

Summary of Advocacy Committee Meeting  
August 16, 2024 1 pm Eastern

1. Welcome and Introductions

Steve Arms welcomed everyone to the meeting. Attendance is recorded in Attachment 1. The agenda was approved by unanimous consent (see Attachment 2), and the minutes from June 6 and June 27 were unanimously approved after a motion by Sharon, seconded by Mike.

Steve thanked Sharon for giving the Advocacy Committee presentation during the General Session at conference, as Steve was unable to be there.

2. Review of Conference for Items with Potential Advocacy Involvement

Jerry noted that two items were highlights of the conference for him – West Virginia expressed interest in becoming a NELAP AB and California stated its intent to apply for NELAP recognition (while maintaining its current program for in-state only labs). WV asked if there could be a “primer packet” and whether TNI could provide model legislation or regulation for use. WV has been invited to participate in the NELAP AC meetings, as is done for all prospective NELAP ABs. Additionally, Nevada has a new program manager and she will be added to the NELAP AC email list in place of the former manager.

Additional pieces of information gathered through informal conversations were that EPA/OGWDW might be willing to consider modifying 40 CFR Part 142 to allow NGABs to accredit labs for drinking water testing, and that the same program is interested in bringing TNI in to help with its Certification Officer training. No specifics of either concept are available.

Jerry also noted, later in the meeting, that this conference in Garden Grove, CA, had record-setting attendance for a TNI meeting.

Updated NELAP Vision

The major issue requiring Advocacy involvement is moving forward with the updated vision for NELAP. Jerry recommends that Advocacy pursue all recommended actions from the presentation (see Attachment 3).

There were no negative comments on the proposed updated vision, and positive comments expressed approval for better use of NGABs, adopting the Technical Specialist concept to replace the former Technical Director/Manager, and allowing more flexibility with PTs (one PT/year in some circumstances, perhaps). There was also sentiment for improving the reliability of field operations. Focusing on data users, showing the benefits of having reliable data from accredited labs, is expected to bring leverage to state certification programs to implement quality management systems.

3. Identification of Newsletter Editor and Articles

Robin Cook agreed to be the editor for the fall newsletter. Jerry suggested that articles be requested by the end of September, with a target date of mid-October for publication (timed to coincide with opening of registration for winter conference). The proposed articles and authors are included in the table below.

<b>Title/Subject</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Contact Info</b>
Summary of Summer Meeting	Jerry Parr	<a href="mailto:Jerry.Parr@nelac-institute.org">Jerry.Parr@nelac-institute.org</a>
Preview of Winter Meeting	Jerry Parr	<a href="mailto:Jerry.Parr@nelac-institute.org">Jerry.Parr@nelac-institute.org</a>
What to do in Jacksonville	Steve Arms	<a href="mailto:arms.steve@comcast.net">arms.steve@comcast.net</a>
Credentials Update/Launch w/ Training Changes also	Lynn Bradley, Ken Brown, Jerry Parr, Elizabeth Turner (for Training pages)	<a href="mailto:Lynn.bradley@nelac-institute.org">Lynn.bradley@nelac-institute.org</a> , <a href="mailto:elizabeth.turner@et.eurofinsUS.com">elizabeth.turner@et.eurofinsUS.com</a> , <a href="mailto:kenneth.brown@escondido.gov">kenneth.brown@escondido.gov</a> , <a href="mailto:Jerry.Parr@nelac-institute.org">Jerry.Parr@nelac-institute.org</a>
Field Sampling (V1 comments)	Katie Strothman	<a href="mailto:katie@sanderslabs.net">katie@sanderslabs.net</a>
Update on Training Courses	Calista Daigle, Ilona Taunton	<a href="mailto:Calista.daigle@pacelabs.com">Calista.daigle@pacelabs.com</a> , <a href="mailto:Ilona.taunton@nelac-institute.org">Ilona.taunton@nelac-institute.org</a>
NEMC Call for Abstracts	Jerry Parr	<a href="mailto:Jerry.Parr@nelac-institute.org">Jerry.Parr@nelac-institute.org</a>
Summary of Assessment Forum and Mentor Session	Judy Morgan, Calista Daigle, Val Slaven	<a href="mailto:Judy.morgan@pacelabs.com">Judy.morgan@pacelabs.com</a> , <a href="mailto:Calista.daigle@pacelabs.com">Calista.daigle@pacelabs.com</a> , <a href="mailto:valerie.slaven@pacelabs.com">valerie.slaven@pacelabs.com</a>
EPA Updates	Jerry Parr	<a href="mailto:Jerry.Parr@nelac-institute.org">Jerry.Parr@nelac-institute.org</a>
Member Spotlight – Jack Farrell	Bob Wyeth, Dave Speis, Patty Snyder	<a href="mailto:Robert.Wyeth@nelac-institute.org">Robert.Wyeth@nelac-institute.org</a>
Robert's Rules for TNI	Patsy Root	<a href="mailto:Patsy-Root@idexx.com">Patsy-Root@idexx.com</a>
Alfredo's Musings	Alfredo Sotomayor	<a href="mailto:asotomayor@mmsd.com">asotomayor@mmsd.com</a>

#### 4. Discussion of Conference Planning for Jacksonville

The winter meeting will be the first week of February, 2025, with three days of TNI sessions followed by training courses on Thursday (either a full or half day, possibly to include a half-day session on preparing to become a QMS Certified Professional). Jerry explained that he would like to compress the Intro for New Attendees (8 - 8:45 am) and Annual Meeting (9 - 10 am) into a quarter day to allow for an alternative plenary session from 10am – noon). Advocacy would meet for ¼ day on Wednesday afternoon, before the report-out session.

Participants discussed asking the Florida Society of Environmental Analysts (FSEA) if they wish to offer or perhaps co-sponsor a training on Thursday, or have a Florida-specific day on Friday (or possibly part of Thursday), or possibly have a poster session for FSEA members to display their work.

For social activities, Jerry envisions the usual Monday night reception with exhibits and the Wednesday Board reception (technically for committee members and the Board, but everyone remaining is invited). The possibility of a Tuesday night reception sponsored by FSEA with posters was raised, as well. Paul is a FSEA Board member and will present the options mentioned to the FSEA Board at its next meeting.

A Strategic Planning meeting is envisioned for Sunday prior to conference, February 2.

5. New Business

There was no new business offered.

6. Next Meeting

The next teleconference is scheduled for **Thursday, September 5, 2024, at 1 pm Eastern.** An agenda and any needed documents will be provided prior to the meeting.

**Attachment 1**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Stakeholder Group</b>	<b>Present/Absent</b>
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	Present
6.	Janice Willey	Federal	Present
7.	Robin Cook	Lab	Present
8.	Sharon Mertens, Vice Chair	Lab	Present
9.	William Lipps	Other	Absent
	<b>Associate Members</b>		
	Sheela Agrawal	TNI Ambassador	Absent
	JoAnn Boyd	Lab and FAC	Absent
	Celeste Crowley	Other	Absent
	Stephanie Drier	AB	Absent
	Paul Junio	TNI Ambassador	Present
	Silky Labie	Other	Absent
	Ashley Larssen	TNI Ambassador	Absent
	Ian McBride	Lab	Absent
	Judy Morgan	TNI Ambassador	Absent
	Devon Morgan	TNI Ambassador	Present
	Lily Sanchez	TNI Ambassador	Absent
	Aurora Shields	Other	Absent
	Elizabeth Turner	Lab	Absent
	<b>Staff</b>		
	Jerry Parr	TNI ED	Present
	Lynn Bradley	TNI PA	Present

**Attachment 2 – Agenda as approved, August 16, 2024**

7. Welcome and Roll Call
8. Approval of Agenda
9. Approval of Minutes (June 6 and June 27 minutes attached)
10. Review of Conference for Items with Potential Advocacy Involvement
11. Identification of Newsletter Editor and Articles
12. Discussion of Conference Planning for Jacksonville (optional)
13. New Business, if any
14. Adjourn

## Attachment 3 – Proposed Actions from Conference Presentation

### Proposed Actions for Updated NELAP Vision

- ✓ The TNI standard continues to evolve and improve.
- ? Changes to State Regulations
  - ? With potential changes (Technical Manager and PT frequency) States may not need a second-tier accreditation program.
  - ? Other States may decide to become NELAP ABs or eliminate their state-specific programs and rely on accreditation by others (e.g., GA, NM).
  - ? States may decide that all laboratories performing any environmental testing in the state need to be accredited.
- ? Increase use of NGABs
  - ? NELAP ABs and other states accept a NGAB certificate (or issue their own certificate based on the NGAB assessment).
  - ? EPA Drinking Water revises Part 142 to allow for NGABs.
  - ? A NELAP or NGAB certificate is accepted in all 50 states without any additional effort, other than paying a fee to the AB.

### Next Steps

- Determine which of the possible solutions are viable components of an updated vision.
- Promote the new vision to all stakeholders.
- Pursue a national dialogue with program offices – EPA and states – of the value of a robust QMS for all aspects of environmental data collection, including sensors, sampling, field measurements, and laboratory analyses.
- Encourage wider use of NGAB assessments and accreditations to assist States.
- Ensure sufficient resources are available for states to implement any needed changes.