

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

-MINUTES-

***Thursday
July 18, 2002***

Approved Minutes

-MINUTES-

Vital Records Improvement Fund Advisory Committee Meeting

July 18, 2002

Health & Welfare Building
Conference Room 110, 111
6 Hazen Drive
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Patricia Little, City Clerk Appointment
William R. Bolton, Jr., State Registrar
Dr. Frank Mevers, State Archivist Appointment
Jane Ireland, Town Clerk Member
David Kruger, Public Member Appointment
Linda Hartson, Exeter City Clerk, City Clerk Appointment
William Armstrong, IT Manager, DITM Appointment
Tom Janosz, Funeral Director Appointment
Paul Bergeron, Nashua City Clerk, City Clerk Appointment

COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Thomas A. Andrew, MD, Physician Appointment
Patricia Seskes, Health Information Specialist Appointment

GUESTS:

Dr. Jesse Greenblatt, Director, Division of Epidemiology and Vital Statistics, OCPH
Melanie A. Orman, Program Specialist, DEVS
Barbara Kostka, Executive Secretary, DEVS
John O'Neal, Office of Information Systems
Mark Parris, Office of Information Systems
Kathy Bizarro, NHHA

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Vital Records Improvement Fund Advisory Committee Meeting

1. Approval of Minutes:

Ms. Little called the meeting to order. She then asked members if they wanted to accept the minutes from the May 21, 2002 meeting. Mr. Kruger made a motion to accept the minutes. Dr. Mevers seconded Mr. Kruger's motion. Ms. Little added that there were several corrections she wanted to make note of. That a guest that arrived late at the May 21, 2002 meeting was not listed. Dr. James Pilliod came in late and was identified on the second page as June. She then explained that Tom Towle had also attended and she spelled his name. Ms. Orman asked that in future meetings, guest names be spelled as she has no way of knowing if her interpretation of the name is correct until the minutes are presented to the committee.

Ms. Hartson stated that it was not especially important to her, but she is not a city clerk, but a town clerk. Mr. Bolton pointed out some other minor edits. Ms. Little expressed her satisfaction with the minutes and other committee members concurred.

Ms. Little asked that before the committee voted on the minutes, there were two requests for additional information that were not attached. She spoke of the first reference in the minutes on page 8 where Rep. Kurk was talking about the data warehouse and asked Mr. Norton if he had a paper that documented those instances and the purpose of the data being used. Mr. Norton replied that he would be happy to share that information. She asked that someone please follow up on that. The next reference was on page 14, second paragraph. Ms. Taylor reported to the committee that she had asked to have the Health Statistics and Data Management data release guideline forwarded to members of the committee. Ms. Little stated that she was not sure she received that. Mr. Bolton stated that he hadn't received a copy of it. Ms. Little asked if those items could be procured for the committee.

Ms. Little then stated that the committee was once again at the motion to accept the minutes of the May 21, 2002 meeting with corrections. The committee members all agreed to accept the minutes with corrections.

2. Development of a Records Management Business Plan:

Dr. Mevers reported that he and Mr. Bolton had worked on the RFP and they sent it out to the Records Preservation and Records Maintenance subcommittee around July 7. It went out a little later than they had originally planned. They had received one response, from Mr. Bergeron. He suggested that they firm up the program responses, to make them more detailed and less general, and to make suggestions on the direct implementation.

Dr. Mevers went on to say that the RFP mentions everything they want to do but in a more general way. He informed the committee that he and Mr. Bolton needed to make the RFP more specific. He asked if any members of the committee wished to discuss the RFP or make suggestions. Mr. Bolton stated that he had received comments from Ms. Hartson as well. He was unsure whether all committee members had them. Mr. Bolton directed the committees' attention to the second page of the RFP. In the last paragraph on the page, in quotations is, "provide revenues for the improvement of the registration, certification, preservation, management of the state's vital records." Mr. Bolton asked

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Ms. Hartson if she was questioning whether that was a direct quote. Ms. Hartson replied that she was not.

She wondered if there was not a need for there to be something mentioned about the revenue also being used for cities and towns to preserve their own records. Mr. Bolton replied that even the records preserved and kept at the local level, he would consider state records. He and Dr. Mevers felt that the term “state records” was being used in a more general term than ownership by the state.

Mr. Bergeron asked if he could expand on what Dr. Mevers said. His comments were in no way an objection to the RFP itself. He felt that it accomplished everything that the Vital Records Improvement Fund Advisory Committee wanted. He just wanted some additional language that made the deliverables a little more New Hampshire specific. He stated as an example “these are the priorities and this is what it might cost”, or provide projects for the reader to consider. Dr. Mevers replied that he and Mr. Bolton understood his point, agreed, and hoped to work with him over the next few weeks.

Ms. Bizarro pointed out that on the first page under statement of purpose they referenced records but did not specifically say vital records. She did not feel like that was specific enough, that anyone reading it could interpret it to mean any records. She stated that it was a minor issue, but felt it needed clarifying. Dr. Mevers agreed. Ms. Little asked if any other members had any suggestions or comments regarding the RFP. Hearing nothing she added that she agreed with Mr. Bergeron and in fact would like to see a section dedicated to deliverables that listed all of them. She had gone through the document and highlighted areas that appeared to address deliverables throughout the document and they were spread over the entire document.

Ms. Little felt that it would make it much easier for those that have to look at the proposals if there was a section on deliverables that they could use as a check off. Ms. Little also felt Mr. Bergeron’s suggestion on program goals where he talked about picking up and developing a five-year plan for conservation and preservation. She asked Dr. Mevers if he was supportive of that suggestion and the one referencing access. Dr. Mevers agreed that he was and that, because the issue of access seemed very important to a great number of people, they would look into it.

Ms. Little asked if his opinion of #8 about developing an inventory of microfilm of the vital records data was also favorable. Dr. Mevers stated that it was. Ms. Little then stated that the only other suggestion she would make would be the handling and filing of the paper. She would like to see a standard for the handling of paper. Things like, do they go in post binders, three ring binders, do you stack them horizontally or vertically, etc.? She admitted that it was sort of a different issue than the storage and asked if it was possibly included in one of their current requirements. Dr. Mevers replied that it was covered on page four where it said “how best to maintain, how best to find notebooks and loose leaf records.” Ms. Little stated that it was that section that made her think. She asked if there wasn’t more to it. Dr. Mevers replied that there was and with all of the questions he was hearing it was clear that they needed to tighten up the document and make it more specific.

Ms. Bizarro asked the committee to explain how they were defining “access”, referring to the previous discussion. She had not heard all of the questions and comments regarding the RFP and did not know what everyone meant by the term access. Ms. Little

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deferred to Mr. Bergeron since the initial comment had come from him. Mr. Bergeron explained that in the two meetings prior to this one there had been a lot of discussion on hiring someone to assist genealogists in the vault and that he would consider being part of access. Giving the public more support in their attempt to find records.

Ms. Bizarro asked if that would help to minimize the number of hands on the original records. Mr. Bergeron agreed and went on to say that it could be broad enough to include digitization, hiring staff, putting information on the web that is old enough where there is no issue with identity. He said that he thought it was a broad umbrella, but should be included in the RFP Dr. Mevers was working on. Ms. Bizarro asked if he was suggesting state access only or town access. Mr. Bergeron replied that he was referring to state access. Ms. Bizarro stated that she would like to see that clarified in the wording of the RFP.

Mr. Bolton reported to the committee that Ms. Hartson had also suggested some edits for the document. She suggested that the word “maybe” and “folded” be struck from the sentence where the lines “how best to bind books or how best to maintain our books.” Ms. Little stated that she would like to think that the committee was just going to authorize Dr. Mevers to go ahead and work with Mr. Bergeron and Mr. Bolton to do some wordsmithing and get it released. She suggested that the committee would not need to see it again. The committee members agreed. Mr. Bergeron replied that he thought the original motion was to give Dr. Mevers and Mr. Bolton the authority to draft and issue the RFP. Ms. Little and the other committee members in attendance agreed.

Mr. Kruger stated that since this was going ahead and it looks good, he was wondering if Dr. Mevers had an estimate of what the final cost would be. Ms. Little asked what amount Peter Parker had come up with in 1996. Dr. Mevers said that he did not. Mr. Kruger stated that it would probably depend on how it is segmented and how they could take parts of it rather than the whole thing. He added that where he was going was to have a brief discussion that the committee should have to give Dr. Mevers guidance as to how much it would be willing to spend and how much it wouldn't. Dr. Mevers replied that committee members should note the dates on the RFP. Since they were given the go ahead to release the document, those dates would allow them to report to the committee at its next meeting. If there were any exorbitant proposals the committee could discuss them at that time. Dr. Mevers reported that they had done a statewide thing like this in 1994 and it was \$24,000 to \$25,000 then. Mr. Kruger estimated that it would be north of that now and Dr. Mevers agreed that it probably would.

Ms. Bizarro asked if the four original towns that participated in Mr. Parker's study had been notified that potential vendors could try to contact them. Ms. Little replied that she expected that they hadn't yet, but it was a good idea. Dr. Mevers replied that they would never send anyone in blind. Ms. Bizarro thought that it would be good to let those towns know that since they participated in the original study, they were going to be asked to participate again. She went on to explain that some of the current town clerks were not around for the first study and would not be familiar. Dr. Mevers agreed and thanked Ms. Bizarro for her suggestion. Ms. Little then clarified for the record, that the committee had approved the creation and issuance of this RFP.

3. OIS Update:

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Mr. Friese reported to the committee for Mr. Parris who was unable to attend the meeting. He reported that the first item to discuss was the Frame Relay. With the Department of Safety, they put on ten towns in the month May and June and were preparing to put another five towns on at the end of July. That would bring the total up to fifteen new VRV2000 users in three months. They also put six new towns on dial up and were pressing ahead with the towns that have the frame relay with the Department of Safety. He explained that because they were planning a release of the latest version of VRV2000, there would not be any training or additional rollouts in August.

Ms. Little expressed surprise that they were adding people to the dial up connection and asked if they were comfortable with capacity. Mr. Friese replied that Manchester is now on a VPN Concentrator and off the dial up. That has freed up a considerable amount of time and Nashua would soon be moving to a VPN Concentrator as well, freeing up even more time. Mr. O'Neal reported that they had added another twenty-three connections for dial up. He stated that they were now up to about seventy. He added that they also noticed that a lot of the users of the dial up are only using it once or twice a week. They are not like a busier town/city like Nashua and Exeter. The newer users are in and out, not creating more demand.

Ms. Little asked that if the dial up capacity was there, would we not roll out to more cities and towns? Mr. Bolton replied that he did not see why we wouldn't and added that the half hour timeout would now be operational with the software that comes with the new PRI. Ms. Little asked him to explain and he replied that the dial up software would trigger the dial up to disconnect if the user were idle for thirty minutes. Mr. O'Neal added that it used to be that Oracle would drop the users connection if they were idle for a long period of time. The problem was it did not affect the dial up, but with the new software and PRI, the dial up connection will be disconnected after thirty minutes of no activity. Ms. Little asked when that change would occur. Mr. O'Neal replied that it was already in service.

Ms. Little asked if anyone had heard anything about it because she had not. Mr. Bolton mentioned that he thought this was discussed at a prior meeting. Mr. O'Neal replied that the committee had agreed to a thirty-minute period. Ms. Little explained that she was concerned whether users had complained. Ms. Hartson reported that she believes that when a connection is lost the user contacts the business office for help. Mr. Bolton asked Mr. Wurtz if he had noticed an increase in the volume of calls in recent weeks. Mr. Wurtz stated that he had not. He stated that he had spoken with Mr. Milligan about it because he was not sure it was in place because of the lack of calls. Mr. Milligan assured him that it was.

Mr. Wurtz went on to explain that places like Exeter, Nashua and Keene probably would not notice as they are busy offices. It would affect smaller towns that log in in the morning and then go about their business. They might come back later in the day and find their connection gone. He explained that in training, users have been informed about the thirty-minute timeout. He did not believe there was a general announcement about the installation of the new software, but believes there was a rumor that it was being done all along anyway. Mr. Wurtz explained that all new users were being informed about the timeout period. Mr. O'Neal stated that the older users were used to Oracle dropping them off anyway.

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Mr. Friese reported that the new release would be in place on August 19. It had to be pushed up a week. He stated that testing was going really well. There were approximately forty changes incorporated into this release. He explained that they were changing the Oracle role and that should not cause any problems if they do it right. What it will do is cut off anyone that is running an older, out-of-date version of VRV2000. They will be forced to upgrade to the newest version in order to use the software. This will ensure that everyone is using the latest version and will allow them to use version control.

Continuing his explanation of corrections to the new version of VRV2000, Mr. Friese reported that they had corrected the abstract birth error. Previously, you could put a record in but could not make a correction. The file date was unnecessary to enter the record, but required to correct one. OIS had removed the dependency on the file date from the software. They had corrected the problem of amendment corrections not showing up for state users or clerks. If an amendment was made on a record you would not be able to access it when you went back to look at the record.

They had updated the software to allow users to do a search by the last name more efficiently. Users can now use an apostrophe when searching by last name. Before, they had to use Soundex to find a name with an apostrophe. Mr. Friese reported to the committee that users would now be able to print a test copy for death certificates when they are entered. The test copy will have "Test Copy" at the top and two watermarks in the body of the document declaring it a test copy. He added that OIS expected to complete testing of the new version the following week and are planning to send out the new version CD on the 8th and 9th of August.

Mr. Friese advised the committee that funeral homes that have more than one location will now be able to use the registry program to switch from location to location. In the past all the locations could not be placed in the table. Ms. Little asked about the notation on fee collecting. He explained that it used to be that when you went in and were doing a multiple collection, doing a birth certificate, another transaction and then a birth or death certificate and tried to cancel out, the system would total the whole table and you would get an astronomical fee. OIS has corrected that, so it will now work properly.

Mr. Friese then reported on a correction for state users. Previously when a user needed to make a correction on an AOP, they would have to rescind it and re-enter it altogether. Now they will not have to rescind and re-enter the AOP. This correction will save a lot of time. Mr. Friese asked if anyone had any questions about the newest version of VRV2000. Hearing none, he continued. He informed the committee that the position he vacated in May had been filled. They interviewed and selected Catherine Eccleston. Ms. Eccleston comes to us from the Bridges program and would begin in July.

Mr. O'Neal asked Ms. Little if he could speak to a late breaking item. He and OIS staff were notified early that week by the data center that on August 23rd, they would be shutting down the data center for about forty-nine hours to upgrade their UPS (Uninterrupted Power Supply) system. The plans are to shut down on Friday at 5:00 p.m. and the schedule currently calls for them to bring it back up on Sunday at 6:00 p.m. He was unsure as to what that would mean for the work that is usually done on the weekends in regard to VRV2000. He reported that he and Mr. Bolton were going to go over the problem and see what they need to do in order to avoid any difficulty and to keep the

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business running. Many of the department's other systems will also be down, but none will have the impact that the VRV2000 system would have.

Mr. O'Neal stated that there is no way to avoid doing this. It is the one weekend when they could secure a contractor and if they wait much longer, the legislative session will have begun. They were planning to look into getting street power into some of the machines. At that point the only thing he knew for sure was that he was told to plan to be down that long. Ms. Hartson asked if they were planning to put out a notice to funeral homes, hospitals and town clerks. Mr. Bolton replied that as soon as it is definite they would be issuing a memo to those affected by it. Ms. Little asked where the data center was located. Mr. O'Neal explained that it was located in 4 Hazen Drive and that it was where all their production equipment was located.

Ms. Little asked if Mr. O'Neal wanted to speak about the VPN Concentrator. Mr. O'Neal replied that the paperwork was making the rounds to all the responsible parties and he hoped that by the time the committee met again, he would have more to report. Ms. Little asked if Nashua was on the VPN and Mr. Friese replied that they were not. He stated that they are still on dial up, but Mr. Milligan is working with them and hoped to have them on shortly. Mr. Bolton stated that it has been the goal since VITTS went down, to get Manchester and Nashua at least, onto a better solution. Mr. O'Neal reported that the concentrator gave them additional capacity. He and Mr. Bolton then said "fifteen-hundred concurrent users" in unison.

4. Strategic Plan:

Mr. Bolton reported to the committee that he could not remember the status of the plan. Mr. O'Neal replied that Mr. Bolton had distributed the plan. Satisfied that everyone had had the chance to look over the plan, Mr. Bolton distributed copies to members that did not bring theirs. Mr. Bolton told the committee that the document they were looking at was an attempt to develop a plan that the committee could use when budgeting. Many of the items listed were just milestones, and that some had been completed and some were not. Ms. Little and the committee agreed that they wanted to go over the document. Mr. Bolton pointed out that the first goal was to maintain VRV2000 software in the field, maintaining optimal connectivity prior to web enablement and the Department of Safety Frame Relay project as well as the VPN Concentrator.

Mr. Bolton stated that they had established a linkage in 2000, which is ongoing. They are still working with DITM and the DOS, looking for a common solution for connectivity. He reported that they had partnered with a provider of alternative methodology. Mr. Bolton stated that "we are no longer going to be contracting out our VPN solution, it is going to be internalized until a statewide solution is established through NHSun." As far as the help desk, we do provide help desk to all users and that was established in 2000. There was also a subcommittee that met a few times and then went by the wayside. He added that in recent months this committee has discussed re-establishing the subcommittee, but hadn't.

Ms. Bizarro asked if Mr. Bolton if he was referring to a ManTech help desk. Mr. Bolton replied that he was not, he was referring to Seneca. Mr. Bolton explained that ManTech never provided DHHS a 24-hour helpdesk. They provided software development and bug fixes. Ms. Bizarro asked if he was referring then to his staff as the "help desk." Mr. Bolton replied that the department contracts a help desk through Seneca. The department

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pays a per head charge for the service, but Vital Records is charged on a per call basis. Mr. O'Neal added that Seneca provides a sort of triage service for us. In some instances the Seneca representative can even fix the problem for the caller through the use of scripts.

Ms. Little asked if any of the reports generated by Seneca show trends as to what kinds of calls are received or if there were reoccurring problems. Neither Mr. Bolton nor Mr. O'Neal were aware of any major trends detected. Mr. Bolton was unsure how much he could query about calls received. He added that he would follow up with Ms. Taylor-Miller regarding reports. Going back to the strategic plan, Mr. Bolton noted it called for technical assistance being available on the web. His office has placed a document on the website that users can query about issues with the program. He admitted that it was probably a little antiquated, but it listed all the problems the bureau had received calls on and their solutions.

Ms. Little asked if the Regional Help Resources was the subcommittee that had gone by the wayside. Mr. Bolton responded that it was, that Ms. Dery was chair and when she left, they stopped meeting. Ms. Little asked committee members if they felt there was still a need for such a committee. Mr. Bolton stated that when it was discussed previously it was suggested that regional help for city and town clerks and funeral homes. He envisioned it as a fairly loose arrangement. Ms. Bizarro offered that we do have a birth data quality committee. Mr. Bolton agreed and added that they have brought forward software issues that the committee had seen.

Mr. O'Neal added that he was under the impression that the idea was to reduce call volume to Seneca since we are charged on a per call basis. He stated that he would bring a printout of call volumes to the next meeting of this committee. Ms. Little agreed that was a good idea. Find out if there is a need before forming another committee. Ms. Hartson added that her office has fielded calls from smaller towns just coming onto VRV2000 and even some funeral homes asking how to do things. Mr. O'Neal asked her if that was a disruption or a bother and she replied that it was not. Mr. Bolton continued, adding that the department still has a contract with ManTech for one hundred twenty-five hours of telephone tech support. Mr. Andrew offered that the contract was through 2004. Mr. Bolton stated that it could be carried further if the committee elected to do that.

Mr. Bolton then reported that the business office and OIS are providing twice yearly software updates to users. Continuing, he moved to focus on maintaining one version of Vital Records software. In May of this year a letter was supposed to have gone out informing all automated VRV2000 sites that it was the bureau's intent to delete all AVRIS modules. Mr. Bergeron asked what was going to be given to those offices as backup. He was concerned as occasionally VRV2000 goes down. He explained that he knew that the IT people would say it was only down for three or four hours, but when you have a customer standing in front of you on their way out of the country and needs a birth certificate, you cannot ask them to come back in three or four hours. His office has been able to use AVRIS as a backup and he was concerned that there be some sort of backup. Mr. Bolton explained that he was concerned with customer service as well, and suggested telling the customer to contact the bureau. Ms. Hartson replied that they have tried to do that but customers are often unwilling to do that.

Mr. Bolton stated that the alternative is data quality. He explained that if AVRIS is being used, there are then records that are going nowhere. They are not being

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transmitted to the state and users can re-enter the record on VRV2000, but then there are two records. If there were a typo in one record, the system would not recognize it as a duplicate and accept it. Mr. Bolton felt that duplicate or missing records was of greater concern. Ms. Bizarro asked why the system would be down during the day for a few hours at a time. Mr. Bolton replied that the system is practically bulletproof. There are times when routine maintenance brings it down, but that is generally done on weekends.

Mr. O'Neal stated that he would ask his staff to prepare an outage report for the committee. Mr. Bolton thought that would be helpful. Mr. O'Neal expressed concern, as he was unaware of the system going down. Mr. Bergeron replied that his office was logging it too, for some time. Ms. Little asked if the outages were town specific or if the whole system was down. Mr. O'Neal replied that he could look at the dial in records to see if that system was down or if it was actually VRV2000 that was down. He would not be able to tell if it was something outside the building. Mr. Bolton added that in Nashua and Manchester we are dealing with another layer of their network. Mr. Bergeron replied that it happens on both ends.

Mr. Kruger clarified what he saw as the question before the committee, "backup at what cost?" Cost in dollars; space; potential loss of customer satisfaction. Mr. Wurtz replied that one of the issues in a true paperless system is backup to the electronic database is almost impossible. He explained that Mr. Bergeron could have a customer that was born in 1957, a record not available on VRV2000, but could pull the actual paper record and quickly issue on the AVRIS system. On the other hand if the customer needed a record from an event that occurred in the last few years, there would be no backup. Mr. Bergeron and Ms. Hartson agreed.

Mr. Kruger suggested that there was a much bigger question, what is a backup system in a truly paperless system? Mr. Bergeron asked if the bureau kept a paper copy of recent events. Mr. Bolton replied that even though they shouldn't, they do. Mr. Bergeron suggested that a solution might be the bureau transmitting by fax, a copy of a record so users could issue one when the system is down. Mr. Bolton replied that some states do that. Mr. Kruger suggested issuing CDs with the information. Ms. Hartson replied that a CD would not be instantaneous. Ms. Bizarro offered that as soon as a CD was issued it would be out of date.

Mr. Wurtz reported that occasionally the bureau has accommodated a few locations by faxing documents when their system or VRV2000 was down. Ms. Bizarro suggested that formalizing that process would be helpful. Mr. Bolton added that a "hot site", an off site location that would always be up has been considered. He added that they would not be running out that month to remove AVRIS, but they will probably rapidly put together a backup plan and pass it around to users that seem to have the most difficulty. He asked Ms. Little if she thought the clerks association would like to have write-off on it. She replied that she did not think so, "that is why they appointed us to be here."

Continuing with his report, Mr. Bolton said that the bureau is basing the rollout of future VRV2000 sites on the co-location of municipal software as well as total certificates issued for both car registrations and vital events. Ms. Little asked if he could refresh her memory as to the cost of sharing with the Department of Safety. Mr. Bolton replied that we were not sharing in the cost of the hardware. Mr. O'Neal added that not for the first fifteen sites. The agreement was that we would share the cost of the communications. In earlier discussions the Department of Safety suggested they would like us to share the

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hardware costs on the next fifteen, in addition to sharing the cost of communications. Mr. Bolton stated that the cost would probably be prohibitive, but there is already a municipal system out there.

Many cities and towns are on the frame relay system and there is good reason to partner with them to bring VRV2000 to those cities and towns already up and running. He estimated that there were forty cities and towns with the municipal solution through the Department of Safety. Ms. Little asked what the 50/50 split on communication cost came to. Mr. Bolton asked if we were paying for it. Mr. O'Neal replied that no one had billed us yet, but that was the agreement.

Mr. Bolton reported that there are plans to rollout the VRV2000 software to certifying physicians in December of 2003. While the bureau is trying to satisfy the Social Security Administrations deliverables for the Electronic Death Registration contract, they are looking at putting on a couple certifying physicians or at least engaging them to use our client server software. The VRV2000 software will be issued to any physician that certifies death in 2003-2004. He reported that as far as a user manual, a birth manual has been completed, printed, laminated and bound and distributed to hospitals. The bureau will continue to develop a manual that contains all of VRV's functions.

Mr. Bolton reported that clerk training is ongoing and databases are being converted. He was unsure of the percentage of databases that were complete, but the bureau would import any city and towns databases as the software is rolled out. Ms. Little asked if Keene's data had been harvested. Mr. Bolton replied that it would have been when they were initially rolled out, but wouldn't have gone back again. Ms. Little questioned whether the larger cities might have records in their database that went in when the system was down for one reason or another. Mr. Wurtz replied that it would be saved to their local database and it would be harvested. Ms. Little asked if there was a program that harvests the new information. Mr. Bolton explained that Mr. Milligan uses a zip disk and brings the information back on that. Mr. Wurtz added that the emphasis is on the new towns being brought online.

Mr. Bolton stated that another point was to assure that VRV2000 is compatible with multiple software and hardware platforms. Although there was no date indicated Mr. Bolton reported that the department had upgraded to Access2000 and Oracle 9i some time ago. The next item was to populate, maintain and improve the VRV2000 database. Representatives from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints were currently in the department's vault microfilming the ten years of records made available by changes in the rules. They are also hoping to digitize all records.

Mr. Kruger asked how far back on the church's burner was that plan. Mr. Bolton replied that he had not spoken with Mr. Noel Barton for several months. When they last spoke, the church was facing a personnel shortage. Mr. Kruger stated that he would be visiting with Mr. Barton in November and would like to speak with Mr. Bolton prior to that, about that very issue. Mr. Bolton stated that New Hampshire was anxious to participate but had been placed third on the list. Ohio and Kentucky were numbers one and two. Mr. Kruger reported that they have had to scale back their plans a bit.

Mr. Bergeron asked to make a comment. He stated that he was aware the plan Mr. Bolton was referencing was used for budget preparation too. He stated that when the committee first approved \$50,000 for the preservation piece of the committee's objective

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that was represented close to 9% of the committee's budget. While the fund has continued to grow the amount dedicated to preservation has not. He suggested that the committee fix a certain percentage that would be used for preservation going forward. So, when revenues increase or decrease, so would the preservation fund. It was Mr. Bergeron's suggestion that the committee dedicate 10% of the fund to preservation. He felt that goal number three was going to be fairly costly unless the bureau gets some free services from the New England Genealogical Society or the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and he certainly would view it as a part of the preservation and access objective. He was unsure whether there needed to be discussion or a vote on that during the current meeting, but he wanted it out there for future budget planning.

Mr. Kruger replied that Mr. Bergeron's suggestion was music to his ears. He thought it did warrant the attention of the committee. He asked to take the issue one step further before Mr. Bolton moved on to the next section of his report. Mr. Kruger felt it might be a valuable exercise, when the committee is looking five years ahead, to put some sort of dollar amount next to the items and a timeline. Then compare those amounts to expected revenues to see if the committee is headed in the right direction. That would enable the committee to see if the percentage allotted to preservation was working or feasible. He did not feel that the document presented was a true strategic plan it was a work plan. Ms. Little asked Mr. Bolton what his intent was in terms of identifying all of the financial aspects. Mr. Bolton replied that they had figured they would be faced with a web enablement budget.

They did not forecast a price for each activity or milestone. Mr. Little asked if Mr. Bolton could bring the committee something more specific or detailed. He replied that he could. Mr. Kruger explained that he would not expect it to be detailed to the nearest nickel, but he would like, and thinks the committee needs to understand if all the small pieces that they are working on just a bunch of pieces with no context or do they all fit together. He believes that they do, but feels a dollar amount and timeline would put it more in perspective. Dr. Greenblatt offered that there is an interdepartmental meeting every month or two and the goal of those meetings is to ensure that the strategic plan that the committee is presented with is matched with the budget that is presented to the committee. If there are months that are not matched, they need to go back and make sure that they do. If the committee feels that an area needs more attention, those that attend those meetings would see that it got it.

Mr. Kruger stated that only by putting a number next to the task can the committee understand if their goals are attainable or if they need to see additional outside funding. Ms. Little asked if the issue could be an agenda item for the next meeting. Mr. Bolton replied he would be happy to place it on the agenda and that he believed that Mr. Andrew would be reporting on the budget at that meeting. It will clarify what they have been budgeting the monies on, the rollout of XP, new machines, the RFP, etc. Ms. Bizarro asked about the status of the web RFP. She was under the impression that it had gone out. Mr. Bolton replied that it had not gone out yet. Mr. O'Neal reported that he had a document that outlined the sequence of events. According to his document the RFP was to be released the next day and work would commence on October 21, 2002. Final proposals would be due September 9, 2002.

Dr. Greenblatt asked Mr. O'Neal if they had worked through the other potential option that had been discussed. Mr. O'Neal replied that they had. Dr. Greenblatt asked if it had been tabled and Mr. O'Neal said yes and explained that he and Mr. Bolton had met with

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the document management folks several weeks earlier and even the filenet people admitted they did not have a solution. They had components that would enhance the solution but they could not do it. Dr. Greenblatt was unsure as to whether or not the committee was aware of what they were talking about. He went on to explain that one of the reasons they believed the RFP had been delayed was because of the consideration of the filenet option as an alternative to a web based solution for this particular project. The idea was batted around internally at DITM, with Mr. Armstrong taking the lead. It was ultimately decided that it was not an option. Dr. Greenblatt also informed the committee that Mr. Armstrong was away due to a death in the family. Both Dr. Greenblatt and Mr. O'Neal agreed that the filenet issue was an unfortunate delay, but that Mr. Armstrong's staff was continuing to work on readying the RFP for release in his absence.

Mr. Bergeron stated that he had one more suggestion for goal 3. He stated that he would leave it to Mr. Bolton and Dr. Mevers discretion, but he wondered if part of the preservation RFP might be to ask the contract recipient to develop cost estimates to implement goal number 3. Mr. Bolton asked Dr. Mevers if he hadn't included that in his written comments. Ms. Little told Mr. Kruger he had many valid points, but offered that this issue would be addressed at the next meeting of the committee. She advised Mr. Bolton to continue with goal 4. Mr. Bolton explained that the next item was web enabling VRV2000, and that the dates were a little antiquated. He stated that it would be enabled with the 2003 revisions and rolled out.

Ms. Little asked about the Social Security Administration contract. He replied that they were still relatively happy. New Hampshire appears to be ahead of Washington, D.C. As far as Mr. Bolton knew, Washington had not completed their RFP yet. So even with the two-month delay, we appear to be ahead of the game. The Social Security Administration has re-issued another RFP and the due date for other states to reply is August 15, 2002. Dr. Greenblatt asked Mr. Bolton to clarify that this was a second round of RFPs. New Hampshire got in on the first round. Ms. Little asked if there was a potential to get more money for the project. Dr. Greenblatt and Mr. Bolton replied no. Mr. Bolton did say that at the end of the three-year contract, New Hampshire might be able to get more funds if we need it.

Mr. Bolton also reported that while we are working on our project, the SSA is working to develop a piece of software, the OBS software, which is html based. They are going to make it xml with messaging. Ms. Little asked if there had been any contact with the IT person from Lebanon about their part in the review of the RFP. Mr. Bolton replied that he had mentioned it to Mr. Parris the week before. Ms. Little asked that Mr. Bolton make sure that a final copy of the RFP and a copy of the timeline is sent to that person so that he will be familiar with it. He agreed to participate, representing the IT focus on the municipal level. Mr. O'Neal asked if there were other names the committee wanted to sit on the review panel. Mr. Bolton replied that Kathy was planning to identify someone or she would be participating.

6. Other Business:

Ms. Little informed the committee that she had emailed Dr. Greenblatt earlier in the week to inquire about the Commissioner's response to the committee's concerns about the confidentiality of the data in the data warehouse. She then asked if the Commissioner was still here. He advised that Donald Shumway would remain Commissioner until July 31, 2002. Kathy Sgambati would be Acting Commissioner after July 31, 2002. Dr.

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Greenblatt recapped that the committee recommended two things. After exhaustive discussion of the web based query system, which he expressed appreciation to the committee for undertaking, the committee decided against funding the \$350,000 for assisting with that project by a 7 to 2 vote.

After further discussion the department is going to adhere to the committee's decision and appreciates the time the committee put into investigating the possibility of funding it. If at some later time the committee would like to either consider a smaller amount of money to show support for the project, Dr. Greenblatt believes it would be very much appreciated and would show good vision towards the dual purposes of vital records and their potential to be used for helping communities with the data they need to competitively compete for grants and obtain funding for other healthcare utilization within their towns. That is completely up to the committee and again if the committee would like to consider a lower amount of money, he felt that anything would be appreciated to help support this project.

The department is continuing to pursue the idea of a web based query system and is searching for funds both in-state (The Endowment For Health) and federally. Dr. Greenblatt believes that Ms. Taylor and Mr. Norton have some very positive leads. He also wanted to inform the committee that once the project begins, they plan to have a steering committee that is devoted to the web based query system and he felt it would be ideal to have a member from the VRIFAC committee on that committee. That member would be able to provide input and connection to the work we do here with vital records. Dr. Greenblatt advised that he felt it was important to stabilize the funding source for the project before putting together a committee.

The second item was the concern the committee expressed about privacy. Dr. Greenblatt reported that the department has, through its legal services department, reviewed that and does believe that sharing those vital records data with an electronic data warehouse, provided the privacy activities and privacy standards of the law are strictly maintained is an appropriate use of department resources. That will still go forward as part of their web based query design project. Dr. Greenblatt suggested that if the committee was still concerned after this meeting, they would be happy to do a presentation at the next meeting about the standards they use to protect vital records privacy. He felt the point made most clearly at the last meeting was that this was an issue of faith to your customers and making sure that in the translation of VRV2000 from a paper based to an electronic system, that confidentiality and privacy is maintained. They plan to have excellent systems in place and feel clerks will be able to tell their customers with absolute honesty that their privacy will be very carefully maintained. They would be happy to make a presentation on the systems that will maintain that security for the committee, showing a full review of the different systems used to protect the data.

Dr. Greenblatt asked if there were any questions. Ms. Little asked if it would be possible for Dr. Greenblatt to provide the committee with a copy of the legal opinion. He replied that it was a verbal opinion but he would get it in writing for the committee. Ms. Little stated that there are two views of a vital record. From her side of the fence it is trusted, confidential data. From the department's perspective it was that same record, but something very different. She expressed hope that there would be an opportunity for clerks to feel they are upholding their responsibility to their people and the state would be able to get what they need from the data.

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She asked if Dr. Greenblatt had thought about the possibility of not utilizing the personal identifiers, adding that she was aware that Mr. Norton called that a “business” decision. Dr. Greenblatt said that they had. Ms. Little asked what kind of discussion occurred about that. Dr. Greenblatt stated that any request for vital records data for interdepartmental use or a health statistics purpose has to go through an elaborate request process. It requires that the minimum elements be shared for the purpose of the task and that is also something that is adhered to from the statute. Their expectation is that any data that would be shared with the electronic data warehouse for the purpose of a web based query system or for any activity is the minimum data set allowed to be able to accomplish the task.

Ms. Little said she agreed with the word “minimum”, especially because that word is not often found in statutes. She added that one particular instance where maybe the minimum amount of data is not being collected. It was her understanding that adoptions were part of what would be taken to the data warehouse as a record. Dr. Greenblatt replied that it was his understanding that adoptions would not be taken. He did not see that there would be any reason to transfer that data. If it is being transferred, it should not be. Ms. Little replied that giving those kinds of assurances to the committee would go a long way toward gaining support from the committee. Dr. Greenblatt replied that what he did not want to see happen was the state appearing as a black box and we unilaterally make decisions without public input. He added that the data warehouse procedures should be transparent to the committee. He again offered to make a presentation on any of the previous issues discussed at the next meeting. Ms. Little thanked him. Ms. Bizarro added that she thought Dr. Greenblatt’s idea to have a member of the VRIFAC committee on the web based query system steering committee was a great idea. She added that it might help the committee to achieve that “comfort” level they were looking for.

Ms. Little informed Dr. Greenblatt about the information referenced in the May 21, 2002 meeting minutes. The information was on page 8 in the second paragraph and on page 14. Ms. Little informed Dr. Greenblatt that she was unsure as to whether Mr. Norton had the information documented previously or if he intended to write something up. Dr. Greenblatt apologized he had misunderstood the request, but offered to contact Mr. Norton for that information. He stated that he could provide the data release guideline to the committee before it adjourned. Ms. Little stated that she thought it would be good for the committee to have a better understanding and comfort level because this information had not gotten out to the clerk membership and when it does they will need to be able to display a confidence that the right balance is being kept.

Dr. Greenblatt replied that the issue of confidentiality is of great concern to the department as it holds many different data sets and one of the biggest issues is what is the department’s policies regarding the release of the data. The department is trying to find the appropriate forum to make sure that those release decisions are public, transparent, and ultimately approved and agreed upon by any staff that would do it. Ms. Bizarro added that New Hampshire and not even vital records is unique to this particular issue. Right now health care is going through a transition to follow federal guidelines as they relate to privacy. The bar has been raised quite a bit, even at the federal level. Especially as far as understanding privacy and taking the consumer’s interests to heart. As a health care person, she stated that she was acutely aware of the issues surrounding privacy. Ms. Bizarro added that birth information, because it comes from hospitals has an extra layer of security because of the federal privacy restrictions.

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Mr. Kruger stated that he felt there was plenty of room to think about adding somewhere within the goals of the five year plan, cooperation beyond the individual customer contact. He went on to say that there are other uses for vital records well beyond that and he did not see anything like that mentioned in that document. He agreed that it was hard to be specific because the committee did not know exactly where to go, but if we are talking about a strategy, he felt that part of that strategy should be, to be proactive in the use of this information, rather than reactive, which is where the committee is right now. The only time we hear about these issues is when someone comes in and asks for money. He did not know how to accomplish that, but he felt it has a place in that document. Mr. Kruger added that maybe the committee should think about giving the web based query system some money once they know exactly what is in the pot.

Dr. Greenblatt thanked Mr. Kruger for his comment. He stated that one of the things that the Ms. Taylor and Mr. Norton's presentations had shown him was that the department had not done a good job in illuminating its other uses for vital records data. They are all within the statute. There is a health statistics purpose and he believed that if we are not showing how the data is used practically, other than the printing of certificates, then we are probably not doing our jobs. He thought it was a great idea to incorporate that into the strategic plan or for them to provide the committee more information.

Ms. Little explained to Mr. Kruger that the committee had two reasons for not offering funding of the project. The first was that some members felt the request was premature. They had no details as to where the project was going. Concerned that we were just one pool of money. The final thing was the committee's interpretation of the statute. The use of funds for the purpose of disseminating information was not one of those verbs in the statutes. Mr. Kruger replied that he was very sorry he had missed that meeting. He added that the minutes were superb. The main thing that had caught his attention was the fact that there was no clear indication of the final cost of the project and without that it is difficult to put money into what could become a bottomless pit.

Ms. Bizarro asked to make a comment. It was not mentioned in the strategic plan, but Mr. Bolton, his staff and the New Hampshire Hospital Association have formed a Birth Data Quality committee and she thought it sort of fell into part of the current discussion about data and its uses. What the committee is aiming to do is to focus on the actual data itself. Making sure that the data going into the system is appropriate, timely, accurate, and that all involved know what they are supposed to be doing. She stated that the committee has met four times, all the birth registrars are coming to the table and there are some excellent discussions. She thought all the parties were learning from each other and will soon go through each data element to make sure everyone understands the definitions. She wanted to tell the committee that this was an excellent process and she felt Mr. Bolton should be applauded for stepping up to the table to do it. Ms. Bizarro felt that it would only improve the system. Mr. Bolton added that the committee had welcomed some great guests as well. Representatives from the Social Security Administration's district office in Boston, Child Support representatives attended to discuss Affidavits of Paternity, and representatives from the Federal Department of Health & Human Services.

7. Next Meeting:

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Mr. Kruger asked when the next meeting was scheduled. Mr. Bolton informed him that it was scheduled for September 19, 2002. Mr. Kruger offered his regrets, but he would be in Russia on the 19th and unable to attend. Dr. Greenblatt informed the committee that he was awaiting the arrival of the documents the committee had requested.

6. Other Business:

Hearing no other business, Ms. Little adjourned the meeting.