

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

To The New Hampshire Department of State

- MINUTES -

Friday

December 10, 2010

Approved Minutes

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Vital Records Improvement Fund Advisory Committee Meeting

December 10, 2010

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

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

David Scanlan, Deputy Secretary of State, SOS Appointment
Stephen M. Wurtz, Acting State Registrar
Patricia Little, Keene City Clerk, NHC&TC Association Appointment
Nelson Allan, Public Member, SOS Appointment
Dr. David Laflamme, Data User, DHHS Appointment
Tricia Piecuch, Nashua City Clerk, NHC&TC Association Appointment
Brian Burford, State Archivist
Debra Clark, Town Clerk, NHC&TC Association Appointment

COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Thomas A. Andrew, MD, Medical Examiner Appointment
Anna Thomas, Municipal Data User, DHHS Appointment
Joanne Linxweiler, Auburn Town Clerk, NHC&TC Association Appointment
Theresa Pare-Curtis, OIT CIO Appointment
Stephen Norton, Vital Records User, DHHS Appointment
Robert Carrier, Funeral Director Association Appointment

GUESTS:

Vicki Tinsley, DOIT
Chris Bentzler, DOIT
Bart Bronson, DOIT

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1. Meeting Called to Order:

- Ms. Little called the meeting to order at 9:39 a.m. She informed committee members that a new member would probably be joining the committee at this meeting. Later, when Mr. Burford arrived to the meeting Ms. Little welcomed him on behalf of the committee to his first meeting. She explained that Mr. Burford was replacing Dr. Mevers as State Archivist and VRIFAC member. He thanked Ms. Little and the committee for their welcome and stated that he was looking forward to working with them.

2. Approval of Minutes:

- Ms. Little asked for motion to accept the minutes (submitted for the May 21, 2010) as written. Ms. Clark offered that motion and another member seconded. Ms. Little stated that she preferred the new bulleted format minutes adopted by the committee as they were easier to read. The committee then voted unanimously to accept the May 21, 2010 minutes as written.

3. NHVRIN Re-Procurement Report:

- Mr. Bart Bronson, Business Systems Analyst introduced himself to the committee. He explained that his main focus was on the Request for Proposal (RFP) to replace the NHVRIN system. He reported that the first draft of the RFP, including the business and technical requirements was complete. It would be distributed to the directors for their first review the following week.
- The RFP is primarily focused on enhancements, reporting, security, and ensuring that the new system is more configurable than the old system.
- The goal was to have the RFP go public in mid January, award contract mid-year (June at the latest) and begin work sometime in the fall 2011.
- Ms. Little, Ms. Piecuch and Dr. Laflamme were concerned that business requirements were complete so quickly. Mr. Bronson replied that discussion/input was ongoing and this was only the first draft and was more of a broad view. As the document is fine tuned the details will become more precise.
- Mr. Wurtz explained that the initial meetings that had been held were higher level meetings and that there would be additional sessions scheduled so all users would have an opportunity to add their input to the final product. It would not have been beneficial to invite them to the higher level meetings as they would have been unable to offer any input that would be valuable at that stage of the planning.

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- One area of great interest was data and he explained that the goal was to have a new import/export feature in the new system to make it easier for users to avoid redundancy and to use the data to its fullest. Ms. Little and Dr. Laflamme felt that their user groups should be able to view and have input in the creation of the business and technical requirements rather than just seeing the final product.
- Mr. Wurtz agreed that this was a possibility. Mr. Wurtz added that although they had not formally reached out to funeral directors he regularly received feedback from them and the executive board and their main focus was on access to data and being able to link their software to NHVRIN. He stated that he would also be attending the funeral director's annual meeting in January 2011.
- Mr. Wurtz reminded the committee that we are planning to purchase an off the shelf system which would mean that much of the functionality we have been discussing will have already been addressed.
- Mr. Scanlan asked if there was a possibility of moving up the dates on the timeline for the RFP. He was concerned that with budget season upon us and all that money just sitting there it might appear ripe for the picking to budget writers and we could lose some of it. Mr. Bronson replied that the timeline was tentative and he felt there was room to move. Mr. Scanlan suggested that we aim for the end of the first quarter if we could.
- Ms. Tinsley was concerned that this might be too aggressive with the amount of work still to be done. Mr. Scanlan stressed that it was very important to get it complete well before June 30, 2011 or we stand to lose some of the funds for the project. There was discussion about where time could be chiseled off the RFP timeline, such as the amount of time given to vendors to respond.

4. Same Gender Marriage Conversion:

- Ms. Tinsley reported that the conversion of all remaining civil unions to same gender marriage would take place January 3, 2011. Mr. Wurtz explained to the committee that this meant that any civil union that had not been converted by the couple or dissolved through the court would automatically become a marriage January 1, 2011 and a program had been written to do this automatically in NHVRIN before anyone opened for business in 2011.
- Vital Records staff had sent out a letter to couples that would be affected by the legislation, advising them of the upcoming change and what their options were. He happily reported that the majority of feedback received was positive which was contrary to what he had expected when the mailing went out. Since the mailing went out we have seen an increase in dissolutions and conversions. There

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were a total of 819 civil unions and there are only 391 left to convert. A second letter is planned for the first of the year following the conversion advising the affected parties to contact the clerk where their civil union took place if they wish to obtain a certified copy of their marriage record.

- The final phase of the project will be to modify some of the death and fetal death fields and screens to make them more consistent with the rest. Development was starting to work on that and the release was planned for near the end of January.
- Ms. Little stated that she seemed to remember the committee discussing having Mr. Wurtz document the hours expended and try to put a dollar figure to making all the required changes to bring Vital Records in-line with this legislation. It would be helpful in the future to have a figure we could provide when this type of change is suggested in the future. Mr. Wurtz stated that those numbers can often be very different. It took a great deal of time to raise the fee for a vital record from \$12 to \$15 dollars and now there has been legislation submitted to roll back the fees. Because of the way we went about raising the fees in NHVRIN, the reversal would be as simple as flipping a light switch to return to the old fee structure.
- Ms. Tinsley reported that the Business Analyst position previously held by Barbara Barton had been put on hold due to budget constraints. Ms. Little asked if the position was paid out of the fund. Ms. Tinsley replied that she thought that it was. Mr. Wurtz stated that this position had played a key role in the recent successful relationship between Vital Records and DOIT and they had been given permission to advertise and interview for the position and did so.
- A person that worked for Administrative Services had been selected for the position. Administrative Services did not want to lose this employee so we backed off a little to allow a longer notice period. Earlier this week, Karen Hutchins, Director of Personnel contacted Ms. Pare-Curtis to inform her that the position had been withdrawn altogether and we would be unable to fill it. Mr. Wurtz felt that rather than it being a budget concern, Administrative Services just did not want to lose this employee.
- Ms. Tinsley stated that Ms. Barton had agreed to extend her part-time employment beyond the originally agreed upon date and to teach Mr. Bronson as much as she could in the time allotted. Ms. Picuch suggested that this was not a good idea especially since we wanted Mr. Bronson to focus on and now to expedite the RFP process.

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- Ms. Tinsley agreed that the RFP would monopolize a lot of Mr. Bronson's time but that there were a lot of other people working with him on moving the RFP forward. Ms. Little asked if there was any appeal in regard to the frozen position. Mr. Scanlan suggested the waiver process.
- Ms. Tinsley felt that Ms. Pare-Curtis should be consulted as she was the person that spoke with Ms. Hutchins. Mr. Wurtz stated that he was under the impression that we had already received a waiver and that was why we had advertised and interviewed for the position. There was discussion as to whether a waiver had been obtained or not or if one could be obtained.
- Mr. Wurtz felt it was important that we at least clarify whether or not a waiver had been granted and if so, had it been rescinded. Ms. Tinsley replied that she would ask Ms. Pare-Curtis to contact Mr. Wurtz about it.

3. Proposed Legislation:

- Mr. Wurtz reported that initially there were several LSRs noted that could potentially affect us. There were two that dealt with same gender marriage and one that could roll our fees back to \$12. After looking over the LSRs again this morning he had noted quite a few that could impact Vital Records.
- Many of those had to do with marriage and its definition, parties allowed marry, etc. There were also LSRs that mentioned requiring all state agencies to use "open data formats," documentation required to amend birth records and raising or setting fees. Historically we know that some of them will just go away but usually not all of them.
- Mr. Wurtz asked Mr. Scanlan when we could expect to see the proposed wording of the legislation. Mr. Scanlan replied that the text of the bill is confidential until the sponsor signs off on them.
- Ms. Little asked if the clerk's association had taken a position on the fee legislation. Ms. Piecuch replied that they had not yet taken a position because they had not seen the text of it yet. It also only mentions birth certificates. She expressed concern that they were trying to lower the cost of birth certificates while leaving marriage, death and divorce at \$15.
- Mr. Wurtz expressed concern about the vacant Business Administrator position in the event that any legislation passes that requires programming changes to NHVRIN. It cost the state thousands and thousands of dollars to change paper forms and to enhance NHVRIN for the same gender marriage and we had Ms. Barton during those changes.

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- Mr. Wurtz reminded the committee that Ms. Tinsley had just reported on the final phase of changes to NHVRIN to make it gender neutral so we can avoid any claims of discrimination. We are finishing up in January 2011 what should have hit the streets in January of 2010.

4. Vital Records Preservation Status:

- Mr. Wurtz explained that he had spoken with Mr. Manning that morning and he reported that there had been no increase in requests. He was in the process of wrapping up commitments made previously by the program under Mr. Teschner's direction. Mr. Manning would report to the committee at the next meeting concerning the final numbers for the preservation grant project.
- Mr. Scanlan asked if the committee had set a maximum number of participants or dollar amount the fund would expend. Ms. Piecuch explained that the time for applications had ended June 30, 2010 and no applications would be accepted at this point.

5. New Business:

- Ms. Piecuch wanted the committee to be aware of something she had heard and then had confirmed by Mr. Bailey of Motor Vehicle. The department would no longer be issuing computers to city and town clerks for the purpose of motor vehicle registrations. Once the current contract expires the clerks will have to supply their own computers and this concerned Ms. Piecuch.
- Ms. Piecuch felt that we could see an increase in demand for Vital Record computers from cities and towns that might not have previously required them in order to make up for the loss of the DMV computers. This could also mean their wanting to run Motor Vehicle programs on our computers.
- Mr. Wurtz felt it might be wise to come up with a policy in advance of this becoming an issue. Something along the lines that we will support the units we have out there but will not increase the number of computers. Increasing the number of computers could be expensive because we not only have to buy the computers, but we also increase our PC count which is something we have been attempting to lower. Mr. Wurtz asked for some direction from the committee.
- Mr. Scanlan suggested that this be made an agenda item for the next meeting when there is more information available as to exactly what is happening.

6. Next Meeting:

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- Mr. Wurtz suggested the last Friday in March. Ms. Little suggested that if Mr. Wurtz wanted input from the committee on the RFP they would need to schedule the meeting accordingly. The date settled upon for the next meeting was March 25, 2011.

7. Meeting Adjourned:

- Ms. Little adjourned the meeting.