

Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC)

Date: January 28, 2026

Time: 8:00AM- 9:02 AM

Location: Virtual (Microsoft Teams)

Attendees:

Matt Finley, Ph.D.: IBC Chair

Dr. Bindu Kumar, MD: IBC Member

Judy Daviau, VMD: Veterinary Consultant

Lauren Merlo, Ph.D.: IBC Member

Anthony Ashton, Ph.D.: IBC Member

Gwendolyn Gillard: IBC Member (Community Member)

Andrea Sipple, MPH: IBC Member (Community Member)

John III Medendorp, MS, BSN, RN, CIP: IBC Member

Guests:

Scott Dessain, MD: Principal Investigator

Amy Rosenfeld, Ph.D.: Principal Investigator

1. Call to Order and Quorum

- Meeting called to order at 8:03 AM by The Chair.
- Quorum was confirmed.

2. Review and Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

Minutes Reviewed

- November 11, 2025 IBC Meeting Minutes
- December 3, 2025 IBC Meeting Minutes

Discussion

- The Chair noted that both sets of minutes had been circulated to the committee via email on January 21, 2026.
- Members were reminded of a recent NIH policy change (effective July 1) requiring IBC minutes to be posted on a publicly accessible institutional website to promote transparency regarding biosafety oversight activities.
- The committee discussed concerns regarding privacy and safety implications of publicly posting detailed minutes, including:
 - Identification of investigators and committee members by full name
 - Potential inclusion of phone numbers or other identifying information
 - Risk to personnel if information were misused
- Noted that initial NIH guidance suggested posting minutes without redaction; however, updated guidance allows for appropriate redactions to protect sensitive or proprietary information.
- Committee members agreed that posting minutes using initials rather than full names would be an appropriate balance between transparency and safety.
 - Phone numbers and other personal identifiers will not be included.
- Committee further confirmed that the IBC committee membership list is not posted on the public website, which limits the ability to associate individual comments with specific committee members.
- Previously posted minutes will be amended to align with updated redaction practices.

Motion

- Approve the November 11, 2025 and December 3, 2025 IBC meeting minutes
 - Moved by: Matt Finley
 - Seconded by: Gwen Gilliard
 - Vote: Unanimous approval

3. New Business – Protocol Reviews

3.1 Protocol Review: B26-3081: Scott Dessain New Business

- **Project Title:** B26-3081: Mucosal Antigens
Biosafety Level: BSL-1

Summary of Proposed Work

- Dr. Dessain presented a protocol involving recombinant DNA techniques to express vaccine-related antigens in *Spirulina*. The expressed products include:
 - Poliovirus virus-like particles (VLPs)
 - Cholera toxin B subunit
 - Heat-labile enterotoxin B variants (including constructs with BC loop peptides and KDEL sequences)
- Overall goal of the research is to develop orally administered immunogens that target intestinal M cells to elicit mucosal and systemic immune responses.
- The work involves plasmid DNA introduced into *Spirulina* to drive expression of non-replicative, non-infectious proteins. No mammalian expression elements are present.

Biosafety Considerations Discussed

- *Spirulina* is non-pathogenic, non-toxic, and generally recognized as safe
- Organisms are not environmentally viable outside controlled growth conditions
- Expressed antigens are non-infectious and intended for oral administration in eventual translational studies
- No environmental persistence or risk to personnel is anticipated
- Animal dosing will use dry, ground *Spirulina* administered via oral gavage

Discussion

- Whether any special precautions were required for animal housing, bedding disposal, or staff exposure.
- Scott indicated that no viable organisms would be present post-processing and that standard biosafety practices are sufficient.

Committee Comments and Requested Modifications

The Chair noted two minor administrative items requiring correction:

1. The biosafety cabinet certification date was not listed in the protocol
2. Sample transport procedures should include use of a secondary container (outer containment), even though materials are low risk

Motion

- Motion: Approve the protocol pending minor administrative revisions
 - Moved by: Judy Daviau
 - Seconded by: Gwen Gilliard
 - Vote: Unanimous approval

Action Items

- Dr. Dessain to update biosafety cabinet certification information
- Dr. Dessain to revise sample transport section to include secondary containment

3.2 Protocol Review: B26-3071: Amy Rosenfeld: Old Business

Project Title: Immune Response Elicited Against Picornaviruses

Discussion

- Committee reviewed a revised version of a previously submitted protocol from Dr. Rosenfeld.
- While many requested changes had been addressed, members identified remaining deficiencies, including:
 - Incomplete descriptions in later protocol sections
 - Missing or unclear details regarding sample preparation and experimental locations
 - Limited description of microorganism usage
- Committee expressed concern that the protocol still lacked sufficient experimental detail to allow for a thorough biosafety risk assessment and that the level of detail was inconsistent with expectations applied to other investigators.
- Questions were also raised about alignment with the corresponding IACUC protocol and whether all proposed activities were adequately captured across both oversight documents.
 - The Chair explained that the IACUC protocol remains under review and that amendments from IBC would be required before animal work could proceed.

Committee Decision

- Rather than granting approval, the committee agreed that the protocol should move from Full Committee Review to Designated Member Review (DMR) once revisions are made.

Motion

- Motion: Move protocol B26-3071 from Full Committee Review to Designated Member Review pending revision
 - Moved by: Matt Finley
 - Seconded by: Lauren Merlo
 - Vote: Unanimous approval

Action Items

- Dr. Rosenfeld to provide additional experimental and biosafety detail
- Revised protocol to be reviewed by designated committee members prior to approval

3.3 Protocol Review: B26-3083: Amy Rosenfeld – New Business

- **Project Title:** S19 and nOPV strains of Poliovirus

Summary of Proposed Work

- Dr. Rosenfeld presented a new protocol involving the use of S19 and novel oral poliovirus vaccine (nOPV) strains supplied through the WHO network (via NIBSC, London).
- These strains are described in the literature as non-infectious and are used for seroprevalence, seroconversion, and antigenic cartography assays.
- The intent of the work is to evaluate whether immune responses generated by *Spirulina*-expressed poliovirus capsid proteins are protective by measuring the ability of serum samples to prevent viral infection in cell culture assays.

Committee Discussion and Concerns

- Committee members raised multiple concerns regarding the lack of detail in the protocol, including:
 - Insufficient description of assay methodology
 - No specification of cell lines used in neutralization assays
 - No information on viral concentrations, volumes, centrifugation steps, or culture conditions
 - Section 5 (human materials, cell lines, and cultures) was checked but not completed
 - Risk assessment could not be completed without understanding how the virus is manipulated
- Additional discussion focused on personnel protection and vaccination status.
 - Dr. Rosenfeld confirmed that laboratory personnel must demonstrate polio vaccination and that the materials are non-infectious per published data.
 - Occupational health considerations for potentially foreign-born employees were briefly discussed.

Committee Decision

- Committee agreed that approval could not be granted without substantial revision.
- Members emphasized that biosafety review requires detailed experimental information similar to what is expected in IACUC protocols.

Motion

- Motion: Refer protocol B26-3083 to Designated Member Review pending major revision
 - Moved by: Anthony Ashton
 - Seconded by: Judy Daviau
 - Vote: Unanimous approval

Required Revisions Prior to DMR Approval

- Expanded experimental description in Section 1.4
- Completion of Section 5, including cell line identities and handling procedures
- Risk characterization for S19 and nOPV strains
- Control and safety data from the source institution
- Attachment of referenced 2017 PLOS publication

4. Incident Report – Sharps Injury

- The Chair reported a recent incident involving an Environmental Services (EVS) employee who sustained a needlestick injury from improperly disposed sharps found in red biohazard waste.

Actions Taken

- The employee received immediate medical evaluation and treatment
- A Workers' Compensation incident report was completed
- The PI conducted immediate retraining of laboratory personnel
- Institute-wide communication was distributed emphasizing proper sharps disposal practices

Committee discussion reinforced:

- Sharps must never be disposed of in red bag waste
- Sharps containers are available in all laboratories
- Improper disposal presents serious risk to support staff
- Occupational health representatives reviewed best practices for post-exposure response and emphasized the importance of providing exposure information to emergency care providers.

5. General Safety Discussion

- The committee briefly discussed sharps container placement and whether containers should be affixed to surfaces.
- Members noted differences between laboratory and acute-care requirements and agreed to continue evaluating engineering controls and safety improvements in both laboratory and vivarium spaces.

6. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:02 AM.