Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, Institutional Biosafety Committee
Meeting Minutes
Meeting Date: 11/21/2025 **Meeting Time:** 2:00 PM
Meeting Location: [redacted]

Note: The approved meeting minutes will be posted publicly per the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Office of Science Policy (OSP) requirement NOT-OD-25-082. All information on matters not covered by the NIH Guidelines for Research Involving Recombinant or Synthetic Nucleic Acid Molecules will be redacted as allowed in NOT-OD-25-082.

Call to Order:
The Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) met on 11/21/2025 [redacted]

The quorum required is 4. There were 6 voting members and 1 non-voting members present at the start of the meeting. Quorum was confirmed.

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 PM.

Dr. Turner entered at 2:02 pm, increasing the voting members present to 7.

Meeting Attendance:

Meeting Chair: Patrick Larkin, Ph.D.

Voting Full Board Members:

Name	Scientific Status	Affiliation Status	Attended by Teleconference?
Patrick Larkin, Ph.D. (Chair)	Scientific, rDNA expert	Affiliated	No
Erica Filep, Ph.D. (Vice Chair)	Scientific, Kinesiology	Affiliated	No
Jeffrey Turner, Ph.D.	Scientific, rDNA Expert and Animal Expert	Affiliated	Yes
Harshkumar Bhakta, M.S.	Scientific, EHS	Affiliated	Yes
Jonda Halcomb, Ph.D.	Scientific, Community Member	Non-affiliated	Yes
Lee Lehman, M.S.	Scientific, Plant Expert	Affiliated	No

Voting Alternate Members:

Name	Scientific Status	Affiliation Status	Attended by Teleconference?
Mary Mantle, R.EEG T, REP T. CMEG (for Morris)	Scientific, Community Member	Non-affiliated	Yes

Non-voting Members in Attendance:

Name	Scientific Status	Affiliation Status	Attended by Teleconference?
Boram Lim, Ph.D.	Scientific, Kinesiology	Affiliated	Yes

Members attending by teleconference were confirmed as able to actively participate.

Full Board Members Absent: Yessenia Morris, BS

IBC Staff: John Scarpa, PhD

Guests: None.

Conflict of Interest
Members are reminded to disclose any conflict of interest related to any of the items on the agenda. Conflicts declared (Filep).

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I. Conflict of Interest
Members are reminded to disclose any conflict of interest related to any of the items on the agenda. The Chair called for any disclosures of conflict of interest. Conflicts were declared and are noted in the minutes on the relevant items.

II. Minutes
Minutes from the October 17, 2025, meeting were reviewed.

The Chair invited additional comments, questions, and/or concerns. Hearing none, the motion to approve the October 17, 2025, meeting minutes as is, was made, seconded, and carried.

Vote Count	Vote Type	Comments
7	For	
0	Against	
0	Abstain	
0	Conflict of Interest	
0	Not present for Vote	

III. Old Business
None.

IV. New Business
Chair: No items.

Education: No items.

EHS: No items.

Other:
A) Annual Self-Assessment: Committee reviewed the draft annual self-assessment. [redacted]
Committee confirmed that there are no gene drive modified organisms or research on campus.
[redacted]

The Chair invited additional comments, questions, and/or concerns. Hearing none, the motion to acknowledge the annual self-assemssment was made, seconded, and carried.

Vote Count	Vote Type	Comments
7	For	
0	Against	
0	Abstain	
0	Conflict of Interest	
0	Not present for Vote	

[redacted]

V. New Studies

IBC Number:	**TAMU-CC-IBC-2025-0076**
Protocol Title:	Integrating MST and QMRA to Improve Environmental Health in a Coastal Community
Principal Investigator:	Powers, Nicole
Primary Reviewers:	Jeffrey Turner, PhD and Harshkumar Bhakta, MSc
Conflict of Interest:	N/A
Lay Summary:	This study will assess recreational water quality in the context of environmental conditions, nutrient/bacterial data, and beach usage data during peak beach usage months (June-August) in Rockport, Texas. Findings from the study will be incorporated into a human health risk assessment to estimate health risks associated with contact recreation (e.g., swimming, fishing, kayaking, boating). Previous research has shown that the traditional fecal indicator bacteria, enterococci, are not correlated with host-associated fecal markers in many recreational beaches. In Little Bay specifically, previous research demonstrated that high levels of enterococci did not correspond to elevated levels of human, canine, or gull fecal waste. A subsequent human health risk assessment was performed as a "proof-of-concept" study to characterize risks associated with incidental ingestion of water while swimming. Recent stakeholder and community feedback has highlighted the need for up-to-date water quality data, particularly during the peak tourist season, in Little Bay. The results of this study will provide a comprehensive look at water quality in multiple recreational beaches in Rockport, Texas, and provide valuable information about the utility of traditional water quality metrics.

Biohazardous Agents:	Synthetic DNA
NIH Guidelines:	III-F: Use of recombinant or synthetic nucleic acid molecules for detection (e.g. probes)
Submission Type:	Research Protocol, Determination if an IBC permit is needed
Biosafety Level:	BSL-1

The synthetic DNA used is non-coding and will only be used as a positive control in a PCR reaction. It is not recombinant, no origin of replication, and will not be used as a building block for the creation of r/s DNA. Per NIH guidelines section III-F, the proposed use of gBlocks is exempt since it qualifies as a simple nucleic acid that lacks an origin of replication and cannot replicate in a living cell. All other aspects of the project are spelled out well. EHS would like for the lab area [redacted] to be specified as it is a shared lab area.

The Chair invited additional comments, questions, and/or concerns. Having none, the motion to approve with stipulations with a permit expiration date of three (3) years was made, seconded, and carried.

The requested changes will be reviewed by the Chair.
Initial Review - Approved with Stipulations

Vote Count	Vote Type	Comments
7	For	
0	Against	
0	Abstain	
0	Conflict of Interest	
0	Not present for Vote	

[redacted]

IBC Number:	**TAMU-CC-IBC-2025-0073**
Protocol Title:	Identification of Cattle-Associated Fecal Pollution and Its Impact on Human Heath in Oyster Waters
Principal Investigator:	Powers, Nicole
Primary Reviewers:	Jeffrey Turner, PhD and Lee Lehman, MSc
Conflict of Interest:	N/A
Lay Summary:	The purpose of this project is to quantify cattle-associated fecal pollution in oyster harvesting waters and perform a quantitative microbial risk assessment (QMRA) to estimate human health risks based on the cattle waste as well as previously measured human and pig fecal waste. Identifying the fecal sources and risks associated with the oyster harvesting waters from a recreational standpoint as well as the risks associated with the oysters themselves from a consumer standpoint will help improve water quality and safeguard public health in the Copano Bay watershed.
Biohazardous Agents:	Synthetic DNA

NIH Guidelines:	III-F: Use of recombinant or synthetic nucleic acid molecules for detection (e.g. probes)
Submission Type:	Research Protocol, Determination if an IBC permit is needed
Biosafety Level:	BSL-1

This similar the previous protocol with a different set of samples. Samples are already extracted for DNA as samples come from an approved protocol. Again, the synthetic DNA used is non-coding and will only be used as a positive control in a PCR reaction. It is not recombinant, no origin of replication, and will not be used as a building block for the creation of r/s DNA. Per NIH guidelines section III-F, the proposed use of gBlocks is exempt since it qualifies as a simple nucleic acid that lacks an origin of replication and cannot replicate in a living cell. All other aspects of the project are spelled out well. EHS would like for the lab area [redacted] to be specified as it is a shared lab area.

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Stipulations:
1. Section 10.4 (Does the protocol involve any of....): Verification request. Committee asked if these samples are from a another approved protocol and now only DNA? If so, you may uncheck Biological Agents. If not, that is, there will be new samples with bacteria, then leave as is.

[redacted]

VI. Tabled Studies
None.

VII. De Novo Reviews
None.

VIII. Annual Reviews
None.

IX. Amendments

[redacted]

[redacted]

PI Dr. Filep exits at 2:22 pm.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

X. Reportable Events
None.

XI. Lab Inspections
None.

XII. Biological Safety (BSR) Review
None.

Dr. Turner, left 2:45 pm, no voting items after his departure (quorum unchanged).

XIII. Miscellaneous
A) Coordinator reported that the audit department of TAMUS requested information on our adherence to the new policy (NOT-OD-25-082) for making minutes available on-line to the public. This was an internal audit, also known as an internal check. Coordinator immediately sent the requested information as we have been in compliance since policy took effect in June; received a thank you for the quick response.

[redacted]

[redacted]

XIV. Closing Comments
[redacted]

The meeting was adjourned at 2:51 PM.