

**TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TO TEXNET AND BUREAU OF ECONOMIC GEOLOGY**

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 18, 2026 – 11:00 a.m. to 2:15 p.m.

OPENING

The meeting of the TexNet Technical Advisory Committee was called to order at ~ 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, February 18, 2026.

PRESENT

Alexandros Savvaidis, Manager of TexNet
Brian Stump, Committee Chair
Jeff Nunn, Committee Member (via Zoom)
Aaron Velasco, Committee Member
Larry French, Committee Member
Mark Boyd, Committee Member
Stefan Hussenoder, Committee Member
Jenna Watts, Director for State Affairs, UT Governmental Affairs and Initiatives
Ryan Rutherford, Policy Coordinator, Governmental Affairs and Initiatives
Lorena Moscardelli, Director, Bureau of Economic Geology
Mark Blount, Assistant Director of External Affairs, Bureau of Economic Geology
Elizaveta Rybina, TexNet Admin Program Coordinator

ABSENT

Chris Hillman, Committee Member
Dave Cannon, Committee Member
Scott Mitchell, Committee Member
Seyyed Hosseini, Program Director, Bureau of Economic Geology

AGENDA FOR FEBRUARY 18th, 2026 MEETING

1. Approval of previous minutes and discussion of the meeting agenda
2. Discussion of the next Biennium Budget Request and TexNet's critical needs
3. Letter to the Governor's office with associated budget; Q2 meeting location and agenda
4. Next steps

DISCUSSION OF THE MEETING AGENDA AND APPROVAL OF JANUARY 20th, 2026 MEETING MINUTES

The meeting began with Mark Blount informing attendees that TexNet's budget runs through UT, and UT's accounting review begins in March. He emphasized that budget figures need to be finalized and submitted promptly to ensure timely processing.

The TAC reviewed a draft letter to the Governor's office, which was distributed to all participants for discussion.

Alexandros Savvaidis shared insights into the challenges of securing additional funding during the mid-biennium and stressed the need for careful planning and communication with relevant stakeholders and the Bureau of Economic Geology.

The Committee agreed on the importance of preparing the budget for the next biennium and ensuring UT is informed of TexNet's needs and TAC's recommendations.

The group discussed strategies to secure endorsement from Railroad Commission (RRC) for TexNet's funding request. It was recommended to meet directly with each RRC Commissioner's office, with Aaron Velasco offering to assist in coordinating these appointments, which would also include participation from TexNet, the TAC, and the Bureau.

The Committee briefly discussed the draft letter and considered scheduling meetings with legislators and industry representatives in Fall to build support for the funding request.

The TAC discussed the agenda of the meeting and the need to adjust the annual budget request from \$3 million to account for increased expenses related to tariffs, inflation, salaries, and RMAs.

The Committee reviewed and approved the January 20th, 2026, Meeting Minutes.

DISCUSSION OF THE NEXT BIENNIUM BUDGET REQUEST AND TEXNET'S CRITICAL NEEDS

Jenna Watts, Ryan Rutherford, and Lorena Moscardelli joined the meeting in-person and Jeff Nunn joined the meeting via Zoom at ~ 12:00 p.m. The draft letter was distributed to the participants.

Alexandros briefed the group that the TAC discussed funding needs and possible adjustment of the annual budget from 3 million to include additional expenses related to IT infrastructure and a backup system, salaries, tariffs, and RMAs, and a strategy for TexNet to address the request for additional funding.

Alexandros shared that the total investment in seismic equipment from 2015 up to end of 2025 is \$4.5 million.

The TAC reviewed equipment replacement requirements, noting that approximately 60-80 stations will need replacement over the next few years, along with IT infrastructure upgrades costing around \$2 million.

Alexandros emphasized the critical need for IT hardware upgrades, including data backup systems, and the gradual replacement of aging seismic equipment. He noted that 62 seismic stations currently have equipment that is 10-year-old, requiring replacement at an estimated cost of \$2 million, which includes tariffs and shipping costs, up from \$1.4 million when originally purchased.

Alexandros presented the seismicity trends in time from 2017 to 2025 and shared cost estimates per seismic site. He highlighted that much of the aging equipment is concentrated in the Permian Basin, Panhandle, DFW, East and South Texas, and provided estimated timeline for multi-year seismic station replacement.

He explained that the network currently uses equipment from multiple vendors, including Nanometrics, Guralp, Silicon Audio, and ESS. The group discussed the advantages and disadvantages of the equipment provided by each vendor.

Alexandros highlighted the need for \$2 million to upgrade 24/7 operations systems and computer servers, excluding rising costs for archive storage. He stressed the importance of replacing IT hardware within a 2-4-year window to maintain coverage, as equipment is not covered by warranty after 5 years. He noted that half of the current system is already out of warranty.

Alexandros expressed concerns about instrument failures affecting earthquake monitoring, leading to inaccurate earthquake location and delayed data response times to the public. He emphasized the need for a back-up data center to ensure system redundancy as well as operations if the main system is to fail and maintaining at least 95% of registered stations operational.

Lorena stressed the need to align the budget with a cap on the number of stations, as adding more stations increases costs for maintenance, data storage, and manpower. She discussed challenges in managing instrument deployment and emphasized balancing network size with available funding and operational capacity.

Lorena also raised concerns about field staff workload and vehicle usage, recommending the development of a safety and rotation plan to address human resource challenges and prevent burnout among field engineers. She also suggested the acquisition of a dedicated fleet for TexNet operations. The TexNet TAC agreed to review current staffing needs, consider additional positions to address the need.

Alexandros explained that 25 instruments currently owned by UTIG will be returned to UT for other research efforts. To replace this equipment currently deployed in the Eagle Ford area, he contacted EarthScope to loan sensors for a 3-year research project. After three years, the Eagle Ford area will lose 25 stations, requiring TexNet to replace the EarthScope equipment to address this gap, considering public safety concerns due to the population living in this earthquake-prone area.

The group prioritized replacing 60 aging stations and discussed adding 20 stations to address the Eagle Ford gap after the EarthScope project ends, while adding new stations should be ad-hoc particularly for new earthquake clusters.

Jenna proposed framing the fund request as a one-time cost for 2027 covering seismic equipment and IT hardware costs, which would need to be spent within two years. Recurring costs, such as salaries and maintenance, would be handled separately. Jenna emphasized that UT Government Affairs needs a finalized plan from the Bureau and TexNet, including clear distinctions between one-time cost and reoccurring costs by the end of May.

Following this discussion, the TAC agreed to prepare two separate budget requests and recommended presenting the one-time cost within the context of a multi-year budget as follows:

1. One time budget request, that would be a rider for special funding and include the cost for replacement of the aging seismic equipment as well as the addition of 20 stations to fill the gap in Eagle Ford after the completion of the project with EarthScope, plus IT hardware upgrades, and vehicles for the field team.

2. Recurring budget adjustment to replace and upgrade a specific number of aging seismic stations or percentage of the current network, network maintenance, and increased costs due to inflation, tariffs, and salaries.

Alexandros will prepare and share updated budget figures, including revised annual funding figures, detailing one-time and recurring cost estimates for equipment, IT needs, and other expenses.

The TAC will revise the draft letter to the Governor's office and share it with the Bureau and UT Government Affairs.

The Committee will aim to finalize the letter by May to align with UT's budget cycle and legislative advocacy efforts.

TAC, Mark Blount, and Jenna discussed the provision of budget numbers, aiming to finalize the budgets by May or earlier. They also explored the possibility of organizing a TAC meeting at the Capitol in Fall 2026 and coordinating with UT Government Affairs as needed.

Jenna, Ryan, Lorena, and Mark Blount left the meeting at 1:25 p.m.

The TAC further discussed budget planning for seismic stations and IT equipment. They proposed a one-time two-year budget plan, including a one-time \$6 million rider for 90 new stations, IT equipment and backup system, along with an annual budget for the replacement of 15 seismic stations.

The TAC agreed to update the current annual budget to account for inflation, tariffs, and salaries, and extend the equipment replacement cycle beyond the current two-year period. Alexandros will include specific line items for vehicle replacement and field operations support in the budget request and share with the TAC for use in the letter. The TAC will revise the draft letter to the Governor, incorporate feedback from the group, and circulate the revised version to all relevant parties, aiming to present the letter to the Governor's office in May.

The TAC considered preparing a shorter version of the Biennium report and a high-level budget rider earlier than December.

Additionally, Alexandros will provide feedback at the Q2 TAC meeting regarding the location of earthquakes in the Permian Basin using the 3D velocity model.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at ~ 2:15 p.m. by Brian Stump, Committee Chair

Minutes submitted by: Elizaveta Rybina, TexNet

Minutes reviewed by: Alexandros Savvaidis, TexNet

Minutes approved on ..., 2026, by: