

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

*To The New Hampshire Department of State*

***-MINUTES-***

***Thursday  
May 19, 2005***

# Approved Minutes

## **-MINUTES-**

### **Vital Records Improvement Fund Advisory Committee Meeting**

May 19, 2005

Health & Welfare Building  
Conference Rooms 113/114  
29 Hazen Drive  
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

#### ***COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:***

William R. Bolton, Jr., State Registrar  
David Scanlan, Deputy Secretary of State, SOS Appointment  
Paul Bergeron, Nashua City Clerk, City Clerk Appointment  
Jill Hadaway, Bow Town Clerk, Town Clerk Appointment  
David Pollard, Funeral Director Appointment  
Andrew Chalsma, Health Statistics, DHHS Appointment  
William Armstrong, IT Manager, DITM Appointment  
David Kruger, Public Member Appointment  
John O'Neal, OIT, DHHS Appointment  
Dr. Frank Mevers, State Archivist Appointment  
Debbie Augustine, NH Hospital Association  
Kimberly Johnson, Henniker Town Clerk, Town Clerk Appointment  
Judy Gaouette, Dover City Clerk, City Clerk Appointment

#### ***COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED:***

Fred Rusczek, Manchester Health Officer, DHHS Appointment  
Doug Hall, Vital Records User, DHHS Appointment  
Thomas A. Andrew, MD, Physician Appointment

#### ***GUESTS:***

Melanie A. Orman, Vital Records, SOS  
Steve Wurtz, Vital Records, SOS  
Barbara Kostka, Vital Records, SOS  
Daniel Cloutier, SOS  
Barbara Hoover, OIT  
Karen Way, OIT  
Eric Allen, OIT

# Approved Minutes

## Vital Records Improvement Fund Advisory Committee Meeting

### 1. **Approval of Minutes:**

Mr. Bergeron called the meeting to order. He explained that the first agenda item was the acceptance of the March 17, 2005 meeting minutes. He then asked for additions or corrections to the minutes. Hearing none Mr. Kruger made a motion for the committee to accept the minutes as written. Mr. O'Neal seconded the motion. Mr. Bergeron asked for a vote. The committee then voted unanimously to accept the minutes as submitted.

The second item was the minutes for the "special" meeting held February 23, 2005. Mr. Bergeron asked for discussion. Dr. Mevers stated that he had a change for the February 23 minutes. He had attended the meeting, but was not listed as being in attendance. He referenced a remark attributed to him on the seventh page of the document. Mr. Bergeron asked for any additional changes. Hearing none, Mr. Kruger again made a motion to accept the minutes with corrections. Mr. O'Neal seconded and Mr. Bergeron called again for a vote. The committee unanimously voted to accept the minutes as amended.

### 2. **OIT Allocated Billing Process:**

Ms. Barbara Hoover was in attendance to explain the process in which OIT determines the allocation of expenses in maintaining the NHVRIN application and how it is displayed in their billing. Mr. O'Neal distributed a handout as Ms. Hoover began her presentation. She explained that what she had tried to do was take the invoices for NHVRIN and try to put them into some sort of logical order based on what Mr. O'Neal's budget had been at the beginning of this partnership. She explained that she might have categorized things differently than Mr. Cloutier, but he would be able to show the committee opposing numbers if he so wished.

Ms. Hoover explained that she took Mr. O'Neal's budget, which had changed since the initial partnering with SOS for this project. The budget was revised when two additional positions (Mr. Allen and Ms. Eccleston) were moved to OIT. The first budget Mr. O'Neal had presented did not create a class 27 because it was not done through fiscal committee. So the understanding was that the VRIF would cover those bills as they came in. The second budget actually moved positions to OIT so it did include a class 27.

Ms. Hoover explained that she wanted to walk the committee through Mr. O'Neal's original budget. On the first page his original estimate was \$273,284. Then two positions moved for an additional \$141,000 for a total budget of \$414,448, which Ms. Hoover listed on the next page. She explained that Mr. O'Neal deserved a great deal of credit as he had done the budget at a time when OIT had no Financial Manager and he had to do it on his own. She added that he had run a few things by her at the time, but he had basically prepared it on his own.

Ms. Hoover felt Mr. O'Neal's budget was pretty accurate based on what they ended up doing. Even though he was showing full-time equivalents and they use the cost allocating system the end result was very close. Ms. Hoover explained that she had taken Mr. O'Neal's budget and spread it, and that is represented in the first column of the

## Approved Minutes

handout (Year to Date Expenses). She pulled out the operating costs because Mr. O'Neal budgeted them at 3%. Ms. Hoover stated that the committee is probably more familiar with the non-profit world than she as she had been out of it for about fifteen years. She added that she seemed to remember the target numbers being in the range of 8-12% for operating costs. She asked committee members to keep in mind that they had underestimated operating (overhead) costs, but that they were still coming in at under 8%. That included agency software development staff, unit staff, database administrators, and technical support staff. She asked the committee to also keep in mind that there had been no mention in Mr. O'Neal's budget of the New Hampshire Support Center and it is available and used by user municipalities.

Ms. Hoover explained that there was also nothing in the original budget regarding the remote server and even though Vital Records was moving away from it, they were still using it and had been for awhile and there are minor costs associated with that. Mr. O'Neal stated that the dial-up costs were actual costs and were tracked on a monthly basis. He added that all users had been moved to a broadband connection at this point. Ms. Hoover agreed with Mr. O'Neal that those costs were minor, but added that there had been costs associated. Mr. O'Neal agreed, explaining that it had gone from \$30,000 per month to nothing over the course of the last year.

Ms. Hoover explained that she took all the committee's year to date invoices and this was where she felt Mr. Cloutier might disagree with how she categorized some of the items. She explained that she had done it based on the job numbers and labeled them accordingly. She then attributed them to where they probably should fall in the budget. Ms. Hoover directed the committee's attention to the fact that OIT is way under budget. In most of the categories she explained that there would be plenty of room. The overhead had turned out to be higher than Mr. O'Neal estimated at 3%. It is turning out to be closer to 6-7% of the total budget.

The other area Ms. Hoover wanted to discuss was the HP Unit Administration staff. They (OIT) had been looking at that allocation area to see if it had been handled appropriately. If anything she felt it might end up increasing the costs because we take part in that group. That was one area she wanted to discuss further with Mr. O'Neal and find out why they are over budget in that area. She stated that she did know that they use PC Count for that group and she guessed that might be part of the reason they were a little off on the budget.

On the whole the total is coming in well below budget. Ms. Hoover suspected that it might be because it takes a while to get started. Even though everyone thought it would start in September she felt the resources did not get up and going until a little later than that. She asked Ms. Way if she was not a little short staffed. Ms. Way answered in the affirmative. The Data Base Administrators were down a position as well. Ms. Hoover stated that she was not surprised that it was under budget at this point. Ms. Hoover then pointed out that OIT was "seriously underpaid" right now.

The total bill for the NHVRIN application to date was \$277,000 of which they have only received \$73,000 from the Secretary of State's office. She felt that the \$73,000 was a token payment so they (OIT) would not bother them (SOS). Ms. Hoover apologized to Mr. Cloutier and admitted that OIT's invoices were incredibly hard to read and they do recognize that their invoices are just one small piece that the SOS has to deal with. She hoped that by presenting it like she had and offered that she would be willing to maintain

## Approved Minutes

this report until such time as Mr. Cloutier has a different way of managing it. Ms. Hoover explained that OIT is self-funded and when the invoices go unpaid they can run into difficulty. Ms. Hoover then asked if anyone had questions.

Mr. Kruger asked if the outstanding \$204,000 was against the Vital Records Improvement Fund. Mr. Bolton replied that it was. Ms. Hoover replied that they could spend down the class 27 first if they chose to. She asked if that was out of the fund as well. Mr. Kruger replied that he felt that was immaterial, he just wanted to confirm that the fund was responsible for that money. Mr. O'Neal and Ms. Hoover replied that it was.

Mr. Kruger then asked who from the state audits the fund and its expenditures. He asked if it was done on a schedule. Mr. Cloutier replied that what happens is anytime an invoice is paid by any agency for any reason it has to go through Administrative Services. The Bureau of accounts looks at every payment that is flowing through the system. A formal audit besides that daily activity would be when the Legislative Budget Assistant (LBA) would come through and say, "I am going to audit your books." Mr. Kruger asked if that audit function audits the VRIF. Mr. Cloutier replied that he suspected it would but that would be something the LBA himself would choose.

Mr. Kruger stated that he thought it would be a good idea and asked Mr. Bolton if the fund had ever been audited. Mr. Bolton replied no. Mr. Kruger added that at the risk of becoming a "pariah" he would almost ask for one to ensure they are doing the good job they feel they are. He stated that he had no reason to feel otherwise, but felt that an audit periodically is healthy. He also stated that he had no idea what he had just asked for but a good practice is to make sure that you had independent oversight. Mr. Scanlan replied that we are on the schedule to have that done. The SOS was given a pass through the election season and legislative session, but is now near the top of the list to be audited.

Mr. Kruger stated that he felt the fund should welcome that oversight. Ms. Hoover replied that OIT would support the fund in an audit situation with any documentation they could provide to back up any of the information on the report she had just supplied to the committee. Mr. Bergeron asked Mr. Scanlan why it was taking so long for OIT to receive payment for their services. Mr. Scanlan replied that he did not know the answer. He had assumed they were being paid all along. Ms. Hoover stated that initially they had been delayed in their billing, but as of March are up do date. She offered that if SOS did not have some of the bills, she would get them to them.

Mr. Scanlan replied that they did have the bills and he expressed surprise that they had not been paid. Mr. Cloutier asked Ms. Hoover what months the bills represented. Ms. Hoover replied that they were from July on through to the end of April. They did not include the \$170,000+ in accounts receivable left over from last year that was not paid. Mr. Cloutier asked which months had been paid for. Ms. Hoover guessed that they had paid for July August & September. Ms. Hoover stated that she had not provided details on the \$170,000 because she felt that through discussion they could work out with SOS what they were and were not willing to pay of that amount.

Mr. Bergeron stated that the committee would not be meeting again until after the start of the next fiscal year and he encouraged Mr. Scanlan, Mr. Cloutier and anyone else in their office involved in billing to try and bring the accounts as current as possible before the July meeting. He added that OIT is our partner in this project and he did not feel it was good to leave things unresolved. Even if there are certain invoices or charges that we are

## Approved Minutes

questioning we can take care of everything else up to that point. Ms. Hoover stated that one of the things they were not able to provide before was someone to help with research. If you have a question about any items on the bill you may contact Ms. Connie Weisberg and she will research it and provide detail.

Mr. Scanlan asked if the two positions that were moved were on the invoice now or if that was separately billed. Ms. Hoover replied that she would defer to Mr. O'Neal for that question. Mr. O'Neal replied that the direct charges for his people are there. Mr. Allen's time is allocated based on PC Count, so to the best of his knowledge we would not see Mr. Allen's name on the invoices, but we would see Ms. Way, the Business Analysts and developer names there.

Mr. Scanlan stated that when the positions were moved to OIT there were two lines in the SOS budget, did those two lines get moved over? Ms. Hoover replied that they had. Mr. O'Neal added that this was why our class 27 only has those two positions budgeted (\$142,000). That was not the amount Mr. O'Neal had projected for the whole team. Mr. Scanlan sought to clarify whether there was a budget line that the VRIF was paying for in addition to the monthly billing or is it all blended into one. Mr. O'Neal replied that he knew nothing of the Vital Records Improvement Fund budget, that all they were charging against was the class 27 account. He was not sure he understood Mr. Scanlan's question.

Mr. Cloutier stated that SOS is no longer paying the salaries of the two positions moved to OIT. OIT is now paying their salaries and billing SOS so we are not paying for them directly. Mr. Scanlan asked if that was in the monthly billing. Mr. Cloutier replied that it was. Mr. Bergeron asked if there were any other questions for Ms. Hoover. Hearing none he thanked Ms. Hoover for providing "the most detailed report we've had."

### **3. NHVRIN Update:**

Mr. Allen reported that Mr. Wurtz had completed a training session the day before and there are now 191 cities and towns on NHVRIN. Of those, 188 of them are connected to through high-speed connections. The last scheduled training is June 15 and it will bring the number to 208 cities and towns on NHVRIN. When we reach that stage we will have exhausted the possibility of connecting towns through traditional broadband services such as DSL or cable. There is one town, which has elected to not participate that Mr. Bolton is working with.

Mr. Bolton replied that there were actually two towns he was working with. Mr. Allen explained that Bath has rejected us outright, but Roxbury is a question mark. Everyone else has been happy to come on board. The next stage that Mr. Allen and Mr. Bolton have been working on is finding a solution so they might bring on the remaining 34 towns and the 3 towns that have DMV. That is a whole other issue and he was not sure Mr. Bolton wanted to bring that up at this point in the meeting.

Mr. Bolton asked Ms. Way if she had anything she wanted to report to the committee before he began this discussion. Ms. Way replied only that they (OIT) were moving forward with the next release and it is on schedule for June 10. Mr. Bolton then stated that maybe the committee should discuss the alternative means of providing high-speed service to those towns that did not have access to traditional services. He distributed a handout to the committee explaining that the numbers were incorrect as they reflected the list before the previous days training. Ms. Hadaway pointed out that Bow was not on the

## Approved Minutes

list. Mr. Bolton replied that he was aware that there were other towns that should be listed but were not.

He then pointed out the list on the back that contained the 37 towns that do not have access to traditional high-speed Internet services. Mr. Allen added that Randolph had just informed him that they had just completed a contract with Time Warner and the route 302 corridor might open up to us. That would give us Randolph and Jefferson. Mr. Allen reported that we have now saturated everything east of 93 and south of Harts Location. Almost everyone south of route 101 with the exception of Sharon and Roxbury are connected. The holes are Coos County, which has practically nothing and parts of Grafton, Sullivan and Cheshire counties.

Mr. Allen reported that the solutions he and Mr. Bolton had been looking at were satellite service, which has its limitations. If they were able to bring in broadband there would be a lot more possibilities for the town that they would not have with satellite. Despite its limitations Mr. Allen explained that he and Mr. Bolton were considering piloting satellite in a couple towns. They had also been discussing some much more ambitious ideas for the North Country. Mr. Bolton stated that they had been working/talking with SEG-NET and G4 and had initial discussions with the state. Mr. Ethan Banks has been competing with G4 and Chris Lonsberry who is working on the contract for Verizon and Internet provision. Mr. Lonsberry works for Mr. Frank Catanese.

Mr. Bolton added that he had spoken with Mr. Catanese the previous day and they have been trading voicemails. He had also heard from SMS Satellite, but there is an inherent latency with satellite because you are traveling thousands of miles up to the satellite and back. Mr. Allen and Mr. Bolton felt it would need to be tested to ensure it did not interfere with the VPN. Mr. Bolton reported that SEG-NET came forward with a pretty ambitious proposal while G4 was rather simplistic.

What Mr. Bolton had been looking for was a vendor that would roll up a lot of the fixed costs up front where theoretically the VRIF could throw a bunch of money at it eliminating the need to carry a monthly fee. SEG-NET took that and ran with it. They think they can build non-recurring costs per site (37 sites) at around \$7000. Then a recurring cost of \$150 and this would be for a 512K synchronous connection. A traditional T1 would cost \$342. The SEG-NET cost was very competitive on the downstream after the upfront costs were taken care of. Mr. Allen asked if it was DSL and Mr. Bolton replied that it was not it was a T1. He went on to say that if we did 15 sites or less it would be 384K and 512K for 16 sites and up.

Mr. Bolton stated that G4 then came in and said “No no, there really are no initial non-recurring costs. We just charge you a monthly cost of \$800 per site.” He explained that this proposal sort of went hand in hand with SEG-NET except that they were charging a couple hundred dollars less per month per site. The main difference was that SEG-NET realized that they could lump all the non-recurring costs into an upfront lump sum and reduce the monthly cost. Mr. Allen asked if SEG-NET would be selling off the remaining bandwidth of the T1 line. Mr. Bolton replied that they would. They had initially tried to sell him on the fact that he could bring the T1 to those towns and then sell the additional bandwidth, but that he had explained that we were not interested in being in the Internet market.

## Approved Minutes

Mr. Armstrong asked how this plan fit with the municipal network plan. Mr. Bolton asked “which one?” There is one being discussed in a bill that would probably be about the same in that it would create a footprint. If it were one that brought T1 service to the towns it might be something we could partner with. The plan that SEG-NET has offered differs significantly from the DMV municipal network/frame relay.

Mr. Allen asked if SEG-NET would be setting up the infrastructure so that the town could then purchase service as well. Mr. Bolton replied that it was his understanding that they wanted to. If they were looking to sell the service to others besides the town they would probably need to co-locate to a local site. Because they would be dealing with a municipality they could run into disagreement about whether or not they could re-market the service. If it is to another municipal office that would probably be acceptable, but to a Rexall drug store next door might be frowned upon.

Mr. Bolton reported that with SEG-NET it did appear that there was a company out there that was offering a solution to the state’s connectivity issues that was competitive or at least reasonably affordable. He reiterated that he would not even consider being a reseller or even getting into the market. He did feel that SEG-NET could at least offer us a fairly competitive cost per month service with an initial upfront cost. Mr. Bolton felt that this option was within the committee’s reach. He asked for the committee’s permission to go forward and either, establish an RFP or something that we might use to attract interest/proposals. He did feel that it was probably in the best interest of the state to wrap this up in a contract.

Mr. Bergeron asked committee members their feelings on the creation of an RFP along the lines of what Mr. Bolton was requesting. Mr. Bolton stated that it would be nice that we would be bringing broadband to all areas of the state and it would fit with the committee’s mission. Mr. Kruger expressed concern that the committee would be paying \$7,000 to bring on towns that may only process ten records a year. That would figure out to \$700 per record and he was not convinced that was a good way to spend the fund’s money. He felt that it would be wiser to have the clerks in those towns put the information in the mail and ask DVRA staff to do it for the cost of postage. He stated that at some point we have to realize we have reached the point of diminished returns.

Mr. Allen replied that clearly the returns on this are not the issue. We would not be doing this to generate revenue. Mr. Kruger agreed that he understood and stated that what we would be doing would be bringing very small towns into the twentieth century for the benefit of all the other state departments as well. Mr. Kruger stated that the question was should this committee be the one to fund this undertaking. He questioned that. Mr. Bergeron stated that Mr. Kruger’s question was the one the committee had to answer. Did they want to spend \$250,000 out of the annual \$800,000 budget to bring the towns in question online?

Mr. Kruger stated that he had a real issue with spending down this fund for that purpose. Mr. Armstrong replied that it might make sense to do a project concept document because it is a fairly complex situation and there are other agencies (library, safety, HAVA, etc.) going out as well. Maybe if we get it down in writing, some of the cost benefits. Maybe take advantage of other efforts already going out. Mr. Armstrong added that it did not necessarily have to slow anything down, but it would probably help. Mr. Kruger asked if Mr. Armstrong wanted the concept document rather than an RFP. Mr. Armstrong replied that it would be a first step.

## Approved Minutes

Mr. Bergeron asked if a request for information would help Mr. Bolton or if he felt he already had enough information to get it developed. Mr. Bolton replied that he did not think he had enough information and that he wanted to speak with Mr. Lonsberry further to find out what might be available in the state infrastructure. Mr. Armstrong felt that was a good idea as Administrative Services might already have something out there. Mr. Bolton stated that they did but the cost might be the same. Mr. Armstrong replied that he might not have to do an RFP.

Mr. Kruger stated that one piece of information that would help him frame the whole issue would be to have someone present a thumbnail picture to the committee of the volume they are talking about in regard to the 38 towns they are considering. In effect, what would the committee be missing by not bringing those towns on board?" Mr. Bergeron suggested an even more bottom line presentation on what kind of revenue the towns are contributing to the fund. Mr. Wurtz asked what the natural rollout for those communities was. The people in those towns must want cable and Internet. He asked if anyone knew if there were future plans in place.

Mr. Bolton replied that it was surprising that some of them did not have a provider. Mr. Wurtz expressed shock that places like the police department do not have it or need it. Mr. Bolton reported that the police department had just gone with satellite service. Mr. Allen stated that he found through talking with the cable companies that they do not have a lot of initiative to go into those areas. The market density there is not sufficient to justify the expense unless they are near a major road like 302. He did not see it happening on its own in the near future. Verizon is moving to fiber optics and they are not really that interested in expanding their DSL network. In some communities they are not even upgrading their 26K lines.

Mr. Allen stated that he had heard of a North Country Broadband Initiative but did not know much about it. He felt that there was very little motivation on the part of private companies to expand into the North Country. Mr. Kruger said that the analogy to the 1930's with the Rural Electrification Administration, are almost direct. It took a governmental body tapping taxpayer monies to electrify and put telephone service into much of rural America. He agreed that a for-profit company would not do it. Mr. Bolton replied that unfortunately the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) does not regulate it and cannot take a portion of your cable bill to do it.

Mr. Kruger felt that at some point if it is deemed so important for governmental process and for the health and welfare of the population the government intervenes and through law reallocates money to get it done. He did not see that on the horizon. He reiterated his question: In place of that should the VRIF be that redistribution vehicle? He questioned that conclusion. Mr. Allen stated that Mr. Kruger's question was important and that anyone that wants to push that issue needs to think hard about it. Mr. Bergeron offered that if the committee followed Mr. Armstrong's point about developing a sort of project concept analysis. We may be able to be a contributor along with a number of other agencies to make this a reality.

Mr. Bergeron asked Mr. Bolton what he thought. Mr. Bolton replied that as a committee they had previously decided to provide broadband coverage for those towns that did not already have it. At the time the committee elected to put a \$100 per town per month cap on it, but the intent was to roll out the NHVRIN application to everyone regardless of volume. He admitted that he realized we were talking about a different scope at this time.

## Approved Minutes

Mr. Kruger replied that \$100 per month is one thing, but \$600-700 per month was another. Mr. Bolton agreed, but added that the cost of \$100 to \$150 was not as bad but would require an upfront cost of \$7,000 per town. He reminded the committee that it was sitting on a very substantial reserve and that \$800,000 was a conservative annual revenue estimate. He did not feel that the committee was lacking funds and there was a real need whether or not the committee steps up to the plate or not. Mr. Kruger agreed that the fund was large and asked if it continued to grow at the rate it had would they want to consider lowering the fees charged for records.

Mr. Kruger quickly added that he was not proposing that, he just suggesting that it might be something for the committee to discuss. Mr. Pollard reported that there was a bill in the legislature proposing to more than double the fees for the issuance of a death certificate. Mr. Kruger asked what the funds were going to be used for. Mr. Pollard replied that they would go to the Medical Examiners office. Mr. Bergeron asked Mr. Bolton based on the discussion, what he wanted to do. Mr. Bolton stated the he could complete the investigation into the scope of what the committee had been discussing, especially with the state. There might be a state solution that would be cheaper or more viable.

Ms. Hadaway asked what the Secretary of State was doing for HAVA in that area. Mr. Scanlan replied that he was aware that they needed to do something there in a short period of time. He felt that the SOS is probably in the same situation as the NHVRIN folks. They need to look around to see what is available. Obviously, they are going to want to combine with Vital Records in the endeavor. Ms. Hadaway added that there is also a desire by the DMV to do this and it just seemed to make more sense for all the agencies to work together toward a common goal. She felt that if the committee went this alone it would be taking on the burden for all the other state agencies.

Mr. Scanlan replied that there was a bill that would have created a statewide network. He asked Mr. Armstrong if he knew more about it including its status. Mr. Cloutier stated that HB234 was in OIT's hands and it directed the Office of Information Technology to develop a state municipal network. It is very short and very general. It called for startup costs of \$587,000 the first year and an ongoing cost of 1.7 million a year. Mr. Bolton added that it is general funds that have been allocated. Mr. Cloutier stated that using general funds would certainly help the VRIF. Mr. Bolton stated that he did not want to reinvent the wheel. He explained that what he was proposing was to just open up some storefronts. As the towns begin to embrace the service and hook up their other offices they would then be expected to cover their own costs and the VRIF would no longer pay.

Ms. Hadaway asked how the fund would know when the rest of the town hooked up. Mr. Allen replied that he was paying very close attention to that. Thirty percent of the towns that the fund has provisioned have now gone on to pay for their own service. The most recent was Whitefield. Their police chief came in and was jealous and wanted the service as well. Mr. Bergeron stated that he was in agreement with Ms. Hadaway that up until now HAVA has been able to piggyback on our hardware and our network. There is going to become a point, and maybe this was it, where it doesn't make sense for Vital Records to be investing everything that is needed to get these towns online. HAVA may need to be part of the financial package.

Mr. Allen asked if the Social Security Administration could help. Mr. Bolton replied that they were happy with their electronic death registration and did not care about this issue.

## Approved Minutes

Mr. Bolton added that he would embrace the Department of Safety solution but he did not feel it was there to embrace. They had tried with the frame relay already and the speed is questionable and they were not concerned with the speed because they have smaller data packets that they are sharing. Ms. Way reported that the Department of Education is looking into statewide student Ids so there will have to be some sort of connectivity for school systems up in the north country to be able to access that centralized database.

Ms. Way stated that she agreed with Mr. Bolton that there was many other efforts going on that should be investigated to see if there is an opportunity to share in the cost rather than have VRIF completely absorb it. Mr. Bergeron asked Mr. Bolton if he could investigate it further. Mr. Bolton replied that he would. He added that all the different projects probably all had different needs and timelines. Ms. Way stated that she was under the impression that the student Id database needed to be online by next year. Mr. Allen stated that he was under the impression that the HAVA software could be used with a dialup connection. Mr. Cloutier agreed, but added it would operate slowly. Mr. Bolton stated that DOE was also probably looking at a dialup. Ms. Way reported that the DOE application was a .NET application just like NHVRIN.

### **4. Data Web Tool Update:**

Mr. Bolton explained that there was not a lot to report on the data web tool as they were still working out some contractual issues and nailing it down. There was a prototype that was built that they had been piloting. Due to vacations of some of the key players very little has happened over the last few weeks. He felt that it was looking very good as far as the contract issues are concerned. The target dates have probably been pushed out. Initially it was supposed to be August 31 but we are now probably looking at October 1.

### **5. Quarterly Budget Update:**

Mr. Bergeron distributed a handout while explaining that they were budget figures given to him by Ms. Penney the day before. He stated that he was ashamed to put it in front of committee members, but it certainly showed some progress over the last two financial reports. It shows how the expenditures are going. He added that the outstanding debt to OIT is not addressed in the document distributed. The balance is still very healthy and receipts appear to be on their way to exceeding budget projections. Mr. Cloutier told Mr. Bergeron that he did not think the numbers reflected the \$200,000 owed to OIT. Mr. Bergeron agreed and stated that he had meant that in his opening statement. Despite that there was still almost three million dollars going forward.

Mr. Armstrong clarified with Mr. Bergeron that the balance owed to OIT was not addressed on the financial numbers in front of the committee. Mr. Bergeron stated that there are a lot of problems with this financial accounting. He explained that he had discussed this in the past with Mr. Gardner's office about getting more detail. He hoped that when the new preservation grant position was filled that person could help with maintaining a more detailed accounting of the fund. Mr. Bergeron asked if any of the committee members had any questions.

### **5. Annual Meeting Travel:**

Mr. Bergeron explained that this agenda item was to confirm a phone poll of members done relative to the expenditure of funds so that staff can attend the national meeting of

## Approved Minutes

the National Center of Health Statistics (NCHS) and the National Association of Public Health Statistics & Information Systems (NAPHSIS). He asked Mr. Bolton if it was fair to say that this is the primary annual conference for vital records personnel. Mr. Bolton replied that it was. Mr. Bergeron asked Mr. Bolton to provide the results of the poll to those in attendance. Mr. Bolton suggested that the committee consider this request at this meeting, as the results for the phone poll were not available.

Mr. Bergeron asked Mr. Bolton to describe what the conference is and why there is a need for additional staff members to attend. Mr. Bolton explained that this item is similar to one that the committee approved several years ago. Although money was never actually expended Mr. Bolton had been given the go ahead by the committee to attend the meeting in Alaska. This time the destination for the meeting is Cincinnati. The joint meeting is a chance for vital statistics cooperative program to meet. It is a contract that we have with the NCHS.

Mr. Bolton is the Contract Manager, Ms. Elderkin is the statistician that works with NCHS regarding data issues and Mr. Wurtz is the head of our field program. He works with the local city/town clerks and hospital clerks. NCHS requested that the statistician, the lead of the field program and the contractor attend the meeting. It is also a meeting of NAPHSIS. They are focused on data collection, automation and dissemination. New Hampshire is considered exemplary in the nation because we have developed a software package that is both integrated and focused on death.

We are also the only state that captures all of its records electronically in regard to death. New Hampshire had been invited to speak at the meeting about our electronic death registration piece and also legislative initiatives. The trip is directly related to vital records dissemination and automation practice and they would be speaking at the meeting. Mr. Wurtz added that they would be demonstrating the NHVRIN application at the meeting. Mr. Kruger asked how many were going and Mr. Bolton replied that there would be three attending. Mr. Kruger asked if there was any reason for any representative from DHHS to attend. Mr. Bolton replied that in the past even when Vital Records was with DHHS we were encouraged to be members of NAPHSIS and DHHS went with NAHDA.

Mr. Chalsma reported that he had not heard of anyone from DHHS planning to attend. Mr. Kruger asked if he was beating a dead horse. Mr. Chalsma replied that it might make sense for someone from DHHS to attend. Mr. Kruger stated that his second question was how much would it cost and how much was Mr. Bolton asking for. Mr. Bolton replied that the total cost would be around \$3500 and he was asking the fund to provide \$2500. Dr. Mevers asked why Mr. Bolton was only seeking \$2500 instead of the \$3500. Mr. Scanlan replied that there was some money in the travel budget that they could use for this trip.

Mr. Pollard asked if the travel budget had criteria as to what expenses would be paid. Mr. Bolton replied that he did not look at each class for criteria, but that the trip was centered on the automation of vital records. Mr. Bergeron asked if at the end of the trip Mr. Bolton had to present some type of report to the SOS in order to get reimbursed. Mr. Bolton replied that he was correct. Mr. Bergeron asked if there were any additional questions for Mr. Bolton. Mr. Kruger suggested it might make sense for such a fundamental user as DHHS to be at this meeting and proposed that the VRIF set aside a similar percentage of funds to send a representative from DHHS to the meeting as well.

## Approved Minutes

Mr. Kruger did not know if anyone even wanted to go, but he wanted to make it available to him or her if they wanted it. Mr. Bergeron asked if Mr. Kruger wanted to make that a motion. Mr. Kruger stated that he would like to make a motion that the committee set aside \$3300 from the fund to subsidize the travel of up to four people, three of which would be from DVRA. Mr. Bergeron asked if it was \$3,300. Mr. Kruger stated that if Vital Records was going to pay a portion of the travel itself he assumed that DHHS also had a travel budget and could pay a portion as well.

Mr. Scanlan suggested that the committee just agree to fund the trip and include the language that if DHHS decided to send a representative the fund would cover travel expenses over and above what they had in their travel budget. With that Mr. Kruger said, "So moved". Mr. Pollard seconded Mr. Kruger/Scanlan's motion and Mr. Bergeron asked for further discussion. Hearing none the committee voted unanimously to send Mr. Bolton, Mr. Wurtz and Ms. Elderkin to the annual meeting and to potentially subsidize a representative of DHHS as well.

### **6. SOS/OIT Memorandum of Understanding Status:**

Mr. Bolton deferred to Mr. Scanlan or Mr. Cloutier. Mr. Scanlan reported that there have been a number of things going on in the SOS's office that has caused them to re-prioritize certain things. It was his opinion that things with OIT had been running pretty smoothly beside the fact that they (OIT) did not appear to be getting paid. Mr. Bergeron stated that he hoped that would be addressed in the MOU. Mr. Scanlan reported that not much had been done on the MOU recently. He explained that they had focused more heavily on the next agenda item more in recent weeks. It was his hope that once the pressure from the legislative session subsided that they would have a great deal more time to focus on this agreement.

Mr. Scanlan asked Mr. Cloutier if he had anything to add. Mr. Cloutier replied that he did not have anything to add. He then stated that he felt that Mr. O'Neal would agree that the MOU supports the SLA, which had already been signed. It just outlines how billing and payments would be handled. Mr. O'Neal joked that maybe that was why they had not been paid. Mr. Cloutier informed the committee that he and Mr. Scanlan would see to it that the funds were paid soon. Mr. Bergeron asked if that meant at the next meeting he could expect OIT to have been paid and for there to have been movement on the MOU. Mr. Cloutier replied that he felt that was a reasonable assumption.

### **7. SOS/DHHS Memorandum of Understanding:**

Mr. Bolton reported that there was a bill HB383 that is essentially a vehicle to move the DVRA rules into law. The rules are currently a 110-page document that everyone should be aware of. It is going to be wrapped up in RSA 5-C. Part of the rules addressed how data is disseminated to researchers and there was a concern that it was either in conflict or not quite addressing the needs of DHHS and their statute 126 has references to research requests and the establishment of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to consider data requests. Part of the discussion in committee was to extract that piece that dealt with disseminating data for research requests and arrive at a MOU between SOS and DHHS with regard to those fields that we share with DHHS and the release of that data through the IRB. A document was drafted and they had held several meetings with DHHS staff, legal staff and with the Director of Public Health, Ms. Cooney.

## Approved Minutes

The agreement that was reached addresses the fields that would be shared, the re-release of that data and audit reports that the DVRA will receive to ensure that only those entitled to the data are allowed to access it. An agreement was wrapped up two weeks prior to this meeting. Once the document is completed it will be shared with this committee and Mr. Bolton was confident that we would see the bill carried forward. Mr. Bergeron stated that the bill as it was currently written simply stated that the two divisions would work out a MOU. He asked Mr. Bolton if it was not the intent to put the MOU right into legislation.

Mr. Bolton replied that the MOU would stand as a separate document, reviewed by both parties annually or as needed. Mr. Scanlan added that there are items in the MOU that could not be put into statute. One item would be those individuals that DHHS identified as needing access to the data. Those people can change and the statute would need to be updated each time. He did feel it was a good working document. Mr. Bergeron asked if there were any questions about the MOU.

Ms. Hadaway stated that she had worked a Municipal Records committee and had thought they had covered everything, but she had recently had some collectors report back to her that there were a few things missing. She said that her question was how easy is it going to be to add on to that as time goes on if we find that we have missed something that should actually have been listed. Mr. Scanlan felt that it would be easier to add on through statute than through the administrative rule process. Ms. Hadaway asked if it would just require having someone sponsor a bill adding an amendment to it. Mr. Scanlan replied that it would.

### **8. Other Business:**

Mr. Bergeron asked about the vacant OIT position and the Grant Administrator position. Mr. O'Neal replied that they had received their waiver and Ms. Way had filled the position the week prior. The new team lead had actually started that morning officially. He is actually finishing up a project for the Department of Education and will begin with OIT on June 3. Mr. Scanlan reported that the Grant Administrator position had been approved by the Division of Personnel. They had some minor issues with the way the classification was made and it had been sent back for changes. He added that he expected to have someone on board by the next meeting.

Mr. Bergeron thanked Mr. O'Neal and Mr. Scanlan. He then distributed a document that had been created by the subcommittee on long range planning. They wanted to find out what some of the long-term needs were of the communities that had previously received grants from the fund some years ago. Mr. Bergeron had sent out a survey to those towns. He expressed his wish that the responses had been better. He contacted the 34 towns that had received preservation grants nine years ago and six responded giving the committee an update on what had been done and what their current needs were.

Mr. Bergeron distributed a handout detailing their responses. In some ways it was exciting, but disappointing in others. Most of the six have accomplished much of what the preservation assessment had asked them to do nine years ago. He added that it made him wonder if maybe the other 28 hadn't done anything and they are a little ashamed to respond. One of the things that the InLook group found when they did their assessment was that there really was a need for a person to physically work with the clerks in the

## Approved Minutes

communities to get responses to surveys, to prompt them with the right kinds of questions to hold their hands through any kind of conservation or preservation assessment and grant writing. Maybe the low response is further indication of that. Mr. Bergeron found the responses interesting and hoped the committee would enjoy reading them. He felt that the information contained in the responses would provide the subcommittee something to work with and use as part of their budget planning.

The next meeting of the VRIFAC was scheduled for July 21, 2005. Mr. Bergeron reported that he would be unable to attend that meeting.

Mr. Cloutier asked Mr. O'Neal how they were billing for the new team lead person if they were still doing work for the Department of Education. Mr. O'Neal replied that they were doing time tracking. Ms. Way added that there would be no charges for NHVRIN until he actually began on June 3. Mr. Cloutier stated that he had just wanted that clarified for the committee. Ms. Hadaway asked when the accounting piece of NHVRIN would be going on line. Mr. Wurtz asked if she was referring to the SOSKB invoicing piece and stated that if she was he was not sure of the timeline.

Mr. Wurtz reported that they had not even really seen it yet, let alone pilot it. Mr. Bolton added that the contractor was still working on the application. Ms. Way had provided tables to the contractor to work with. Mr. Scanlan asked how long it had been since that information was provided. Ms. Way replied that it had been months. Mr. Scanlan stated that the contractor was also working on a major project with the corporate division and had possibly gotten bogged down. Ms. Way laughingly told Mr. Scanlan that was ok, as they had also gotten bogged down with other things as well.

Mr. Bergeron added that he thought most clerks would be happy to know that it was bogged down. Ms. Hadaway stated that she had asked because her deputy had recently attended the advanced user class and came back with a lot of things Ms. Hadaway had been previously unaware of. She was referring to the pending searches and cleaning them out and how it had caused her a great deal of anxiety because it looked like a major undertaking. She asked if there was a way for the system to just purge that information when it is time for the new accounting system to go online.

Mr. Wurtz replied that he felt that we would have to come up with a way to purge that for the clerks. He explained that it would be virtually impossible for clerks to remember transactions from last July, let alone the DCN numbers. Through the training process he had come to realize that it would be necessary to come up with some sort of tool to assist clerks in cleaning out that mess.

Mr. Kruger made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Members concurred and the meeting ended at 11:22 a.m.