

Summary of Advocacy Committee Meeting
November 1, 2012

1. Call to order

Jerry Parr called the meeting to order at 12 Noon CDT November 1, 2012. Attendance is recorded in Attachment 1.

2. Approval of minutes

Minutes of the October 4, 2012, meeting were reviewed. Elizabeth Turner moved that the minutes be approved. Paula Hogg seconded. All present voted in favor, with the exception of Lara Phelps who abstained since she had been absent that day.

3. Newsletter Feedback

The newsletter was sent earlier in the week, in a new format that included a “click here” hyperlinked button to bring up the formatted newsletter in a browser, instead of sending a pdf attachment. Some participants reported that the button did not work, but for others it did, and there was no clear pattern of whether this depended on the browser or email system used. Future emails should include an alternate way of accessing the document, perhaps “if you are unable to use the button, here is the URL....”

The editor said the newsletter seemed exceptionally long but not “interesting” since most of the articles addressed issues that had already been covered. One suggestion was to use an alternate format of having a short summary paragraph with a link to the full article.

We also discussed the overall format, which was designed for a printed newsletter, with sidebar columns that actually make reading the electronic version somewhat more difficult. Jerry will ask Jan to prepare a mock-up of more efficient design for an e-newsletter, in time for the December Advocacy meeting.

4. Position Statement SOP

Since the October meeting, all comments were addressed into the draft of SOP 1-118, “Development of Position Statements,” and it was circulated for an electronic vote. Elizabeth Turner made the motion to approve it and Mike Wichman seconded; 12 yes votes and 2 abstentions approved the document. It is now considered “Provisional” and can be used by TNI; it will be forwarded to the Policy Committee for approval, at which time it becomes “Final.”

After discussing how to proceed, whether to circulate the SOP to all committees or target particular positions to be developed, participants agreed to make three assignments, as follows, and then allow the process to evolve from this pilot stage.

- “Small labs can have good quality systems” – assigned to Small Laboratory Advocacy Committee, Keith Chapman
- “Why we believe in the quality systems approach” – assigned to Advocacy Committee
- “The importance of a PT program” – assigned to PT Executive Committee, Stacie Metzler, Chair

The initial assignment will request a draft in time for discussion at conference in Denver, but if the committee workload makes that seem excessively burdensome, extensions will be granted.

5. New Business

Jerry noted that Kirstin Daigle, who has done the excellent series of Member Profiles in our TNI newsletter, will no longer be able to fill that role due to time constraints. He asked for volunteers from among the committee, and hearing none, asked for nominations instead. Lara noted that Ms. Stephanie Drier of MN DOH's AB seemed to enjoy her volunteer time at the Information Desk at conference this past summer, and might be a good candidate. Participants agreed to ask Ms. Drier if she would be willing to accept this role.

6. MUR training

Jerry does not yet have a schedule for the MUR webinar course, but noted that the guidance document is posted to the website (see <http://www.nelac-institute.org/cms/posts/1350353548.php>) Jack Farrell used this guidance document in his presentation at the recent FSEA meeting and it was also used by several presenters at the EPA Region 6 QA conference in Dallas. Jerry also noted that QC is a non-issue for NELAP accredited labs, anyway, since they'll necessarily be already following those 12 steps!

7. SLAG Update

Keith Chapman reported that there was a call of the Small Laboratory Advocacy Group on October 31, with some lively discussion of operating under emergency conditions due to the storm Sandy activity. They also discussed small labs' interest in quality systems. Keith noted that the small lab survey seems to be dragging on, but he has most of the questions compiled. Elizabeth Turner noted that her lab has a "professional subscription" to Survey Monkey and offered that tool for use in conducting the survey; Keith agreed enthusiastically, and promised to gather the questions and send them to Jerry and Elizabeth soon. They discussed piloting the survey with a small group before sending out mass email, but were hopeful that with Survey Monkey performing the statistics, a report from the survey results can be ready in time for the next newsletter (late winter?)

8. Next meeting

The next meeting of the Advocacy Committee will be on Thursday, December 6, at 12 noon Central time. Jerry Parr will continue to serve as Interim Chair while Steve Arms is on leave of absence.

Attachment 1

	Name	Stakeholder Group	Present/Absent
1.	Lara Phelps	EPA (Other)	Present
2.	Steve Arms	AB	Absent
3.	Lynn Bradley	Other	Present
4.	Judy Duncan	Other	Absent
5.	Kenneth Jackson	Other	Present
6.	Martina McGarvey	AB	Present
7.	Susan Wyatt	AB	Absent

8.	Zonetta English	Lab	Present
9.	Paula Hogg	Lab	Present
10.	Elizabeth Turner	Lab	Present
11.	Gary Ward	AB	Present
12.	Michael Wichman	Lab	Present
13.	Janice Willey	Federal	Present
14.	Keith Chapman	Small Lab Advocate	Present
	Ex Officio		
	Sharon Mertens	TNI Board Chair	Present
	Associate Members		
	Kirstin Daigle	Lab	Absent
	Judy Morgan	Lab	Absent
	Aurora Shields	Lab	Absent
	JoAnn Boyd	Lab and FAC	Absent
	Staff		
	Jerry Parr	TNI ED	Present
	Carol Batterton	TNI PA	Absent