

Summary of Advocacy Committee Meeting
January 29, 2021

1. Call to order

Steve Arms called the meeting to order at 9:00 am CST, January 29, 2021. Attendance is recorded in Attachment 1.

2. Approval of Minutes

Minutes were not considered at this meeting.

3. Overview of significant issues at the winter virtual conference

Jerry reported that we had an amazing turnout for the sessions and good participation in the networking sessions. Vendors appreciated the opportunity to present and attendance was good for the virtual vendor lunches. It was suggested that we try to keep track of how many people view the recorded presentations after the conference. Jerry will talk to William to see if that is possible. Comments and questions about the conference included:

- There does not seem to be a need to make any changes to the white paper *Does Laboratory Accreditation Make a Difference? Data You Can Trust*. The data quality sessions confirmed the paper.
- The work that William did on the portals made it so much easier to log on to a session.
- For NEMC this summer, do we need something like a help desk for assistance to presenters?
- After the first day or two, we should add "News from Conference" if needed instead of the "Welcome Message" on the log in page. We can answer questions and post documents.
- The Field Activities Committee fielded a lot of questions and exchanged information at networking sessions. There are currently 28 accredited FSMOs and they have set a goal of 100.
- Debbie Bond of Alabama Power will be the new chair of the Quality Systems Committee.
- Will we have articles in the newsletter about the program changes that were mentioned? Ans: Jerry will create an annual report with these details and post it on the website. He will share a draft with the Advocacy Committee so we can pick topics for discussion in newsletter articles.
- Chemistry worked on DoC language and technical manager description. Their biggest issues right now are the LOD/LOQ requirements and instrument calibration relative standard error. We need to publicize the existing guidance documents.
- Assessor qualifications are being simplified, but technical manager qualifications are being ratcheted up. This is not in sync.
- A big issue for the NELAP ABs right now is having to review the technical manager qualifications. More complex requirements take more time. Could we do something different for less complex labs?
- We should prepare a document for assessors to give to labs that shows labs how to find guidance on the TNI website.
- Competency Task Force had good discussion regarding the difference between competency and qualifications. They will need to consider these comments and address them.
- The Consumables Committee has done a lot of work and may need to develop a new TNI standard perhaps dealing with accreditation of suppliers. This would give the labs confidence in their suppliers.
- The Mentoring Subcommittee's proposal needs to be approved by the TNI board in March or April. Then, William will need time to build the website.
- LAB is expecting multiple persuasive comments to their draft standard. They will likely need another comment period (30 days only).
- Improvements in Data Quality session – it was interesting to see the analytical reports from other labs on the screen. We should do more of that type of information sharing.

- The Accreditation Council shared information about remote assessments and implementation of the 2016 standard. One AB is not performing remote assessments. It's not a regulatory requirement, but a policy decision. EPA Region 9 does not allow remote assessments for drinking water labs, so California cannot permit remote assessments for drinking water. We need to promote the fact that remote assessments reduce the carbon footprint.
- Wastewater Epidemiology was a good session with good speakers. The specificity for COVID-19 is new and may require a different accreditation process. This could be covered by NGABs. ACIL is working on a 17025 accreditation for this.
- FoPT tables were presented for PFAS in air. We should report changes in the PT programs in the newsletter.
- We need to remind people that our accreditation is for environmental samples and not consumer products.

4. Newsletter

After discussion of the highlights of the conference, members agreed on the following articles for the next newsletter.

Article	Author	Email
Recap of the winter conference	Jerry Parr	jerry.parr@nelac-institute.org
Update on 2021 NEMC in Seattle	Jerry Parr	jerry.parr@nelac-institute.org
Article about Bellevue	Lee Wolf	wolfpacific18@gmail.com
2021 TNI Board elections	Sharon Mertens	smertens@mmsd.com
Summary of the annual report with link	Carol Batterton	carbat@beecreek.net
Promoting the success of remote assessments	Marlene Moore	mmoore@advancedsys.com
Potential changes to TNI's proficiency testing	Shawn Kassner	shawn.kassner@pacelabs.com
Accreditation for WW epidemiology	ACIL-David Friedman	friedmanconsulting@outlook.com
WW epidemiology- the science	Stacie Crandall	scrandall@hrsd.com
Member spotlight – David Speis	Sharon Mertens	smertens@mmsd.com
General interest – gardening	Jerry Parr	jerry.parr@nelac-institute.org
Update on mentoring if approved by TNI Board	Jacob Oaxaca	Jacob.Oaxaca@Waterboards.ca.gov

For the spring/summer edition, members agreed on the following:

- Editor will be Lynn Bradley.
- Target publication date is June 2021.
- Articles will be due May 1, 2021.

For the fall edition:

- Martina McGarvey will be the editor.
- Target publication date is October 2021.
- Articles will be due in September 2021.

5. Future meetings

Jerry reported that the Bellevue meeting will cover two weeks and the first week will be a combination of virtual and in-person. The meeting will run for four days per week with four concurrent sessions per day.

The TNI committee meetings will be in the afternoons, but some may have to be moved to virtual during the second week. They are asking which speakers can be there in person before the agenda can be finalized. The theme for this year's meeting is "Hitting Reset".

Ideas for special sessions included a TNI session on mentoring and a session focusing on the chemistry module and how to comply with the new calibration requirements and MDL requirements. Jerry noted that these special sessions have been hard to set up in the past. The deadline for decisions about special sessions will be in the May-June timeframe. He is expecting about 1/3 to 1/2 of our regular summer attendance.

6. Next Meeting

The next meeting is March 4, 2021, at 12 noon CDT.

Attachment 1

	Name	Stakeholder Group	Present/Absent
1.	Lara Phelps	EPA (Other)	Absent
2.	Steve Arms	Other	Present
3.	Lynn Bradley	Other	Present
4.	Martina McGarvey	AB	Present
5.	Stacie Crandall	Lab	Present
6.	Zonetta English	Lab	Absent
7.	Marlene Moore	Other and NEFAP	Present
8.	Janice Willey	Federal	Absent
9.	Trinity O'Neal	Lab	Absent
10.	Robin Cook	Lab	Present
11.	Sharon Mertens	Lab	Present
12.	Teresa Coins	Lab	Absent
13.	Josh Wyeth	PT provider	Present
	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	Present
	Bob Pullano	TNI Ambassador	Absent
	Lee Wolf	TNI Ambassador	Present
	Paul Junio	TNI Ambassador	Present
	Lily Sanchez	TNI Ambassador	Absent
	Silky Labie	Other	Absent
	Elizabeth Turner	Lab	Absent
	Stephanie Drier	AB	Absent
	Erin Consuegra	Lab	Absent
	Nan Thomey	Lab (other)	Absent
	Aurora Shields	TNI Ambassador	Absent
	Staff		
	Jerry Parr	TNI ED	Present
	Carol Batterton	TNI PA	Present