

Summary of Advocacy Committee Meeting
January 29, 2014

1. Call to order

Steve Arms called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm Eastern, January 29, 2014. Attendance is recorded in Attachment 1. In Carol Batterton's absence, Lynn Bradley assumed responsibility for minutes.

The purpose of this session was to conduct the business of the committee, so that the scheduled Thursday session can be devoted entirely to planning for the upcoming reassessment of the national environmental accreditation program.

2. Introduction of Committee, Its Mission, Role and Members

Steve provided background on the Advocacy Committee and those members present introduced themselves. Steve indicated that the current session would be an opportunity to discuss highlights of the conference as well as planning the next newsletter and upcoming position papers. NOTE: due to time constraints, the newsletter and position papers will be taken up at the February 6 meeting.

3. Summary of New Kentucky Certification Program

Zonetta English introduced Mr. Frank Hall and Mr. Pat Garrity of the Division of Water, KY Department of Environmental Protection. Mr. Hall offered a short discussion of the new wastewater lab certification program. The proposed program won legislative approval in a single session and was implemented rapidly. It was developed after a Notice of Intent to Sue from an environmental group prompted a review of wastewater lab data that showed unacceptable performance from some labs. The legislature appropriated funds to hire assessors, and new staff are on board, but training is problematic since apparently there are no resources available to train these assessors.

NOTE: for program details, please see <http://water.ky.gov/permitting/Pages/labcert.aspx> This is not a NELAP program but KY may, upon document review, recognize NELAP accreditations as equivalent to its certification requirements. Mr. Hall stated that they plan to "bridge" to NELAP at some point in the future. Aaren Alger, Chair of the NELAP Accreditation Council, offered information sharing and other assistance in developing documents, when the program decides to upgrade to NELAP.

4. Highlights of the Conference

California

The withdrawal of California from NELAP was noted during the Annual Meeting and discussed during the Accreditation Council (AC) session on Tuesday morning, also. At its January 8 meeting, TNI's Board charged the Advocacy Committee with developing an expanded statement, beyond what was initially

posted to the TNI web site. Jerry, Lynn and Aaren will work to have this posted no later than midday Tuesday, February 4.

Participants discussed the purpose and audience of a more detailed or updated statement. Eventual consensus was that an updated statement – what else has taken place, NELAP support for the CA labs – will be posted to the TNI web site, and all interested parties and questioners will be referred to that location, and the updated TNI statement will be posted in advance of the Wednesday, February 5, meeting of the EPA Forum on Environmental Measurements (FEM,) so that the FEM Executive Director can reference it for updating that group.

We also discussed whether ACIL might be interested in issuing its own statement about California's withdrawal from NELAP and its impact on the laboratory community, hopefully in a form which supports the NELAP program and the ACs rigorous peer evaluation process as well as the AC's efforts to ease the transition for the laboratories in California.

Several AC members noted that the updated statement ought also to acknowledge the efforts of the TNI Proficiency Testing (PT) Providers to quickly provide summarized PT data for the affected labs.

One lesson learned is that the EPA Office of Groundwater and Drinking Water needs to be added to the NELAP Evaluation SOP, to ensure that the headquarters program as well as the regional offices are notified when any of the NELAP Accreditation Bodies (ABs) encounter problems that might affect drinking water accreditations.

SSAS

This program is continuing to develop and expand, and should get a dedicated article in the next newsletter.

LAMS

The Information Technology Committee realizes that many members of the TNI community are unaware of this database and the useful information it provides, and that it is publicly accessible. Also, the method compendium that TNI's Database Administrator, Dan Hickman, has nearly completed is available as links to the Method Codes in this database – where publicly available, a copy of the method is provided, and if copyrighted, a link to the purchase location is given.

NEFAP

A brochure about NEFAP, developed some months ago, seems not to be available on the website. Marlene noted that it would be handy to have, to print and distribute with the NEFAP exhibit. Apparently, there were some graphic

problems such that it didn't always print properly, but those can be fixed and the brochure again posted.

Two ABs are fully accredited and two more have achieved preliminary accreditation, pending laboratory applications so that an assessment may be witnessed or observed in order to complete the process.

We need to include NEFAP in the re-evaluation of national environmental accreditation, and continue highlighting the program in the TNI newsletter. Some contracts are now requiring accreditation for field sampling and measurement, and apparently more are considering that possibility.

Chemistry Committee MDL Document

This item is the culmination of the process begun by a federal advisory committee that completed its work some years ago. The document is a procedure that is now accepted by EPA and will become part of the next Methods Update Rule. We discussed whether there is some further way that TNI can utilize this committee work product, since the committee essentially finished the work of the initial advisory committee.

Crypto Accreditation

This session was a success – well attended and highly informative.

4. Spring Newsletter

The newsletter articles will be due by February 28, so the newsletter itself can be published by March 15. The chair decided to delay selection and assignment of articles until the February 6 meeting, in order to have information from the report-outs at the closing session of conference. Sharon noted that we need to announce committee openings in the newsletter.

5. Next meeting

The next meeting will be Thursday, February 6 at 1 pm Eastern. If Carol is not available, Lynn will prepare minutes.

Attachment 1

	Name	Stakeholder Group	Present/Absent
1.	Lara Phelps	EPA (Other)	Present
2.	Steve Arms	AB	Present
3.	Lynn Bradley	Other	Present
4.	Stephanie Drier	AB	Present
5.	Judy Duncan	Other	Absent
6.	Kenneth Jackson	Other	Absent
7.	Martina McGarvey	AB	Present
8.	Zonetta English	Lab	Present
9.	Paula Hogg	Lab	Absent
10.	Marlene Moore	Other and NEFAP	Present
11.	Elizabeth Turner	Small Lab Advocate	Absent
12.	Gary Ward	AB	Present
13.	Michael Wichman	Lab	Absent
14.	Janice Willey	Federal	Absent
	Associate Members		
	Kirstin Daigle	Lab	Absent
	Judy Morgan	Lab	Absent
	Aurora Shields	Lab	Absent
	JoAnn Boyd	Lab and FAC	Absent
	Keith Chapman	Other	Absent
	Karna Holquist	AB	Absent
	Sharon Mertens	TNI Board Chair	Present
	Staff		
	Jerry Parr	TNI ED	Present
	Carol Batterton	TNI PA	Absent

Attachment 2

Item	Status	Assigned to	Due Date
Small Lab Position Paper	Approved by TNI Board	Carol	
Prioritize future position papers	Agenda for next meeting	Committee	
PT position paper	Pending with Advocacy Comm.		
QS position paper	Pending		
FEM/ELAB response letter	Proposal for state/regional workshop approved by TNI Board. Will be discussed in Louisville	Carol, Jerry and Committee	Louisville meeting
Good practices handbook: Assign chapters for review/revision	Agenda for next meeting	Committee	
Follow up on Benefits Panel, webinars? Newsletter articles?	Newsletter article assigned	Committee	
Small Lab Handbook revisions	In progress	Carol	