

# University of Rhode Island IBC

## MEETING MINUTES

December 10, 2025

Zoom Meeting

The meeting was called to order on December 10, 2025 at 10:00 AM and a quorum was present.

### **ATTENDANCE**

#### **Voting Members Present:**

Alessandra Adami  
Jennifer Beninson  
Joel Chandlee  
Ruitang Deng  
Megan Dyer  
Robert Ireland  
Heather McClary  
John McLane  
Louise Paquin  
Alan Rothman

#### **Non-Voting Attendees, Staff and Guests Present:**

Callan Bleick, PharmD, MSc  
Gwen Currier  
Kathryn Daffinee  
Nisanne Ghonem, PharmD, PhD  
Thomas Lavoie, PharmD  
Ting-Yu Shih, PhD

#### **Recording:**

Gwen Currier  
Heather McClary

### **ITEMS**

- 1 Welcome and Opening Remarks**
- 2 Next Meeting Date and General Announcements**

2.1 **Next meeting 1/14/2026 at 10 AM via Zoom if needed**

2.2 **IBC members must not review, participate in the discussion of, or vote upon any research protocol for which they have a conflict of interest (COI) other than to provide requested information.**

**3 Review of Previous Minutes**

**3.1 November 19 2025 IBC Minutes**

**Review Type:** Full Committee Review  
**Action:** Approved  
**Effective Date:** December 10, 2025  
**Vote:** Total = 9; For = 9; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 0;

**Discussion and Remarks:**

LP moves to approve minutes as written. JB was not present for the vote.

**4 Continuing Education**

No items

**5 New Studies**

**5.1 [2366475-2] Evaluating the in vitro activity of Cefiderocol and combination therapy against metallo-β-lactamase producing bacteria**

**PI:** Thomas Lavoie, PharmD  
**Reference Number:** BI2526-011  
**Sponsor:** Shionogi  
**Submission Type:** New Project

**Review Type:** Full Committee Review  
**Action:** Modifications Required  
**Effective Date:** December 10, 2025  
**Project Status:** Deferred - Modifications Required  
**Vote:** Total = 10; For = 10; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 0;  
**Primary Reviewer:** Ruitang Deng  
**Secondary Reviewer:** Heather McClary

**Discussion and Remarks:**

**Biosafety Level:** BSL-2

**NIH Guidelines Section(s):** N/A

Dr. Lavoie presented an overview of project, risk assessment, and risk mitigation.

New protocol to investigate treatment strategies for MDR bacteria. Antibiotic resistance to Cefiderocol is increasing; looking at combination therapies to combat this. Susceptibility testing for ~20 isolates.

Committee wants to understand justification for procedures performed in BSC vs. outside BSC. Per PI, all procedures other than incubation will be in BSC. Some biosafety trainings still need to be completed. Abbreviations and scientific notation need to be spelled out / clarified. Disinfection / waste practices need to be clarified. Committee asked about monitoring of consistency of cell lines over time.

RD moved to approve pending minor modifications.

5.2 **[2389985-1] IBC: Development of biomaterial drug delivery systems**

**PI:** Ting-Yu Shih, PhD

**Reference Number:** BI2526-012

**Submission Type:** New Project

**Review Type:** Full Committee Review

**Action:** Modifications Required

**Effective Date:** December 10, 2025

**Vote:** Total = 10; For = 10; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 0;

Primary Reviewer: Ruitang Deng

Secondary Reviewer: Heather McClary

**Discussion and Remarks:**

**Biosafety Level:** BSL-1, BSL-2, ABSL-1

**NIH Guidelines Section(s):** III-E and III-F

Dr. Shih presented an overview of project, risk assessment, and risk mitigation.

New project to investigate biomaterial development and use in delivery of cancer drugs. Will synthesize RNA, incorporate into biomaterials, test in cell lines and animals. Using viral sequences (polymerases) to create self-amplifying RNA (saRNA); this allows use of lower dose of mRNA for treatment.

Well-written protocol. Committee asked about cell type specificity of saRNA; PI clarified that saRNA + lipid nanoparticles are very cell type specific. Why use equine encephalitis virus (VEEV) to design vector? Committee asked for details of biosafety experience of undergraduate personnel. Need procedures in this protocol for in vivo testing in mice. Committee recommends that tumor antigens be added either to initial protocol or via amendment. PI confirmed that all cell lines listed in protocol (e.g., HEK, T-cells) will be transfected eventually. Committee asked about possibility of murine cell lines causing tumors in humans (given one previous incident). Bone marrow extraction will take place in the BSC. Some details needed for LNP and hydrogel formulation. Are C. novyi going to be used? No, this was a mistake. Need clarification about use of sharps and alternatives.

RD moved to approve pending modifications.

5.3 **[2391268-1] Optimizing Phage-Antibiotic Combinations: Developing Therapeutic Strategies to Improve Treatment Efficacy in Multidrug-Resistant Infections**

**PI:** Callan Bleick, PharmD, MSc

**Reference Number:** BI2526-013

**Sponsor:** URI

**Submission Type:** New Project

**Review Type:** Full Committee Review

**Action:** Modifications Required

**Effective Date:** December 10, 2025

**Vote:** Total = 10; For = 10; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 0;

Primary Reviewer: Joel Chandlee

Secondary Reviewer: Robert Ireland

**Discussion and Remarks:**

**Biosafety Level:** BSL-2

**NIH Guidelines Section(s):** N/A

Dr. Bleick presented an overview of project, risk assessment, and risk mitigation.

New project to investigate methods to treat MDR infections using combination therapy. Work is completed at BSL-2 containment.

Well written thorough application. Need BSC certification date; currently not certified. PI provided more information about MDR strains of interest (Gram +; biofilm producers; various molecular capabilities. PI confirmed that all work with live strains will be conducted in BSC (except bioreactor incubation); sonication is performed in closed tube. Bioreactor waste container has bacteria but is pre-loaded with disinfectant. Riskiest procedure is needle sampling from bioreactor. When will additional PPE be needed? This was an error in the protocol. Bacteriophages will not be concentrated.

JC moved to approve pending modifications.

6 **Revisions**

No items

7 **Renewals**

7.1 **[1539015-6] Regulation of bile acid metabolism in human liver by nuclear receptors**

**PI:** Nisanne Ghonem, PharmD, PhD

**Reference Number:** BI1920-007

**Submission Type:** Continuing Review/Progress Report

**Review Type:** Full Committee Review

**Action:** Modifications Required

**Effective Date:** December 10, 2025

**Project Status:** Active  
**Project Expiration:** December 17, 2025  
**Vote:** Total = 10; For = 10; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 0;  
**Primary Reviewer:** Megan Dyer  
**Secondary Reviewer:** Heather McClary

**Discussion and Remarks:**

**Biosafety Level:** BSL-2

**NIH Guidelines Section(s):** N/A

Five-year renewal of ongoing research using human cell lines or tissue samples for bile acid analysis and biochemical assays. Use samples in BSC using BSL-2 practices.

Some training needs to be updated. Acronyms need to be spelled out. Need information about screening of samples for BBP. Need transportation details (labeling, containment). Need SOP for import of samples (transportation and receipt). PI confirmed that no biosafety incidents have occurred in the past 5 years. PI provided clarification on a few procedures.

MD moved to approve pending modifications.

**8 Amendments**

No items

**9 Other Submissions**

No items

**10 Adverse Events**

No items

**11 Other Business**

No items

**12 Office of Research Integrity Updates**

No items

**13 New Protocols or Renewals Approved by Expedited or Full Board Review**

**13.1 [2358282-2] SLEEPS 2: Studying Long-term Effects of Epigenetics and Pediatric Sleep**

**PI:** Justin Parent, Ph.D.

**Reference Number:** BI2526-007

**Sponsor:** NIH

**Submission Type:** New Project

**Review Type:** Full Committee Review

**Action:** Approved

**Effective Date:** November 17, 2025  
**Project Status:** Active  
**Project Expiration:** November 17, 2030

13.2 **[2329434-3] Genetic engineering in marine symbiosis bacteria and microbiomes**

**PI:** Amanda Alker, PhD  
**Reference Number:** BI2425-007  
**Submission Type:** New Project

**Review Type:** Full Committee Review  
**Action:** Approved  
**Effective Date:** December 4, 2025  
**Project Status:** Active  
**Project Expiration:** December 4, 2030

14 **Amendments Approved by Expedited Review or Full Board Review**

14.1 **[336295-18] IBC: Use of human primary cells, cell lines, gene delivery and COVID-19 Research Specimens**

**PI:** Angela Slitt  
**Reference Number:** BI1314-007  
**Submission Type:** Amendment/Modification

**Review Type:** Full Committee Review  
**Action:** Approved  
**Effective Date:** November 24, 2025  
**Project Status:** Active  
**Project Expiration:** May 14, 2030

14.2 **[392166-19] Study effect of pH Low Insertion Peptides (pHLIPs) and their conjugates on cultured cells and tumors created by implanting of cancer cells in mice**

**PI:** Yana Reshetnyak, PhD  
**Reference Number:** BI12-10-009  
**Submission Type:** Amendment/Modification

**Review Type:** Full Committee Review  
**Action:** Approved  
**Effective Date:** November 16, 2025  
**Project Status:** Active  
**Project Expiration:** January 9, 2028

15 **Administrative Approvals**

No items

16 **Terminations**

No items

17 **Adjournment**

**Review Type:** Full Committee Review

**Action:** Approved

**Effective Date:** December 10, 2025

**Vote:** Total = 10; For = 10; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 0;

**Discussion and Remarks:**

RI moved to adjourn.

The meeting adjourned on December 10, 2025 at 11:18 AM.