# TNI Policy Committee Meeting Summary
## Friday, September 21, 2012

**1.      Welcome and Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 11 am Eastern.  Attendance is recorded in Appendix A.
Alfredo introduced and made welcome the TNI staff person now working with this committee, Lynn Bradley, and asked her to say a bit about herself, and then, since Pat Brumfield is also new, others were asked to say a few words about their affiliation and background also.

At the start of the meeting, a voting quorum was not present, so Alfredo will conduct an email vote to endorse Pat for membership.

**2.      Revised Process for Review and Approval of SOPs**

Much work has recently gone into reformatting and organizing the backlog of SOPs pending approval.  Jerry has identified the latest version of each one and placed them into a Dropbox folder that is accessible to all staff, and would be accessible to the Chair if permitted.  [Jerry and Lynn will ensure that the most recent versions are posted to Dropbox as we work through the backlog.]  Jerry noted that William Daystrom, TNI Webmaster, has cleaned up the TNI web pages so that the versions posted on various committee sites match the latest versions pending approvals or residing in Dropbox.

Alfredo explained that, in order to triage the workload, he is establishing a three-tiered system that is expected to expedite approvals, as follows:

1.  Pass Through with electronic voting – documents such as the financial-related SOPs that were approved by federal funding officials in 2002 and thus have been in use for extended period of time, but still require formal approval by Policy Committee.  [NOTE: Alfredo will send these by email for approval in the coming days.]
2.  Electronic Voting – items which, in the opinion of the Chair, are likely to be approvable without full committee discussion.  If a committee member desires discussion, that will be arranged.
3.  Require Discussion – SOPs and Policies of a complex nature or that will set new policy directions for TNI will be brought before the full committee automatically.  Items in the existing backlog will be triaged for order of presentation.

**3.      Review of SOP 1-116**

This SOP was previously approved by Policy Committee but had not yet been submitted to the Board of Directors, and Jerry wanted to add a new section 5.6, that requires committee discussion.  This section will give the Policy Committee Chair discretion to approve minor revisions to already-approved SOPs, without requiring full committee attention.  This was deemed acceptable through the discussion, but prompted several additional issues to be raised.

Since the Corrective Action workgroup is now recommending that there be an "interim" stage in standards development, Bob asked if we could use some term other than "interim" to refer to SOPS that are in use but not yet approved by Policy Committee.  "Provisional" was agreed upon, for this purpose.  Several other minor edits were also agreed upon and added.

Considerable discussion ensued about whether to retain the original effective date when a revised SOP version is approved.  A modified table that tracks review dates and the effective date of the latest revision, along with the rest of the SOP's history, will be used.  The group also discussed whether to omit Appendix A (guidance for file naming) and leave that as an uncontrolled document, for ease of revision, but it was instead agreed that any minor changes to file nomenclature could be approved by the Chair's discretion (see above) instead.  Mention of TIA in the file name (and some way to capture the expiration date) were also discussed.

Bob Wyeth moved, and Bob Moorman seconded, approval of the SOP 1-116 with changes as discussed.  All present voted in favor.  Staff will make the revisions, update Dropbox, and forward the newly revised provisional draft to Alfredo for presentation to the Board.

With insufficient time remaining to address the other major SOP on the agenda (SOP 1-104, Control of TNI Documents,) the Chair determined to postpone that until the next meeting.  [Bob Wyeth noted that he will submit comments beforehand, since he won't be available for that meeting.]

4.    **Pending Items**

Alfredo asked Lynn, who serves as Evaluation Coordinator for the NELAP AC, about whether the review of SOP 3-102 (the NELAP Evaluation SOP) should continue.  Lynn noted that the SOP has undergone extensive revisions since Version 3.0 was implemented, to accommodate the "streamlining" recommendations of the NELAP QAO, and that it is nearly ready to begin wending its way through the committee approval processes, so that it should return to Policy Committee in about a year for final approval prior to use in the next round of AB evaluations.  Alfredo will informally transmit the Policy Committee's comments from previous discussions, for incorporation if desired, and the Committee will await the draft of Revision 4.0 for full review.

The issue of abstentions in the voting process has arisen in the NEFAP program, where the ABs believe their ILAC signatory status would be threatened if they were to vote on NEFAP accreditation issues.  The ABs make up nearly a third of the NEFAP Executive Committee, so that the typical 2/3 favorable vote for accreditation issues becomes problematic.  Jerry researched abstentions in Robert's Rules of Order, and found that whether or not they are counted as "votes" depends on the wording of the organizing documents, to wit:  if a motion needs the majority of the committee votes to pass, an abstention counts as a vote, but if a motion needs a majority of votes (irrespective of the number of committee members), then an abstention does not count as a vote.  Thus, NEFAP has several options – rewording their voting SOP or forming a "recognition subcommittee" that does not include the ABs, or possibly other ways.  Alfredo noted that it is important to make conscious, intentional decisions about this issue, when creating the decision documents for a committee, and noted that this issue arose in consideration of the NELAP voting SOP 3-101 also.

5.    **Action Items**

See Attachment B.

6.    **Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Policy Committee will be October 5, 2012 at 11 pm Eastern.
Action Items are included in Attachment B and Attachment C includes a listing of reminders.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 pm Eastern.

**Attachment A**

| Name/Affiliation<br>NOTE:  Please check your email and notify Lynn of correct one.  Shown here is the TNI member contact but is not always the one used to contact you for Policy Committee meetings. | Representing | Present |
|---|---|---|
| Alfredo Sotomayor, Chair<br>Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources, Madison, WI<br>alfredo.sotomayor@ Wisconsin.gov | TNI Board | Yes |
| JoAnn Boyd<br>Southwest Research Institute, San Antonio, TX<br>jboyd@swri.org | | Yes |
| Patrick Brumfield<br>Sigma-Aldrich RTC, Laramie, WY<br>patrick.brumfield@sial.com | PT Executive Committee | Yes |
| Gary Dechant<br>Analytical Quality Associates, Inc.<br>Grand Junction, CO<br>gldechant@aol.com | | No |
| Silky Labie<br>Env. Lab. Consulting & Technology, LLC<br>Tallahassee, FL<br>labie@comcast.net | | No |
| John Moorman<br>South Florida Water Management District<br>West Palm Beach, FL<br>jmoorma@sfwmd.gov | NEFAP Executive Committee | Yes |
| Mei Beth Shepherd<br>mbshep@sheptechserv.com | Associate Member | No |
| | | |
| Susan Wyatt<br>Minnesota DOH, St. Paul, MN<br>susan.wyatt@state.mn.us | NELAP AC | Yes |
| Bob Wyeth<br>Pace Analytical Services,Inc., West Seneca,NY<br>rfwyeth@yahoo.com | CSD Executive Committee | |
| Jerry Parr (ex-officio)<br>Executive Director, TNI<br>Jerry.Parr@nelac-institute.org | | |
| Lynn Bradley, Program Administrator<br>The NELAC Institute (Staunton, VA)<br>lynn.bradley@nelac-institute.org | | |
| Guest:<br>none | | |

**Attachment B**

**Action Items – TNI Policy Committee**

|  | Action Item | Who | Expected Completion | Comments/ Completion |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 22 | Send finance SOPs for voting per pass-through process | Alfredo | | |
| 23 | Send 9-21-12 version of SOP 1-116 for Board approval | Alfredo | | |
| 24 | Email acceptance of Pat Brumfield for committee membership | Alfredo | | |

**Attachment C**

**Backburner / Reminders – TNI Policy Committee**

|     | Item | Meeting Reference | Comments |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1.  | Look into need to include something about review schedule in all SOPs. | 3/20/12 | |
|     | | | |
|     | | | |
|     | | | |
|     | | | |