

Laboratory Certification Standards Review Council Meeting Minutes From 5/12/2015

Attendance

Council Members: **In Person:** Paul Harris (Chair), Pat Gorski (Vice-Chair), Kirsti Sorsa, Paul Junio, Kurt Birkett (Secretary), Sharon Mertens
via LYNC Meeting: Jennifer Peth

DNR Staff: Steve Geis, Rick Mealy

Others in Attendance: Kevin Freber (Watertown WWTP), Tom Hungerford (Eurofins S-F, via LYNC), Jarrett Thomas (Suburban Labs, via LYNC), Frank Lagunas (EPA Region V via LYNC)

The meeting was called to order at 9:31 am

Minutes from meeting of January 6, 2015

- o **Action:** A motion (Junio/Mertens) to approve the January 6, 2015 minutes with correction of one minor typographical error was unanimously approved.

Program Performance Status Report for FY 2015 Year-to-Date

- Audits - Commercial/Public Health: **29** (34); Municipal/Industrial: **70**(89)
- Reports - Commercial/Public Health: **31** (34); Municipal/Industrial: **66** (89)
 - o Reports Due - Commercial/Public Health: **4**; Municipal/Industrial: **8**
- Closures - Commercial/Public Health: **24** (34); Municipal/Industrial: **74** (89)
 - o Open Cases - Commercial/Public Health: **26**; Municipal/Industrial: **29**
- For the fiscal year 2015 to-date, **75.3%** of reports for audits conducted were issued within 30 days
- o No significant comments were received regarding program data or backlog lists.

Budget Variance Report for FY 2015

- o The following information represents the status of spending to-date, but does not completely reflect allocable charges incurred. Expenses are expected to be approximately 75% of budget at this time.

	BUDGET	ACTUAL	% of BUDGET
Salary	\$301,882	\$ 203,595	67.4%
Indirect labor	\$ 20,916	\$ 63,232	302%
Fringe	\$150,779	\$ 110,301	73.5%
SALARY+ FRINGE	\$473,577	\$ 377,128	79.6%
Contractor	\$ 44,000	\$ 24,263	55.1%
Travel, Supplies & IT	\$ 44,050	\$ 26,664	60.5%
Indirect supplies	\$ 18,600	\$ 24,999	134%
Additional Allocables	\$ 20,175		
SUPPLIES/IT	\$106,825	\$ 75,926	71.1%
FY 2015 BUDGET	\$580,402	\$ 453,054	78.1%
<i>Allocables</i>	<i>\$ 60,398</i>	<i>\$ 88,231</i>	<i>146%</i>

- o An extensive discussion on allocable charges and their impact on our budget, as unbudgeted costs, ensued. In addition, there was discussion regarding criteria for lapsing money from the program, another cost that has not be authorized to be included in budgeting, was discussed. We have no information on whether lapses will continue beyond FY 2016.
- o The prevailing sentiment seemed to be that the program has no choice but to allow a deficit to occur to emphasize the impact of these unbudgeted costs.

Other DNR Business

- o Variations - No variance requests were received.

- 2015-17 proposed budget & Science Services impact – This portion of the budget has not yet come before Joint Finance. We are still looking at a reduction of 2.25 FTEs. We technically have 2 full FTE vacancies, but there has been no clarity of the 0.25 FTE position.
- Region V program Audit – Frank Lagunas provided feedback on his recent visit. He spent time with our program, DATCP's microbiology program, auditing the State lab, and "shadowing" a DATCP audit. He was "pleased with how we are working to run the program" and commented that, region-wide, staffing issues are a problem. He also indicated that he raised the issue of proposed changes to the EPA's MDL procedure at the region level. Mr. Lagunas plans to be more visible and will provide feedback to/from other states.

Paul Harris asked if there were any recommendations for our program. Lagunas indicated that he is really in the exploration stage.

Assessment of LOD/LOQ Guidance – Now that the guidance has been out for a month, Steve Geis was looking for any feedback. Paul Harris indicated that he presented it to his staff and they think it is very good. They found the examples to be particularly beneficial. He also commented that the latest edition of LabNotes was excellent. Kurt Birkett indicated that LabNotes was "very awesome".

Paul Junio experienced some confusion as he read it, but believes the guidance is fair.

Tom Hungerford feels it serves as a good reference guide. He has a few new analysts and this provides good examples for a training tool.

Sharon Mertens commented that it seems that the guidance uses the terms LOD and MDL interchangeably.

The discussion led to some commentary on the program website. While there are some good resources available, updating the website perennially seems to be neglected due to other pressing issues. Is there anything the Council can do to help?

Steve Geis concluded the discussion by noting how much he values how this Council operates and wants to use it as a model for the Operator Certification program, which very few folks seem to understand.

- NR 812 Status – Geis handed out a draft of the guidance expected to be released via the Department Guidance protocol. All guidance goes through the Department Leadership Team and is generally posted to allow for public comment for 21 days. After public comments have been addressed, the guidance becomes final and is posted as such.

Other DNR Business

- LabCert Retrospective – Paul Harris shared some interesting historical documents. In late 1986, Alfredo Sotomayor was hired part-time as the initial program auditor. The DNR Secretary and Department required 25% of time be spent working at the State Lab of Hygiene. Auditing began in March 1987 with 525 labs in the program. August 2014 marked 30 years of Lab Certification Standards Review Council.
- TNI Assessment Forum – Paul Junio reminded that there will be an Assessment Forum in Chicago Tuesday July 14 at the Hyatt Regency.
- LabCert Program Support – Paul Harris will draft a letter in support of the LabCert Program.

Next Meeting Date

- **Action:** *The next Council meeting was scheduled for 9:30 AM CDT Tuesday, August 11, 2015 at the DNR Science Operations Center (2801 Progress Road, Madison).*

The meeting was adjourned at 11:56 AM.