VITAL RECORDS IMPROVEMENT FUND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

To The New Hampshire Department of State

-MINUTES-

Thursday
July 20, 2006

Approved Minutes

-MINUTES-

**Vital Records Improvement Fund Advisory Committee
Meeting**

July 20, 2006

Health & Human Services Building
Room 110/111
29 Hazen Drive
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

       Joseph Gray, Rochester City Clerk, City Clerk Appointment
       Jill Hadaway, Bow Town Clerk, Town Clerk Appointment
       David Scanlan, Deputy Secretary of State, SOS Appointment
       William R. Bolton, Jr., State Registrar
       Thomas A. Andrew, MD, Physician Appointment
       Judy Gaouette, Dover City Clerk, City Clerk Appointment
       David Pollard, Funeral Director Appointment
       Doug Hall, Vital Records User, DHHS Appointment
       Dr. Frank Mevers, State Archivist Appointment
       Kimberly Johnson, Henniker Town Clerk, Town Clerk Appointment
       Dr. David Laflamme, Maternal & Child Health, DHHS Appointment

COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED:

       Debbie Augustine, NH Hospital Association
       Bob Lambert, Peterborough Town Clerk, Town Clerk Appointment
       David Kruger, Public Member Appointment
       Peter Croteau, OIT, OIT Appointment

GUESTS:

       Melanie A. Orman, Vital Records, SOS
       Douglas Teschner, SOS
       Jackie Goonan, OIT
       Steve Wurtz, Vital Records, SOS
       Chris Bentzler, OIT

Vital Records Improvement Fund Advisory Committee Meeting

Approved Minutes

1. **Approval of Minutes:**

Mr. Gray called the meeting to order. He asked for comments or corrections to the May 18, 2006 meeting minutes. Hearing none he asked for a motion to accept the minutes as written. A motion was offered and the committee voted to accept the minutes as written by a unanimous vote.

2. **Network Security Assessment:**

Mr. Gray reminded the committee that Mr. McColley had attended that last meeting and made a presentation about testing the NHVRIN application to see how secure it really was. Mr. Gray explained that after discussing it with Mr. Bolton they had determined that the same type of testing could be done in house. Mr. Bolton and Ms. Goonan agreed that it could be done in house. Mr. Gray suggested that since it could be done in house he felt it was something that should definitely be done. He asked if any member wanted to discuss possibly going through a third party to do the assessment rather than keeping it in house.

Mr. Bolton replied that in all fairness to Mr. McColley, this was a need that was not being met previously. While OIT was going forward with more of a look at their applications, Mr. McColley focused on the NHVRIN application only. Having said that, Mr. Bolton stated that he felt it could probably be done in house a little more cheaply. Mr. Gray added that he felt that security was extremely important and he had been in favor of it at the last meeting. He was happy that it could be done in house and by people that are more familiar with the system.

Mr. Gray suggested a motion to have OIT move forward with a security assessment of NHVRIN. Ms. Hadaway made the motion and Ms. Johnson seconded. Mr. Scanlan asked if Ms. Goonan felt there would be additional costs associated with completing the security assessment. Ms. Goonan replied that there would probably be cost incurred. The OIT staff would run a software tool scan and report on issues they uncover. They would also probably recommend that Microsoft do an assessment of security and maintenance issues. The combination of those two items would provide the developers with the information they need to modify the application to make it more secure and easier to maintain. There would definitely be a cost involved with that aspect of it.

Mr. Scanlan asked if she had any idea what those costs might be. Ms. Goonan replied that she did not have an estimate of the cost. They were working with Microsoft to develop a plan and she expected to have more detailed information around Labor Day. Mr. Scanlan asked if it would be possible for the committee to see those numbers before electing to go ahead. Mr. Bolton explained to Mr. Scanlan that he was under the impression that Mr. McColley's assessment would also probably result in his recommending that we have Microsoft look at the application as well. He felt that if the committee went with Mr. McColley they would still be looking at a Microsoft expenditure as well.

Ms. Goonan added that she felt that the major difference would be that Microsoft would be very technical and would tell the developers exactly how to modify the software to get it to where it needs to be. A third party might just say it needs to go from A to B, but I don't know how to get you there. That is why they (OIT) prefer Microsoft. Mr. Gray

asked Ms. Goonan if she felt the OIT solution would likely be more than the $25,000 Mr. McColley quoted to the committee. Ms. Goonan replied that she could not comment. She had asked a similar question and received no reply. She offered that as soon as she had firm numbers she would pass them on to the committee.

Ms. Hadaway asked Mr. Bolton if he meant that Mr. McColley would just get us to the point that OIT would and would then recommend that we use Microsoft as well for the $25,000. Mr. Bolton replied that he had. He thought that Mr. McColley would point out the security flaws with the software and then we would have to remedy the problems ourselves. Mr. Gray stated that what Mr. McColley was offering was a "snapshot" of our security at the time of the assessment. He said that he had hoped it would be more of an ongoing process. Ms. Goonan replied that it would be. As technology evolved so would the application security. She explained that they were already aware of some things they could do to make it more secure.

Ms. Hadaway asked if she could change her motion. It was agreed that she could. She then made a motion that the committee wait and see the numbers and the plan OIT comes up with before moving forward. Mr. Bolton and Mr. Gray suggested the committee table the item until they have more information. Mr. Gray asked for a vote and the committee unanimously voted to table the assessment issue until they have more information in September.

3.   **VRIF Grant Procedure:**

Mr. Teschner began by thanking committee members for their input into the process of creating the grant program guidelines. He explained that he had worked very closely with the clerks over the past few months on developing the program. Mr. Bolton, Mr. Wurtz, and Dr. Mevers had also been very helpful with the preservation aspects. Mr. Teschner had circulated several different drafts and received a great deal of feedback. He also wanted to thank Mr. Bergeron and Ms. Little for their assistance.

The project is now at a point where they have a completed proposal. Mr. Teschner added that he had copies for those in attendance that had not had a chance to read the one he had distributed via email. The plan was to move it out to the clerks as soon as he had the committee's blessing. On a parallel note, a big part of this especially in the beginning would be doing the assessments. An RFP went out to thirty-four potential consultants that could do the assessments. The deadline for their proposals is August 1, 2006.

Mr. Teschner had already received one proposal from InLook that is very strong and is in line budget-wise with what he was anticipating. He had also met with another potential consultant the day before this meeting and expected to receive a proposal from them as well. Mr. Teschner reported that he was also working on an RFP for vendors. One of the concepts that they are working on is to try as much as possible to not give the money directly to the municipality, but to have them tell us what they need and we provide it for them. He envisions a master contract with vendors. The RFP will go out to eleven different suppliers of archival products.

The first step though is to move this process out to the clerks. It is about the eighth draft so there has already been a great deal of discussion, but he wanted it to go out widely so everyone would get a chance to provide input or have questions addressed. Ms. Hadaway told Mr. Teschner that she thought it was great and that she felt he had done a "terrific"

job. Mr. Teschner thanked her. Mr. Gray echoed Ms. Hadaway explaining that Mr. Teschner had only been on the job a couple of months and had put the program together in that short time. "If you think about it that is what this whole committee is about, administering the excess funds toward preserving and maintaining vital records. It is good to finally have a program in place the whole state can benefit from."

Mr. Gray asked Mr. Teschner how much money he was hoping to appropriate. Mr. Teschner replied that they had discussed $1 million, but he thought it was written with a great deal of flexibility built in so if we get to $1 million mark and there are still good proposals outstanding, there should be no reason why the committee could not say "let's keep going." He added that he was getting a little ahead of himself and this could be discussed further when they get to the financial part of his presentation. There was about $3 million in the fund so the committee could spend $3 million. The only problem is that kind of expenditure would not be sustainable going forward.

After discussing the amount with several people including Mr. Scanlan, he determined that $1 million would be the ideal amount to start with. That would leave $2 million in the fund. Mr. Teschner added that he was aware of the concerns of Mr. Bolton and Mr. Wurtz over upcoming federal requirements and the burden they might place on the fund in terms of upgrading NHVRIN, and financing bulletproof glass, etc. for clerks. He suggested that the committee might not need to vote on a specific amount of funding for the grant program, but on the concept itself. He assumed the committee could commit up to $1 million, but not more than that until we see what kinds of proposals come in.

It had originally been suggested that each community receive up to $10,000 and if every community participated that would be over $2 million. They are anticipating that not every community will participate. They will be doing a lot of outreach by speaking at clerk meetings and conferences. Mr. Teschner suggested that some members of the committee might want to assist with getting the word out to clerks. It was his intention to get the money out before the clerk conference in October. If it could be sent out to the clerks in the next week or two and some awards made the word would be getting around to clerks about the availability of the funds without any effort on our part.

Mr. Teschner reported that he and Mr. Gray had agreed upon a deadline of January for submissions so they would have a chance to see where the program stood. Dr. Laflamme asked if there was any evaluation built into the program. After the grants are made, seeing how well the activities wind up. To look at best practices or whether certain archival methods are better than others. Mr. Teschner replied that they had not discussed anything along those lines yet, but after the previous awarding of grants InLook had performed an evaluation and submitted a report to the committee. He felt that it would probably be a good idea to do that again this time.

Mr. Gray stated that he felt it would be a good idea to set a limit so a cycle could be set up. Everyone would know that we plan to send out this much money every year. That way the fund would not be exhausted and clerks would know of its future availability. He did not foresee a great deal of competition for the grant funds this year, but believed that in future years there would be. He did not think it was unreasonable for the committee to want to see how the funds are used. In planning with Mr. Teschner they decided that if smaller towns had simple requests like non-acidic boxes, Mr. Teschner could just send them out to the towns. That would be a way to maintain some control over how the grant funds are used.

Ms. Hadaway stated that another good thing about paying vendors directly is the committee will know the vendor and what they offer for goods and services and can ensure the money is being used wisely. Her town had received some funding from the earlier grant and she had to provide pictures of the books that she had bound after they were completed. Dr. Mevers added that he wanted to add to the accolades as he had worked with and observed Mr. Teschner working on this project. He felt it was going to be a very effective project. He wondered if it was the appropriate time to make a motion to the effect of confidence in the project and earmarking $1 million to it.

Dr. Mevers also did not believe they would use the entire $1 million this year, but he did believe many towns were interested and excited about the project. He felt this was a great step forward and offered a motion that committee members show confidence in the proposal and budget $1 million to support it. He added that there would be a progress report made to the committee at every other VRIFAC meeting. Mr. Hall seconded Dr. Mevers' motion and suggested that the report reflect how many applications were received, how many were awarded, and dollar amounts of awards.

Mr. Hall explained that his concern would be that the more sophisticated and highly staffed communities would get their applications in much quicker than the smaller communities. The kind of outreach that would be needed would be for those smaller communities. Some sort of reporting of how that is accomplished and its results would be helpful. How well they are penetrating the large and small communities, etc. Then if additional funding is necessary the committee could then also consider those requests. Mr. Teschner replied that he would be happy to do a report for each VRIF meeting. He would do a spreadsheet showing what towns have applied, how many have had assessments, etc.

Mr. Gray suggested that after elections when they hold the new official training for new clerks we could possibly get some time on the agenda to do a little training on records preservation. He admitted that when he became clerk he knew nothing about it and only knew the basics now. That might be one of the biggest weaknesses, lack of training of clerks on the importance of and the how to of preserving their records. Mr. Gray asked the committee for a vote and the motion to express confidence and allocate $1 million for records preservation grants was approved unanimously. Mr. Teschner explained that he would complete the RFP process and get some approved vendors and consultants and see how many applicants we get.

Mr. Teschner wanted to discuss with Mr. Gray whether they wanted to put together a small committee to go over the proposals/requests in the approval process. In terms of the proposals, he stated that from what he understood if a city or town wanted an assessment we would approve that automatically. He wanted the committee to tell him whether they wanted to have a specific deliberative process or would he have the authority to approve requests. Mr. Teschner said he was comfortable either way. He suggested that a subcommittee might just want to see proposals that may appear "controversial or strange."

Mr. Hall asked if there was a standing subcommittee. Mr. Teschner replied that there was not, but that he had worked closely with the clerks up until this point. He asked if the committee would like to have a standing subcommittee or a more informal process. Ms. Hadaway replied that she felt that the criteria had been made pretty clear and if he had the money he should distribute it. If there was an occasion where he was inclined to

deny a request he should bring it before a subcommittee before doing so. Mr. Teschner agreed with Ms. Hadaway and explained that her solution would definitely keep the process moving.

Mr. Gray added that he felt a subcommittee would be a good idea as it is sometimes a good idea to have a different perspective. Someone that might ask, "Gee, do you really need to spend money on this?" He suggested that the committee take a look at how many applications have been received and what they are asking for at the next meeting and then look into possibly forming a subcommittee. Ms. Hadaway asked if Mr. Gray wanted Mr. Teschner to bring every request before a committee. Mr. Gray replied that he was thinking of the larger requests not every request.

Mr. Gray felt that if someone wanted the fund to pay for their vault HVAC system to be redone a subcommittee should be involved in considering that type of request. He stressed that the first step though was to get everyone evaluated and see where we stand. Mr. Pollack asked if $10,000 was the limit a municipality could request. Mr. Teschner replied that they had intentionally left a little wiggle room, but in general yes. Mr. Gray explained that because it had been so long since the committee had offered grants they wanted to make the process as smooth and easy as possible. Was the bar set low this year? Mr. Gray admitted that it may be and in future years there could possibly be fewer restrictions, but for this initial offering he preferred they take it slow. He did not think the fund would spend $1 million this year.

Mr. Hall added that there would be more opportunities in the future. If there are larger applications that come in the committee might consider asking the town to provide some matching funds. He felt comfortable with letting it go this year to see what the response will be. Mr. Bolton agreed. He believed that in the past there was a subcommittee set up to review all the grant applications and he would like to see that in the future. Mr. Gray replied that Mr. Teschner's job is Grant Administrator and he had no problem with him approving average sized awards, but felt there needed to be a little oversight on the larger requests.

4. **Personnel Update:**

Mr. Bolton reported that there were two data entry positions that were created. They had been approved by Personnel and were being advertised. He was already aware of several applications and was confident they would be able to fill the positions. Mr. Hall asked if there was anything holding them up this time. Mr. Bolton replied that there was nothing he was aware of. Mr. Gray explained that during the Intelligence reform discussion they could expand more on the importance of the new hires and the keying of data.

5. **NHVRIN Update:**

Ms. Goonan distributed a handout to those in attendance. She reported that she felt that her staff was making great progress. They have complete five releases. The next release was scheduled for August 8, 2006. She explained that there were still 107 change requests in the queue. One release had been done on July 5, 2006 to enable clerks to support HB1487, eliminating the three-day waiting period to marry. The upcoming August 8, 2006 release was a fairly large one. They had completely changed the daily receipts report. It will allow clerks to reconcile their daily cash receipts with fee

transactions. She distributed samples of the reports to the committee to give them an idea of the detail the reports would offer.

Part of the work OIT has done to complete this release will also assist the SOS in keeping track of transactions. Another part of the release is for birth clerks. They will now be able to enter birth events that occur outside the hospital. The final change is one to the marriage module that will allow clerks to more easily add officiant data to marriage records. Ms. Goonan reported that they would be upgrading Oracle to 10G, which has better features than the 9I they currently use. Her staff will be working in the development and testing environment in August and on September 9, 2006 they will move to the production database. That will require an eight-hour outage during non-business hours. They generally take it down on a Saturday morning and bring it back up that evening.

Ms. Goonan explained that she would let Mr. Bolton report on the NHVRINWeb project later. She reported that OIT would also be working on migration to a new software lifecycle management tool that they use called Harvest. The benefit of this product to the state is that it web enables their aspect of the process. Right now what they do is notify OIT by phone or email if they need something changed in the application. This tool will allow them to enter it directly into the system. That will make things much more streamlined and all information about changes will be captured in one central database.

Some non-related work that Ms. Goonan's staff was doing, meaning not related to the next release of the NHVRIN application, was discussing with Microsoft the security of the application and the possibility of an assessment. They are also working with the DMV to match death data to ensure people cannot fraudulently obtain a driver's license or ID with a deceased person's identity. Her staff also has some other requests from funeral directors to send data in electronic form that they can then use in another application. Mr. Pollard was pleased to hear that OIT had that request as a priority. Ms. Goonan reported that the state is also interested in death data so they can adjust benefits accordingly. Ms. Goonan asked if committee members had any questions about any of the items she had discussed so far.

Mr. Hall stated that much of what Ms. Goonan had discussed related to the modules around the data. His question was what is the status of the data sets themselves. How many records are in the files, how many are being added on a regular basis, and in particular, since he had met with Mr. Bolton and Mr. Scanlan about making access to the data, the question of the data dictionaries for the files. What is the status of all of that? Mr. Hall wanted to know the status of the data itself, not the modules surrounding them.

Ms. Goonan replied that they did not have an updated data dictionary. It was not on their to-do list, but could be put there. Mr. Hall asked how people can request data from the system if they do not know what all the fields are and what the definition of the codes in the field are? Ms. Goonan replied that they work with requesters on a one-on-one basis to gather that information. When they do get new information on NHVRIN they do modify the data dictionary. It is a very large database so it is not a simple task to create a data dictionary and it is very time consuming.

Mr. Hall asked if they as developers did not need to know all the fields as they went about creating all the entry screens and data export pieces. He felt that there at least had to be an informal data dictionary. Ms. Goonan replied that there is a partial data

dictionary and it is sufficient for the work they have had to do to date. If something new comes up that they have not dealt with before that is when additions are made to the dictionary. Mr. Hall asked then how would he know which fields he wanted her staff to crosstab and the analysis he wanted them to do.

Mr. Bolton explained to Ms. Goonan and Mr. Hall that they were talking about two different things. Ms. Goonan was talking about the entire dataset. Mr. Hall would not be interested in things like flags, just the data. Mr. Hall agreed. Mr. Bolton explained that we could provide that information to Mr. Hall and used an example: F_FNAME is father's first name. Ms. Goonan agreed that she was probably looking at it from a different perspective. Basic information that would be used for statistical analysis had been documented.

Mr. Wurtz stated that he thought that what Mr. Hall was speaking of was the code structure and that we do have. Ms. Goonan added that that the code structure is not really complete either. It is only worked on as they get to it. It has not been a deliverable that they have been instructed to work on. Mr. Hall stated that as someone that had done system development before, this was sort of like working on the second floor of a home before the foundation was complete. He encouraged the committee to raise the data dictionary on the priority list.

If we don't know what the fields of information are in every file in the system we will have a lot of problems when it comes to cross-walking or even security. Which fields needed to be protected, and why. He also suggested in terms of updates on the system, that some time be spent looking at how many records do we have in each file, how many are coming in and what has been holding up the process. He appreciates the fact of all the work being performed on the modules, but the data itself is why he was there. The modules are only there to improve everyone's ability to use it.

Mr. Hall said that he was stymied as to how he would make a very specific request of data from the system without a data dictionary. Ms. Goonan explained that she did not know the exact number of records in the database, but that she could get it for the committee if they wished. She explained to Mr. Hall that typically when someone comes to them for data they go with a business problem and tell them what it is they want to know from the dataset. In her role as an analyst Ms. Goonan researches the issue, talking with developers obtaining the desired information. That is why she stated earlier that they do it on a case-by-case basis. In her experience, people did not ask for specific data they want questions answered.

Dr. Laflamme stated that the lack of a data dictionary affects a lot of people. If you look at the birth certificate worksheet, there is a facility worksheet and a mother worksheet. There is a fair amount of information on there that is the legal information and that is important. The other important piece is the public health information contained there. That is the information that Dr. Laflamme uses as a Maternal & Child health epidemiologist. His job is to look at the birth dataset as a whole and try to figure out how they can improve the public health of mothers and children in New Hampshire based on this data. They look at birth outcomes, birth weight, etc.

It has been really difficult since the NHVRIN system came online. They had a data dictionary pre-NHVRIN and they do not post-NHVRIN. To Dr. Laflamme that is a really huge management issue, which is part of the language that is what this committee

is supposed to do. They do not have a key to what is in there that is complete enough so that the public health people like himself can do their job really well. He felt it was really a huge deal.   He encouraged the committee to put this high on the priority list and somehow task some people to build this data dictionary. They do not have enough of an understanding of what is in there when they go to use it. Typically people are very responsive when they have a question, but if someone is on vacation it can take a couple of weeks before he can get an answer.

They (Public Health) had a federal grant application for $1 million and were unable to complete it in time because the person he needed specific information from was unavailable. They (DHHS) are operating in crisis mode, responding one by one to the questions. Dr. Laflamme reported that it was not just him, but many people in public health need a key. Mr. Gray asked Ms. Goonan when the next update was scheduled after the August release. Ms. Goonan replied that they hoped to release again late in September. Mr. Gray asked if they already had the changes made for the September release. Ms. Goonan replied that they did not. Mr. Gray asked what it would take to have Mr. Hall and Dr. Laflamme sit down and discuss expanding the data dictionary.

Ms. Goonan expressed a desire to go back to her office and speak with the Data Base Administrator (DBA).   She thought that possibly Oracle could have some automated tools that could provide a great deal of information about the database including a data dictionary. It could turn out to be something very simple to produce quickly. Mr. Gray suggested that Ms. Goonan, Mr. Hall and Dr. Laflamme meet to discuss it. He asked that the issue be put on the next agenda. Mr. Bolton stated that he might have more input on what is currently available as we use it on a daily basis. The developer has provided us with a great deal of documentation and much of what Dr. Laflamme and Mr. Hall were looking for could be contained there.

Mr. Bolton stated that it is also our responsibility to provide a data dictionary to the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) as well. Ms. Goonan replied that NCHS was a different story.   It is a subset of all the NHVRIN data and that is very well documented. Mr. Bolton explained that the subset is the public health data set. Ms. Goonan replied that probably a lot of it was. Mr. Bolton stated that it was the whole data set. Probably not so much the flags and such, but they document whether no prenatal care occurred. Ms. Goonan stated that this could be a very good short-term solution. Dr. Laflamme stated that he had been informed by Ms. Elderkin and he had an email to verify that, that the NCHS data set would be of no interest or help at all to him. He had been ignoring those on Ms. Elderkin's advice.

Mr. Hall explained that he wanted to use another example so everyone could get a sense of the issues surrounding this. The divorce data is one dataset and he felt it would be very useful to know at any point and time how many kids and what age groups are affected by divorce. He did not know what fields would be necessary for him to obtain that information. Mr. Hall said that is when you need a data dictionary so you know where to find the kids and how to cross tab to who has the legal custody and all that sort of thing. Instead of relying on OIT staff to satisfy requests if there were a data dictionary anyone could access the data themselves.

Mr. Bolton replied that maybe this was a good time to segue into the NHVRINWeb tool. The data dictionary is little pieces put together in one wrapper. Users can extract every bit of data from the worksheets on the new web tool. That does exclude identifiers and

confidential data sets. If the research requires that you drill down even further where you would be accepting data, then you would need to know what field equals what, but the data you would receive would be an extract of what we have and not just a dump in the data warehouse. Generally when we satisfy a data request we wrap it up in an Excel spreadsheet and tell you what each field means. If you then need further confidential data extracts you would then worry about the data dictionary. Mr. Gray suggested that Mr. Bolton, Mr. Hall and Dr. Laflamme work on that and the subject could be revisited in September.

Ms. Goonan asked if the committee wanted a report on the number of records. Mr. Hall replied that he would like to know. He thought it would be useful for the committee to know how many we have, how many years, which years are complete. He added again that he was concerned about the delays between the time the data is supposed to be in hand and when it finally becomes available for use. If we have data that is only current through 2003 then we are already three years into a process about something and we don't know what has happened. He felt an update about the data itself was as important as an update on the module surrounding it.

Mr. Gray suggested Ms. Goonan do a demo on how a data dictionary is used and the committee could then see what the need is. He asked Mr. Bolton to also revisit the NHVRINWeb demo to see how a data dictionary would affect it. Mr. Bolton replied that it would be two separate things. The data dictionary would be a document and the NHVRINWeb tool will make the data dictionary unnecessary except for requests for confidential or identifying information. You can just go in and request specific parameters and the tool will provide results.

Mr. Gray asked what the status was on clerks issuing divorce decrees. Ms. Goonan replied that they do have a change request in to do that work, but have not done any work on it yet. Mr. Gray reported that a resident of his town had been married five times. Three of those marriages were filed in Rochester. When she requested copies of the marriage records he noticed there was no indication that a divorce had taken place and he felt that was something the committee should consider. Mr. Wurtz wanted to clarify that he understood what Mr. Gray was asking. Did he want the marriage certificate to indicate whether the marriage was still intact? Mr. Gray replied that he did.

Mr. Wurtz replied that it was an interesting concept. He had never seen anything like that before. He explained that the main problem was that our records only reflect events that occur in New Hampshire. If someone divorces outside New Hampshire the state would have no record or notice of the divorce. If we did start marking the records there could be issues for people that have divorced elsewhere. We could be providing incorrect information on a legal document. Mr. Gray agreed and added that he thinks that further supports clerks issuing divorce decrees. Mr. Wurtz replied that this was true and that he would hesitate to add that element to a legal document and take away from the integrity of it. If we did elect to do that and limited it to New Hampshire, he did not see that it would add much value to the document.

Ms. Hadaway wanted to be sure she understood what Mr. Gray was asking. She asked if he wanted it to state on the marriage certificate that the marriage had ended? Mr. Gray replied in the affirmative. Ms. Hadaway stated that the marriage certificate was only supposed to reflect that the event took place and to add that information would be altering a record after the fact. Mr. Gray replied that in some ways a marriage is not a record. It

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is a record that the marriage took place and people could take the marriage certificate to Motor Vehicle and claim to be married to someone they are no longer married to. An attendee asked if a person was intent on pulling a fast one, couldn't they just take an old certificate and accomplish the same thing? Mr. Gray replied that they could, but he would just like to see us be a little more accurate in how we report things.

Mr. Wurtz explained that the marriage certificate is supposed to reflect facts as they were at the time of the marriage. Mr. Gray suggested that they look at it like an adoption. Do we not change the name of a child when it is adopted? Mr. Bolton replied that it could be looked at like when we mark a birth record deceased. He wanted Mr. Gray to understand that the document is supposed to reflect the facts on the date of issuance. Mr. Gray agreed, but added that it bothered him that this person was in obtaining copies of all her marriages and he wondered what she was using them for. He was aware that Motor Vehicle had gotten really tough on their licensing/identity requirements.

If you have been divorced and your name has changed you have to produce the history for them. He had a 95 year old woman come into his office that had to reproduce her history for DMV so she could obtain a non-driver ID. It is getting difficult to obtain identification in this state and it bothered him that this woman was walking out of his office with three marriage certificates. How could he know what she planned to do with them?

Mr. Wurtz explained that once the national EVVE project went into effect the strain on the public to document their life events would lessen. All that would happen then is any agency seeking to identify a person will just have to bump up against the database and they will have the information they need to do so. That will save the customer money. Mr. Bolton added that the EVVE project is mainly focused on birth and death. Mr. Wurtz replied that right now they are just focused on birth and death because that is where a lot of fraud/identity theft occurs, but he felt the natural progression of that was marriage.

Mr. Bentzler reported that since the last meeting two more towns had been brought online. The towns of Webster and Newbury were now using NHVRIN. The towns of Chatham and the following Monday the town of Roxbury would be online, but would not be trained until the end of August. As for the rest of the towns, they have been trying to work out a process for using WildBlue high-speed internet via satellite through the New Hampshire Electric Co-op. He had been working with the towns, vital records and the co-op to try and get the process in place of how we were going to do this.

There has been a great deal of interest in the project and he predicted that within the next couple of weeks we would have some installs set up. The biggest hurdle so far is how payment would be handled. They have gone back and forth with the initial $300 install being covered by the state. They found that payment could not be accomplished that way. It has to be a reimbursement type situation. He had gone back and explained to towns that they would have to pay for it and then be reimbursed by the state. The co-op has made is easier as initially a credit/debit card was the only acceptable form of payment and now they have stated that they will accept most forms of payment. That has made it easier and more convenient for the towns.

The town of Goshen and the town of Stark are within a week or so of having an install date. Mr. Bentzler reported that there were probably fifteen other towns on the verge of

getting their install dates as well. A training class had been set up for August 22, 1006 for those new users. He assured the committee that even though it has been a little slow the last month or two it is moving along nicely. He felt that by the next meeting he would have a bigger list of towns that are online and ready to go. Mr. Gray asked how many towns would still be outstanding after these towns go online. Mr. Bentzler replied that currently there were 28 towns that did not have access. He has been focusing on those that have responded to his inquiries. As those towns come online he will move toward those towns that have been slower to respond. Many of them have questions he will need to answer.

Mr. Bolton stated "Getting back to out-of-state records and a statewide system, or a nationwide system" that we are looking at to capture electronic records of both birth and death events. The National Association of Public Health Statistics Information Systems (NAPHSIS) is looking at how to develop a hub to capture or act as a rules engine to allow states to go into other state's databases to harvest their birth and death information for residents. The rules engine will describe access and how you might use that record in some kind of an inter-jurisdictional exchange agreement. That will be developed over the next year.

Mr. Bolton was under the impression that the funding would fall under the bird flu. One of the things the hub would be used for would be compiling events of death in the state. The other thing is the inter-jurisdictional exchange. He had been invited to a meeting in Portland on Halloween to develop software requirements. He explained that he was seeking funds from the VRIF to go there. They hope to have the system up and running within a year. Mr. Bolton stated that it was very exciting from his point of view as he had been on the Inter-Juridictional exchange committee for a number of years and it had really never gone anywhere.

There was a trial in recent years handled by NCHS, but they were now backing out of the process and NAPHSIS was now the go to agency on the project. They also have contracts with all the states. This project will allow us to populate our data sets that much quicker. Dr. Laflamme stated that the committee would probably need to know how much Mr. Bolton needed to make the trip, but that he would certainly approve the funding of that trip. Mr. Hall asked if someone would be going from public health. He thought it would be appropriate that they have someone there as well.

Mr. Hall suggested that if the committee funds Mr. Bolton's trip that they also make an offer to DHHS to fund someone from there to attend. Mr. Gray asked if Mr. Hall wanted to amend the motion to reflect that. Mr. Hall said that they should approve funding two people and if DHHS had no one to send that would be fine also. Mr. Bolton suggested that they limit it to $1500 per person and leave it at that. Mr. Gray stated that he wanted the minutes to reflect that Mr. Laflamme made a motion for the committee to fund $1500 for Mr. Bolton and $1500 for an unnamed employee of DHHS to attend the meeting in Portland. Mr. Scanlan asked if NAPHSIS underwrites any of the cost. Mr. Bolton replied that they do only if you are a member of the Executive Committee and he was not. Dr. Mevers seconded the motion. Mr. Gray called for a vote and the committee voted to approve the funding with one member opposing and one abstaining.

6. **NHVRINWeb:**

Mr. Pollard asked if he could make a point before Mr. Bolton began his presentation. He explained that currently funeral directors had to do double data entry to perform their jobs. In the past with VRV2000 they had a way to transfer the data from VRV2000 to their funeral director software and with the advent of NHVRIN they lost that ability. Mr. Bolton stated that he did not believe anyone contemplated moving data from the "Mortware" to NHVRIN. Mr. Pollard agreed. They wanted it the other way around.

Mr. Pollard pointed out that funeral homes do all the work. They get the death certified and enter all the data, and they do not have an automated way to transfer that data to their own software. He and the other 85 funeral homes wanted to see this issue placed higher on the OIT priority list. Mr. Bolton replied that he had recently been contacted by two different entities regarding this issue. One of them was preparing to use a web-based funeral director software and wanted to import the data from that application to NHVRIN. Mr. Bolton was somewhat concerned by that. He explained that we would be happy to push data to their application but did not want it the other way around.

Mr. Pollard replied that in most cases it would be satisfactory for NHVRIN to push the data to the funeral home application. That is what he was advocating, not the other way around. Mr. Gray asked if it would be that difficult to add an export button on NHVRIN that would provide an Excel file. Ms. Goonan replied that she could not comment on the ease of providing this type of export until she had taken a look at the requirements. Mr. Pollard asked if there was any way that funeral directors could assist by providing documentation on several of the most popular versions of the funeral director software. Ms. Goonan replied that someone needed to tell her that it was a priority and then she could meet with representatives to determine the requirements necessary to meet the needs of the majority of users.

Mr. Gray stated that this might be a good subject for a subcommittee, the NHVRIN Improvement Committee. People could come to the subcommittee and tell them what was important to them. That would make the quarterly updates that much more valuable. He asked Ms. Goonan, Vital Records and funeral directors to participate and asked Mr. Bolton for suggestions of other members. Mr. Bolton suggested the health information, and health statistics people might be interested in participating. Mr. Gray suggested that Ms. Goonan chair the committee and suggested the committee meet in August and report to the committee in September.

Mr. Bolton explained that in fairness and since Ms. Augustine was not in attendance he felt he should mention that there is another group that is looking to receive data from NHVRIN. It is called OBNet and it is a joint development between Fletcher Allen and Dartmouth Hitchcock. It was a prenatal registration software that is also a birth registration software. In Vermont they use their state software and the OBNet. Mr. Bolton received a call from Dr. Lauria at Dartmouth regarding their desire to prevent double entry of the data.

They have talked off and on for several years about this project. He explained that rather than both developing their own versions of registration software they could have partnered to create one that was compatible for both the state and the healthcare facilities, but they had not and now there were two different applications. He was not aware of how many other hospitals in the state would take advantage of this new application, but he assumed at least all those affiliated with Dartmouth would. So there is also a need for

NHVRIN to be able to grab their data. This would represent a reverse direction for the data, but very similar situation.

Mr. Bolton explained he had just returned from a NCHS conference and had heard a representative from Vermont give a presentation on the two different software applications and both appeared to collect data equally. He stated that he did not have a problem with grabbing information from OBNet, but it would require an interface be built with an XML file that goes back and forth. Ms. Goonan stated that she needed to collect the email addresses of those she should invite to any meeting of the subcommittee. Mr. Bolton replied that those addresses would be on the circulation list.

Mr. Bolton reported that he had recently done two demonstrations of the NHVRINWeb product and both were successful. He joked that he had already sold New Jersey and the application had not even been released in New Hampshire yet. He explained that the application was a fully integrated marriage, death, divorce, and birth data query system. It will allow for return of all the data we collect within those modules with suppression based on small cell size. If you are looking at cells that are 4, 3, 2, or 1 it will return no results. The developer is cleaning up a lot of things. Vital Records was also already planning/requesting enhancements to the application.

Mr. Bolton explained that he had a list of enhancements that had already been sent to the developer to knock out before the release. Mr. Bolton stated that he was pursuing through the committee or with external help to complete the contract. The contractor has come back with a need for $9,100 to complete the development and that included several enhancements. He felt that we were doing well with that cost. The major concern that Mr. Bolton had heard the most about is we had yet to receive a copy of the code from the developer and OIT has been adamant that they want to see the code before it is plugged in or they will not plug it in until they have a chance to review it.

OIT is preparing a letter for Mr. Bolton to present to the developer to see if we can obtain the code and somewhat of a preview of it before we go live. Mr. Hall asked Mr. Bolton what he thought the timetable was for the completion of NHVRINWeb. Mr. Bolton replied that he expected it in the fall. Mr. Hall asked if he was referring to receiving the code by the fall or the completed product. Mr. Bolton replied that he meant the completed product. He expected the code sooner.

Mr. Hall stated that the state must own the code if it paid for it to be developed. Mr. Bolton replied that was not entirely the case. Just because we paid for it does not make it public domain. Mr. Hall asked if the contract with the vendor did not state that we own what we pay to have developed. Mr. Bolton replied that yes, in this particular case it does. Dr. Laflamme asked if a record is added or updated today how quickly the change would be reflected on NHVRINWeb. Mr. Bolton replied that it was real time data. Dr. Laflamme asked if things like low birth weight could be generated by the system. Mr. Bolton replied that they would.

Dr. Laflamme reported that this concerned him because to the lay person the low birth weight numbers would not look right and the concern is that the out-of-state births do not make it into the database very quickly. Many New Hampshire children born out of state are low birth weight babies. They are born out of state because their mothers are taken to Boston because of complications. If the community wants to write a grant for low birth weight babies and they go to this system they will not get a complete picture. He asked if

there would be a warning to users that the data is not complete. Mr. Bolton replied that he was aware of that and there would be a disclaimer to that effect on the site.

They would be warned that the data they are looking at is fresh and as time goes by it will become more stable as amendments and out of state records are added. He added that one of the enhancements he mentioned was to put data descriptions on the site so people will understand the fluidity of the data. Dr. Laflamme asked if there was anyone from DHHS involved in the project. Mr. Bolton replied that early on Mr. David Reichel had been invited to participate and was assigned to the project for several months. At some point he decided to put constraints on how we would operate the web tool that we could not agree with. One of which was he wanted us to hold data back for a year or two and we will not do that. The immediacy of the data is one of the great things about the tool. Public health is not our only market. It is a high utilizer of the data, but not the only one. Just getting the numbers out immediately is a very big plus.

Mr. Bolton explained that other public health officials have been involved as well. He had recently met with Denise Love of NADO who went through a similar situation with the Utah system. She was very encouraging. He had also met with Dan Friedman from Massachusetts and he was also very intrigued and excited about it. Dr. Laflamme stated that it looked like they had lost the public health participation. He offered that he would be happy to be involved if they would have him. Mr. Bolton replied that they would be happy to have him.

Mr. Wurtz stated that he wanted to comment on some of the database concerns. He explained that possibly the staff in Vital Records is spoiled in the sense that all of our information comes in electronically so it is there instantly. The weak link of out-of-state events is not all states gather their data electronically and even less share it electronically. He cited Massachusetts as an example. They will dump to paper and give us statistics periodically. In the past when vital records had a data entry operator they were tasked with entering these records.

The fact that we will soon have two data entry staff coming on board he felt there would be a noticeable improvement of that data. That data is not only important to public health, but some of it is used by city and town clerks in their annual reports. If the town of Bow is building a new school and Ms. Hadaway is tasked with finding out how many children were born she really needs to know if there were thirteen more born in Massachusetts. Everyone will benefit from this addition to vital records.

Dr. Andrew asked if the imminent nature of the web program going online meant they at the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) should just plan to hold off on using the NHVRIN system since they have not had the opportunity yet. Mr. Bolton replied that he thought they were using NHVRIN. Dr. Andrew explained that they had tested it and enjoyed it very much, but were not currently using it, as there were some "bugs" that needed to be worked out. He asked if all they needed was a user name and password to begin using it.

Mr. Bolton was still confused. Dr. Andrew explained that they had been VRV2000 users but were not on NHVRIN. Mr. Wurtz replied that we could re-establish user name and password and get them back on NHVRIN. He had been under the impression that they were at least able to go in to look at records, but that was an easily remedied situation. Mr. Wurtz recalled that there had been some deficiencies in the system when OCME had

initially tried it out. Mr. Bolton added that there was probably a change request out there somewhere. Ms. Goonan replied that she did not know the gentleman that had brought up the subject. Mr. Bolton introduced Dr. Andrew to Ms. Goonan.

Mr. Bolton informed Dr. Andrew that the system they had been discussing would be of no use to the medical examiner's office as it was just to export data already located in NHVRIN. Mr. Bolton thanked Dr. Andrew for raising the issue, as he was unaware that his office was not currently using NHVRIN. Dr. Andrew replied that he did not want to "rattle cages" either, but they had enjoyed NHVRIN when they tried it out. Mr. Bolton asked if they did not even create records. Dr. Andrew replied that they did not.

7.   **Financial Report:**

Mr. Teschner began by explaining that at the last meeting there were quite a few questions about the financial reports supplied to the committee and he had several himself. He met with Mr. Gray and Ms. Penney and the document he was distributing was the format they agreed upon. He explained that there was a lot of information contained in the report, but the most important point was the $3 million balance the fund is maintaining. Mr. Teschner pointed out that the question was the ongoing sustainability of the fund. The fund was bringing in about $900,000 per year and the expenses this year were $686,000.

Mr. Teschner wanted to point out that we are adding two new staff members this year for data entry and his salary and benefits were not reflected in this document. Going forward the fund will not be sustainable beyond what it is doing now unless there are some changes in the expenses. He stated that he was aware that there had been discussion about whether there were other ways to bring new revenue into the fund. The backup data was listed on the second page of the handout. The revenue per month and for the year were listed there. The last two pages are the expenses to the fund. Mr. Hall asked when they start making grants out of the fund where would that show up in this report.

Mr. Teschner replied that he believed they would have to have another line in the report. He had not spoken with Ms. Penney about that aspect yet. She does use the state system that most everyone is familiar with but he assumed there was an object class for this type of thing. He offered to produce a second spreadsheet for the committee to show the grant program status. Mr. Hall stated that he wanted to point out that three quarters of the transfers were to OIT and the transfers to other agencies. That was the bulk of the $600,000, but who were the other agencies.

Mr. Scanlan replied that it was all OIT. Mr. Hall asked why it was in two lines. Mr. Teschner replied that he would speak with Ms. Penney and find out. Mr. Gray asked if there were any comments or questions about the financial reports. Ms. Gaouette asked for a better breakdown of the transfers between agencies. Mr. Teschner replied that before the next meeting and his next report he would sit down with Ms. Penney and get a better description so he would be better able to explain.

8.   **Divorce Records:**

Mr. Gray reported that he had been speaking with Mr. Bolton about the OIT expenses. Going by projections he thought they were kind of high and they had been discussing ways to lower them. He asked Ms. Goonan to provide a report in September better

detailing where the money was going. Break the billing out into better categories so the committee might better understand where the money was going. Is it helpdesk calls, development costs, etc.? During the meeting today he was surprised to learn how much development is still ongoing. He had not realized we were doing so much. At the same time he thought there had to be room for improvement. He asked if OIT provided 24/7 support for NHVRIN. Ms. Goonan replied that essentially they were. Mr. Gray asked if that was really necessary.

Mr. Bolton stated that OIT does not provide 24/7 support for NHVRIN. They supply business hours support and the helpdesk is there to triage phone calls. Ms. Goonan added that she had been thinking more in terms of network operations supports. Essentially the network is maintained 24/7. She added that it was her understanding that some of the expense is shared costs. Mr. Gray explained to Ms. Goonan that what he wanted was to see a breakout of where the money was going and to possibly find somewhere that we could accomplish some cost savings. There could be a way to save five to ten percent by making some changes to how we do some things.

Mr. Hall added that it would seem to him that after the change requests are brought under control it should not cost $500,000 per year to maintain a system of this size. He thought it should be down to $100,000 to $150,000 a year to maintain. Seeing expenses broken out the way Mr. Gray requested might help the committee to understand how much was being eaten up by development versus operational expenses. Looking forward Mr. Hall did not want to think about having to raise fees when there could be an opportunity to lower expenses.

Mr. Gray added that he did not believe the fund would be providing $1 million in grants every year but he also wanted to make sure the fund had positive growth. Increasing income and watching expenses is vital to sustaining the fund. That is why he brought up the issue of clerks issuing divorces and billing other departments for services we now provide free of charge. If you think about it, that is the current model the state is using now. If you use another department's resources you are billed. If all these other departments are using our service then maybe we should look at billing them.

Mr. Scanlan explained that billing other agencies could be a very complicated issue because they (SOS) have relationships with many different areas where they do things for us and we reciprocate in kind. Mr. Gray replied that he was just putting it out there for everyone to think about. Mr. Teschner had pointed out the new employees as well as his own salary for the coming years would be coming out of the fund and Mr. Gray felt it was something the committee needed to look at. As an outsider looking at these reports all you see it vital records paying all these other agencies and no one is paying them. When do we get paid?

Mr. Teschner stated that it seemed to him that the committee really needed to wrestle with what the priorities were and they have not had to do that up until now. He had spoken with Dr. Mevers and reminded the committee that there are municipal records other than vital records that need to be preserved and maintained. Possibly in the future the fund might want to look at expanding the grant program and possibly look elsewhere for some funding for the grants. Mr. Bolton replied that a number of years ago a strategic plan was crafted and it is probably time to revisit that.

In terms of municipal records he felt that it was like a sleeping giant and that there was a

great possibility of gathering megabucks with proper legislation and funding the program that was set up several years ago. Mr. Teschner reported that when he first took this position he had read up on legislation and happened across the municipal records legislation that was passed and never materialized. Mr. Gray added that is the reason he wanted to discuss the issue now while we do have money. Not several years down the road when the fund is low. There are also a finite number of records to be preserved and once those are preserved they are done. That is something to keep in mind as we go forward with the grant process.

Mr. Bolton agreed with Mr. Gray that it would not hurt to take a look at our support model. There had been a lot of discussion about the expense of OIT. He thought there might be a benefit to having an external look at the support model. If there is enough of a concern there we should do something now rather than waiting until there is a deficit. Mr. Gray added that normally there is a budget and things are planned for, but this committee just says "let's pay for this now." He explained he was not picking on Mr. Bolton's trip to Portland, but there is usually a travel line and you need to operate within that annually budgeted amount. Mr. Bolton replied that Mr. Gray's idea sounded like a really good idea. That had been done in the past as well. Mr. Gray suggested that this issue be discussed further at the next meeting. He asked if there was any other business.

Mr. Scanlan stated that he had read the minutes from the last meeting that he had been unable to attend. There was some discussion about the Archives and whether VRIF funds were being used for that. He asked Mr. Bolton to look in past minutes for references to this and found it in the August 2004 minutes. The committee at that time agreed to provide $76,000 specifically for air conditioning in the vital records vault area. Although that money has not been used yet they are proceeding with the understanding that they still plan to use it for that purpose.

In addition to that they have had to deal with several issues that were not planned for when the capital budget was passed, such as the bullet proof glass in the reception area and reinforcing the walls to prevent someone from cutting their way into the office. Mr. Bolton agreed with Mr. Scanlan that some of the security requirements had been unexpected. Mr. Scanlan just wanted to let the committee know upfront so that when the money was transferred there would be no confusion.

9.   **Intel Reform:**

Mr. Bolton reported that there was not much new. Mr. Bergeron would be doing a panel at the upcoming NAGARA meeting and that would include Delton Atkinson from NCHS and Executive Director Garland Land from NAPHSIS. They would be discussing the intel reform legislation. At the last NAPHSIS meeting Mr. Bolton heard that every site will be certified to do vital records and that certification in regard to a state agency would be done by the feds. The local registrars would be certified by the state. Mr. Bolton did not like that idea. He wanted the feds to certify everyone. He added that Vital Record would probably have an auditing component though. Still no target date on when the legislation is coming out. Mr. Gray asked Mr. Bolton to report on the NAGARA meeting at the September meeting.

Ms. Hadaway informed the committee that she and Ms. Gaouette would be unable to attend the next meeting as they had a tax collectors conference scheduled for that same time period.

Approved Minutes

Meeting adjourned at 11:58 a.m.