

# TNI Board of Directors Meeting Summary

## May 8, 2013

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### 1. Roll Call

Directors	Present
Joe Aiello	
Aaren Alger	X
Steve Arms	X
Judith Duncan	X
Zonetta English	X
Jack Farrell	X
Keith Greenaway	X
Sharon Mertens	X
Judy Morgan	X
Patsy Root	X
Scott Siders	X
Alfredo Sotomayor	X
Dave Speis	X
Elizabeth Turner	X
Susan Wyatt	X
Ex-Officio Directors	
Brenda Bettencourt	X
Brooke Connor	
George Detsis	
Jordan Adelson	X
Staff	
Lynn Bradley	X
Carol Batterton	X
Ken Jackson	
Jerry Parr	X
Ilona Taunton	X
Janice Wlodarski	X

### 2. Approval of April 2013 Minutes

**Motion to Approve April 2013 Minutes:** Jack Farrell

**Second:** Dave Speis

**Approved:** Unanimous

### 3. 2012 Financial Report and 2013 Budget Review

The Board reviewed the 2012 Financial Report. Arrangements will be made for a dedicated session to discuss TNI financials in June.

#### 4. **SOP 1-119, Travel**

We have had a travel policy (Policy 1-106) in effect since 2006 and a related travel expense reimbursement form. However as we have grown and now cover travel of many volunteers on committees, this policy does not provide adequate detail, and we experienced some issues in Denver this year. This SOP was developed to provide much more detail concerning reimbursable expenses and as well require preauthorization for “discretionary” travel. This SOP was provided as a separate document.

**Motion to Approve:** Jack Farrell

**Second:** Judy Morgan

**Approved:** Unanimous

#### 5. **Letter to EPA**

The letter discussed in April was to EPA's Forum on Environmental Measurement (FEM) to provide an update on TNI activities. The FEM reviewed the letter in their April call and thanked TNI for providing this information.

#### 7. **Program Reports (Attachment 1)**

The Board began reviewing the program reports but got cut off at 1:15 due to a FreeConference failure. The Board was discussing the cryptosporidium issue in the NELAP report when this occurred. Sharon requested by email that the Board review the remaining reports and provide comments by email.

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## Attachment 1 PROGRAM REPORTS

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### CONSENSUS STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT

- The Consensus Standards Development Executive Committee (CSDEC) considered the recent complaint from an AB representative that the Chemistry Expert Committee may have insufficient AB representation. The current composition of the Chemistry Expert Committee is 4 Laboratory, 4 Other and 1 AB. Hence, it meets the requirement of balance in SOP 2-100. It had been suggested that the AB representative on the Chemistry Committee may no longer work directly for the accreditation program in his state agency. However, the CSDEC considers his stakeholder designation is not defined by his role within the department but rather being a member of said department. During the tenure of the Chemistry Committee (formed in January 2011) no other AB representative has participated as an Associate Committee Member or, until a month ago, has volunteered for Committee Membership. However, during the past month several AB representatives have nominated themselves. Therefore, the Chemistry Committee chair, Richard Burrows, announced that they will consider those nominations in time to appoint one or more additional ABs as Committee Members prior to considering the voters' comments on the current calibration VDS. Meanwhile, those volunteer AB representatives are of course welcome to participate as Associate Committee Members. The CSDEC supports this position and believes it is appropriate and consistent with TNI principles.
  - Board Comments: We need to revisit the issue of stakeholder designation. The process described above will work provided the new members are added as voting members before any significant votes occur.
- The Laboratory Proficiency Testing Committee has completed its Modified WDS of V1M1 and V2M2, subject to a final check. Currently, V3 is under discussion as a WDS. It is the committee's goal to have all four volumes ready for discussion as MWDS (V1M1 and V2M2) or WDS (V3 and V4) in San Antonio.
- The Laboratory Quality Systems Committee will examine the Small Laboratory Handbook and Quality Manual template for consistency with the revised QS standard and prior to the San Antonio meeting will make recommendations to LAS. The committee is considering a TIA to revise the holding time which is currently inconsistent with requirements of Giardia.
- The Microbiology Committee is helping the Quality Systems committee with the small laboratory handbook. Giardia needs to be addressed and the committee is considering preparing a guidance document for Giardia laboratories. Robin met with Dan and work has started on reviewing method codes. The committee is beginning their review of relevant sections of the Small Lab Handbook and Quality Manual Template.
- The voting period for the Chemistry Committee's Calibration VDS will conclude on May 11, 2013. The committee will discuss the voters' comments in San Antonio.
- The Radiochemistry Committee is meeting for 2 hours once a month. They are working on Section 1.
- The Laboratory Accreditation Body Committee has determined how to accomplish Phases I and II of the Board-approved proposal to create a list of Third Party Assessors on the TNI website. A template for assessor use in consistently displaying their qualification criteria is nearing approval and the Program Administrator will work with the TNI Webmaster to create the listing page and post the template for use. The Chair will form a workgroup with several members of the Information Technology Committee to facilitate addressing phased creation of a generic application. It is envisioned that the initial phase will not include Fields of Accreditation but only demographic data about the laboratory. Review of the streamlining revisions to the Compliance Checklist (aka, Technical Review) for NELAP evaluations is underway. This review will verify the NELAP evaluators' decisions about duplicate items (being eliminated) and items requiring formal documentation (as opposed to observation of practice.)

## **NEFAP**

- Another AB has received their first FSMO application and the technical observation is planned for May 14-15, 2013. All information has been distributed and the Lead Evaluator and technical evaluator are working on the checklist.
- A request was submitted to the remaining two Lead Evaluators to receive a copy of their Evaluation Checklist so that TNI can help maintain it until the first FSMO application is received by these two remaining preliminarily accredited ABs.
- The Recognition Subcommittee submitted recommendations to the NEFAP EC for procedural changes. A subcommittee was formed to update the Evaluation SOP to consider these recommendations and other recommendations that have been documented in the minutes since August 2012. A DRAFT SOP is expected at the next meeting.
- Doug Leonard presented a flow chart to compare the NEFAP and NELAP process that will be reviewed at the next meeting.
- Continued follow-up on training needs for Recognition Subcommittee. One member still needs to complete the quiz for the webcast, but all subcommittee members have reviewed the webcast or participated in the original Webinar.
- In Progress: Justin and JoAnn finalized a listing of upcoming meetings/conferences where NEFAP has an opportunity to present. Ilona and William worked in Denver on a format to provide this information on the NEFAP site so speakers can be found and people will know where they can go to get more information about NEFAP. Documents are now being collected to put up on the site and a number are ready for posting after William prepares this new page. NOTE: Temporarily the presentation information will be an attachment in the minutes until the website is updated.
- The NEFAP EC has been reviewing the new charter format. The chair and PA are working on updating the charter and will present it for review at the next NEFAP meeting. There are some concerns being expressed about the definition of a non-NEFAP AB and Other.
- Scott Evans distributed a final DRAFT to the subcommittee working on the NEFAP training SOP. The subcommittee has not been able to meet to finalize the DRAFT. A new target deadline of San Antonio can be expected.
- The Mobile Lab Subcommittee has started work. They are finalizing a questionnaire to help them better understand different state mobile lab accreditations. Paul Bergeron was added to the subcommittee. The questionnaire is expected to go out this week.
- Marlene shared some concerns expressed by FSMOs about whether their evaluations will sufficiently cover sampling procedures. This will be further discussed in San Antonio.

## **Field Activities Expert Committee (FAC)**

- The modified standard is going through one final review by committee members and then it will be ready for posting on the website. Ken Jackson is helping to ensure the format of the comments/response/resolution table is correct for posting. Justin expects the standard will be sent for posting in the next week.
- The ISO language review was completed and the ISO and non-ISO language versions of the standard are now identical.
- The committee has started working with the NEFAP EC on mobile lab issues. John is the FAC representative on this committee.
- The committee has formulated a subcommittee to work on FSMO tools. They will begin work on a Quality Manual guidance document or template this week (previous meeting was delayed). Ilona has been compiling information and examples to help facilitate the discussion and planning phase. The group would like it to be complete or be in Final DRAFT form by San Antonio.

- The committee will begin work to update the NEFAP brochure. They will work with the NEFAP EC and Advocacy to do this.
- Some advocacy concerns were expressed during the last teleconference. Completing the work on the NEFAP website would have prevented the issues that happened at the Louisiana conference (speaker missing). Information will be tracked through the minutes until the website page is prepared.
- The issue of ANSI accreditation of the field standards was raised. The application information and examples have been given to Ilona and she will begin working with the committee to compile the information needed to apply.

## NELAP

### Accreditation Council

- The AC will meet with Charles Feldmann of EPA's OGWDW Technical Support Center later this month to discuss the decision criteria for issuing new EPA Laboratory Identification Numbers. The acquisition of Columbia Labs by ALS has resulted in new ID numbers being issued, resulting in the need to adapt processes for ABs, PT Providers and the LAMS database.
- The AC is also holding extensive discussions, and may meet with Carrie Miller of EPA OGWDW, concerning the EPA's expectations that states will assume responsibility for accrediting laboratories for analysis of *Cryptosporidium*. The AC is also contemplating how to accommodate the withdrawal of roughly half of the EPA regional offices from participation in the AB evaluation process

### Laboratory Accreditation System Executive Committee (LAS EC)

- LAS EC has successfully integrated with the Technical Assistance Committee, and established objectives for the coming year. Multiple activities are underway, with expected results prior to conference in August or for presentation during the conference. Reducing the SIR backlog is a priority effort for LAS EC.
- Standards Interpretation Request (SIR) update:

Total Number of SIRs	SIRs Closed Out	SIRs in NELAP AC	SIRs To Be Responded To: Quality Systems Expert	SIRs Being Redirected
228	152	59	21	2

- There were 0 new SIRs submitted this month.
- Lynn and Ilona discussed options for updating the Voting Summary once modified wording is finalized on SIRs that need to be updated.

## PROFICIENCY TESTING

### PT Program Executive Committee (PTP EC)

- The Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee is continuing to work on the Solid Chemicals and Materials FoPT table and is making progress. They are back to meeting every other week to finish this table.
- A request was made to consider changing the limit for Settleable Solids on the NPW FoPT table. It was forwarded to the Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee and they concluded that a change is not necessary because equipment to meet the limits is available.

- Meetings are being planned over the next two weeks with each of the PTPAs to get additional feedback on ideas for collecting information to assess the effectiveness of the entire PT Program. The information will be reviewed by the subcommittee and presented to the PTP EC.
- The Dispute Resolution and Voting SOPs were finalized by the PTP EC. They are going through final editing and will then be submitted to the Policy Committee.
- The committee charter was worked on by the chair and PA and will be presented for finalization at the next PTP EC meeting.
- The position paper will be finalized by a newly formed subcommittee. The paper describes TNI's philosophy behind PTs and it will be submitted to Advocacy.
- The committee received a complaint about a PT Provider that was forwarded to the PTPA.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **Advocacy Committee**

- The Advocacy Committee has completed planning of a half day session at the San Antonio meeting tentatively titled: The Benefits of Accreditation in the Environmental Measurement and Monitoring Community.
- The next newsletter will be published on July 1. Steve Arms is the editor.
- Advocacy will begin discussing development of a training course tentatively titled "Good Practices for Environmental Laboratories" using the 1979 EPA QC handbook as a starting point. This will be on the agenda for the Advocacy meeting in San Antonio.

### **Non-Governmental Accreditation Body (NGAB) Working Group**

- The NGAB working group is meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays of each month. They are reviewing and comparing the NELAP and NEFAP Evaluation SOPs, identifying common processes, and preparing to make recommendations on a path forward.

### **Information Technology Committee**

- John Kuhn has taken over as chair replacing Art Clark. Continued progress is being made on the national database with 10 ABs now actively providing data. The committee plans to begin work on the methods compendium effort outline in the EPA cooperative agreement.

### **Policy Committee**

- Reviewed Travel Procedures SOP 1-119 and forwarded it to the Board for final approval.
- Reviewed and returned to originating committee with comments SOP 3-108, "Issuance of the Provisional Recognition of Accreditation Bodies According to the TNI Standard," and the first Position Statement 1204, "Small Laboratory Quality Systems." Review of SOP 4-107, "FoPT Table Management" has been completed and it will be returned to the originating committee shortly.

### **Training**

- We had our first Technical Webinar and offered CEUs. The response was great and the reviews were mainly 4 and 5's on the surveys we have received thus far. A final evaluation will be available late this week. Additional webinars are being planned. Group registrations were handled differently with this webinar and this process will be refined for the next webinar.

- The Brown Bag Webinar was on development of effective quality manuals. TNI did a short presentation on the Quality Manual template being offered on-line. The response to this webinar was also great – mainly 4 and 5's. Next month's webinar will be on documentation.
- In Progress: The review of the ethics training has been expanded to add information about a 5 minute portion of the training where the microphone was not working. Ilona has sent Jack Farrell the recording to see what information (if any) needs to be added beyond alerting people that this issue exists. Language has been agreed on to provide information about using the Ethics training for annual and refresher training. This language will be updated on the class description - along with any language being added regarding the 5 minutes of missing audio.
- 2013 goals: Progress was made on preparing the documentation for distributing CEUs. There are new forms for attendance that were used with the Technical Webinar, new procedures were used to develop Learning Outcomes and polling questions were used to evaluate the students learning. Ilona and Jerry met to review needs to pursue accreditation. The SOPs will be worked on this next month and relevant TNI documents will be reviewed.
- Training certificates for completed webcasts were prepared and distributed.
- The Webex issue that suddenly appeared with survey results has been repaired by Webex.

### **2013 Environmental Measurement Symposium – San Antonio, Texas**

- Registration is now open and the preliminary program will be mailed this week. Information has been posted on the TNI and NEMC websites.
- The NEMC portion of the program will feature 23 breakout sessions and 133 presentations. All abstracts and biographies have now been reviewed and are ready for posting. Only a couple of session orders are still outstanding and then William will have all information for posting the technical program to the website. We are still finalizing Plenary and Keynote abstracts and biographies.
- 36 exhibitors have signed up and we are at 80% of budget.
- A notice will go out to all NEMC speakers this week with additional information to help them prepare for the meeting and give their presentation. This communication will also serve as a back-up for the session chairs to ensure that all speakers have been contacted.
- A change was made to make the vendor sessions available on Monday (lunch) and Tuesday (evening) more doable.

### **Membership Report**

- Active Members: 902