

TNI Board of Directors Meeting Summary June 10, 2009

1. Roll Call and Approval of May Minutes

Directors	Present
Joe Aiello	
Aaren Alger	x
Steve Arms	x
Judith Duncan	
Jack Farrell	x
Ken Jackson	x
Tom McAninch	
Sharon Mertens	x
Judy Morgan	x
Ken Olson	
Aurora Shields	
Matt Sica	x
Alfredo Sotomayor	x
Dave Speis	x
Curtis Wood	x
Bob Wyeth	x
Ex-Officio Directors	
Brenda Bettencourt	x
Brooke Connor	x
George Detsis	x
Edward Hartzog	x
Staff	
Carol Batterton	
Jerry Parr	x
Ilona Taunton	x
Jane Wilson	x
Janice Wlodarski	x

Motion to Accept May 2009 Minutes

Motion: Judy Morgan
Second: Sharon Mertens
Approved

1. Program Administrator Reports

See Attachment 1.

2. TNI Reorganization

The draft plan for a reorganization of TNI was reviewed. Basic points to consider in the discussion of reorganizing included:

- Our current bylaws, especially article VI, Core Programs, are really all centered on NELAP. We are doing much more than that now.
- Our standards are being developed for programs other than NELAP.
- Our PT program has utility beyond NELAP, as for example use by non-NELAP states and the DMRQA program. It needs to have more independence.
- We do not have an organizational "home" for field and SSAS.

The Proposal:

- Put all the pieces that related to labs in one program, called NELAP.
- Have PT become an independent program, where NELAP is just one customer. Put the SSAS program into PT as a sub-program.
- Create a field program.
- Put everything else under Administration.

Pros and cons of the issues and proposed changes were discussed. A revised reorganization plan will be presented for discussion at the next Board meeting. The Board determined this is an important, but not critical issue. The Board requested a meeting with the NELAP Board in San Antonio to discuss the proposal.

3. Next Meeting: Wednesday, July 8, 2009

**Attachment 1
Program Reports**

June 9, 2009

Consensus Standards Development

- Two additional TIAs were determined to be of an emergency nature and were posted for public review - one for QS and one additional for PT. Public comment ended May 30th and the respective committees are expected to wrap up the TIA process this month.
- CSDB will add to the LASC report to provide confirmation of the disposition of each item (e.g. editorial revision or TIA) on the report. Having this consolidated information is anticipated to help facilitate the review of the standards by the NELAP Board. The PT and QS expert committees will also provide a narrative regarding each TIA that is finalized. Final versions of the standards with the TIAs incorporated will need to be prepared as well.
- The three SSAS voting draft standards were posted on the TNI website May 15. Voting closes June 30th. Work continues on development of a database to house the audit sample data - William has created a framework system that the subcommittee is now reviewing for next meeting on June 18th.
- Expert Committees are preparing for San Antonio - will confirm those committees that require a separate committee following June 11th CSDB call.
- Next CSDB meeting is scheduled for June 11th.

NELAP

- The NELAP Board has voted to approve renewal of the CA program completing the first round of renewals.
- In the second round of renewals, OR onsite evaluation and lab observation have been completed and the draft report is in preparation. TX onsite and lab shadow have been completed. The report is expected shortly. LADEQ's onsite is scheduled for the week of July 13. IL requested an extension to July 24 to respond to extensive comments on the technical review.
- Paul Ellingson, QAO, has indicated that his report on the first round of evaluations will be complete within a week.
- The technical review on the VA application has begun.
- Minnesota has received legislative authorization to have a NELAP accreditation program. The MN application could come in as early as August 2009.
- A subcommittee of Steve Stubbs, Art Clark, Lynn Bradley and Carol Batterton has completed draft revisions to the Evaluation SOP to accommodate new applications. The proposed revisions will be circulated to the EPA regional evaluators for comment.
- The SW 846 issue continues to be discussed. Dave Spies briefed the Board on ELAB's meeting with EPA ORCR.
- The NELAP Board has prepared a letter to the FEM requesting an EPA liaison to the NELAP Board.

Technical Assistance

- David Caldwell and Jack Farrell are working with Jerry on a methods modification session for the summer meeting.
- Jack Farrell is working to develop the Assessment Forum agenda and is holding conference calls to finalize. Topics for the Forum will include assessor uniformity and consistency. Assessment report format and consistency will also be included.
- Next meeting is June 16.
- Quality Assurance Manual Template:
The original goal for this project was that it be completed by the San Antonio meeting in August. Competing projects have caused delays. Completing this project by December should still allow the manual to accomplish its intended purpose and this timing works better with the finalization of the TNI standard.

Advocacy

- Len Schantz reported that the Small Lab Advocate Group (SLAG) is up to about 40 members.
- Ken Jackson is the next newsletter editor. Articles and authors have been identified. Articles will be due June 16, estimated publication is June 30.
- The Advocacy Committee has begun additional analysis of Judy Morgan's survey.
- The Advocacy Committee will be working with Jerry to draft an MOU with EPA to formalize EPA's relationship with TNI. This effort will take a few months to complete and will formalize each person's role. Jerry will keep the Board updated on progress.

Laboratory Accreditation System Committee

- The committee is continuing to work with CSDB, Expert Committees and the NELAP Board to work through the TNI Standard recommendation.
 - TIAs are progressing. The following note received from the chair of the PT Expert Committee may be cause for concern depending on the outcome of their June 9th meeting. One of the main comments we have heard regarding this potential issue is that the standard has stood all these years and this may just be an interpretation issue.

The committee is aiming for June 9th to finalize and approve all of the TIA for our modules – however just this week I received a TIA comment from Dr. Kircher that the scoring requirements in Section 10.3 for V3 is in conflict with 40CFR Part 141 and this section must be removed from the standard in its entirety. If this language is removed, the change from PTRL to LOQ reporting cannot be implemented – in fact, Carl's comment implies that this entire reporting scheme is in conflict with federal regulation – this is the first time in the entire standards development process that such a concern has been raised and if this concern is valid – we have a problem. The committee now needs to conduct research and determine if his concern is valid and this could cause delay in committee approval of at least 2 of the TIA.
 - A meeting was held with the CSDB Chair, CSDB Incoming Chair, LASC Chair, all 3 Program Administrators and Jerry Parr to review status. Ken has forwarded the updated standards with all editorial changes to LASC and LASC will provide an updated table to CSDB on Wednesday (6/10) to let them know the status of the changes originally requested in Attachment 1 of the NELAP Board recommendation. LASC's initial review shows that some changes have not been made, but in some cases TIAs were used instead. CSDB is expecting to have a final version of the standard completed in June. LASC will need to review the TIAs after PT and QS finish

reviewing comments and CSDB incorporates them into the standard. The last remaining item is to make sure an action plan is in place for any policies and guidance documents that were recommended.

- The NELAP Board had a few recommendations that they placed in their “parking lot”. They are planning to let the process continue in hopes that these “parking lot” items will resolve themselves.
- Standards Interpretation Request process:
 - Five requests were received in May. 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. The Expert Committees and NELAP Board have been working on responses. Updates will be going out to inquirers by the end of the month.

PT Board

- The limit update SOP is being evaluated by the PT Board. At this point the basic procedures will remain similar to previous procedures until the issue of what to do with Experimental PTs is resolved. The Chair is working on some formatting and then a final copy will be forwarded to the Policy Committee.
- Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee: They have started work on the DW Inorganics. They will proceed by compound class and work through the analytes unless the PT Board requests something different based on the PT Board’s Experimental Analyte discussions.
- Air and Emissions FoPT Subcommittee: The chair is currently recommending that this subcommittee be disbanded unless the SSAS Committee requires their assistance or if there is a specific request to add Ambient Air PTs. At present, the TNI PT Program is still operating under the 2003 NELAC Standards. That means that acceptance limits must be derived from at least 10 valid PT studies with at least 20 participants per study. We do not have enough data available at present.

There has not been a formal petition to require Air PT's from accredited laboratories. The laboratories have commented about extra problems and expenses of analyzing air PT's relative to analyzing water or soil PT's.

The question has been raised regarding who the driver of this issue is – NELAP? States have made requests to the PT Board to have analytes added. Issue should be sent to the NELAP Board for a decision on disbanding.

National Database

- Dan Hickman is still working on getting the subcommittee full access to the database so that they can look for any final issues before the system gets tested.
- Dan has identified some very minor issues that need to be fixed before the database can be released.

NEFAP

- A comparison of options for how accreditation may work is just about complete. The following third party options are being considered – NACLA and ILAC.
- The Field committee hopes to have a more formal presentation prepared for the July TNI Board meeting.

Website

- Ready to work on national database when access is granted.
- Continued minor tweaks to website.

Policy

- No meeting since Miami.
- 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

- A draft of the first quarter financial report is being reviewed by the committee.
- TNI has been notified that the application for additional assistance (\$100,000 over 18 months) from has been accepted and should be awarded by June 15. Note: NSF will be receiving an additional \$50,000 to continue to support the consensus standards development effort and other tasks.
- The NSFTC grant will terminate on September 30, unless an extension is requested. David indicated about \$80K was remaining in this grant. Plans are to use the remaining funds to support travel of state officials to San Antonio in August and for Accreditation Body evaluations. David and Jerry are working on a budget to expend the remaining funds.

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

- Registration has opened and we have over 100 registrations so far, including many first time attendees.
- The TNI part of the meeting is developing fairly well.
- 117 abstracts were submitted. The session chairs have finalized the order of presentations and final acceptance letters have gone out with instructions for writing biographies. Instructions for writing papers and a License and Copyright Agreement have been finalized and will go out to all presenters on Wednesday after final comments are received from the session chairs regarding the detailed agenda for the website. The detailed agenda will be posted under the Technical Program. Viewers will be able to click on a presentation and read the abstract; click on the presenter and read their biography.
- Many presenters have requested to not submit a paper this year due mainly to time constraints in their schedules. Draft papers are due the end of June and finals are due July 15th.

Membership

- Active Members: 606