

***VITAL RECORDS IMPROVEMENT FUND
ADVISORY COMMITTEE***

To The New Hampshire Department of State

- MINUTES -

Friday

September 23, 2011

Approved Minutes

-MINUTES-

Vital Records Improvement Fund Advisory Committee Meeting

September 23, 2011

Archives Building
2nd Floor Conference Room
71 South Fruit Street
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

David Scanlan, Deputy Secretary of State, SOS Appointment
Stephen M. Wurtz, Acting State Registrar
Patricia Little, Keene City Clerk, NHC&TC Association Appointment
Brooke Dupee, Data User, DHHS Appointment
Tricia Piecuch, Nashua City Clerk, NHC&TC Association Appointment
Debra Clark, Town Clerk, NHC&TC Association Appointment
Nelson Allan, Public Member, SOS Appointment
Ashley Conley, Municipal Data User, DHHS Appointment
Brian Burford, State Archivist
Bruce Riddle, Dartmouth Hitchcock, DHHS Appointment

COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Thomas A. Andrew, MD, Medical Examiner Appointment
Theresa Pare-Curtis, OIT CIO Appointment
Joanne Linxweiler, Auburn Town Clerk, NHC&TC Association Appointment
Robert Carrier, Funeral Director Association Appointment

GUESTS:

Vicki Tinsley, DOIT
Bart Bronson, DOIT

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1. Meeting Called to Order:

- Ms. Little called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m., with an announcement that there were several new appointees/members to the committee. She suggested committee members welcome their new peers by going around the room introducing themselves. Ms. Ashley Conley of the Nashua Public Health Department was the first new member to introduce herself. She was appointed by the Department of Health & Human Services to replace Ms. Anna Thomas.
- Ms. Conley explained that she was very interested in the work of the committee and hoped to be able devote a greater amount of time to it than Ms. Thomas had been able to. Ms. Little thanked her for her interest and enthusiasm. Mr. Bruce Riddle introduced himself to members. His complete introduction was not fully captured by microphone. He is employed by and was in attendance, representing the Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center.

2. Approval of Minutes:

- Ms. Little asked for a motion regarding the minutes submitted for the June 24, 2011 meeting. An unknown member put forward the motion. Mr. Burford stated that he had made several suggestions to Ms. Kostka to amend the minutes as originally submitted. The first suggested change was in the last sentence of the first bulleted point in item number three. He wanted the words “sufficiently flush” replaced with “sufficient.”
- In the second bulleted paragraph of the same section the words “some specificity” should be replaced with “greater detail.” On the fifth page in Section 7, second bulleted paragraph, last sentence, the word “some” should be replaced with “someone.” A motion to accept the minutes with corrections was made with Mr. Burford offering a second. Ms. Little called for a vote and the motion to accept the minutes as corrected was accepted unanimously by the committee.

3. Income and Expense Report:

- Mr. Wurtz reported that the financial report distributed to committee members was accurate as September 22, 2011. The balance as of that date was \$3.82 million.
- None of the \$900,000 expected to be withdrawn by the Governor and legislature had occurred yet. Mr. Wurtz explained that if the committee took those withdrawals into account for the “true” balance of the fund, it would actually be \$2.82 million. Mr. Wurtz reported that the division generated approximately \$10,000 - \$15,000 in revenue per month.
- Mr. Wurtz instructed members that the contract to procure a NHVRIN replacement would bring down the balance by \$1.4 million. He arrived at that figure by taking the

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mandatory deliverables of the contract which is 1.2 million dollars and added the first year of maintenance by the vendor at \$117,000. The fund would still be in good shape with a balance of 1.5 million dollars.

- Included in the funds set aside for NHVRIN2 is a \$500,000 contingency fund to purchase hardware necessary to run the application as well as a tentative enhancement to the off-the-shelf system we are purchasing. Mr. Wurtz has asked the vendor to provide an estimate for their staff to potentially create a bridge from the financial package in Netsmart's NHVRIN2 application that would satisfy state requirements and allow the division to discontinue the financial package currently in use.
- Mr. Wurtz advised the committee that the cost of the financial package enhancement was projected by Netsmart to be approximately \$65,000. Total exposure to the fund for this project if the entire \$500,000 contingency is used would be 2.3 million dollars (1.2 OTS system, \$587,000 maintenance and \$500,000 contingency) and that is a worst case scenario.
- Mr. Scanlan agreed with Mr. Wurtz that the fund would likely remain healthy even after this large expenditure. He reported that the funds have been encumbered for this project so it is safe. Mr. Scanlan felt that the committee should expect the \$900,000 to be withdrawn eventually, especially considering another 3-5 million dollar deficit had been uncovered recently. This money could be used to help reduce part of that deficit.
- Mr. Scanlan stated that considering the fund makes approximately 1 million dollars per year and covers annual expenses of \$600,000-\$800,000., it would remain in good shape despite the legislative action. The \$400,000 taken by the legislature in each of the next two years would not seriously hurt the fund.
- Mr. Wurtz told members of the committee that he was very pleased with the progress of the project to replace NHVRIN. Mr. Scanlan agreed, stating that Mr. Wurtz and DOIT staff really deserved credit for moving this project forward and getting the job done.
- Ms. Piecuch expressed a concern about legislative action relative to same gender marriage. She felt that any major changes to this legislation could very negatively impact the cost of the new application. Mr. Wurtz assured Ms. Piecuch that the contingency fund was set up just for that type of expense. Because the contract with the vendor was for a same gender marriage module, a rescission of that legislation would create the need for a whole new civil union module. That would most definitely be considered an enhancement.
- Ms. Little asked if the division's relationship with the DOIT would change or be the same following the release of NHVRIN2. Ms. Tinsley replied that the extent of DOIT's relationship with the division would depend upon how the new application is set up. She reported that those discussions were ongoing and to the best of her knowledge, no decisions had been made. The application could be housed and maintained by DOIT, which would keep the relationship as it currently stands. They could also elect to have

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the Secretary of State's IT staff house and maintain the application, which would make their future relationship with DOIT very minimal.

- Mr. Wurtz added that there was one thing that was certain and that was that DOIT did not currently have a Database Administrator trained in Sequel and that is the language the new application is written in. SOS IT staff does have a Sequel trained Database Administrator on staff and he believed that at minimum, the division would be using at least one SOS IT staff member on NHVRIN2.
- Mr. Burford noted that he saw a discrepancy in several of the columns. There appeared to be a difference of approximately \$100,000 in the fund balance and the change seemed to have happened overnight. Mr. Wurtz agreed that Mr. Burford's inquiry was a good one. Mr. Bronson pointed out the interest earned column seemed to be the same amount as the difference in the columns.
- Mr. Burford agreed pointing out that the interest earned in 2011 did not appear to be reflected in the 2012 beginning balance. Ms. Little reminded committee members of the auditors discovery that interest was not being applied correctly to the fund previously and a lump sum of \$107,000 had been deposited into the fund after the audit uncovered the error. She surmised that the amount of the initial lump sum was much larger than the amount earned on an annual basis.
- Mr. Scanlan replied that he would need to investigate the source of these funds before confirming Ms. Little's hunch. He explained that the auditor's had provided a specific dollar amount owed to the fund, but it was too large to payout in one year. Ms. Little felt that the \$107,000 was not the total amount owed to the fund and asked Mr. Scanlan to confirm her recollection that there would be additional future deposits to the fund by Treasury.
- Mr. Scanlan replied that he would have to look into it as he believed the auditors had provided an exact amount due the fund, but he did not recall an exact amount. He stated that he felt Ms. Little was correct that the amount was going to be paid in several installments. It would need to be confirmed but he believed the payments were supposed to be over a three to five year period. Ms. Little asked for affirmation that the fund was now being invested earning interest.
- Mr. Burford suggested a motion that the committee vote to accept the Income and Expense report. Mr. Allan seconded the motion. Ms. Little asked for additional discussion. The committee unanimously agreed to accept the report.

4. NHVRIN Replacement Update:

- Mr. Bronson reported that since the last meeting a contract had been awarded to Netsmart Technologies. The project would be called NHVRIN2. The previous week a three-day kickoff meeting had been held with the Netsmart team that would be working on the project. The meetings were to lay framework for project

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timelines, resources needed. They reviewed general workflows of the current system. The meeting went well and everyone seemed eager to go. In the next month Mr. Bronson reported that they would be having risk assessment meetings to discuss some known risks as well as identifying potential risks. They would also be starting on the conversion portion of the project. Mr. Bronson explained that the new system would be called NHVRIN2 went over the cost of the contract and the timeline outlined in the document Mr. Wurtz distributed.

- Mr. Wurtz provided a background of the vital records automated record registration for new members, Ms. Conley and Mr. Riddle. He explained how the system evolved over the years and how the Vital Records Improvement Fund came into existence.
- Ms. Little explained how she felt the fund was vital to the success of this project. She felt it unfortunate that this year the Governor and Legislature both felt it necessary to use this fund as a revenue source, as this very healthy fund is what has helped set New Hampshire Vital Records apart from every other state year after year. Ms. Little stated that she hoped that the \$900,000 this year and the \$400,000 earmarked from the fund next year would be the first and last time it would be used for the budget.
- She expressed the importance of the committee managing and maintaining and using the fund wisely to maintain a healthy balance in the fund. Hopefully, it can be healthy and not so attractive to others in the future. It was Ms. Little's goal that the fund stay off the Governor's and legislator's radar screen during future budget planning.
- Mr. Dupee asked to add something to Mr. Wurtz's history or NHVRIN. Dr. David LaFlamme was asked to attend the planning meeting the previous week and Mr. Dupee was very pleased to have had a researcher involved in the planning of the next vital records application. He stated that security issues still remain important, but that much has been done since the 1980s.
- Mr. Wurtz agreed with Mr. Dupee adding that when they were evaluating NHVRIN the previous year, security had been one of the issues raised and it was one of the driving factors behind its (NHVRIN) replacement.
- Mr. Allan asked Mr. Wurtz, noting the different processes, look and feel of the new application, if he anticipated a great expense for training users on NHVRIN2. Mr. Wurtz replied that since it would be in two phases, the first being birthing hospitals (24) and funeral directors (99). The first phase would entail bringing in the city and town clerks from the cities and towns where there is a birthing

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hospital. The second phase would be the remaining 225 city and town clerks. Mr. Wurtz did not anticipate a major increase in the cost of providing training for NHVRIN2. He was unsure to what extent training would be necessary for non-birthing hospital cities or towns. He had thought of possible regional training that could cost us a little extra to do that.

- Mr. Wurtz had discussed with the vendor, creating a web-based training module that users could revisit at their leisure. He did not feel that it would continue to be feasible for division staff to bring all the clerks into the office for training. Everything is driven by continuing education today and Mr. Wurtz suggested that nurses and funeral directors could receive credit for being certified in NHVRIN2. Mr. Wurtz added that the web-based training module would be considered an enhancement and he hoped he could count on this committee's support when it gets to that point, because that module would not be inexpensive.

5. DOIT Update:

- Ms. Tinsley reported that she did have much to report. There had been no major issues or changes. She and her staff were focusing on procuring the new application. The hardware is definitely nearing its end of life and Ms. Tinsley stated that although it is currently okay she hoped it made it until the new installation. It was definitely ready to be retired and Ms. Tinsley felt this was a good time for the replacement of the NHVRIN application.
- Mr. Bentzler had nothing of importance to report. He is still replacing PCs and printers and has the occasional Internet Explorer 9 issue that he has to handle. Ms. Piecuch asked if Mr. Bentzler was telling cities and towns that they could not come back to the state for equipment any longer. The committee had voted to no longer provide equipment to cities and towns that have not been using state equipment all along.

6. Old Business:

- Mr. Wurtz thanked Mr. Dupee and his staff for their help in convincing Portsmouth and Concord hospitals to encourage all their physicians to register for NHVRIN and to begin certifying all their deaths online.
- Mr. Riddle told Mr. Wurtz that physicians are not trained to fill out death certificates, even in medical school. It would be a great training item for vital records to offer. He added that there are many things that families do not want to be listed on death records and that makes it difficult for physicians to want to complete death records. Mr. Wurtz replied that division staff receive calls from families often asking that a negative cause or contributing factor be removed from

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a record. They have had physicians change the cause of death due to pressure from family members.

- Mr. Wurtz described the grant program previously administered by Mr. Manning. He had promised Mr. Wurtz that he would attend the next meeting to report on the final town.

7. Next Meeting:

The next meeting was scheduled for January 27, 2012.

Ms. Little adjourned the meeting.