

FORM 4

UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, D.C. 20549

| OMB APPROVAL | |
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| OMB Number: | 3235-0287 |
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Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction 1(b).

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1. Name and Address of Reporting Person* <u>Rosen Howard B</u> <hr/> (Last) (First) (Middle) <u>C/O ACELRX PHARMACEUTICALS, INC.</u> <u>351 GALVESTON DRIVE</u> <hr/> (Street) <u>REDWOOD CITY CA 94063</u> <hr/> (City) (State) (Zip) | 2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol <u>ACELRX PHARMACEUTICALS INC [ACRX]</u> | 5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer (Check all applicable) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Director 10% Owner <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Officer (give title below) Other (specify below) <p style="text-align: center;">CEO</p> |
| | 3. Date of Earliest Transaction (Month/Day/Year) <u>02/07/2017</u> | |
| 4. If Amendment, Date of Original Filed (Month/Day/Year) | | |

Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned

| 1. Title of Security (Instr. 3) | 2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8) | | 4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed Of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5) | | | 5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4) | 6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4) | 7. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4) |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|---|------------|-------|---|--|---|
| | | | Code | V | Amount | (A) or (D) | Price | | | |

Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

| 1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 3) | 2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security | 3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 4. Transaction Code (Instr. 8) | | 5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5) | | 6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year) | | 7. Title and Amount of Securities Underlying Derivative Security (Instr. 3 and 4) | | 8. Price of Derivative Security (Instr. 5) | 9. Number of derivative Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 4) | 10. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4) | 11. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4) |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|--|-----|--|-----------------|---|----------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| | | | | Code | V | (A) | (D) | Date Exercisable | Expiration Date | Title | Amount or Number of Shares | | | | |
| Stock Option (Right to Buy) ⁽¹⁾ | \$3 | 02/07/2017 | | A | | 366,000 | | 02/07/2018 ⁽²⁾⁽³⁾ | 02/06/2028 | Common Stock | 366,000 | \$0 | 366,000 | D | |

Explanation of Responses:

- Issued pursuant to the 2011 Equity Incentive Plan.
- The shares subject to the option vest as follows: 25% of the shares subject to the option vest on the 12 month anniversary of the Vesting Commencement Date (February 7, 2016) and the remaining shares subject to the option vest on an equal monthly basis over the following 36 months.
- 100% Acceleration upon Change of Control.

/s/ Martha Adler, Attorney-in-Fact 02/17/2017

** Signature of Reporting Person Date

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 4 (b)(v).

** Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations See 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, see Instruction 6 for procedure.

Persons who respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB Number.