seconded. The motion carried.

## FINANCIALS REVIEW

Dr. Hunter provided an update on SBM's financial position following a recent meeting of the Finance Committee, during which a mid-year review of SBM's budget was conducted and the committee considered the impact of potential lost revenue in 2025 and 2026 as well as increased spending on programs to support members in the current climate of funding uncertainty and federal government hostility toward scientific research.

Consistent with SBM's reserves policy, which requires at least one, and no more than two, years' operating expenses to be maintained in cash and investments, the original 2025 budget approved by the board already included increased spending on: Bridging the Gap Awards; strategic plan goals for Healthy Living, volunteer recognition, and curated educational speakers; membership and annual meeting social media ads; and website accessibility and member belongingness updates. Dr. Hunter suggested that, despite potential threats such as a stock market correction or the revocation of tax-exempt status for nonprofit organizations, SBM would be able to maintain its reserves and the board could consider additional expenditures to help meet members' needs under current conditions.

Ms. Bullock drew the board's attention to expense line items that had already exceeded their budgeted levels for 2025, including some Annual Meeting vendor fees and costs associated with the board's upcoming strategic planning retreat. In addition, she reported that the Scientific Education Council was considering a proposal for new research awards to support members whose funding or employment had been impacted by recent federal grant cancellations.

*Dr. Newton joined the meeting at 9:08 a.m. HT.*

The board discussed whether these new awards would require additional fundraising, with Dr. Hunter noting that any near-term awards would use existing funds, however donations could be solicited explicitly to support the awards in the future.

## EXPANDED POLICY ADVOCACY SERVICES

Dr. LaRowe introduced two items for the board's consideration related to augmenting SBM's advocacy efforts. First, the Advocacy Council proposed that SBM enter into a formal agreement with a lobbying firm to support SBM's advocacy priorities by undertaking several initiatives including, but not limited to: Monitoring legislation, meeting with policymakers, preparing template messages for members to use when contacting their representatives, providing talking points to SBM's policy ambassadors, and coordinating with partner organizations such as the Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences and the Coalition for Health Funding.

In addition, the Advocacy Council proposed purchasing a grassroots advocacy software platform that would allow SBM members to easily contact their federal representatives with template messages relating to crucial policy issues. The software would be populated with content provided by the lobbying firm as previously described, and would be made available to all SBM members, though resources specifically developed for policy ambassadors could also be hosted on the platform.

*Dr. Bonner joined the meeting at 9:24 a.m. HT.*

Dr. LaRowe noted that lobbying firms do leverage their existing relationships with policymakers and knowledge of legislative procedure that SBM does not currently possess. In addition, lobbyists would have the expertise to identify actionable policy items

relating to SBM's advocacy priorities, helping SBM to consistently respond to emerging advocacy issues in a timely manner, which the Advocacy Council has found to be particularly challenging for policy ambassadors in the past.

*Dr. Goldman Rosas joined the meeting at 9:31 a.m. HT.*

Board members asked if any metrics would be used to evaluate the effectiveness or impact of the lobbying firm's work for SBM, and whether the firm would agree to a trial period of several months before the board considers entering into a contract for a year or longer. They also asked for more details as to how an SBM-hosted tool would differ from those offered by other organizations, some of which SBM has already encouraged its members to use.

Ms. Bullock noted that any contract would require the firm to provide a detailed inventory of the work completed and time spent on SBM items each month. An agreement typically wouldn't cover a period of less than one year, but the Advocacy Council and the board would have an opportunity to review these statements of work before approving a renewal for future years. Ms. Bullock also clarified that the proposals before the board currently would be to approve contracting with the lobbying firm and licensing the advocacy software, or contracting with the firm without also licensing the software. Because the lobbying firm would be primarily responsible for developing content for the software platform, the Advocacy Council is not proposing that SBM license the software without also entering into an agreement with a firm. Ms. Bullock further noted that, while SBM has consistently linked to other organization's grassroots contact forms, members have consistently asked for SBM- and behavioral medicine-specific forms.

Dr. Hunter informed the Board that the software would be paid for using donations to the Jim Sallis Policy Advocacy Honor Fund. Dr. Sallis does not need to approve the expense, but was given a confidential heads up, and he expressed strong support for this.

**MOTION:** Dr. LaRowe moved to approve SBM Staff entering into a formal agreement with a lobbying firm, with initial annual expense not to exceed \$120,000. Dr. Manne seconded. The motion carried.

**MOTION:** Dr. LaRowe moved to approve spending up to \$10,000 from the Jim Sallis Policy Advocacy Honor Fund in 2025 for grassroots advocacy software. Dr. Newton seconded. The motion carried.

## ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 9:52 a.m. HT.

*Minutes respectfully submitted by A. Schmidt on May 28, 2025.*