

BIOSAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES

The Watertown BioSafety Committee has scheduled a REMOTE ZOOM meeting on
Thursday, September 5, 2024 at 7:00 pm

PRESENT: Brad Parsons, Chairman, Deb McEwan, Mia Lieberman, Ralph Mele, Maureen Foley, Clerk,

In attendance: Richard Williams, Zaira Martin Moldes

CALL TO ORDER: Brad Parsons called the meeting to order 7:02 pm

Minutes

Minutes approvals for August 1, 2024

All Approved

Public Comment

No Public Comments

Permit Applications:

Jana Care – 313 Pleasant Street 3W

Richard Williams, Chief Scientist gave a short presentation of the company's activities. Jana is using human blood samples in a BSL-2 lab. Dr. Lieberman questioned the sources of the blood samples and the ethics that are in place. Mr. Mele inquired about the shared space with an incubator. Jana has their own space at the facility. Mr. Parsons asked where the community member lives on the IBC.

Dr. Lieberman made a motion to recommend approval of the application to the Board of Health without conditions:

(Lieberman, McEwan) (4,0)

Roll Call

Amendments:

Cultivarium – 490 Arsenal Way #110

Zaira Martin Moldes, Principal Scientist gave a presentation of the company's new process for evaluating promoters used for their research. Dr. Moldes stated Cultivarium is introducing additional organisms and common antibiotics. Dr. Moldes stated a new software SecureDNA is used to determine if any promoters from RG3 or RG4 organisms are present and if the promoter sequences are associated with genes encoding virulence factors or toxins. No promoters from RG4 organisms will be used, and promoter sequences from RG3 organisms will not be used if they are associated with virulence factors, antibiotic resistance markers or toxins. Mr. Mele asked why Cultivarium is asking for an amendment? Dr. Moldes explained that the company had inadvertently ordered promoter sequences from RG3 organisms - as soon as this was realized, they stopped the work, notified the company that had synthesized the promoters, the WBSC and the FBI WMD team (who did not find this to be of substantial risk). This amendment was submitted to the WBSC in order to request permission to use RG3 promoter sequences not associated with virulence factors, toxins or antibiotic resistance markers as determined by the new screening process. Dr. McEwan stated there is no concern in her opinion as detection methods improve and are ongoing. Dr. Moldes stated every sequence will be analyzed. Dr. Lieberman asked about potential for contamination. Mr. Parsons asked if the software will be used once the materials are onsite or before. Dr. McEwan stated it is another layer of safety when getting a sequence without the promoter.

Mr. Parsons stated this amendment will not present to the BOH.

Items that were not anticipated before publication of this agenda.

Dr. McEwan wants to talk about sequences. Cultivarium was flagged by a third party. Dr. Lieberman stated Watertown does not have companies with large libraries. Dr. McEwan stated all a company needs is one strand. Dr. McEwan stated her concern was that Cultivarium was not aware of what they were working with. Dr. McEwan would like to have question on the new applications ask about plasmids screening and purchasing.

Renewals will be fast approaching. Schedule a meeting to review and update the renewal application.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be October 10, 2024

Adjourn

Adjourned at 8:06 PM