

Summary of Advocacy Committee Meeting
February 5, 2026 1 pm Eastern

1. Welcome and Introductions

Steve Arms, Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Attendance is recorded in Attachment 1 – Five voting members (quorum met) and three Associate members.

The agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

The December meeting minutes were distributed for review. A motion was made by William to approve the December 4, 2025, minutes with a correction to the year. The motion was seconded by Devon and unanimously approved.

Heather Morgan has joined as a new member that will be serving as an Ambassador.

David Smith – interested in South Carolina

Charles Morrow – interested in being an ambassador for Texas Already an AB – maybe see about another state.

Sparked further conversation: Maybe need to look at how we have this structured. Jerry summarized what ambassadors do – geared towards non-NELAP states and changes.

2. Boston Conference

- Summary
 - Discussed core roles of Advocacy
 - Advocate for national program
 - Maintain relationships – EPA, Federal Agencies, Non-NELAP states, Professional organizations
 - White Papers
 - Presentations
 - Newsletter (2x/Year)
 - Outreach to small labs
 - Discussed Ambassador Program – act as a conduit between non-NELAP states and TNI. Need to recruit more ambassadors. There were a few people interested in Boston (David Smith – South Carolina, Charles Morrow – Texas, Heather Morgan – Alabama).
 - Discussed the new attendee presentation. Possible need for recordings: History & Foundation of TNI and Welcome to New Members
 - Discussed possible topics for newsletter
 - Future Actions:
 - Encourage acceptance of TNI-recognized third party assessments
 - Work with non-NELAP states toward AB participation or work with TNI
 - Special sessions at conferences. Feedback opportunities.
 - Committee will move towards specific and trackable actions

- Additions
 - There is not a need for a Texas Ambassador since Texas is already a NELAP State, but the Committee discussed options to be an Ambassador for a State that someone may not live in. Perhaps the do work in that state?
 - The NGAB meeting was a good meeting and ran over in time.
 - Need to set-up a meeting with Christine Sotelo (CA) since she was not at the meeting and had questions about applying to be a TNI AB.

3. Conferences

Winter

- January 2027: Long Beach, California

Summer

- August 2026 - Houston – The triangular layout in the hotel is going to require lots of walking. NEMC abstracts are coming in and the TNI Committee sessions are lined out. Jerry shared the proposed schedule.
- August 2027: Chicago (O'Hare area)

4. Newsletter

Editor: Devon

Timing: June 4th publication

Articles due: May 15, 2026 (Friday)

Topic	Author/Contacts
Summary of Annual Report in Boston – include link	Jerry
Technical Specialist	Paul Junio – summarize Monday morning session.
LAB - Expert Committee status – one article – include standards development process.	Paul Junio
FSMO - Volume 1 and Volume 2 Standard Update – transition timelines?	Tracy/Katie
PDP – AEX Scholarship and Emerging Professionals update	Joe Manzella
Benefits of Credentials	Written by Advocacy Explaining what the process is, etc ...
Field Conclave	Tracy
Summary of Boston – conference re-cap	Jerry has asked for summaries from the Program Administrators.
Announcement of summer EMS – Houston visit	Jerry
Reason's for using NGABs	Duncan
Alfredo	Alfredo
Member Spotlight	Kim Watson Ask Zoneta if she can do it.
New webcasts, webinars, future training	Mention new ones – 2 from advocacy

Topic	Author/Contacts
	Ilona
Feedback/Complaint Survey	Ilona
Organizational Name Changes	Jerry
Board Election Results	Sharon Mertens
Things to do in Houston	Harold
Topic	Author/Contacts
Summary of Annual Report in Boston – include link	Jerry
Technical Specialist	Paul Junio – summarize Monday morning session.

5. Possible New Tasks Discussed in Boston

- State of Accreditation Report 2026 - The last report was 2023, so an update is needed.
 - o This should only take a few meetings to do. Important for non-NELAP states and ambassadors. The EPA would also be recipient. This will be due December 2026. We will also be close to a new Lab Standard.
- Promote use of NGABs.
 - o They feel stuck – it was TNI's idea. This needs to be pushed along. It was decided to do an article in the Newsletter.
 - o How do we promote this to others. NELAP ABs are also customers.
- Credentialing needs stronger promotion.
 - o This will be added as a standing Advocacy task on Agendas? There are now 18 credentialed Quality Management Specialist. Reach out to ACIL, AWWA, local chapters – CA, Texas, FSEA. This will be further discussed next month.

6. Continuing Tasks:

- 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 – no update
- CANNRA Update
 - o Status of Providing TNI Documents – no update
- Update/Continuation of Single PT Discussion – no update

7. Update on New Business, if any

None.

8. Next Meeting

The next scheduled teleconference will be March 5, 2026, at 1pm Eastern. An agenda and any needed documents will be provided prior to the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:15pm Eastern.

Attachment 1 – Advocacy Roster

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

Attachment 2 – Agenda, February 5, 2026

1. Welcome and Roll Call
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of December Minutes
4. Conference Update – Boston, MA
 - Review
 - Discussed core roles of Advocacy
 - Advocate for national program
 - Maintain relationships – EPA, Federal Agencies, Non-NELAP states, Professional organizations
 - White Papers
 - Presentations
 - Newsletter (2x/Year)
 - Outreach to small labs
 - Discussed Ambassador Program – act as a conduit between non-NELAP states and TNI. Need to recruit more ambassadors. Some possible new volunteers.
 - Discussed the new attendee presentation. Possible need for recordings: History & Foundation of TNI and How TNI Works Today
 - Discussed possible topics for newsletter
 - Future Actions:
 - Encourage acceptance of TNI-recognized third party assessments
 - Work with non-NELAP states toward AB participation or work with TNI
 - Dedicated lunches or special sessions at conferences. Feedback opportunities.
 - Move towards specific and trackable actions
5. Meeting Updates
6. Newsletter

Begin developing next newsletter and select editor.

Topic	Author
Summary of Annual Report in Boston – include link	
Technical Specialist	
Expert Committee status – one article (include standards development process?)	
Volume 1 and Volume 2 Standard Update – transition time lines?	
PDP – AEX Scholarship and Emerging Professionals update	

Topic	Author
Benefits of Credentials	Written by Advocacy
Field Conclave	
Summary of Boston – conference re-cap	Jerry has asked for summaries from the Program Administrators.
Announcement of summer EMS – Houston visit	
Reason's for using NGABs	
Alfredo	
Member Spotlight	
New webcasts, webinars, future training	
Feedback/Complaint Survey	
Organizational Name Changes	

7. New Tasks?

- State of Accreditation Report 2026 - The last report was 2023, so an update is needed.
- Promote use of NGABs
- Credentialing needs stronger promotion. Add this as a standing Advocacy task?

8. Continuing Tasks:

9. 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

10. CANNRA Update

Status of Providing TNI Documents

11. Update/Continuation of Single PT Discussion

12. Update on New Business, if any

13. Adjourn