

Summary of Advocacy Committee Meeting
August 14, 2025 1 pm Eastern

1. Welcome and Introductions

Steve Arms, Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Attendance is recorded in Attachment 1 – 6 Voting members (Quorum) and 1 Associate member. Steve confirmed that the agenda also included working on the next newsletter. The agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

A motion was made by Sharon to approve the July 3, 2025, minutes as written. There were no comments on the Ambassador meeting summary. The motion was seconded by Devon. There was no further discussion, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

2. St. Louis Meeting – Review for Advocacy Interests

Comments:

- Paul's summary of the WET meeting led to questions about the TNI Glossary. We have a Glossary SOP that still needs to be finalized. Once the SOP is approved Paul will be correcting definitions in SOPs and Policies where the definitions are not the same as the Glossary. In addition, the definitions in the Glossary are being used to help finalize definitions in the DRAFT Standards being worked on right now.
- LAB is getting close to finishing up their DRAFT Standard.
- Chemistry Expert Standard has been sent for posting for comment but is not up yet.
- PT Expert has the Volume 4 Standard posted for comment. They are looking at changing the PTPA term to PTP AB. They are working on Volume 3.
- PTPEC discussed the gamma-Chlordane to trans-Chlordane change. Jerry mentioned that he notified EPA, but there has been no response. Reference material for gamma-Chlordane is not available.
- Jerry noted that there were two excellent presentations on improving the reliability of Cannabis data. In addition, Michelle Wade did a presentation geared towards Module 4. Jerry would like all the Expert Committees to do a similar presentation on how each Module improves the reliability of data.
- Microbiology worked through its Response to Comments document. A concern was raised that the term verify is being used various ways in the Standards. Paul plans to follow-up on this with the Expert Committees. Microbiology also completed their Implementation Guidance documents and LASEC is reviewing them this month for posting on the website.
- Radiochemistry discussed whether the Module 6 Standard needs to be reopened to add definitions and then provided an update on work they are doing with the PTPEC to review the new Radiochemistry FoPT limits. They are working with EPA on updating MQOs.
- EMC discussed the issue of reducing methylene chloride.
- The NELAP AC provided updates and shared information on the Accreditation Body (AB) Round Tables, which are being conducted to share how different ABs are handling various procedures, allowing all participants to gain insight from these communication opportunities.
- Jerry and Devon had a good conversation with Nevada. One topic of conversation that had impact was that not being part of NELAP penalizes laboratories in her state that have to go out of state to get a primary accreditation. These labs need to have

an additional accreditation. Concern was expressed about the fee to be a NELAP AB. Need to see if they are on the NELAP AC's list of interested states that can attend a NELAP AC call. (Addition: Jasmine Curiel (NV) is on that list. CA, AR, and WV are also.)

- LASEC gave a presentation on the SIR process. This would make a good newsletter article. Steve would like to see like to see something in the article about the philosophy of why the process is the way it is.
- The Building a Quality Culture was well received. Maybe Scott Siders would be willing to write an in-depth article.
- The Assessment Forum and Mentor Session got good reviews in the survey given out at the end of the sessions.
- QMS reviewed the definitions they are planning to remove from the Module 2 Standard and discussed a proposal for Technical Specialist that Debbie, Ilona, Kristin and Aaren worked on after the Radiochemistry session. The proposal was very well received, and the Committee will still be working on a couple of details – STEM degree for master's and PhD and how credentialing can be used. Many ABs want to see how the credentialing for Technical Specialists will work before giving their full support. Jerry will be working on putting something together to share with them.
- The Field Session resulted in several ideas about topics for upcoming workshops and ways to approach engineering firms, and companies that hire them, to encourage them to use accredited FSMOs for sampling and field analysis. Katie did an in-depth review of the progress made on Volume 2 of the Field Standard.
- Credentialing Exam – There was only one failed exam, and it had numerous questions that were not answered. Jerry is following up on it.

3. Newsletter

The Committee discussed possible articles and decided on the following topics to pursue. The goal will be to publish it mid-October. Devon volunteered to be the editor and Sharon agreed to give guidance.

Topic	Author
Upcoming Forum in Boston, MA	Jerry Parr
Things to do in Boston ...	Mike Delaney
From the TNI Chair	Alfredo Sotomayor
Board Election	Sharon Mertens
EMS Wrap Up	Jerry Parr
Charlie Carter Award – Bob Wyeth	Jerry will check with Lara.
Article Related to EMS Plenary	Scott Siders
Status of Standard Updates	Paul Junio
Field Standards	Katie Strothman/ Ilona Taunton
Chemistry – Highlight Big Changes	Michelle Wade
Chlordane Update on FoPT Tables	Susan Jackson/ Amy DeMarco
Technical Specialist Update	Debbie Bond/ Ilona Taunton
AB Round Table Discussions	Cathy Westerman

Topic	Author
Professional Development Program - Introduction - Jack Farrell Scholarship	Chair PDP Back-up: Jerry Parr/ Ilona Taunton
First Credential Exam	Jerry Parr
Status of Technical Specialist Credential	Jerry Parr
AB Round Table Discussions	Cathy Westerman
Roberts Rules Article	Patsy Root

Jerry will follow-up with William to get previous newsletter posted.

4. Boston – Winter Forum on Environmental Accreditation

Jerry described the advantages of the location that included it is a great destination city, great downtown location, and close to a few Northeast NELAP states. They offered a 10% rebate on food. Disadvantages are a hotel rate of \$179, but that's still \$10 below per diem, \$40K in food and beverage, but this should not be a real issue.

There is an option with everything on one floor or putting two rooms on the floor below to possibly get bigger rooms. Jerry shared the floor plans with the Committee.

Looking at the schedule of meetings, it does not look likely to do the IDEXX tour. Jerry will talk to Patsy.

Conference fees were discussed and will be further discussed in September.

5. Updated NELAP Vision and Outreach Plan

Jerry has tried to reach out to Michella Karapondo from EPA without success. He is under the impression that EPA is not talking right now.

Steve noted that EPAs Drinking Water training is not necessarily a requirement. Some states do their own training with permission from the EPA region. Jerry will look at talking to Region 3. Jerry mentioned that he has been hearing the EPA regions being referred to as locations and not numbers – Rocky Mountain Region.

6. Cannabis Regulators Association (CANN-RA.org)

Jerry is still planning to send a copy of the Training Course Catalog and current DRAFT data integrity language and/or data integrity language in the new Volume 1 Field Standard.

7. New Business

There was no new business.

8. Next Meeting

The next scheduled teleconference is planned for **Thursday, September 4, 2025, at 1 pm Eastern.** An agenda and any needed documents will be provided prior to the meeting.

The next TNI Ambassadors quarterly meeting is tentatively scheduled for **Tuesday, October 7, 2025, at 2 pm Eastern.**

Steve adjourned the meeting at 2:20pm Eastern.

Attachment 1 – Advocacy Roster

	Name	Stakeholder Group	Present/Absent
1.	Steve Arms, Chair	Other	Present
2.	Mike Delaney	Other	Present
3.	Zonetta English	Lab	Absent
4	Marlene Moore	Other and NEFAP	Absent
5.	Janice Willey	Federal	Present
6.	Robin Cook	Lab	Present
7.	Sharon Mertens, Vice Chair	Lab	Present
8.	William Lipps	Other	Absent
9.	Devon Morgan	Lab	Present
	Associate Members		
	Sheela Agrawal	TNI Ambassador	Absent
	Celeste Crowley	Other	Absent
	Stephanie Drier	AB	Absent
	Paul Junio	TNI Ambassador	Present
	Silky Labie	Other	Absent
	Ashley Larssen	TNI Ambassador	Absent
	Judy Morgan	TNI Ambassador	Absent
	Lily Sanchez	TNI Ambassador	Absent
	Aurora Shields	Other	Absent
	Elizabeth Turner	Lab	Absent
	Staff		
	Jerry Parr	TNI ED	Present
	Ilona Taunton	PA	Present

Attachment 2 – Agenda, August 14, 2025

- Welcome and Roll Call
- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of July Minutes
- Review of Conference – St. Louis
 - Topics of interest to Advocacy
 - Action Items
- Next Conference – Boston, MA
- CANNRA Update
 - NELAP AC Meeting (7/7/25)
 - Providing TNI Documents
- NELAP Vision and Outreach Plan

Continue discussion of how TNI might assist EPA's drinking water lab certification efforts if Agency staffing/funding gets drastically reduced

 - Reach out to Michella
 - Reach out to ASDWA
 - Possible meeting with non-NELAP States
 - Ambassador Involvement
- Update on New Business, if any
- Adjourn