

TNI Board of Directors Meeting Summary November 12, 2008

1. Roll Call and Approval of October Minutes

Directors	Present
Joe Aiello	Yes
Steve Arms	Yes
Judith Duncan	Yes
Jack Farrell	Yes
Ken Jackson	Yes
Tom McAninch	No
Sharon Mertens	Yes
Judy Morgan	Yes
Ken Olson	Yes
Aurora Shields	Yes
Matt Sica	Yes
Alfredo Sotomayor	Yes
Dave Speis	Yes
Curtis Wood	Yes
Bob Wyeth	Yes
Ex-Officio Directors	
Brooke Connor	Yes
Deb Szaro	Yes
George Detsis	Yes
Edward Hartzog	Yes
Staff	
Carol Batterton	No
Jerry Parr	Yes
Ilona Taunton	Yes
Jane Wilson	No
Janice Wlodarski	Yes

Approval of October 2008 meeting minutes:

Motion to Approve: Jack Farrell
Second: Bob Wyeth
All in Favor: Approved

2. Response to ACIL and Resolution on SW-846 Methods

The Board reviewed a draft letter to ACIL.

Comments were made that the draft letter did not address the accreditation issue. Also, that the letter does not thank ACIL for bringing the issue to our attention nor did we ask for their assistance in crafting a solution. The letter needs to be sent back to the NELAP Board and include the following elements:

1. Thank ACIL for reviewing the process and bringing the issue to our attention;
2. Ask ACIL to join in assisting with developing the solution; and
3. Tell them that a solution has not yet been identified and that we will be contacting them with progress.

Next Steps:

1. Jerry will redraft the letter and sent out via email for review and comments. The revised letter will also be sent to the NELAP Board for review at the same time. Need to define who – TNI Board? NELAP Board? – will stay in contact with ACIL.
2. We need to charge the NELAP Board to come up with a solution – a solution that will be applicable to other methods as well – and to set a timeline for developing that solution.

David Speis offers the following resolution for the Board to consider:

Resolution of the Board of Directors of The NELAC Institute

The NELAC Institute's vision since its inception has been that all entities generating environmental data in the United States will be accredited to consensus national standards. A premise of this vision is that accreditation bodies (states) participating in standards development and implementation will perform as a consortium to ensure the accreditation process is uniformly applied in a manner that facilitates interstate recognition of accreditation credentials. In recognition of that premise the Board of Directors of the NELAC Institute, acting in the best interests of the common good, has resolved to charge the NELAP Board with the task of eliminating the barriers to the interstate recognition of accreditation credentials that have been created by the development and release of revised versions of SW-846 methodology by the USEPA. The consensus system developed by the NELAP Board for this task should be applicable to future methodological changes that may impact interstate recognition of accreditation credentials. The Board of Directors of the NELAC Institute further charges the NELAP Board with the completion of this task by the 2009 summer meeting in San Antonio, Texas.

Motion to Approve: Bob
Second: Sharon
All in Favor: Approved

3. Letter from STAC and Acid Rain Accreditation Program

A new air regulation scheduled to go into effect next year would require stack testers to be accredited to an ASTM standard and Scott Evans sent a letter to Dave asking TNI to think about becoming an AB for stack testers using an ASTM standard (D7036). STAC has been unable to accredit anyone, likely because they have no system/processes in place.

After reviewing background documents, the Board decided TNI should not accredit to D7036. It doesn't fit with our mission, charter, etc.

TNI will send a letter to STAC that our Field Activities Committee (plus a couple of members from the TNI Board) would be happy to meet with the STAC Board of Directors to discuss this issue. Our program is based on 17025 and we would be happy to add the elements of D7036 to our program and consider accrediting to our standard with those additions.

Next Steps: Dave will draft a letter to STAC.

Motion to send letter and request meeting: Ken
Second: Sharon
All in Favor: Approved

4. Treasurer's Report

The TNI Board of Directors reviewed the 3rd quarter Treasurer's report in executive session.

Motion to accept Treasurer's Report: Curtis
Second: Matt
All in Favor: Approved

5. Program Reports

See Attachment 1.

Attachment 1 Program Reports

November 11, 2008

Consensus Standards Development

- SSAS committee has been meeting biweekly and will have a 2 day face-to-face meeting November 13-14 in Raleigh, NC. Committee is expected to be officially constituted (with some proposed new interest categories) during November 20th CSDB meeting.
- Other Expert Committees are responding to comments from LASC after review of their standards.
- Expert Committees are starting prep for the Miami forum, e.g. Quality Systems is designing presentation for mentoring session.

NELAP

- Six evaluation team recommendation reports have been approved by the NELAP Board for AB renewal. These are NH, LA DEQ, KS, PA, UT, and NY.
- Renewal letters for the next round of evaluations were mailed on October 1 and all ABs requested and were granted a 20 day extension. This puts the application due date at approximately Nov. 25. Paul Ellingson will remain as QAO for this round and Lynn Bradley will continue as EC.
- Ken Jackson has prepared a proposal for NELAP Board and EPA evaluators to consider which would delay the onsite evaluation for new applicants until after the new program is up and running. An added benefit of this proposal is to defer the travel costs for the onsite.
- Online training for potential new AB's was held October 23 on the EPA web training system. The NELAP Board has received and responded to several requests for assistance from AB applicants in the form of example SOPs, and other documents.
- The NELAP Board has agreed in principle to assessing fees to ABs beginning in July 2010, but no formal resolution has been voted on to date. Many ABs are facing state budget cuts and travel restrictions which may affect attendance at the Miami meeting.

Laboratory Accreditation System

- The LASC has completed review of the new TNI standard.
 - Final review tables with questions were submitted to the PT Expert Committee, QS Expert Committee and AB Expert Committee. Responses are expected this month. The group will start work on their recommendation to the NELAP Board 11-14-08.
 - A final review table with questions is in DRAFT form for the On-site Expert Committee. This should go out before 11-14-08.
 - At this point the review/recommendation process still appears to be on target for completion.
 - The procedure for the Tentative Interim Amendment was distributed to each of the chairs of the expert committees.
- The Standards Interpretation Request process is well underway.
 - 7 new requests were received in October and the first 7 final response letters were sent out.
Status of remaining questions:
 - TAC Preparing Response: 5 (should be complete by the end of November)
 - PT Board Preparing Response: 7 (2 are just about complete)
 - PT Expert Preparing Response: 2 (both are almost complete)

NELAP Board Preparing Response: 8

NELAP Board Reviewing Final Response: 3

- The TNI Webmaster is developing a method for posting the final responses. They will be posted by section of the standard to make it easier for people to find questions related to specific parts of the standard. William is also looking at search capabilities and the possibility of pulling up parts of the standard as the question is reviewed.
- Ilona is working with the TAC Assessor's Forum Subcommittee to provide any open questions for this session. A presentation will also be developed for Miami to summarize the responses to the questions raised at the Forum in Washington, DC. This will also be an opportunity to review the Standards Interpretation Request process.

PT

- The Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee has had their first meeting. Brian Boling and Carl Kircher were selected as Co-Chairs. There are currently 7 volunteers, but the group is still looking for more. The group's first action item is to update the SOP describing how limits are determined. They are also preparing requests for summary data and examining which standard they should be using – 2003 NELAC or new TNI standard.
- The A2LA on-site office visit should have occurred November 10-11th. This will finish up the A2LA review process.
- Two new PT Board members have been recommended.
- The WET FoPT Subcommittee is working to finalize the format and populate the fields for the acceptance criteria to be posted on the TNI website. They are hoping to have this ready for final review before the Miami meeting.

Technical Assistance

- TAC is planning mentoring sessions for Miami on the new TNI quality systems standards and training for potential ABs.
- TAC is planning the assessment forum for Miami.
- TAC will begin discussing regional workshops for training labs on the new TNI standards at their next meeting.
- TAC and the NELAP Board coordinated with Jerry to set up a web page for new AB applicants.
- Web training for new AB applicants was held on October 23. Twenty sites registered for the training with 33 participants.
- Ilona and Brook have begun planning the Quality Manual Template update. They hope to solicit a few volunteers to help with this effort. The new template will be web based so that additional tools can be incorporated.
- Quality Systems has volunteered to work on examples for the Document Control Guidance document. We would like to incorporate these guidance documents into the Quality Manual Template so that users can build their quality system as they complete the template.

Advocacy

- The Advocacy Committee is reviewing their task list from the strategic plan and assigning priorities, particularly with respect to outreach to other organizations and EPA program offices. A special effort will be made to reach out to EPA regions.
- Judy Duncan is preparing a draft letter to Mike Shapiro thanking him for his leadership on the FEM and giving him an update on TNI activities.
- A survey of ABs indicated that over 450 utility labs are NELAP accredited.
- Alfredo Sotomayor gave a presentation at the FSE meeting in Palm Beach, Jerry Parr gave a presentation at the EPA Region 6 QA conference, and Sharon Mertens gave a presentation at WEFTEC in Chicago.

- Newsletter published.
- Will submit abstracts for EPA Quality conference in 2009.

Website

- Website now fully operational.
 - membership, secure document purchasing and download.
- Several areas, in particular committee pages, need fine tuning.

Policy

- SOP for Document Control in final draft form and will be on the agenda for the Board for December.

Finance

- Developed first cut at budget for 2009.
- Reviewed third quarter financial data and prepared summary report for Board.
- Continued efforts to compile 2006 data for accounting firm to review.
- Reviewed proposed NELAP budget.
- Preliminary plans for future EPA funding.

Miami Forum

- Brochure mailed to 2900 individuals
- On-line registration open; registration is light
- Current Exhibitors
 - Absolute Standards (Meeting Sponsor)
 - ERA (Meeting Sponsor)
 - IDEXX
 - ManSci
 - NSI
 - Promium
 - RTC
 - Wibby

Environmental Measurement Symposium (NEMC plus TNI Forum in San Antonio)

- An updated schedule of activities for the NEMC Board.
- A revised "conference at a glance" reflecting the changes from the call last month.
- Registration fees and budget approved.
- Exhibitor prospectus developed. Marketing of exhibit program to begin 11/17.
- Keynote speakers and Wednesday session outlined.

Membership

- Current membership: 615

Other News

- Carol Batterton will be in China with Barbara Finazzo spreading the good word about TNI and NELAP accreditation from Nov. 10-20.