

Summary of Advocacy Committee Meeting

June 4, 2026

1PM Eastern

1. Welcome and Introductions

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

The agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

The May meeting minutes were distributed for review. A motion was made by Mike to approve the May 7, 2026, minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Robin and unanimously approved.

2. Quarterly Ambassador Meeting

Ambassador Updates:

Sheela – OH

No updates from Ohio.

Mike - New England

Sent information regarding the Field Conclave to his contacts. The person in charge of Massachusetts's lab certifications retired after many years. The supervisor of the lab will take over until they hire a new person. Henry Leibovitz for Rhode Island retired and his replacement is Brady Cunningham. Mike has sent these changes to Paul Junio to update TNI records.

Paul – Wisconsin

Commercial laboratories have asked the Wisconsin DNR Lab Cert Program to begin holding a 'technical forum' in conjunction with its quarterly Certification Standards Review Council meetings. The intent is to bring up technical topics that are unlikely to be of concern to the mostly smaller laboratories that are also certified (or registered) in Wisconsin. There has been reluctance, but it sounds as though the first effort might happen July 16. Paul will not be able to attend.

Devon – NV

There have been some recent conversations about pursuing NELAP accreditation. It will be dependent on legislative action. The state's existing program is based on the 2003 Standard. Ilona noted that she has been sending Nevada invitations to the NELAP AC meetings and they have attended.

3. 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 Credentialing 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	Zoneta
New webcasts, webinars, future training	Mention new ones – 2 from Advocacy Ilona
Feedback/Complaint Survey	Ilona – Task force needs to approve.
Organizational Name Changes	Jerry
Board Election Results	Sharon Mertens
Things to do in Houston	Harold
Signing up for TNI notifications	Paul

Devon reported that all articles have been received. Duncan was not able to submit the NGAB article. Jerry noted that the newsletter should be out within the next week.

3. NEMC Summer Meeting Update

Jerry reported that planning is complete. Currently there are 196 registrations for attendees and 105 for exhibitors.

Sandhya Parshionikar, Michella Karapondo and Will Adams from EPA are trying to attend. They are not speakers at the conference, but Jerry hopes to have them attend a side meeting with the NELAP AC.

4. Continued Review of TNI Welcome Presentation

Jerry Parr noted that most of the previous comments were incorporated and that the changes primarily involved updated formatting, refreshed demographic information, and plans to include links to several webcasts covering standards development, accreditation, and credentialing.

The updated membership demographics showed a higher proportion of government laboratories relative to commercial laboratories. Jerry explained that this shift reflects growth in municipal wastewater laboratory membership rather than a decline in commercial lab participation. The statistics are based on individual members rather than organizations, meaning multiple members from a single laboratory contribute to the totals.

The Committee also reviewed slides describing consensus standards development, NELAP, NEFAP, proficiency testing, and professional development. Jerry plans to include links to recorded webcasts for attendees who want additional detail on these topics.

The Committee discussed the differences between NEFAP and NELAP and ensured the slides clarify that in NEFAP a single accreditation may apply across multiple locations when they operate under one quality management system.

Jerry commented that two scholarships (Jack Farrell Scholarship) were recently awarded for about \$1600. There was also a recent generous Jack Farrell Scholarship donation received for \$15,000.

The Credentialing Committee is working on a comprehensive webinar describing the credentialing process. This will help people that have not attended previous TNI meetings where this information was originally shared.

Reviewing the Training Committee slides led to a conversation on improving communication about training opportunities. Jerry will look into establishing a list serve sign-up that can be placed on the training portion of the TNI website. People can sign-up to be notified whenever a new class is posted. Ilona noted this will be especially helpful for new webcasts where marketing material typically only goes out when a new webinar email goes out.

Jerry presented a new slide highlighting additional TNI resources available through the organization's website. Rather than providing extensive explanations during the presentation, viewers will be directed to a dedicated webcast that demonstrates how to navigate the TNI website and locate available resources.

The Committee emphasized the need to increase volunteer participation. Organizational progress depends on member involvement. This led to the thought of including the well-known quotation, "Be the change you wish to see in the world," as the presentation's closing message. This quote has been around for about 100 years and there is likely no copyright associated with it.

Edits were made throughout the review of the slides to update information as needed. There are now about 40 slides and Jerry expects the presentation to take about 30 minutes.

5. NGAB Discussion

Follow-up is needed to get the NGAB article from Duncan.

6. New Business

None.

7. Next Meeting

The next scheduled teleconference will be July 2, 2026, at 1pm Eastern. An agenda and any needed documents will be provided prior to the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00pm Eastern.

Attachment A – Advocacy Roster

	Name	Stakeholder Group	Attendance 6
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	Present
7.	Sharon Mertens, Vice Chair	Lab	Present
8.	William Lipps	Other	Absent
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
	Heather Morgan	TNI Ambassador	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 B: Advocacy Action Item Summary 2026

	Task Description	Doc Number	TNI Contact	Committee Contact	Date Action Item Added	Start Date	Complete Date	Communication	Notes
1	Ambassador Meetings – March, June, September, December					Ongoing			The Ambassador meeting will be added to the regular Committee agenda on a quarterly basis.
2	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. 3/5: Possibly plan discussion in Houston.
3	CANNRA		Jerry				4/2/26	CLOSED	Jerry will provide TNI documents. 4/2: Jerry provided documents: Data Integrity Language in Field Standard and possible TNI courses that could be of assistance.
4	Single PT Discussion		Jerry						3/5: Jerry will reach out to Carol Gebhart. Can this be considered in Module 1 update? 4/1: Discussed with Carol and Committee will look into this.
5	State of Accreditation Report		Jerry		2/5/26	Plan to start in July.			2/5: Not due until end of year – Begin work in July.
6	Promote use of NGABs			Steve	Boston	2/5/26			2/5: Article planned for Newsletter – Duncan 6/4: Article still needed.
7	Free Webcast: New Members Welcome History and		Jerry		3/5/26	3/5/26			4/1: Committee started review of DRAFT presentation. 5/7/26: Final will be reviewed by Committee in June.

