

TNI Board of Directors Meeting Summary March 11, 2009

1. Roll Call and Approval of December and February Minutes

Directors	Present
Joe Aiello	
Steve Arms	Y
Judith Duncan	
Jack Farrell	Y
Ken Jackson <input type="checkbox"/>	Y
Tom McAninch	
Sharon Mertens	Y
Judy Morgan	Y
Ken Olson	Y
Aurora Shields	Y
Matt Sica	Y
Alfredo Sotomayor	Y
Dave Speis	Y
Curtis Wood	
Bob Wyeth	
Ex-Officio Directors	
Brooke Connor	
Deb Szaro (Kevin Kubek)	Y
George Detsis	Y
Edward Hartzog	Y
Staff	
Carol Batterton	Y
Jerry Parr	Y
Ilona Taunton	Y
Jane Wilson	Y
Janice Wlodarski	Y

2. Offer of Resignation from Ken Jackson

Ken Jackson retired from the State of New York in late February and thus moved from the stakeholder category of Accreditation Body to Other.

The TNI Board considered Ken's offer of resignation. The change in stakeholder category from Accreditation Body to Other does not affect the balance and the BOD unanimously decided not to accept Ken's offer of resignation.

3. 2009 Board Election

The following candidates are presented for election to the Board with 3-year terms beginning on April 8, 2009:

2009 Board Nominees

Joe Aiello

New Jersey DEP
Accreditation Body

Aaren Alger

Pennsylvania DEP
Accreditation Body

Judy Duncan

Oklahoma DEQ
Accreditation Body

Jack Farrell

Analytical Excellence
Other

Ken Olson

ALS/Datachem
Laboratory

David Speis

Accutest Laboratories
Laboratory

Curtis Wood

Environmental Resource Associates
Other

With these additions to the Board, the composition of voting members on the Board will be: Accreditation Body, 6; Laboratory, 5; and Other, 4. Also note that current board members number 16; the board can expand to 18 and may give an opportunity to bring new people on board.

Discussion then took place regarding whether or not enough people know about the nomination process and when nominations are open. Suggestions for publicizing the nomination process included the utilizing the newsletter and website, as well as holding a special "Meet the Board" session in San Antonio. Current news about the election will be placed in the March newsletter and distributed via email around 3/15. Results of the election will be announced in the June newsletter. Aurora will also write up a general article on board membership for the June newsletter.

4. 2009 Officer Election

In accordance with the TNI Bylaws, elections for Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer will occur at the April meeting of the Board. Judy has announced her intention to not stand for Chair for a third term. This item of business will be the first order of business at the April meeting.

5. 2009 Budget

The current proposed budget does not include certain items for which we are still awaiting approval of grant monies. It was decided that it will be easier to add the monies back as soon as the grants are approved, rather than take the money out if they don't come through. Lara Autry is in the process of writing a 15-page justification for the grant extension which is a non-competitively awarded grant. Also a possible part of the justification could be the implementation of the Field Standards – since no one else has such a program, one will need to be developed – by us.

Motion to accept the 2009 budget as presented: Steve Arms

Second: Matt Sica

All in Favor: Unanimous*

*Note that Federal reps are required to abstain from voting on anything budgetary in nature.

6. Action Items from Miami and previous Board minutes

Action items from Miami and previous Board calls are included in the Program Administrator reports (Attachment 1).

7. Newsletter

1st quarter newsletter has been distributed.

8. Program Administrator Reports

See Attachment 1.

**Attachment 1
Program Reports**

March 10, 2009

Consensus Standards Development

- Bob Wyeth was nominated to become chair of CSDB, replacing Ken Jackson who has retired from NY State. Bob has accepted the nomination. Bob will serve as the vice chair for a few months while coming up to speed on CSDB issues, and to allow Ken to chair the process of finalizing the first round of TNI standards.
- Expert Committees have identified the editorial changes from LASC reports that can be made to their modules and have provided them for review. CSDB will review them on March 12.
- SSAS committee is meeting weekly to review comments and develop VDS. Several new committee members are being recruited to represent stack testers and other participants. Application has been received from one stack tester (Jim Serne).
- FAC met March 9 to continue development of NEFAP (See NEFAP Report)

NELAP

- The NELAP Board has approved renewal of the NJ program. Renewals for FL and CA are still pending.
- In the second round of renewals, TX and OR onsite evaluations are scheduled for March and April respectively. Technical reviews are still in progress for LADEQ and IL.
- The NELAP Board has begun review of the LASC's recommendations. The Board is currently in discussion with the NY program to try to resolve a PT reporting issue that LASC identified.
- A vote on the WET FoPT tables is scheduled for March 16.
- Action Items from Miami Meeting and TNI Board Calls:
 - Addition of EPA person to Board. Need urgency to this matter. This person will act as an advisor as well as be a conduit of information. We will have to revise the bylaws accordingly.
 - Provision for associate members.
 - Budget
 - Jeff Flowers indicated that ELAB would be visiting with the EPA OSWER in Washington, D.C. to develop a process for handling the SW-846 issue. Perhaps a member of the NELAP Board could attend this meeting as well.

Technical Assistance

- TAC has begun discussions on regional workshops for training labs on the new TNI standards. Potential partners, include the NY-PA lab association, FSEA and WEAT.
- TAC will put standards interpretation requests regarding methods modifications on hold pending a revised procedure. TAC members are working with Ilona to devise a long term solution to the methods interpretation questions.
- Quality Assurance Manual Template:
 - Brooke and Ilona met with the chair of the Quality Systems Expert Committee. Paul Junio will be meeting with his committee next week to review a list of potential guidance documents and examples that are needed to complete the QAM template. They'll decide what they can help with and then the TAC will see what they can do.
 - A more detailed list of section content will be complete next week and then the committee will begin updating the sections. Volunteers are being contacted for assistance in this task. There will be a core group to oversee the big picture and individuals will participate in the update of the sections.

- Action Items from Miami Meeting and TNI Board Calls:
 - In the future, TNI should consider outreach to regulators who may be unaware of the complications of methods issues in accreditations. TAC could assist with this outreach.

Advocacy

- Len Schantz reported that the Small Lab Advocate Group (SLAG) had held their first conference call. Nine labs participated, representing a good cross-section of types of labs. Jerry will participate on the next call.
- The committee reviewed a list of all the WEF state associations and agreed that an article should be drafted and sent to each association explaining TNI's outreach to small labs through the Small Lab Advocate.
- The committee reviewed the final draft of the next TNI newsletter which is scheduled to come out on March 12.
- Judy Duncan and Jerry Parr will participate in a conference call with EPA Regional Science and Technology Directors on March 16.
- A small working group was formed to explore the possibility of a TNI response to a Federal Register RFP notice requesting comments on the cryptosporidium lab quality assurance program.
- Action Items from Miami Meeting and TNI Board Calls
 - Help for state agencies: Put together a letter to state agencies about the value of the NELAP accreditation program.
 - TNI form a work group to get back to ELAB with comments on the comparison of TNI's standard to the Drinking Water program. The work group will consist of one member each from CSDB, Policy Committee, Jack Farrell, and Jerry Parr. The review will focus on how the programs are similar, how they are different and how they can be brought together. Jerry has initiated work on this task.

Laboratory Accreditation System Committee

- The LASC is expecting comments back from the NELAP Board by the end of the March. The LASC will then work with the Consensus Standards Development Program and NELAP Board to make any needed changes.
- The committee is preparing a status/expectation summary for each of the Expert Committees to ensure that the committees know what they can be working on while the NELAP Board is performing their review.
- Standards Interpretation Request process:
 - Three new requests were received in January. New requests are being received, but people are being informed that the process may take longer to accommodate the time needed for finalization and implementation of the TNI Standard. Five final responses were sent to inquirers and posted to the TNI website.
 - Ilona and Jack Farrell met to put language together to respond to method inquiries that are coming in through the standard interpretation process. Lynn Bradley gave us a great website with links to help people contact the proper regulatory authority to work through method issues. This new template should be finalized this next week and will be ready to use as needed.
 - Ilona compiled information on the need for a methods interpretation process and prepared a summary.

PT Board

- The PT Board is still finalizing their review of A2LA. This month, Gary is expected to meet with Dan Tholan to finish up the concerns about the database. The database was not fully operational at the time of the review.
- The PT Board approved the new WET FoPT Tables. They have been forwarded to the NELAP Board for final approval. PT Providers have stated that they will implement these tables as soon as the Board approves them. They do not feel they need a 6 month lead time.
- The PT Board approved the FoPT table the Air and Emissions Subcommittee developed. 95% of the information contained in the tables came from the current EPA program. The table is being distributed to the SSAS Committee for their review.
- Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee: They are working on clarifications to the FoPT tables, and are in the process of receiving PT summary data from providers with which to do the evaluations of the existing acceptance limits. They have a goal to update the format of the tables and incorporate the Experimental PTs with an effective date in July. This is starting to feel like a stretch, but the subcommittee is meeting next week to see if they have enough information and resources to accomplish this goal.
- Jerry met with Randy Querry to discuss approvals of PT Providers for the SSAS program. Randy indicated an expansion of the scope of work could be done without an additional on-site assessment.
- Jerry has tasked the committee to finalize a Statement of Work for A2LA's effort.
- Action Items from Miami Meeting and TNI Board Calls
 - GLEMP: A group was formed (Ilona Taunton, Bob Wyeth, Judy, Dave Spies, Curtis Woods) to work on this. A meeting with ERA and GLEMP may be a consideration. This group will consider the issue and come back to the TNI Board with recommendations.

National Database

- Dan Hickman is working on getting the subcommittee full access to the database so that they can look for any final issues before the system gets tested.

NEFAP

- NEFAP Board will start out with the FAC and its associate members to act as unit. The NEFAP Board is to initiate a process for development of the criteria for qualifying FSMO ABs.
- A2LA has started work on adoption of the TNI FSMO standards. A2LA asked the committee for comments related to questions on implementation and development of the checklist for the FSMO TNI standard. The process for responding to ABs like A2LA has not been developed.
- Marlene discussed the possibility of setting up a pilot program for implementation of the TNI FSMO standards. This may be limited to the stack testing program due to the recent federal regulatory program requiring accreditation by January 2010. (acid rain) This pilot may also be open to all ABs to develop a program for implementation of the FSMO standards with related standards.

Website

- Reviewed the National Database Development Plan and has begun work on the design of the web page.
- Initial work on a policy for access to database. Draft of policy to be complete by April and then sent to Policy committee for review.
- Once Database Committee performs beta test of database, Website committee will begin a QA review.
- Update Conferences page with information about both Miami and San Antonio meetings.
- Implemented the new functionality for standards interpretations. Take a look:
<http://www.nelac-institute.org/interpret.php>

Policy

- No meeting since Miami.
- The new document control policy is effective April 2009. Jerry has schedule a meeting with staff for April 19 to review. Jerry has also been working to establish the document control system.
- Action Items from Miami Meeting and TNI Board Calls
 - Bylaws: The Policy committee will draft bylaws changes.
 - QA: Need to consider adding a function for QA feedback to the TNI Board on the activities of the NELAP Board. This function could mirror the old AARB with annual review and report.
 - TNI bylaws require each committee to submit an annual report. The Policy committee is working on an example to share. Committees will be required to review their old charters and submit new ones.

Finance

- Draft of 2009 budget completed and presented for Board review at the March meeting.
- Committee developed ideas for future cooperative efforts.

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

- Call for Papers mailed
- Proposals for training courses have been received.
- All keynote speakers close to being finalized.
- Hotel site visit on February 26.
- Abstract deadline extended to March 18 due to Pittcon.

Membership

- Active Members: 594