



**Annual Membership Meeting (*Virtual*)  
MINUTES  
Wednesday, November 2, 2022  
2:00-3:30pm ET**

I. Welcome – *Matthew Rizzo, MD, Chair; Mark Rasenick, PhD, Vice Chair*

Dr. Matthew Rizzo, ABC Board Chair, on behalf of the ABC Board of Directors, welcomed ABC members and guests to the 2022 Annual Membership Meeting.

**A.** Introduction of Board Members

Dr. Rizzo introduced ABC's newest Board members who took office during our last Board meeting.

- Chantelle Ferland-Beckham, PhD, Senior Director, External Affairs, Cohen Veterans Bioscience
- Mar Sanchez, PhD, Division Chief & Core Scientist, Developmental & Cognitive Neuroscience, Emory National Primate Research Center

View our entire Board of Directors [here](#).

**B.** Introduction of New ABC Members

Dr. Mark Rasenick, ABC Vice Chair, welcomed 2022 new ABC members.

Nonprofit members:

Epilepsy Alliance America  
Medical Technology Enterprise Consortium  
Neurotech Network  
Simply Neuroscience

Corporate members:

Alto Neuroscience  
Harmony Biosciences  
Karuna Therapeutics  
Synaps Dx Biomarker Technology

More information on these members, as well as all of the ABC members, can be found on the [ABC's website](#).

II. Action: 2021 Annual Membership Meeting Minutes – *Bobby Heagerty, Secretary*

Ms. Bobby Heagerty, ABC Secretary, called for a motion to approve the 2021 Annual Membership Meeting minutes. Dr. Matthew Rizzo called for a motion, and Dr. Mark Rasenick seconded. Members were asked to

provide any changes/additions/oppositions to the minutes in the chat box. Seeing none. Minutes were approved at the end of the meeting.

### III. Treasurer's Report – *Diana Felner, Treasurer*

Ms. Diana Felner, ABC Treasurer, provided an update on the ABC finances. The ABC continues to keep a very modest operating budget. This year's total budget is just over \$350,000.

Membership dues remain the largest portion of ABC's income, with nonprofit membership dues making up over half of ABC's income. We also receive a modest amount of income from a few sponsorships helping with our educational programming.

A more detailed end of year financial report will be included in the ABC's Annual Report, which will be distributed the end of 2022/early 2023.

On behalf of the ABC Board, Ms. Felner thanked members for their contributions to the ABC – without dues, the ABC could not operate.

### IV. Advocacy Report – *Craig Obey, Advocacy Committee Vice Chair*

Mr. Craig Obey, Advocacy Committee Vice Chair, provided an advocacy report to the membership. A Washington Update as a written report can be view [here](#). Any questions regarding this report can be submitted to Ms. Katie Sale, ABC Executive Director.

#### [Public Policy Priorities](#)

The ABC Advocacy Committee has developed a set of public policy priorities to direct our advocacy work. These priorities are regularly reviewed and updated. ABC's current policy priorities include:

- Chronic Care
- Ethical Use of Animals in Research
- Federal Investment in Brain Research
- Innovative Approaches for Developing New CNS Cures
- Mental Health & Substance Use Insurance Parity
- Stem Cell Research

The ABC has circulated a number of statements and letters this past year, led by either the ABC or your organizations, all of which support ABC's policy priorities. Our [letters, statements, and policy priority white papers](#) can be found on the ABC's website.

#### [Congressional Neuroscience Caucus](#)

The ABC continues to work with the Congressional Neuroscience Caucus in hosting and organizing briefings on a number of topics to engage Congress and staffers on the brain. Briefings this year (all held virtually) included the importance of brain donation; long-haul neurological and psychological impacts from COVID; the

importance of neuroethics; potential psychedelics in the treatment of psychiatric diseases; and the importance of BRAIN funding.

We have been discussing with the Congressional Neuroscience Caucus some exciting briefing ideas for 2023, hopefully some will even be back in-person on capitol hill.

### **Innovations in the Understanding of Brain Structure and Function**

#### *V. Special Guest: John Ngai, PhD, Director, NIH BRAIN Initiative, National Institutes of Health*

The ABC has been a proud advocate of the Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies (BRAIN) Initiative since it was established in 2013 and is honored to serve on the BRAIN Initiative Alliance since 2021. Dr. Matthew Rizzo introduced guest speaker, Dr. John Ngai, Director, NIH BRAIN Initiative, National Institutes. Dr. Ngai provided a brief overview of the NIH BRAIN Initiative and addressed BRAIN's most recent advancements from the past year. He provided additional details on three key points: BRAIN-funded tools and techniques are having direct impacts in the clinic; BRAIN-funded teams are developing new resources and technologies that are laying down a foundation for new cures; BRAIN is creating a new paradigm for doing science. Further discussion of details regarding the work of the BRAIN Initiative and potential impacts and outcomes provided during the Q&A time with attendees and panelists. Recognizing there is much work to be done and certainly areas which need to be explored. [View recording](#) of Dr. John Ngai's presentation.

Dr. Matthew Rizzo thanked Dr. Ngai for his time and all that he and his colleagues are doing to advance our understanding of brain structure and function.

### **Innovations in Facilitating Diagnostics and Therapeutics**

#### *VI. Innovation Initiative*

##### *A. Special Guest: Doug Kelly, MD, MBA, Deputy Director for Science, Food and Drug Administration's Center for Devices and Radiological Health (FDA, CDRH) – Mark Rasenick, PhD, Vice Chair*

Dr. Mark Rasenick provided an update to the membership that in September, ABC leadership had the opportunity to meet with FDA Commissioner Robert Califf and his senior staff. During this meeting, FDA leaders expressed their support for engaging the patient advocacy community and agreed that patient engagement is central to their efforts. Dr. Jeff Shuran, Director of the Center for Devices and Radiological Health, called our attention to a pilot that was included in the user-fee package – the Total Product Life Cycle Advisory Program, an effort that would bring companies working on new concepts together with patients, providers, and payers. Dr. Doug Kelly, FDA's CDRH Deputy Center Director for Science joined us for our membership meeting today to provide an update on this program. Dr. Kelly provided an overview of current processes and proposed changes that this program outlines, to ultimately provide a faster processing time within the FDA. He stated that post their work in cardiovascular, he anticipates they will focus on neuroscience and would utilize patient organization groups in this process. Discussion from questions around not only devices but would this advance into pharmaceuticals as well. [View recording](#) of Dr. Doug Kelly's presentation.

Dr. Rasenick thanked Dr. Kelly for his time today and for his service within the FDA. The ABC looks forward to working more closely with Dr. Doug Kelly and his colleagues.

## B. FDA Possible Patient Engagement Opportunities

Ms. Katie Sale, ABC Executive Director, provided an update on possible FDA patient engagement opportunities. Over the past two years ABC has been advocating with both Congress and the FDA to make efforts to address the unmet need for treatments and cures for brain conditions, with a particular emphasis on improving patient engagement in the FDA process.

We began our efforts by advocating for the creation of a Neuroscience Center of Excellence at the FDA. An NCOE would help increase capacity at the agency and advance a more transparent, innovative, and patient-guided approach to product development and provide clearer guidance to researchers and developers.

Through conversations between legislators and FDA officials, it became clear there is little appetite for advancing a NCOE at this time.

While a full NCOE is still a long-term goal, ABC has shifted to advocating for incremental efforts at FDA that will help speed the delivery of safe and effective treatments to individuals with brain conditions.

Due to time constraints, following this meeting, I'll be circulating a written report outlining our efforts to date, along with some policy proposals that seek to advance innovation and deliver safe and effective treatments to the millions of patients impacted by diseases and conditions of the brain.

Along with this report, we'll be asking that you fill out a brief survey helping us plan our path forward.

We value our members' input and will implement an advocacy plan that is reflective of your feedback, will continue to provide ABC members with opportunities to engage in ABC's advocacy efforts.

## Planning for the Future of ABC

### VII. Strategic Planning – *Steve Strakowski, MD, Strategic Planning Steering Committee Chair*

Dr. Steve Strakowski, ABC Strategic Planning Steering Committee Chair, provided an update on the Strategic Planning process which the ABC Board has undertaken this year.

- [SWOT Analysis](#) completed
- Established a [Strategic Planning Steering Committee](#)
- [Revision of the Vision and Mission](#) of ABC which has been vetted by the ABC Board and felt to reflect the ABC more accurately.

The [next steps](#) for the Strategic Planning Steering Committee will be to formally adopt the new Vision & Mission; set long-range Goals based upon Vision, Mission, and environmental scan; set key 3–5-year goals/strategies for each long-range goal; create plan for annual review and updates and determine

deliverables & a plan for updating the Membership. Further information will be provided in the future, if you have any questions please contact Katie Sale, ABC Executive Director.

VIII. Podcast Series – *Patrick McCartney, Programming, Engagement & Outreach Committee Chair*

Mr. Patrick McCartney, Programming, Engagement & Outreach Committee Chair, provided an update to the membership. The Programming, Engagement, and Outreach Committee has established an [ABC Podcast series](#), featuring ABC members. It will be called *Voices for the BRAIN* and will be debuted in January 2023. We welcome EVERY ABC member to be featured in a Podcast, to showcase your initiatives in the brain space, and how you work with the ABC on your advocacy efforts. If you haven't already signed up to be interviewed, please contact Ms. Katie Sale, Executive Director, or Ms. Sheila Stern, Director of Engagement & Administration in the ABC's office.

Dr. Matthew Rizzo thanked the membership for joining the virtual meeting.

Meeting was adjourned.