

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

To The New Hampshire Department of State

-MINUTES-

***Thursday
March 16, 2006***

Approved Minutes

-MINUTES-

Vital Records Improvement Fund Advisory Committee Meeting

March 16, 2006

N.H. Department of Safety
First Floor Conference Room
Hazen Drive
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

William R. Bolton, Jr., State Registrar
Joseph Gray, Rochester City Clerk, City Clerk Appointment
Jill Hadaway, Bow Town Clerk, Town Clerk Appointment
David Kruger, Public Member Appointment
Andrew Chalsma, Health Statistics, DHHS Appointment
Kimberly Johnson, Henniker Town Clerk, Town Clerk Appointment
Judy Gaouette, Dover City Clerk, City Clerk Appointment
David Pollard, Funeral Director Appointment
Dr. Frank Mevers, State Archivist Appointment
Peter Croteau, OIT, OIT Appointment

COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED:

David Scanlan, Deputy Secretary of State, SOS Appointment
Debbie Augustine, NH Hospital Association
Doug Hall, Vital Records User, DHHS Appointment
Thomas A. Andrew, MD, Physician Appointment
Bob Lambert, Peterborough Town Clerk, Town Clerk Appointment
Fred Rusczek, Manchester Health Officer, DHHS Appointment

GUESTS:

Melanie A. Orman, Vital Records, SOS
Barbara Kostka, Vital Records, SOS
Jackie Goonan, OIT
Steve Wurtz, Vital Records, SOS
Chris Bentzler, OIT

Vital Records Improvement Fund Advisory Committee Meeting

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1. Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Gray called the meeting to order and asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the January meeting of the Vital Records Improvement Fund Advisory Committee. Mr. Bolton made a motion to accept the minutes. Mr. Kruger seconded Mr. Bolton's motion and the committee voted unanimously to accept the minutes as written. Dr. Mevers pointed out that Mr. Gray was not listed as attending the last meeting and that correction was noted.

2. WildBlue Satellite Update:

Mr. Bolton reported that he had been working with several divisions within WildBlue on two solutions. One solution was an enterprise solution and one a home solution. He explained to WildBlue that he had received approval from this committee to put up 31 sites. That decision had been made on the assumption that we would get it at the advertised web price and with the \$100. off coupon we would get each location online for approximately \$340. each. The monthly cost would then be \$69.99 for 1 Meg down and 200K up. When he approached the company after gaining approval from the committee the price he was offered was completely different than the one he had seen online and had been proposing.

WildBlue also explained that they did not offer central billing, but would bill the cities individually for an additional fee and they would be required to pay with a credit card. The state would then have to reimburse the towns for their expense. The final price that WildBlue offered Mr. Bolton was an \$800. upfront cost for provisioning of the satellite and installation. That was \$500. more per site than Mr. Bolton and the committee had anticipated.

The monthly cost also went from 69.99 to 79.99. Mr. Bolton reported that he tried to work further with the company to come to a better agreement explaining to them that the sites he was talking about would use very little of the service. Their use would be far less than a home user. They would not be downloading MP3 files from the internet and they would probably only be connected to the software once or twice a month.

Having a state account would even help them out with billing. Rather than having to bill 31 separate accounts they would only have to deal with the state. WildBlue did not appreciate that argument and refused to discuss anything other than the \$800 for the install and the \$79 per month for service. Mr. Bolton then contacted and spoke with a local WildBlue company in Hanover. They deal in after market WildBlue satellite service. As such, they are not obligated to honor the \$300 internet deal and they would charge \$695 for install. That is partly because of their business relationship with WildBlue and they need to allocate pretty much a whole day to install, set up and configure each system.

Mr. Bolton reported that the bottom line was that he did not think he could ask the 31 clerks to use their personal or town credit cards to pay for the service. Ms. Gaouette stated that she has a city credit card that she uses all the time. Mr. Bolton explained that this would mean pushing it back on the towns to install the satellite service themselves. He did not feel that would assure that everyone would be online versus us providing the service. Ms. Orman asked if the clerks could just bill the state. Mr. Bolton replied that

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they could and we would reimburse them after the fact. Ms. Hadaway added that towns could obtain a credit card just for this purpose.

Mr. Gray stated that it sounded like there were a couple of issues. The provider had gone up on the installation charge. Mr. Bolton replied that the Internet special did not have to be honored by any WildBlue installer in the state and that is an agreement that they made with local installers. He suggested that to take advantage of this internet deal maybe the customer has to be located in Colorado. Ms. Hadaway asked even if the clerk used a credit card to order the service the price would still not be the same. Mr. Bolton replied that it would not. Mr. Gray asked who the other company was that Mr. Bolton had dealt with. Mr. Bolton replied that it was Directway and their charge for installation would be more like \$1400.

Mr. Gray stated that there are a lot of independent contractors for the satellite companies that negotiate their own deals with the providers and he suggested that Mr. Bolton contact more of the smaller operations (the competition) and explain that we want 30 dishes installed and see what kind of deal they would offer. Mr. Bolton explained that they had done that with WildBlue. He had even offered them the ability to use NH in advertising and the representatives he spoke with did not appear interested. Mr. Gray replied that was why he felt Mr. Bolton should approach their competition. Mr. Bolton agreed that he would do that, but asked if the committee should settle on a compromise amount? A number he would feel comfortable agreeing to without having to wait until the next meeting to have approved.

Mr. Chalsma felt that the more important amount was the monthly amount. The installation would be a one time charge, but the monthly fee could go on for years. Ms. Hadaway asked if that monthly fee was guaranteed for any period of time or could it go up at any time. Mr. Bolton replied that he did not think the price would be going up. Mr. Gray agreed that satellite was a pretty stable cost. He suggested that Mr. Bolton go back out and re-submit the quotes. Mr. Bolton agreed and suggested that he might move a little higher up the hierarchy to someone in management to try and work a deal. Mr. Gray suggested a motion to allow Mr. Bolton to try again and to enable him to accept the lowest bid.

Mr. Pollard asked if Mr. Bolton had asked the satellite providers about electronically debiting a bank account. That is no more difficult than a credit card and they would actually make a percent and a half or two percent more. Everyone agreed that Mr. Pollard presented a good idea. Ms. Hadaway offered Mr. Gray's motion to allow Mr. Bolton to further investigate and accept the lowest bidder. Mr. Bolton seconded the motion and the committee voted unanimously to approve the motion. Mr. Gray stated that he saw some new faces at the meeting and wondered if there was indeed a quorum.

Dr. Mevers replied that he was a member and added that he was unsure what the committee was deciding. He understood they were talking about installing satellite dishes, but was unsure of the purpose. Mr. Gray explained that it was to provide broadband to those towns that had no other access to it without the satellite option. Dr. Mevers replied that they could consider his a yes vote. Mr. Bolton added that they did have a quorum. Mr. Gray asked the committee to vote again now that there was a better understanding of the purpose of the vote. The committee again voted unanimously to approve the motion.

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3. Vital Records Preservation Grants Manager Position:

Mr. Gray explained that he had been talking with Mr. Scanlan from the Secretary of State's office. The Grants Manager position was approved several years earlier and they were hoping to get the position hired for when Vital Records moves over into its new building on Fruit Street. The person in the Grants Manager position is supposed to facilitate grants to the cities and towns and keep track of the accounting of the different towns, and clarifying the financial statements that the committee has been unhappy with for some time. Mr. Scanlan provided a copy of the job description for Mr. Gray recently and they planned to meet again to discuss it. It was Mr. Gray's belief that they would be advertising and interviewing for that position relatively soon.

Mr. Gray explained that he wanted to go away from that for a moment. He had been speaking with Mr. Bolton recently about staffing and was aware that basically all the clerks have a build up of older paper records and he hoped that we would eventually have them all in an electronic version so basically any clerk could issue them. Citizens would not have to drive from one end of the state to the other to obtain the older records. Mr. Gray felt that it would be a big help if some data entry people could be hired to speed up the process.

This would lead to all the paper records being available to any clerk to issue. He had asked Mr. Bolton to provide him with some estimates of personnel hours and the cost of such an undertaking. Mr. Gray said that it was mind boggling. Almost a million person hours to convert all the paper records into an electronic format. Three people of course would not get the job done, but Mr. Gray felt that it would be a great start and a service to all the people of New Hampshire. He felt the committee should authorize Vital Records to hire three new staff members to make this idea a reality.

Ms. Hadaway asked where the new staff would work. Dr. Mevers replied that there was nothing new about that idea. He asked if we could wait and get the building finished first. Mr. Gray stated that he was not suggesting that the staff be hired the next day. He explained that when the clerks met with Secretary Gardner the previous month they all agreed the new Grants Manager position could coincide with the move to the new building and Mr. Gray agreed. He felt that these new positions would also not be started until after the move. He added that there is federal legislation coming down the pike that might change the way we do business and this might give us time to see how it might change business patterns for us.

Mr. Gray stated that he would entertain a motion to add these three new positions to Vital Records. Ms. Hadaway made the motion and Mr. Chalsma seconded. Mr. Gray called for a vote and all but two members voted in the affirmative. Mr. Pollard and Dr. Mevers voted nay. Mr. Pollard stated that he was opposed because he did not know a lot about the cost. Mr. Gray passed around a cost estimate that Mr. Bolton had given him. He felt the cost was relatively low compared to the amount of work they would do. Mr. Wurtz added that they were looking at about 3.5 million records that needed to be keyed. Mr. Bolton stated that the spreadsheet he had prepared was a little confusing.

The federal government is targeting January of 2008 for the program to be implemented. So their expectation is that every state will be "up" with their birth records back to 1935, and death matches complete so they can start doing electronic verification of state records. That would allow "that warm fuzzy feeling" that the person standing in front of

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them is really who they say they are. New Hampshire is very much “in the bucket” when it comes to our need to do the out-of-state events that need to be in our system and the death matches. We used to match the 49 and under people that died so if someone was born and died in New Hampshire under 49 their record would be marked as deceased.

The expectation is that should happen for every record. Every death of a New Hampshire resident born in New Hampshire should be marked deceased and those are included in the spreadsheet. Those would be perennial records. They would need to be entered in every year. Mr. Bolton estimated that the three suggested positions would be knocking out three years of records each year. The expectation is that the feds would also throw some money or contracted help at this project. He estimates that there is 15 years of work to reduce the backlog in the records.

Dr. Mevers suggested that Mr. Gray tell the committee more about his meeting with the Secretary of State. Mr. Gray replied that he had met with Secretary Gardner and Mr. Scanlan the previous month and they had only talked about the Grants Manager position. This idea had come to him later. He was aware of the size of the backlog and the challenges facing Vital Records. As it sits now, if a person moves from Portsmouth to Berlin and needs a record they must call and ask them to enter the record or they have to drive there to get the record. Why not put all the records in electronic format and save a lot of long trips and phone calls. You just have to go to your clerks. Dr. Mevers asked if Secretary Gardner understood that whole scenario.

Mr. Gray stated again that he had not brought this issue up to Secretary Gardner at their meeting. Dr. Mevers introduced himself to Mr. Gray and added that they have billions of records at Archives that they would like to image also for the state. He added that they have been talking the last few weeks about imaging all of the Vital Records in the research room so they do not have to stay out in the research room because that is not where original records should be.

He did not feel that the research room where everyone has access to them is the place to keep the records. To take up the entire space of the research room with vital records is not right and the answer seems to be to image them and make them available to the public that way. That project in itself is an enormous project that needs to be done, but there is no shortage of enormous projects that need to be done in the state and by the Secretary of State.

Mr. Bolton replied that the benefit he felt that we have is that we have a fund that has approximately \$3.5 million that is looking for projects like this. This project has a real value to vital records and would be easily accomplished. The quicker they get into place the better. He went on to say that if they are going to forward with a request to hire or to create the position it would probably be July before there was any movement on them. He felt the quicker we put them into the pipeline the better. Ms. Gaouette added that she felt we should “fast track” the positions so they are ready to go when we are.

Ms. Orman explained to Dr. Mevers that this is not just a “wish list” item for Vital Records, but rather an urgent need. The Intelligence Reform rules are going to require that all records be issued from a state sponsored database and if all those records are not online many clerks might be forced out of the business of issuing records to their constituents. Mr. Wurtz explained that Ms. Orman had made one of his points, but that the intention from the beginning of the automated system was always to go back and

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include all the records. That was just part of the original plan when the automation began in 1998. Ms. Orman's point brings it to light sooner.

If the legislation goes into effect and we do not pull records from a central database every record that is not there will not be available to be issued by the locals. Some of the smaller municipalities would be put completely out of business. Places like Dover, Bow and Concord would not be out completely, but they could only issue the records already contained in the database. If a Bow resident came into the clerk's office and wanted a copy of their 1975 marriage they would have to be directed to the Vital Records office so we could do a direct entry. Mr. Wurtz stated that the new federal rules could have a chilling effect on New Hampshire citizens if we do not try to prepare for this eventuality.

Mr. Bolton reported that Vital Records had been short staffed for some time. They lost a data entry position about 4-5 years ago. It was not frozen it was just given up. Ms. Hadaway stated that one of the things the clerks spoke with Secretary Gardner about was the fact that the fund had a large balance that they had been unable to spend down at all because his office had not approved the Grants Manager position that they need and she was under the impression that these positions would suffer the same fate. Now that Vital Records is under the Secretary of State every position needs to be approved by them and judging from the past, she was afraid that these positions would be hung up as well.

Ms. Hadaway did feel as an advisory committee it was their responsibility to find the best use of this money and it appeared to her that if the expenditure had to involve Vital Records this seemed to be the best way to spend those funds. Mr. Gray added that vital records are a business and inputting more records enhances the clerk's business as well as Vital Records. Clerks can serve more customers while also freeing up more of their own time. When they have to stop and enter a record it takes a great deal more time than issuing from the database. Meanwhile there is a line forming out the door. The creation of these positions would remove that logjam.

Mr. Wurtz stated that these are fixed records so technically they only have to be keyed once. It isn't like a motor vehicle record where it needs to be updated each time someone buys a new car. Once it is in it is in. Mr. Pollard informed Mr. Gray that he was now convinced and willing to vote in the affirmative for the creation of the three positions. He felt that salary suggested was terrible and he would never do the job for that kind of money.

Mr. Gray explained that he was not trying to come in and add a bunch of new staff he was trying to make a better product and improve customer service. Dr. Mevers explained that he had not been at the last meeting, but had read the minutes and wanted to express that he shared former Chairperson Bergeron's frustration over the lack of movement on the Grants Manager position in the last two years.

Dr. Mevers felt it had been a long time coming and he had a gut feeling that it would be held off at least until the building expansion is finished. Mr. Gray stated that he agreed that it should be held off until the building is finished. Mr. Bolton asked if the previous vote was final. Mr. Gray suggested that the committee take another vote on the motion to approve the three data entry positions for Vital Records. The committee voted again and this time unanimously to approve the hiring of three new staff members. Mr. Chalsma added that Mr. Bolton does not have to post them right away, but it is the steps prior to posting that can often take time.

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Mr. Bolton replied that even with posting right away it could take some time to find and hire the personnel. Mr. Gray asked when the next budget cycle began. Mr. Bolton replied that the next budget work it will be for 2008. Ms. Hadaway asked why these positions would need to be budgeted since the funding is coming from the committee? Mr. Bolton replied that they need to be legislated and to do that they need to be in the budget. These will be temporary employees because the legislature did not act on them. It is creating a position to fill a need. The legislature will then look at them positions and ok it by looking at the position and the department's expectations.

Ms. Hadaway asked why it would need to go through that whole process if the committee is creating and funding the positions. Mr. Bolton replied that they did not absolutely have to go through that process and that they could remain temporary indefinitely. Dr. Mevers reminded Ms. Hadaway that this was just an "advisory" committee. Mr. Chalsma explained that the committee is not actually writing the check to pay for the positions.

The money would still be coming from the state and they would be state positions, employees of the State of New Hampshire so they have to go through Administrative Services and be established. Mr. Bolton agreed with Mr. Chalsma. Ms. Hadaway replied that his explanation made sense. Dr. Mevers added that Mr. Bergeron had been correct, it does take 100 years to get things done.

4. Intelligence Reform Update:

Mr. Bolton reported that the previous discussion regarding the new positions in Vital Records was also relevant to this agenda item. The intelligence reform law has now been drafted and it deals with building security, physical security of paper, staffing levels, and background checks. It also mandates that an electronic database be put in place that maintains birth records dating back to 1935 and death records back to 2000. All federal agencies would have access to this information so they could verify the identity of people standing in front of them. This would allow them to know right away if an individual had stolen the identity of a deceased person. If everything goes as planned the law would be going into effect January 2008.

Mr. Bolton wanted the committee to understand that the quicker we get rolling on getting the data entered in the system the easier it will be to comply with the new rules when they become law. Mr. Wurtz asked Mr. Bolton if this law would have a budget attached to it when it comes down. Mr. Bolton replied that the final draft would have to have a budget attached, the first draft we would see probably would not. We will be asked to comment on the law, not the budget. States have been able to vocalize a budgetary need through NAPHSIS.

NAPHSIS has held several teleconferences and organized several surveys of state registrars regarding the cost of setting up databases and entering, generating, and maintaining data. They have been developing cost schemes of how much it will cost to bring states that are not in as good of shape as New Hampshire up to speed. That information has been given to DHHS to assist them in preparing a budget.

Mr. Wurtz added that New Hampshire's task is going to be relatively simple. We just need to find a way to get all the outstanding records into the system. He explained he would not want to be in one of the states that have no electronic system and need to be up

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and running by 2008. Mr. Bolton stated that New Hampshire would be able to comply quite easily with electronic requirements, but we do have a problem that is unique to the northeast and that is a lot of local registrars. We have 234 local registrars that will be affected by this legislation.

5. NHVRINWEB Update:

Mr. Bolton distributed two handouts to committee members. One of the documents was the latest invoice for the application. The other, a rather dated timeline that the Constella Project Manager had created. Mr. Bolton reported that they had not met any of the deliverable dates or at least the ones that are described in that document. He reported that in reality the project is still going strong and they are still holding weekly teleconferences. They had floundered a little recently. Allowing themselves to get tangled up in population and race data.

Everything on the project seems to be going well enough with the exception of the deliverable dates floating. The cost looks like it is bumping up against what was approved by the Vital Records Improvement Fund Advisory Committee in approximately November of 2005. The actual approval for the grant was \$54,000. and we had some additional work done by their Database Administrator (DBA) to do some data conversion to some of our data sets and that has added to the cost.

Mr. Bolton reported that he had a verbal promise from the Project Director, Steven Wilkins that there would be no additional cost to the state for this work as long as we stay within scope. Mr. Bolton found this refreshing because this was not a firm fixed contract. He added that he had saved the voicemail Mr. Wilkins left with that message, just in case. Mr. Bolton explained to the committee that the developer had provided us with a working prototype of the application. He agreed that it appeared slow, but assured committee members that he had been advised that once it was on state servers it would be "lightning" fast.

Mr. Bolton then took the committee on a tour of the NHVRINWEB application. Ms. Gaouette asked to whom and when this would be available. Mr. Bolton replied that it would be available to anyone that wanted to look at Vital Record data. It would be located on our website and anyone would be able to run a query. Dr. Mevers asked how up to date the data was. Mr. Bolton replied that it was up to date as far as we have complete data sets, which right now is through 2003. That is contingent on death records being entered and coded.

Mr. Bolton felt that there are other needs in regard to data other than codes. They are looking at making New Hampshire event/occurrence data available without being able to query on codes. This is because he felt that some people may just want to know how many people may have died in a specific city or town during a given period and not be interested in the codes. Mr. Bolton reiterated that the deliverable dates have slipped quite a bit but the developer is very anxious to get this project completed very soon. He is targeting the annual meetings for both NCHS and NAPHSIS in June and July and hopes to have something to demonstrate for attendees at that time.

Ms. Hadaway asked when the contract was originally scheduled to end. Mr. Bolton replied that it was supposed to be complete in November of 2005. Mr. Pollard asked if every record entered on the system is reflected in the NHVRINWEB reports right away.

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Mr. Bolton replied that the database refreshes itself everyday so items entered one day would be available the next. He explained that this was one of the things that made this tool unique. Mr. Gray asked if DHHS had something like this prior to this tool. Mr. Bolton replied that they did not.

Mr. Bolton explained that he had spoken with the gentleman that developed MICA and he was incredulous that New Hampshire had developed such a tool for the amount of money it had. In fact, he re-markets his own tool for \$48,000 per year and that is a state developed web-based tool. Eventually Mr. Bolton planned for this tool to cover birth, marriage ,divorce and death. Ms. Gaouette asked when birth and marriage information would be available. Mr. Bolton replied that the contractor was hoping to complete the contract as quickly as possible. He believed the schedule would be very aggressive. Ms. Hadaway asked if the query tool would be on the NHVRIN site. Mr. Bolton replied that there would be a link to it on the SOS site and one on the NHVRIN site as well.

Mr. Gray asked if it would eventually be a public site. Mr. Bolton replied that it would be. Mr. Gray then asked if it was the plan to wait until all the different modules were complete or would it be released a piece at a time. Mr. Bolton replied that all the different sections would be completed at the same time and would be released at the same time. Mr. Pollard asked if this system would eliminate a lot of phone calls to staff. Mr. Bolton replied that he felt that it would reduce the number of calls to his staff and possibly to the Health Statistics staff as well.

Mr. Wurtz asked Mr. Bolton who handles the requests in Vital Records. Mr. Bolton replied that a Statistician, Patsy Elderkin responds to these requests. He added that thankfully she has built a lot of canned reports that can be modified really easily. Mr. Wurtz asked Mr. Bolton if that was part of Ms. Elderkin's job description. Mr. Bolton replied that it was under "related duties."

6. NHVRIN Update:

Ms. Goonan distributed a handout to committee members. The document outlined work that OIT has completed since the last meeting and work that they plan to do during the remainder of 2006. She explained that before she began her presentation she wanted to advise the committee that they had lost one of their developers (Mr. Dahl) to Northeast Delta Dental. Ms. Goonan added that they are currently trying to recruit a replacement, but in the meantime he would be sorely missed. The position is posted as a Systems Development Specialist VI.

Ms. Goonan felt that Mr. Dahl's departure had slowed her team considerably. She explained that they had closed 32 change requests so far this year. There have been 22 new requests added. This leaves a total of 93 open change requests in the backlog. She added that currently, 13 of those are in analysis and 6 are in construction. Those are being prepped for the second quarter release. Ms. Goonan reported that they had successfully completed a release that day. She is targeting May for the second quarter release. Some of the change requests can be accomplished without a release and this is why the number of requests closed versus total number may not always match.

Ms. Goonan reported that by February 17, 2006 they had completed their (OIT) infrastructure project. All of their servers are now synchronized on Windows 2003. They have seen a vast improvement in up time. They also completed a Help America

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Vote Act (HAVA) project for SOS. What they were doing was removing a subset of death records and sending them to the SOS through an FTP server. That was being done for their voter registration project.

One item that will be addressed in the new release is called “Town Clerk Access.” It has been very much in demand and will allow clerks that support secondary towns access to that towns records. Currently, a clerk can only access records for their own town. An example would be Conway and Center Conway. This change will allow the clerk to access both records to better serve residents. As it currently operates they are unable to do this. Mr. Wurtz reported that this is a known flaw in the current system.

Mr. Gray explained to Mr. Wurtz that there was another flaw. When he inputs an abstract in Rochester, other clerks in other cities and towns can see it. Mr. Wurtz replied that they could not see it. Mr. Gray disagreed. Ms. Gaouette sided with Mr. Gray, confirming that they can see it in Dover five minutes after Mr. Gray enters it in Rochester. Mr. Wurtz was shocked, but pleased and explained that this was how they had initially wanted the application to work but in the past it never had. That is why Vital Records staff “cleansed” records and entered them into the central database.

Mr. Wurtz explained that what he meant by “cleansing” was entering a record multiple times into the system and assigning a state file number, which then allows the record to transfer to the central database. Mr. Gray replied that they do it all the time. Mr. Bolton stated that the only problem was that his staff is able to confirm that they have the most up to date information before they add the record to the central database. They look for amendments, corrections, and name changes before proceeding. He was a little concerned that this step was now being bypassed.

Dr. Mevers confirmed with Ms. Goonan that “CR” stood for “Change Request” and asked the definition of “SIT” and “UAT.” Ms. Goonan replied that they meant “Systems Integration Testing” and “User Acceptance Testing.” Mr. Wurtz explained to Dr. Mevers that in order for a new build to go into production it goes through SIT and then UAT to make sure it is functional. Dr. Mevers thanked Ms. Goonan and Mr. Wurtz. Ms. Goonan reported that her staff would be re-designing the “Another Transaction” button. She explained that as it was originally designed it was causing some users trouble so they were adding some dynamic help information. The information will pop-up to help the user make a decision about how they want to proceed. It will make the application more efficient.

They were also adding the county to the (Affidavit of Paternity) AOP form. Ms. Goonan’s staff also supports an application called NHVRIN Files. It extracts data from NHVRIN for the Social Security Administration (SSA), the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), and others. They have found some errors with the data it has pulled and they are working on that as well. The last item is adding the Document Control Number (DCN) to the daily receipts report. This feature has been requested for quite awhile. It will link monies with the DCN of the records sold allowing better reconciliation.

Mr. Bolton asked if there was any chance that the “Another Transaction” might be ready sooner rather than later. Ms. Goonan replied that they had found a tool to help them with the earlier aggravation the application had caused the developer, but new issues had come up since. Mr. Bruner was supposed to provide her with a unit test the next day and that

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would allow her to answer Mr. Bolton with more certainty. Mr. Bolton stated that he would appreciate it if it could be released prior to the next planned release in May. Ms. Goonan replied that if it was ready sooner they would certainly release it early.

Mr. Wurtz asked Ms. Goonan if she had discussed the way in which releases are now handled so users do not experience a break in service. Ms. Goonan replied that she had not, but would be happy to. She explained that one of the two NHVRIN servers was programmed to come offline at 2 a.m. so they could be assured no one would be logged on. That left the server available to Ms. Goonan's staff when they arrived in the morning. The new release was deployed in about five minutes and once that server was back up and running they brought down the second server and deployed the new release on it.

The release done that morning was the first time they had tried this approach and Ms. Goonan was very happy with the results. She explained that this process would allow them to do releases more frequently. They could do one twice a month if necessary. This would eliminate the need to hold back completed work for the quarterly releases. Those releases could then be dedicated to major changes. Mr. Wurtz added that clerks used to receive notice that the application would be unavailable for several hours during a release but it is now seamless. The goal is to have the system available 24/7 and this allows us to do so. He felt this was a major improvement over what was done in the past.

Ms. Goonan explained to the committee that the demonstration of NHVRIN Web that they had just seen would be transitioning over to the OIT environment. She has one developer specifically focused on that project. Some of the other areas they intend to focus on in 2006 is something called "Web Service." Ms. Goonan and her staff feel that it might help facilitate data extracts. Ms. Goonan is forwarded a large number of requests from Mr. Bolton for data sets. Right now it is somewhat of a manual process to set up. It can be automated once it is set up, but each one takes time. They feel there is a better way and hope to explore that in the coming year. They plan to upgrade the Oracle database to 10G. It is almost a maintenance item that they need to do. They need to make sure that NHVRIN in its current state will function in 10G.

Ms. Goonan reported that her other goal for the year was automated regression testing. She felt that it would improve their whole test process. They have insufficient time, knowledge, or staff/resources to thoroughly perform the testing. She explained that she felt that was the reason for the large number of outstanding change requests (CR), the testing that is performed is not sufficient to catch everything before the new version is released. After the automated testing is implemented it is their hope that the change requests will dwindle and the ones they do receive will be for enhancements or wish lists. Ms. Goonan asked if there were any questions. Mr. Gray told her that they had done a good job on the Soundex. She replied that she would let her staff know.

Mr. Croteau asked if Mr. Bolton wanted to discuss additional resources at this meeting. Mr. Bolton replied that it would be fine. Mr. Croteau reported to the committee that he and Mr. Bolton had discussed using outside consultants to help Ms. Goonan's staff to catch up on the backlog of CRs. He explained that the process for doing this is almost as convoluted and time consuming as requesting a new permanent state employee.

In the discussions with Mr. Bolton and his staff they had determined that it could take four to six months to get someone on board through the RFP process, sometimes longer.

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Full time resources are fifteen months away if we decide to go that route. Mr. Bolton had an idea of temporary full-time option that is available to us. They had learned that that process could take as little as three weeks pending the funding. Mr. Croteau did find out that those positions are intended to be for a twelve month period. He stated that Mr. Bolton was under the impression that they could be renewed and extended. Mr. Bolton replied that during the budget cycle you have the option of bringing forward those positions as full-time. Theoretically, why would the legislature disagree?

Mr. Croteau reported that on that theme they would be discussing a Systems Development Specialist V position and if he has enough money in the budget they could discuss an additional Systems Development Specialist III which is more of a programmer level and work it into the next budget cycle. Mr. Croteau said that at the same time he would recommend moving forward with the RFP process as an insurance policy for those times when staff moves on and we find ourselves shorthanded. Ms. Goonan has been working on an RFP and has reported to Mr. Croteau that she is two-thirds done. We might also want that option in the event that Mr. Bolton decides to do a major add on to the system. The staff could be brought in as they are needed.

Mr. Bolton stated that Vital Records is not the only agency with this issue. It is a statewide problem. It would be nice if the state had a “body shop” with staff that has expertise in different areas so that when a project is begun and input is needed there would be someone to assign to it. Mr. Croteau replied that he had spoken with the CIO of OIT about that because there are other agencies that could take advantage of that. His major concern was that they would get resistance from Administrative Services or Governor and Council.

They would be leery to give us a free ticket to hire people when we need them. There would probably need to be an RFP written that would outline a maximum per year/project and things of that nature. The contracts we already have in state government that would be similar to this are used in a situation like when we need to deploy 200 PCs and have no staff to do it or someone’s network is down and we do not have anyone available that is qualified. They can hire a network person to come in for two to three days.

He added however, that in the programming area it is rare that you would need someone for such a short time. It is usually a little more complex relative to getting it through the red tape we have to go through. It always ends up with Governor and Council so it will take more time and homework in its design. Mr. Croteau ensured the committee that this was on his “wish list” and he had spoken with Mr. Bailey about doing it. Mr. Bolton replied that it looked from what Mr. Croteau was saying that we would be all set. That we would be able to dig out of all the outstanding CRs. If there are two other developers on hand and the RFP on the horizon we should be in good shape. He added that he felt that type of solution should be available at the state level.

Mr. Croteau replied that he would again bring the idea up with Mr. Bailey. The problem he faced was getting it placed high enough on the priority list. Mr. Gray asked Mr. Croteau and Mr. Bolton “What do we get out of developing and maintaining?” He added that he understood that operating systems change and they are always preparing to support the next operating system. He stated that he assumed that eventually we would get to where we wanted to be with the application and then what. Mr. Bolton replied that

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he should ask Ms. Goonan as she never felt that they would reach that point because users continue to come up with ideas to make it better.

Mr. Gray acknowledged that but felt that we would eventually reach a point where we would not need as many developers. Ms. Goonan replied that she agreed that at some point the bugs that affect the operation of the application will all be found and resolved. The focus then switches to enhancements. At that point it is a question of whether to retire the software and move to the next generation so to speak. An example of this would be the move from VRV2000 to NHVRIN. As time marches on even NHVRIN will seem obsolete at some point. We will need to make a decision at that time whether to stick with NHVRIN or look into developing the next version.

Mr. Croteau added that in his experience there will also be a need for maintenance and that calls for a certain number of individuals to be available to do the work. Development on an application of this size seems to just keep going and going. He also felt that as the bugs became fewer and fewer Ms. Goonan's staff could begin doing some of the development that outside contractors will be doing because of staffing issues.

Mr. Croteau explained that he did not think there was an easy answer to Mr. Gray's question other than "big systems require additional plug ins as you go forward" and there is a trend in IT toward integrated systems. And if you do not have an integrated system right within the Vital Records office, you've got the integration to so many partners that either want data downloaded or query ability or they want additional reports. The stakeholders end up generating this, plus there is tremendous amount of integration with systems like the SSA that was mentioned earlier and other state and federal systems.

Mr. Croteau explained that he was aware that Mr. Bolton was working with the DMV on death verification. This would prevent the DMV from sending notices to deceased residences concerning their license renewal. To some degree today the integration is endless in the world of data communications. The good news about the RFP system he and Mr. Bolton discussed was that we would only have to hire the people when we needed them. The temporary positions could also be allowed to lapse if they are not needed at the end of their one year period.

Mr. Croteau reported that the MAP program at the DMV had over 100 bugs currently, but when they switched to this new system in July 2005 the old system that had been in operation approximately sixteen years had 40 bugs. Mr. Gray explained that his question was at what point do we begin asking those that want to tap into our data to pay their share. Mr. Bolton replied that the Intel Reform legislation covers that very question. Once the repository is built the federal agencies will expect to bump into it to verify identity/personal data for citizens and they will be expected to reimburse the state for this option. The DMV is a pilot for this program and several states are bumping up against state vital record data and they are paying for it. They do not grab the data they just verify that their information is correct.

7. Other Business:

Mr. Bolton informed the committee that the annual National Association of Public Health Statistics Information Systems (NAPHSIS) meeting was upcoming and he and Mr. Wurtz usually attended. The previous year they had gone to Indiana and this year's meeting was

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scheduled to be held in San Diego the first part of July. In the past the VRIF committee has approved expenditures from the fund to pay for transportation and lodging for Vital Records staff to attend these meetings. Mr. Bolton asked if the committee would hold a vote to provide funding once again this year. He stated that it would be approximately \$2500. for two people to fly and stay at the two day conference. Ms. Gaouette made a motion to allow the expenditure of up to \$2500. for Mr. Bolton and Mr. Wurtz to attend the conference. Mr. Pollard seconded the motion. Mr. Gray asked for a vote and members voted unanimously to provide funding for the trip to the NAPHSIS conference in San Diego.

Meeting adjourned