

**NIMH ACUC Meeting  
Virtual Meeting  
May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
2:00 P.M.**

**Members Attending:** T. Usdin, J. Raber,

Redacted by agreement

Redacted by agreement

**Absent:**

Redacted by agreement

**Visitors:**

Redacted by agreement

**Executive Secretary:**

Redacted by agreement

**1. Approval of Minutes, Review of Designated Items & Committee Correspondences**

Minutes of the March Meeting – Approved

Minor Amendments Approved in March and April – Reviewed

Items Approved via Designated Review during March and April – Reviewed

Annual Review and Renewal Memos Sent During March and April– Reviewed

**2. Reports**

**A. ACRF Tower:**

- Redacted by agreement reported that helicobacter had been detected in a sentinel animal. While helicobacter had not been detected for a long time, it is not a pathogen that the facility excludes.

**B. Primate Report:**

- Redacted by agreement reported the current pair housing percentages. Currently there are 226 macaques in the colony; 34 animals are permanently exempt from social housing for scientific reasons (11%), 11 are temporarily exempt for scientific reasons (4%) for a total of 45 animals exempt for any reason (~20%). We have 70 animals currently paired (representing 30% of the entire colony; if exempt animals are excluded, we have 38% of available macaques paired). Another 16 animals are in progress toward pairing.

Currently there are about 175 animals in the colony, 70 percent of which are socially housed in either pair or group settings. We are working with investigators to pair or group house the remaining animals. Currently no marmosets are exempt from social housing for research reasons.

### 3. Old Business

- **Suspension of Animal Activities** – At the March ACUC meeting the Committee reviewed the memo from the PI discussing the recent suspension of animal activities related to an incident of work outside of a protocol. At that time, the Committee requested additional information regarding training, supervision, and the arrangement of scheduled and unscheduled visits by the VMRB staff to assure that procedures are being carried out as described in the ASP. [Redacted by agreement] contacted the PI and conveyed the Committee's requirements for the reinstatement of the protocol. Another memo was generated by the PI providing greater details addressing the Committee's concerns. This memo was circulated to the Committee who by consensus agreed that it met the requested criteria for reinstatement. The PI was sent a notice on March 23, 2020 that her protocol was reinstated. The laboratory will contact the VMRB staff to alert them at the start of any research related procedures. After further discussion, the Committee voted to close this incident. Dr. Usdin and Dr. Raber will write a memo to be sent to [Redacted by agreement] and OLAW for the official close out of the matter.
- **Tail Biopsy Policy** – One member asked about the status of the proposed policy. [Redacted by agreement] stated that the subcommittee met and discussed the differences in ages for rats between the proposed NIMH policy and the ARAC guideline. They also discussed the potential impact on a behavioral study if some rats had experienced anesthesia for a tail biopsy and others had not. The sub-committee felt that this issue could be addressed by working to streamline the procedure by requesting tail biopsies through VMRB staff and litter weaning from [Redacted by agreement] so that pups would have their tail biopsy collected as soon after weaning as possible such that general anesthesia would not be needed. If that change can be made, then the sub-committee recommended no changes to the NIMH Tail Biopsy Policy as currently written. The sub-committee also recommended performing a study to verify that the L.E.T. ointment is efficacious but did not require that the policy wait until this study could be done. The final draft of the policy will be forwarded to [Redacted by agreement] for distribution and consideration at the next the next meeting.

### 4. New Business

- **OLAW Audit Follow-Up Communication**– Dr. Raber informed the Committee about the follow-up communication from the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) regarding their findings from their recent site visit. In the letter provided by OLAW NIMH received several commendations. The letter also included several issues to be addressed, without attributing them to specific sites. Dr. Raber stated that the items relevant to NIMH are as follows:
  1. Inconsistent justification for certain potentially painful procedures – OLAW observed that scientific justifications provided by investigators and the subsequent ACUC review were inconsistent.

The discussion at our March meeting, that our Committee will strive to provide a thorough and consistent review and approval of the justification for all potentially painful and/or distressful procedures, was reviewed.

2. OLAW stated that some protocols lack strong justification for the conduct of behavioral tests, (e.g., forced swim test, prolonged restraint, and tail suspension protocols).

The discussion at our March meeting, that our Committee will ensure that strong justifications are present for all studies proposing to use column E behavioral tests was reviewed. The justification will not only include the test endpoint, but also a discussion of why that specific test is required to achieve the scientific goal.

3. OLAW reported that they found potential fire egress issues in some NIMH NHP laboratories in Redacted by agreement. Dr. Raber stated that the NIH Fire Marshal was asked to evaluate all laboratories in this building and no code violations were identified. This will be reported to OLAW.
4. OLAW stated that “in numerous areas throughout the campus behavioral equipment and caging in PI laboratories and procedure rooms (both within central facilities and in laboratories), were hand disinfected. However, there was no system for routine monitoring of sanitation efficacy.”. OLAW recommended implementation of a process for the routine monitoring of the efficacy of sanitation.

The ACUC discussed that while this verification has not been routinely done, there is substantial evidence that our policy is effective in prevention of disease transmission between groups of animals. The Committee discussed several potential methods of verification that could be put in place to address this issue. It was stated that since this appears to be an NIH global husbandry issue, the item will be addressed by OACU following input from individual institutes and will likely be brought before the Animal Research Advisory Committee for discussion. One member asked when our responses were due back to OLAW. It was stated that institute responses were due to OACU by June 1<sup>st</sup> and that the NIH full response was due to OLAW by July 31<sup>st</sup>. The Committee will be updated on the NIH response.

## 5. **Animal Protocol and Amendment Review**

*\* Recommendations have been broken down into two categories, “Administrative Recommendations” and “Clarification Items”. The identified items in each category are provided below. The “Administrative Recommendations” are highlighted in yellow and the “Clarification Items” are not highlighted. The “Administrative Recommendations” will be made to the original version of the item by the ACUC Executive Secretary using the “Track Changes” feature in Microsoft Word® and forwarded to the PI for their review.*

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**Animal Study Protocol Amendments:** *Tabled to Designated Review*

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Meeting was adjourned at 4:41 PM.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 2 pm.

**NIMH ACUC Virtual Meeting**  
**June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020**  
**2:00 P.M.**

**Members Attending:** T. Usdin, J. Raber, [Redacted by agreement]  
[Redacted by agreement]

**Visitors:** [Redacted by agreement]

**Executive Secretary:** [Redacted by agreement]

**1. Approval of Minutes, Review of Designated Items & Committee Correspondences**

Minutes of the May Meeting – Approved

Minor Amendments Approved in May – Reviewed

Items Approved via Designated Review during May – Reviewed

Items Approved Via Veterinary Verification and Consultation - Reviewed

Annual Review and Renewal Memos Sent During May– Reviewed

**2. Reports**

A. [Redacted by agreement]

- Dr. Raber reported no change to the status of the animal facility.

B. Primate Report:

- Dr. Raber reported no significant changes to the pairing numbers.

**3. Old Business**

- **Tail Biopsy Policy** – The Committee reviewed the policy that the working group had discussed and revised. One member suggested accepting this draft until such time as a more comprehensive one that covered more biopsy procedures (i.e. – ear samples, buccal swabs, etc.) could be created. Concerns over this protocol included the routine use of a non-pharmaceutical grade reagent and use of an analgesic agent for a purpose for which its efficacy is not documented. A concern that the compounded analgesic L.E.T was a non-pharmaceutical grade product was brought up. Subsequent to the meeting it was determined be currently listed as available at pharmaceutical grade. A second concern was that use of L.E.T as not been established as efficacious for rodent tail biopsies. The rationale for its use includes that it has been used

in both human and veterinary clinical situations for pain relief involving injuries more extensive than a tail biopsy. The Committee will re-evaluate the use of L.E.T. as more information becomes available. One member stated that the working group also wanted some follow-up review done to see if the policy is working as intended. It was suggested that follow up could be conducted during post-approval monitoring of laboratories and during the semi-annual walk-throughs. The Committee voted to approve the guideline as presented and Ms. Drake will forward a copy of the approved document to all rodent investigators.

- **AAALAC Site Visit** – [Redacted by agreement] informed the Committee that, after a recent conversation with AAALAC International, he was planning on having a discussion with [Redacted by agreement] about moving the accreditation site visit to June of 2021. Further information will be as it becomes available.

#### 4. **New Business**

- **Microsoft Teams** – Dr. Usdin stated that he was working on establishing a ACUC group on Microsoft Teams that would allow members of the ACUC to review and comment on documents and view the comments made by other members. It is hoped that this would make meetings more efficient and assist in providing feedback to the submitting investigator.

#### 5. **Animal Protocol and Amendment Review**

*\* Recommendations have been broken down into two categories, “Administrative Recommendations” and “Clarification Items”. The identified items in each category are provided below. The “Administrative Recommendations” are highlighted in yellow and the “Clarification Items” are not highlighted. The “Administrative Recommendations” will be made to the original version of the item by the ACUC Executive Secretary using the “Track Changes” feature in Microsoft Word® and forwarded to the PI for their review.*

**Animal Study Protocol:** *Tabled to Designated Review*

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**Animal Study Protocol Amendments:** *Tabled to Designated Review*

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Meeting was adjourned at 4:15pm

The next meeting is scheduled for July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 2 pm.

**NIMH ACUC Virtual Meeting  
July 14, 2020  
2:00 P.M.**

**Members Attending:** T. Usdin, J. Raber, [Redacted by agreement]  
[Redacted by agreement]

**Visitors:** [Redacted by agreement]

**Executive Secretary:** [Redacted by agreement]

**1. Approval of Minutes, Review of Designated Items & Committee Correspondences**

Minutes of the June Meeting – Approved

- The Committee further discussed the previous Tail Biopsy Policy deliberations as reflected in the minutes and required the following modification: “A concern that the compounded analgesic L.E.T was a non-pharmaceutical grade product was brought up. Subsequent to the meeting it was determined be currently listed as available at pharmaceutical grade. A second concern was that use of L.E.T as not been established as efficacious for rodent tail biopsies. The rationale for its use includes that it has been used in both human and veterinary clinical situations for pain relief involving injuries more extensive than a tail biopsy. The Committee will re-evaluate the use of L.E.T. as more information becomes available.” The Committee voted to approve the minutes with the above modification.

Minor Amendments Approved in June – Reviewed

Items Approved via Designated Review during June – Reviewed

Items Approved Via Veterinary Verification and Consultation - Reviewed

Annual Review and Renewal Memos Sent During June– Reviewed

**2. Reports**

A. [Redacted by agreement]

- [Redacted by agreement] reported no change to the status of the animal facility.

B. Primate Report:

- [Redacted by agreement] reported that VMRB continues their work on establishing success pairings of animals in both the rhesus and marmoset colonies but that the pairing numbers have not changed significantly.

### 3. Old Business

- **Microsoft Teams** – Dr. Usdin stated that several members participated in the review of the July agenda items on the Team site and that it appeared to work fairly well. He is continuing to work with the IT department to allow our outside members to utilize this format as well.

### 4. New Business

- **None**

### 5. Animal Protocol and Amendment Review

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**Animal Study Protocol:** *Tabled to Designated Review*

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**Animal Study Protocol Amendments:** *Approved*

Redacted  
by

**Neural Coding of Visual Stimuli and Their Relation to Reward  
Contingency in the Awake Monkey**

Redacted by  
agreement

PI)

Meeting was adjourned at 4:06pm

The next meeting is scheduled for August 11, 2020 at 2 pm.

**NIMH ACUC Virtual Meeting  
August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
2:00 P.M.**

**Members Attending:** T. Usdin, J. Raber, [Redacted by agreement]  
[Redacted by agreement]

**Members Absent:** [Redacted by agreement]

**Visitors:** [Redacted by agreement]

**Executive Secretary:** [Redacted by agreement]

**1. Approval of Minutes, Review of Designated Items & Committee Correspondences**

Minutes of the July Meeting – Approved

Minor Amendments Approved in July – Reviewed

Items Approved via Designated Review during July – Reviewed

Annual Review and Renewal Memos Sent During July – Reviewed

**2. Reports**

A. [Redacted by agreement]

- [Redacted by agreement] reported no change to the status of the animal facility.

B. Primate Report:

- [Redacted by agreement] reported that VMRB continues their work on establishing success pairings of animals in both the rhesus and marmoset colonies but that the pairing numbers have not changed significantly.

**3. Old Business**

- **Microsoft Teams** – Dr. Usdin stated that both of our outside members now have access and we will continue to work on navigating the system as we work to review and edit agenda items on the system so that we do not have multiple revised versions on the site.

**4. New Business**

- **Targeted Attack and FOIA Requests** – Dr. Usdin initiated a discussion of an email that was sent to many NIH employees by (b)(5)  
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Dr. Raber stated the New England Anti-Vivisection Society (NEAVS) has sent a FOIA request to several other institutions requesting their most recent AAALAC Program Description. This document provides a very detailed description of an entire program including floor plans, species, types of research, animal numbers, and laboratory locations. NIH has not yet received such a request, (b)(5)

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## 5. **Animal Protocol and Amendment Review**

\* *Recommendations have been broken down into two categories, "Administrative Recommendations" and "Clarification Items". The identified items in each category are provided below. The "Administrative Recommendations" are highlighted in yellow and the "Clarification Items" are not highlighted. The "Administrative Recommendations" will be made to the original version of the item by the ACUC Executive Secretary using the "Track Changes" feature in Microsoft Word® and forwarded to the PI for their review.*

**Animal Study Protocol:** *Tabled to Designated Review or Full Committee Review  
Pending PI Action*

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**Animal Study Protocol Amendments:** *Sent to Designated Review*

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Meeting was adjourned at 3:37pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 2 pm.

**NIMH ACUC Virtual Meeting  
September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
2:00 P.M.**

**Members Attending:**

T. Usdin, J. Raber,

Redacted by agreement

Redacted by agreement

**Members Absent:**

Redacted by agreement

**Visitors:**

Redacted by agreement

**Executive Secretary:**

Redacted by agreement

**1. Approval of Minutes, Review of Designated Items & Committee Correspondences**

Minutes of the August Meeting – Approved

Minor Amendments Approved in August – Reviewed

Items Approved via Designated Review during August – Reviewed

Annual Review and Renewal Memos Sent During August – Reviewed

Annual Reviews Submitted for Review During August – Reviewed and Approved

**2. Reports**

A. Redacted by agreement

- Redacted by agreement reported no change to the status of the animal facility.

**B. Primate Report:**

- Redacted by agreement reported that several primates have been moved to the NIH Animal Center to make room for construction that is about to begin in Redacted by agreement. Other animals have been moved within Redacted by agreement and appear to be tolerating the move well, but the NIMH Technicians have increased their monitoring of the animals to ensure that there are no adverse behavioral effects.

**C. Incident Report (adverse events, reportable incidents, animal welfare concerns):**

- None

**3. Old Business**

- Smith Review of Procedures** – As a condition of the reinstatement of Redacted by agreement protocol, arrangements were to be made for a NIMH veterinarian to observe when certain protocol related procedures were conducted. Redacted by agreement asked if the vets

had been contacted. It was stated that they had not. It was decided that [Redacted by agreement] would send a reminder to [Redacted by agreement] regarding this requirement.

[Redacted by agreement]

#### 4. New Business

- **Fall Semi-Annual Walk Throughs** – Dr. Raber asked the Committee to consider for this Fall's semi-annual review the use of ad hoc reviews for the [Redacted by agreement]

[Redacted by agreement]

animal facilities. The ad hoc reviewers would be members of other ACUC's that would act as our agents and forward their walk thru findings relating to our animals to us. This would help reduce the number of areas our reviewers would have to enter and limit the number of potential COVID related exposures. Our reviewers would still need to inspect our [Redacted by agreement] facility as well as all primate laboratories and laboratories where surgery is performed outside of an animal facility. Dr. Raber went on to stated that we would receive the names of the reviewers used by the other institutes and appoint them as ad hoc consultants to our Committee. Any items needing correction would be listed in our semi-annual report and would be our responsibility. The Committee voted to approve the use of ad hoc reviewers for the Fall semi-annual review.

[Redacted by agreement]

stated that she would be sending out an email to the Committee to determine possible dates and times when members would be available. One member asked if we could establish narrow windows for the times for the walk thru to allow the laboratories to be empty during the review. Another member stated that we like to have lab member(s) present to answer questions and that both the reviewers and lab members could wear a face shield in addition to a face mask, in addition to being conscious of social distancing requirements.

The Committee also discussed the OLAW recommendation regarding the participation of outside members participating on semi-annual reviews. While OLAW did not state that the participation of the outside members was a requirement for all semi-annual reviews, they did stress that they should participate. While our outside members did not participate in the Spring 2020 review due to the OLAW site visit and the reduction of on-campus activities due to COVID-19, our outside members have always been encouraged to participate and have been extremely generous with their time. One or both of them have participated in each of the Spring and Fall reviews since the Fall of 2016.

- **Announcement** - At the end of the meeting, Dr. Raber announced that this will be

[Redacted by agreement]

last ACUC meeting for a while as she will be [Redacted by agreement]

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next week. We wish [Redacted by agreement] well and congratulate her

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#### 5. Animal Protocol and Amendment Review

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*made to the original version of the item by the ACUC Executive Secretary using the "Track Changes" feature in Microsoft Word® and forwarded to the PI for their review.*

**Animal Study Protocol:** *Tabled to Designated Review*

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Meeting was adjourned at 2:41pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 2 pm.

**NIMH ACUC Virtual Meeting**  
**October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020**  
**2:00 P.M.**

**Members Attending:** T. Usdin, J. Raber, B.

Redacted by agreement

Redacted by agreement

**Members Absent:**

Redacted by agreement

**Visitors:**

Redacted by agreement

**Executive Secretary:**

Redacted by agreement

**1. Approval of Minutes, Review of Designated Items & Committee Correspondences**

Minutes of the September Meeting – Approved

Minor Amendments Approved in September – Reviewed

Items Approved via Designated Review during September – Reviewed

Items Approved via VVC during September - Reviewed

Annual Review and Renewal Memos Sent During September – Reviewed

Annual Reviews Submitted for Review During September – Reviewed and Approved

**2. Reports**

A.

Redacted by agreement

- Redacted by agreement reported no change to the status of the animal facility.

B. Primate Report:

- Redacted by agreement reported that several primates have been moved to the Redacted by agreement Center to make room for construction that is about to begin in Redacted by agreement. The number of pair housed rhesus monkeys remains at approximately 30% and marmoset pair or group housed animals is about 70%.

C. Incident Report (adverse events, reportable incidents, animal welfare concerns):

- None

**3. Old Business**

- Redacted by agreement **Review of Procedures** – As a condition of the reinstatement of Redacted by agreement protocol, arrangements were to be made for a NIMH veterinarian to observe when certain protocol related procedures were conducted. It was decided at the last ACUC meeting that Redacted by agreement would send a reminder to Redacted by agreement regarding this

requirement [Redacted by agreement] asked if the vets had been contacted. It was stated that they had not. As of the time of this meeting, no communication has been received from [Redacted by agreement] It is not known if any procedures that would be covered by this requirement are being carried out.

- **Fall Semi-Annual Walk Throughs** – Dr. Usdin asked for a brief report concerning how the semi-annual walk-throughs had gone. [Redacted by agreement] stated that she, [Redacted by agreement] [Redacted by agreement] had been able to complete the inspection of all laboratory areas and our [Redacted by agreement] facility. The site visit team was able to review all areas while maintaining social distancing and felt comfortable with their safety and ability to carry out the inspections. In addition to the standard face mask, the group also wore disposable face shields or all-enclosed safety glasses. [Redacted by agreement] stated that the areas for the most part seemed uncluttered and in a good state. [Redacted by agreement] stated that she had received reports from most of the other ACUC's ad hoc appointed teams concerning the other areas reviewed and would send out our report to the Committee for review once all of the ad hoc reports had been received.

#### 4. **New Business**

- **Report about the accidental loss of an head implanted mouse** – Dr. Raber informed the Committee that he and [Redacted by agreement] of the OACU had been contacted by a veterinarian in the [Redacted by agreement] facility concerning a mouse that had gotten its head implant snagged in the filter top of a ventilated mouse cage. Animals with head implants are routinely housed in cages without a wire bar feeder to prevent the implant from being damaged. This animal chewed through the filter in the cage lid and get its head caught in the outer mesh work. After some discussion with the veterinarians and the investigator, a stainless-steel plate was designed to be fitted into the lid that will prevent contact with the filter but not impede air flow. After discussion, the Committee determined that the measures being taken are an appropriate step to prevent further occurrences and that no action by the ACUC is necessary at this time.

#### 5. **Animal Protocol and Amendment Review**

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**Animal Study Protocol:** *Tabled to Designated Review*

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**Animal Study Protocol Amendments:** *Tabled to Designated Review*

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Meeting was adjourned at 4:30.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 2 pm.