

Summary of Advocacy Committee Meeting
April 4, 2019

1. Call to order

Steve Arms called the meeting to order at 12:00 Noon CDT, April 4, 2019. Attendance is recorded in Attachment 1.

2. Approval of minutes

Minutes from March 7, 2019, were reviewed, but not approved due to lack of a quorum at the beginning of the meeting.

3. Updates

- Martina reported that she had forwarded all of the newsletter articles to Jerry.
- Hotel and conference registration for the Jacksonville meeting are open.

4. Value of Accreditation position paper

Stephanie presented and discussed her comments on the position paper outline as well as her experiences in Minnesota trying to quantify the value of environmental laboratory accreditation. She noted that Minnesota currently has performance indicators that are mostly quantitative, but they are trying to evaluate quality also. She noted that qualitative and quantitative measures are both necessary for stakeholders. She also reviewed the logic model she had proposed and suggested that TNI might want to come up with numbers that addressed the outcome measures. Other comments and suggestions included:

- Rather than title this paper as “The Value of Accreditation” should we title it “Does Laboratory Accreditation Improve Data Quality” or “Does Accreditation Improve Laboratory Performance?”
- We should note that NGABs are assessed at the same level as NELAP ABs.
- Is there any relevant information related to ISO 9000 certification? Why would a business want to be ISO 9000 certified?
- We should try to push our community to the next level and try to document success. Can we get data from the NELAP ABs, enforcement cases, anecdotal evidence, etc. what information is out there?
- We still have an opportunity to do a before and after evaluation in California. We have Mitzi Miller’s “before” presentation. What about an “after” presentation? She could note that improvements in AB performance had a direct effect on laboratory performance. There are multiple layers to the question.
- Labs in CA will be given 3 years to get into compliance with the TNI standard. Mitzi’s analysis could be repeated in 3 years. This will be a long term effort.
- We could also document performance by the number of AB trainings, lab findings, etc.
- What do we actually mean by “data quality”? Is it “known and documents quality” or laboratory performance, or confidence in lab performance? Why does our accreditation scheme do this?

- We should start the position statement with a qualitative statement and whatever quantitative information we can get. Recommendations could note the quantitative data that we need. The paper can be updated yearly or whenever we get hard data. Carol will write a draft for consideration.

4. Small Laboratory Advocate

Steve reported that the Board approved the committee’s recommendation for Robin Cook as the Small Lab Advocate at the last TNI Board meeting. The Board asked for information on exactly what Robin was going to be doing. They wanted to make sure that the beneficial aspects of the program would be continued. One of the activities the Board wanted to see continued was monthly conference calls with small labs. Robin agreed to try this, but will ask for help if it gets to be too much. Other ideas suggested included:

- Develop a web page for the Small Lab Advocate with Robin’s contact information
- Hold a special small lab issues session at the winter meeting in California
- Consider whether or how to link the Small Lab Advocate to LASEC
- Invite Robin to the next TNI Board meeting to introduce her and let the Board give input

Jerry suggested that Advocacy develop a modification to their charter with an objective and success measures covering the Small Lab Advocate’s activities and present this at the next Board meeting.

5. Questions for NELAP ABs regarding use of the TNI recognized NGABs

Questions for the ABs regarding use of NGABs were finalized after the last meeting. Steve asked for suggestions on how to present these questions to the NELAP AC to get their input. Jerry indicated that he would like to have the ABs’ responses prior the strategic planning in October. After discussion, the Committee decided to hold a face to face meeting in Jacksonville with the AC and the NGABs.

6. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Thursday, May 2, 2019, at 12 Noon Central time.

Attachment 1

	Name	Stakeholder Group	Present/Absent
1.	Lara Phelps	EPA (Other)	Present
2.	Steve Arms	Other	Present
3.	Lynn Bradley	Other	Present
4.	Martina McGarvey	AB	Present
5.	Stacie Crandall	Lab	Absent
6.	Zonetta English	Lab	Absent
7.	Marlene Moore	Other and NEFAP	Present
8.	Janice Willey	Federal	Present
9.	Trinity O’Neal	Lab	Present
10.	Robin Cook	Lab	Present

11.	Sharon Mertens	Lab	Present
12.	Teresa Coins	Lab	Absent
13.	Ron Coss	Lab	Absent
	Associate Members		
	Kirstin Daigle	Lab	Absent
	Judy Morgan	Lab	Absent
	JoAnn Boyd	Lab and FAC	Absent
	Celeste Crowley	AB	Absent
	Keith Chapman	Other	Absent
	Andrea Teal	TNI Ambassador	Absent
	Devon Morgan	TNI Ambassador	Absent
	Bob Pullano	TNI Ambassador	Absent
	Lee Wolf	TNI Ambassador	Absent
	Paul Junio	TNI Ambassador	Absent
	Lily Sanchez	TNI Ambassador	Absent
	Silky Labie	Other	Absent
	Elizabeth Turner	Lab	Absent
	Stephanie Drier	AB	Present
	Erin Consuego	Lab	Present
	Staff		
	Jerry Parr	TNI ED	Present
	Carol Batterton	TNI PA	Present