

Summary of Advocacy Committee Meeting
September 5, 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 once a quorum was present, the minutes from August 16 were unanimously approved after a motion by Sharon, seconded by Stacie.

2. Newsletter Update

Robin Cook, the editor, was not present. Lynn agreed to reach out to her after the meeting to share the updated list of articles (an article about Board nominations was added) and verify that potential authors have been contacted. All authors have now been contacted. The Robert's Rules article may need to be postponed until the spring newsletter, but all other authors have accepted their assignments. A due date for articles was set for September 30, with October 25 as the target publication date. The final list of articles is below.

Title/Subject	Author	Contact Info
Summary of Summer Meeting	Jerry Parr	Jerry.Parr@nelac-institute.org
Preview of Winter Meeting	Jerry Parr	Jerry.Parr@nelac-institute.org
What to do in Jacksonville	Steve Arms	arms.steve@comcast.net
Credentials Update/Launch w/ Training Changes also	Lynn Bradley, Ken Brown, Jerry Parr, Elizabeth Turner (for Training pages)	Lynn.bradley@nelac-institute.org , elizabeth.turner@et.eurofinsUS.com , kenneth.brown@escondido.gov , Jerry.Parr@nelac-institute.org
Field Sampling (V1 comments)	Katie Strothman	katie@sanderslabs.net
Update on Training Courses	Calista Daigle, Ilona Taunton	Calista.daigle@pacelabs.com , Ilona.taunton@nelac-institute.org
NEMC Call for Abstracts	Jerry Parr	Jerry.Parr@nelac-institute.org
Call for Board Nominations	Sharon Mertens	smertens@mmsd.com
Summary of Assessment Forum and Mentor Session	Judy Morgan, Calista Daigle, Val Slaven	Judy.morgan@pacelabs.com , Calista.daigle@pacelabs.com , valerie.slaven@pacelabs.com

EPA Updates	Jerry Parr	Jerry.Parr@nelac-institute.org
Member Spotlight – Jack Farrell	Bob Wyeth, Dave Speis, Patty Snyder	Robert.Wyeth@nelac-institute.org
Robert's Rules for TNH	Patsy Root	Patsy-Root@idexx.com
Alfredo's Musings	Alfredo Sotomayor	asotomayor@mmsd.com

3. Update on Jacksonville Conference

The format of the Annual Meeting will be modified to shorten the time needed for program and committee reports but details remain to be settled. At minimum, administrative tasks performed by each and every committee, such as “completed internal audit”, will be omitted from the presentations. This will allow for a second session in the morning of the first day, and Jerry plans to use that for a brief presentation and longer discussion of how to address analytical disciplines. All of the environmental lab expert committees have been asked to provide KSAs (knowledge, skills and abilities) that a Technical Specialist would need for each analytical discipline covered within its technical module. This will need to be done without severely delaying development of module revisions, and Jerry foresees three disciplines for Asbestos, four or five for Radiochemistry, one for WET, and an unknown number for Chemistry and Microbiology, to be coordinated by a CSDPEC task group.

The Florida Society of Environmental Analysts (FSEA) will do “something” on Thursday afternoon of the Jacksonville conference. Jerry advised that he will need at least a topic for the preliminary program by October 1.

The Thursday morning training will likely be a workshop somehow related to the credentialing activity, perhaps a pre-test or “here’s what to expect” format with a sample of questions. This would be for individuals anticipating the “full credential” for QMS, which will likely become available once the digital badge software is completed and the digital badge activity successfully underway – likely early next year. Participants recommended that this first workshop be free for anyone attending, then recorded as a webcast for future viewing (at a nominal fee). Harold Longbaugh and Paul Junio will work with Jerry to develop the concept and possibly portions of the training itself.

Steve asked about how training courses are decided upon, as Florida’s program manager has suggested several topics that are needed (preparing for assessments and joining forces with other ABs to conduct investigations were specifically identified). Jerry explained that the Training Committee puts out Requests for Proposals periodically, but unsolicited proposal may also be considered.

One of the potential new ABs, West Virginia, asked at conference in California that perhaps a “preparation packet” could be prepared for states considering applying for NELAP recognition. Jerry sent a presentation that explains some aspects, and Lynn noted that the NELAP Accreditation Council invites potential applicants to participate in its meetings and every NELAP AB is willing to mentor those potential applicants. Given the diversity of operations among states, individual mentoring is likely to provide better outcomes than generic processes that may or not fit within the legislative and regulatory structures of a particular state. Jerry would still like to have some sort of presentation to use as a marketing tool, and will work with the Council to determine

how best to approach its development, and will use the presentation from several years ago as the starting point.

4. Possible TNI Role in EPA OGWDW Certification Officer Training

A conversation began at conference in California and has continued with California and the NELAP AC Chair about possibly using TNI's training and credentialing processes to track C.O. training, but EPA is not considering involving TNI in preparing or presenting the actual training. Much of the chemistry C.O. training is now in the form of webcast but the Agency is unwilling to administer the course exams online, so that a day or two on-site will continue to be required. EPA has expressed its frustrations that many trainees show up for the course woefully unprepared, and wants them to have observed assessments and undergone assessor training before taking the course, as well as being familiar with drinking water analytical methods.

NELAP ABs have expressed their frustration that the C.O. courses are offered only once per year (chemistry and microbiology separately), which means that newly hired assessors sometimes have to delay performing assessments for many months, and have tried to address their concerns several times in past years.

No concrete commitments were made, but the involved parties expect to continue the conversation in coming months.

5. Discuss Outreach Plan and NELAP Vision

The meeting time was expired, so this topic will be postponed for a future meeting. Jerry declared that he heard no disagreement with the options presented for discussion at conference, and that he plans to craft language for the PT committees to consider about PT frequency being either one or two per year.

A suggestion was made that the updated vision issues be tabled until the Strategic Planning meeting in Jacksonville, but another recommendation was to continue fine-tuning the approach, so as not to lose the momentum already underway.

6. New Business

There was no new business offered.

7. Next Meeting

The next teleconference is scheduled for **Thursday, October 3, 2024, at 1 pm Eastern.** An agenda and any needed documents will be provided prior to the meeting.

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	Present
6.	Janice Willey	Federal	Absent
7.	Robin Cook	Lab	Absent
8.	Sharon Mertens, Vice Chair	Lab	Present
9.	William Lipps	Other	Present
	Associate Members		
	Sheela Agrawal	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
	Ashley Larssen	TNI Ambassador	Present
	Ian McBride	Lab	Absent
	Judy Morgan	TNI Ambassador	Absent
	Devon Morgan	TNI Ambassador	Present
	Lily Sanchez	TNI Ambassador	Present
	Aurora Shields	Other	Absent
	Elizabeth Turner	Lab	Absent
	Staff		
	Jerry Parr	TNI ED	Present
	Lynn Bradley	TNI PA	Present

Attachment 2 – Agenda as approved, September 5, 2024

- Welcome and Roll Call
- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Minutes (August minutes attached)
- Newsletter Update (see updated article list, attached)
- Update on Jacksonville conference
- Assistance for Potential NELAP ABs
- Possible TNI Role in EPA OGWDW Certification Officer Training
- Discuss Outreach Plan and NELAP Vision (see attached Plan and proposed actions)
- New Business
- Adjourn