

Summary of Advocacy Committee Meeting
March 4, 2010

1. Call to order

Judy Duncan called the meeting to order at 12 Noon CST. Attendance is recorded in Attachment 1.

2. Approval of minutes

Minutes from the 1-28-10 and 2-4-10 meetings were reviewed and approved for posting.

3. Small Lab Advocate

Leonard Schantz announced that he had resigned his position as Small Lab Advocate (SLA) for TNI due to a job change. Len expressed appreciation for the opportunity to serve in this position and stated that it had been very enjoyable for him.

Len then introduced Keith Chapman who will be taking over as SLA. Keith indicated that he had accepted the position because of the sound start that Len had made. Keith works in a small lab (8 people) analyzing DW and WW samples. Jerry Parr will try to find an opportunity on the agenda in Washington for Keith to speak.

4. TNI Statement of Support

Jerry presented a draft paper on why TNI supports national laboratory accreditation. Jerry indicated that TNI had never developed a document like this and it would be a good public education piece. National laboratory accreditation is becoming important now, not just for regulatory agencies, but because so many in the general public are using laboratory services.

Comments and discussion included:

- Does this belong in the vision, mission, and goals statement?
- This is a white paper; it outlines our position for stakeholders
- Could be used for advocacy to non-NELAP states
- Could be a preamble to the advocacy program description
- This paper explains “why” we do what we do; the “Benefits” paper is a supporting document
- We should try to write this for a lay person
- Judy Morgan will try to do an estimate of the total number of labs in the U.S.

- We could say “millions of measurements by thousands of labs”
- To insure that money is effectively spent
- Protects human health and the environment
- No comprehensive national program
- Do we need to define environmental measurements?
- Find a synonym for “oversight”
- Add fourth bullet: Should follow international standards
- 3rd paragraph, use TNI mission statement

Jerry will revise and send around again for comment.

5. Committee Member Replacement

Judy Duncan suggested that the committee member vacancy created by Carl Craig’s resignation be left open for the time being. There was no objection.

6. EPA-TNI Letter

EPA provided a response to TNI’s letter requesting an MOU. The essence of the letter was that TNI had a number of issues to deal with before EPA would be comfortable entering into an MOU. Jerry proposed the following plan for response to this letter:

- 1) The TNI board will send an initial response that outlines what we have done in the short term to address the issues outlined. This will include the new organizational chart and governance document. The letter will also list the planned actions: bylaws amendments, new evaluation SOP addressing interpretations and suspensions, the TNI quality management plan, the NELAP Board response to the QAO report and the global complaint SOP.
- 2) The TNI Board will then send another letter in the July-August timeframe that shows completion or progress on the above sections.

We should inquire about how the FEM communicates with the EPA regions. The Regions do not seem to be aware of all the previous TNI responses and actions. Jerry will work with Brenda Bettencourt on this.

7. Outreach to Non-NELAP States and other organizations

Jerry indicated that registration fees would be waived for one state person in each non-NELAP state for the new standards training. He will also try to arrange a time after each training to visit with non-NELAP state representatives. We should also share this information with the state assessors group. Michael Wichman will share with the state lab group.

With respect to outreach to other water organizations, Paula Hogg suggested that a good time for outreach to these groups might be right before the new standards implementation in early 2011. It would be a good time to lay out the changes that had been made.

Judy Duncan requested that the list of stakeholder concerns from the previous round of meetings be placed on the next meeting agenda for discussion.

8. Proposal for post-assessment survey

At the Chicago meeting, the Advocacy committee received a suggestion that a survey of labs following their assessment would be a good tool to evaluate assessor consistency. It was proposed that this survey could be sent directly back to TNI for evaluation. It was the consensus of the committee that this project falls under the mission of the Consistency Improvement Task Force. Carol will advise Alfredo.

9. Status of the newsletter

Judy Duncan indicated that she needed to follow up with Marlene Moore, Brooke Connor and Richard Burrows on their articles. Jerry stated that it might also be possible to announce the new Board members in this issue.

10. Next meeting

The next meeting will be April 1, 2010, at 12 Noon CDT. The agenda will include:

Outreach to non-NELAP States
Discussion of stakeholder issues from previous meetings

Attachment 1

#	LastName	FirstName	Stakeholder Group	Present	Term
1	Autry	Lara	Other	N	1
2	Coats	Kevin	Other	N	2
3	Conlon	Pat	Other	Y	3
4					
6	Bradley	Lynn	Other	Y	1
7	Duncan	Judy	AB	Y	1
8	Jackson	Kenneth	Other	N	2
9	Shields	Aurora	AB	Y	3
10	Wyatt	Susan	AB	Y	1
11	Eaton	Andy	Lab	N	1
12	English	Zonetta	Lab	Y	2
13	Perry	Michael	Lab	N	3
14	Hogg	Paula	Lab	Y	1

15	Ward	Gary	Lab	N	2
16	Wichman	Michael	Lab	Y	3
17	Schantz	Leonard	Small Lab Advocate	Y	
	Keith	Chapman	Small Lab Advocate	Y	
18	Parr	Jerry	ED	Y	
19	Batterton	Carol	PA	Y	
			ASSOCIATE MEMBERS		
	McCracken	Kirstin	Lab	N	
	Morgan	Judy	Lab	Y	