

Summary of Advocacy Committee Meeting
August 12, 2021

1. Call to order

Steve Arms called the meeting to order at 8:00 am CDT, August 12, 2021. Attendance is recorded in Attachment 1.

2. Introductions and Housekeeping

Steve opened the meeting with a reminder that the meeting was being recorded and would be available to review. Minutes were not considered at this meeting.

3. PowerPoint presentation

Steve introduced the committee members along with reviewing Advocacy's mission, roles, accomplishments, and future plans.

Under accomplishments, Steve noted:

- Jerry's presentation on the State of National Accreditation was well received.
- Susie Arredondo's presentation on the Mentoring Initiative was well done and is available for viewing. She reported that 9 labs had applied to be mentored, but only 5 mentors are available. Jerry will out this on the TNI Board agenda.

Under goals, Steve noted:

- We have not yet taken any action on updating the "Introduction to TNI" presentation and converting it to a webinar.
- Jerry is working with ACIL and APHL to make a list of state contacts for sharing the State of National Accreditation report.
- We have one potential addition to the TNI Ambassadors, Mike Delaney. He will be the Ambassador to Region 1.

Overview of significant issues at the winter virtual conference

- The EPA update session was very good. Jerry offered to write a summary for the newsletter.
- The Tuesday keynote on effective communication was very motivational. We could ask for permission to post this presentation on our website. We should also consider following up with a newsletter article on the link between effective communication and quality management systems.
- The Assessment Forum and Mentor Sessions were very good. We should consider converting these into training videos. William already has a number of these recorded. The Jeopardy game was especially effective. Dorothy Love will share the link.
<https://slidelizard.com/blog/jeopardy-powerpoint-template>
- The SARS-Covid sessions were good. Jerry will propose some action items to the Board in September which will include a proposal that Advocacy develop a position paper supporting accreditation of labs analyzing COVID wastewater samples and the PCR technique. He will also propose that the Training Committee find a trainer to offer a course on PCR technology.
- There were 75 virtual attendees for the Update on TNI activities session. Potential follow up could be a newsletter article on the technical manager position, article on training and an article on FSMO's based on Justin's PowerPoint. We can also post Justin's presentation on the website. Christine Sotelo's talk on "labs as Essential Services" was also well done. We should also consider posting the TNI Updates session under "Training" on the TNI website for viewing at no charge. There may be other presentations as well that could be posted under Training and offered for free.

- The Quality Systems Committee presented a comparison of ISO 2017 compared to the TNI Standard 2016.
- The presentation on California’s efforts to regulate microplastics may be reason for TNI to think about a process for accrediting emerging contaminants. This could be an Advocacy effort.
- There was an interesting presentation in Citizen Science regarding citizen monitoring of microplastics on the Texas Gulf Coast. We may want to consider a special session at the San Antonio meeting and invite Diane Wilson, “Keeper of San Antonio Bay”.
- The Microbiology Committee talked about revisions to V1M5. We should have a newsletter article.(We also need to work on distribution of internal notifications about draft standards.)
- PT Executive had discussion about when PTs are useful. We may need to provide some education to regulators in this area. It could be a joint project with PTEC and Advocacy. Our previous white paper could be useful.

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 summer conference	Jerry Parr	jerry.parr@nelac-institute.org
Summary of the EPA updates session	Jerry Parr	jerry.parr@nelac-institute.org
Update on 2022 in San Antonio	Jerry Parr	jerry.parr@nelac-institute.org
Article about San Antonio – what to do, where to eat, overview of the history	Patty Carvahal	pmcarvajal@sara-tx.org
2022 TNI Board nominations	Sharon Mertens	smertens@mmsd.com
Call for abstracts NEMC	Jerry Parr	jerry.parr@nelac-institute.org
Expert committee openings	Paul Junio	paulj@nslab.com
Effective communications and the link to QMS	Trinity O’Neal	trinity.oneal@austintexas.gov
Sidebar with link to Jeopardy game	Dorothy Love?	
Updates on technical manager position	Aaren Alger	aaren@alger-consulting.com
Labs provide essential services in times of crisis	Christine Sotelo	Christine.Sotelo@waterboards.ca.gov
Chemistry standard- same concepts in a different way	Paul Junio	paulj@nslab.com
Updates on micro standard	Cody Danielson	Cody.Danielson@deq.ok.gov
Updates on FSMO standard	Scott Haas	shaas@etilab.com
Member spotlight <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scott Siders • Carol Batterton 	Zonetta English	zonetta.english@louisvillemsd.org
San Antonio recipe -Rosario’s salsa	Sharon Mertens	smertens@mmsd.com
Charlie Carter Award	Jerry Parr	jerry.parr@nelac-institute.org
Musings from the Chair	Alfredo Sotomayor	ASotomayor@mmsd.com

For the fall edition:

- Martina McGarvey will be the editor.
- Target publication date is October 2021 (may have to move to November).
- Articles will be due September 30, 2021.

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

- Editor will be Steve Arms.
- Target publication date is June 2022.
- Articles will be due May 1, 2022.

5. Future meetings

Jerry presented a PowerPoint with his ideas for the January 2022 meeting scheduled for January 17-21, 2022, in San Antonio. Under lessons learned, he noted that hybrid meetings were very difficult to carry out and were not popular with the exhibitors. He proposed that we consider making the San Antonio Winter 2022 meeting in-person only with various sessions recorded and offered for training or as a free webcast for later. Jerry also noted that because of hotel scheduling difficulties, the first day of the conference was MLK Day which could present an issue for government employees. He proposed training classes on that day and shifting the main meetings and presentations to start on Tuesday. The General Session would be on Tuesday afternoon to allow for those who want to travel in the morning. It was also suggested that we could add some special sessions in place of committee meeting if some committees didn't want to meet. Members generally agreed with this approach. Jerry will revise his PowerPoint reflecting discussion from the committee. He proposes to send it out to committee chairs for comment and to determine which committees will need to meet.

For the summer 2022 meeting, Jerry proposed in-person only as well with some sessions recorded and offered after the meeting for a nominal fee. The meeting will run 4.5 days with a reduced number of sessions for both NEMC and TNI. The location has not yet been determined, but he is seeking proposals from 10 properties in the Eastern and Central time zones. Comments and questions from the committee included:

- Can we meet in Washington, D.C. to make it easier for EPA staff to attend? TNI has no obligation to go to D.C. anymore since we no longer have a grant from EPA.
- We can use a smaller hotel with a scaled-down conference with fewer people.
- What about Minneapolis? We were not able to get an acceptable proposal from them.
- Would like to see more special sessions than committee meetings, however it may not be possible with a scaled down meeting.
- Vendors are the key to making a profit. We lose vendors with a virtual meeting.
- Having in-person committee meetings helps members justify travel requests. Jerry will run this by committee chairs for comment.
- We need to choose which committees have in-person meetings based on who's doing what and composition of committees. WET and FSMO are not active in other areas of TNI, and it may not be an issue if they don't have a face-to-face meeting. Committees could use WebEx after the conference for a meeting to get public input.
- Is a recording of a committee meeting valuable after the fact?
- We could have an in person only meeting and record all sessions. The fee to review recordings after the meeting would be as much as full registration.

Jerry will revise his PowerPoint and get the committee chairs input.

6. Next meeting

The next meeting is September 2, 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	Absent
	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
	William Lipps		
	Staff		
	Jerry Parr	TNI ED	Present
	Carol Batterton	TNI PA	Present