

Summary of Advocacy Committee Meeting
April 4, 2024 1 pm Eastern

1. Welcome and Introductions

Steve Arms welcomed everyone to the meeting. Attendance is recorded in Attachment 1. The agenda was declared approved since there were no comments (see Attachment 2), and the minutes from March 7 were unanimously approved mid-meeting, once there was a quorum, after a motion by Mike, seconded by Robin.

2. Updates

Newsletter – April 15 is the due date for articles. None have been submitted yet, but Steve remarked that Stephanie is working with September to create the Member Spotlight. Paul reported that the request for additional Ambassadors will run as a sidebar instead of being incorporated into his committee member article.

State of National Accreditation Report – Jerry has sent this report to the non-NELAP state certification bodies and four non-profits (ACIL, APHL, WEF and AWWA). He is using the undeliverable returns from the State Certification Profile database to update those contacts.

Ambassadors – Steve has contacted the individuals who inquired about becoming a new Ambassador during conference. Sheela Agrawal from Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District joined the call as part of her learning more about what Ambassadorship would involve. Ashley Larsen has not responded to Steve's email. Paul noted that Ashley will likely have a new email soon, so her decision is pending. Steve asked if any Ambassadors had updates and the following replies were offered:

- WI – Paul explained that WI rules differ from the Certification Manual, about timing and temperature of drinking water sample deliveries;
- TN – Judy plans to check and see whether the new agency leadership is more receptive to considering improvements and a quality systems approach;
- CA – Lily had no updates except to say that an organized lab tour will not be set up for the summer conference but that conference attendees are invited to visit the lab and will be given tours, as they have some exceptional projects underway;
- Northeast – Mike noted that the RI lab director has retired and that he will be reaching out to the new director, and also that Bhavita Patel of EPA R1 is moving to Headquarters. Lynn provided the new R1 person's name, Maureen Freedman; and
- NV – Devon met with the state staff, who are greatly understaffed at present, so any moves towards a NELAP application are on hold.

Summer NEMC Conference – Jerry noted that registration is open, but that the Friday sessions are still a work in progress. He hopes to use part of the TNI Plenary session on Thursday afternoon to discuss the new vision for NELAP (draft PowerPoint distributed with meeting reminder for this meeting) as well as for the committees that do not have high attendance or necessary business to do at conference. The need for a “new vision” was highlighted by remarks from EPA at the summer conference, questioning whether only one “inspection” of a laboratory is adequate when many states rely on that single primary accreditation to recognize a lab for work in their state.

3. Revised White Paper

Several months ago, Jerry undertook to make revisions that might allow Environmental Monitoring Coalition endorsement of the original white paper, but after more interaction with several of the non-profits involved, that seems unlikely, and participants in today's committee meeting noted that the EMC's endorsement is not necessary. The original version was revised to

address comments submitted by both Stacie and Mike, and a number of additional case studies were added, plus all case studies were reformatted with relevant sections of the 2016 TNI Standard identified. Mike moved and Stacie seconded that the white paper be approved as presented, and the vote was unanimous. The version previously posted as an Advocacy Document will be replaced with the version sent out with the meeting reminder for today. That link is also included in the State of National Accreditation Report, sent to states and associations as noted above. The fall newsletter (November 2023) had an article about the white paper, with the same link.

Jerry also noted that he is considering asking EPA to make two regulatory updates, to 40 CFR 136.8 (drinking water) and 40 CFR 260 (RCRA), to add quality management system requirements.

4. PT Position Statement POS-1205

This document was distributed with the meeting reminder, and has been approved by PTPEC. William moved that it be approved by Advocacy and Sharon seconded the motion; Approval was unanimous. Jerry will present it to Policy Committee and after Policy's approval, it will go to the Board for endorsement.

5. Review and Approve Minor Revision to Ambassador SOP 1-126

With time nearly expired, Steve skipped over the discussion of Revising TNI's Vision (until the May meeting) and asked for a quick approval of this SOP revision to add updating the State Program Certification Profiles database to the tasks of Ambassadors. Participants added a link to the database and listing it in References, and added a specification that updates should be sent to the TNI Executive Administrator. With those additions, Mike moved and Sharon seconded that the revised SOP 1-126 be approved, and the vote was unanimously in favor.

6. New Business

Steve asked that committee members send their comments on the Vision for NELAP PowerPoint to Jerry, and noted that he had already provided comments.

7. Next Meeting

The next Advocacy Committee teleconference is scheduled for **Thursday, May 2, 2024, at 1 pm Eastern.** An agenda and any needed documents will be provided prior to the meeting.

The Ambassadors meeting is rescheduled for Tuesday, April 23, at 2 pm Eastern. A meeting reminder with teleconference information will be sent out several days in advance.

Attachment 1

	Name	Stakeholder Group	Present/Absent
1.	Steve Arms, Chair	Other	Present
2.	Stacie Crandall	Lab	Present
3.	Mike Delaney	Other	Present
4.	Zonetta English	Lab	Absent
5.	Marlene Moore	Other and NEFAP	Absent
6.	Janice Willey	Federal	Absent
7.	Robin Cook	Lab	Present
8.	Sharon Mertens, Vice Chair	Lab	Present
9.	William Lipps	Other	Present
	Associate Members		
	Judy Morgan	TNI Ambassador	Present
	JoAnn Boyd	Lab and FAC	Absent
	Celeste Crowley	Other	Absent
	Stephanie Drier	AB	Absent
	Paul Junio	TNI Ambassador	Present
	Silky Labie	Other	Absent
	Ian McBride	Lab	Absent
	Devon Morgan	TNI Ambassador	Present
	Lily Sanchez	TNI Ambassador	Present
	Aurora Shields	TNI Ambassador	Present
	Elizabeth Turner	Lab	Absent
	Potential New Ambassadors		
	Sheela Agrawals		Present
	Staff		
	Jerry Parr	TNI ED	Present
	Lynn Bradley	TNI PA	Present

Attachment 2 – Agenda as approved

- Welcome and Roll Call
- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Minutes (March minutes attached)
- Updates
 - Newsletter
 - State of National Accreditation Report
 - Progress on Recruiting New Ambassadors
 - Issues or Updates for Summer NEMC Conference
- Review and Approve Revised White Paper (see latest draft, attached)
- Review and Approve PT Position Statement POS-1205 (see attached revision)
- Revising TNI's Vision for NELAP (see attached PowerPoint file)
- Review and Approve Minor Revision to Ambassador SOP 1-126 (draft attached)
- New Business, if any
- Adjourn