

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE RECORDS OF CONGRESS
MEETING # 36
APRIL 27, 2009
CONGRESSIONAL MEETING ROOM SOUTH
CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER

MINUTES

The meeting opened at 10:00 am.

I. Chair's Opening Remarks – Lorraine Miller

Miller called the meeting of the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress to order. She welcomed returning committee members Sheryl Vogt, Terry Birdwhistell, and Bernard Forrester. She thanked them for their service and contributions to the Committee. Miller noted the pending committee appointments and expressed hope that they would be filled soon.

Miller thanked Nancy Erickson, Secretary of the Senate, for her leadership on the Advisory Committee during the 110th Congress, and looked forward to continuing their collaboration in the future.

Miller welcomed Acting Archivist of the United States, Adrienne Thomas, stating that she looked forward to working with her. Thomas thanked her and said she was pleased to be in attendance. Miller and Erickson presented Thomas with flowers in honor of her 39th anniversary of working at the National Archives.

Miller then recognized several people who regularly attend Advisory Committee meetings. First, she recognized John Wonderlich, Policy Director from the Sunlight Foundation. Secondly, she recognized Lee White, Executive Director of the National Coalition for History.

Miller highlighted some of the developments in the Office of the Clerk since the last meeting. She mentioned the new and expanded edition of *Black Americans in Congress*, produced by the House Office of History and Preservation under the direction of the Chief, Farar Elliott. The book was published last fall and profiles 121 African American members who served in the Congress from 1870 to 2007. A companion website was created with additional features, lesson plans, and descriptions of the gallery of art and artifacts related to the book. Just this month, the book won the Government Printing Offices Sweet 16 competition, recently held through the GPO's online bookstore website for most popular government publication.

The Office of History and Preservation's Oral History Program also completed interviews with three individuals. The first, an African American page in the House, the second, the daughter of two former members, and the third, a former Radio/TV gallery employee. Additionally, an interview was initiated with a House Legislative Operations employee who had been with the Office of the Clerk for 50 years. An oral history webpage is scheduled to debut on the Office of the Clerk's website later this fall, featuring many of the program's interviews.

The House Curator, Farar Elliott, continues to work on the House Portrait Commission, including the recently unveiled portrait of former Representative Shirley Chisholm. The portrait is located on the first floor of the Capitol. Miller explained the portrait is very different because they tried to portray Mrs. Chisholm as the energetic member she was. Miller said you can get a sense of that from looking at her portrait. There is also an image of the portrait on the Office of the Clerk's website, along with her entry in the online biographical directory of the US Congress.

Like the Secretary of the Senate's Office, the Office of the Clerk's staff has been involved in the preparation for the Opening of the Capital Visitor's Center, where this meeting is being held today. We have been conducting training sessions for the staff tours, installing artifacts in the exhibit spaces, and reviewing products in the CVC gift shops.

Miller reported that the Office of the Clerk's Archival Program has been inundated with records transfers since the end of the 110th Congress and the beginning of the 111th Congress. A high priority, long-term project for the Office of the Clerk has been to work with the Center for Legislative Archives to provide assistance to committees transferring their electronic records. Robin Reeder, House Archivist, and Ted Clark with the Center, have met with House committee staff since last year to gather information on the types and formats of electronic records the committees are creating. The information will be used to compile a phased approach to handle the transfer of electronic House records. Miller said a detailed discussion on this subject would occur later in the meeting.

Miller then said it was her pleasure to yield to the distinguished Secretary of the Senate, Nancy Erickson, for her remarks.

II. Recognition of Co-Chair – Nancy Erickson, Secretary of the Senate

Erickson welcomed everyone to the meeting and said she had much to report from the Secretary's office. She began with reporting that 16 Senate offices closed during the 110th Congress, the highest number since 1978 when there were 20 closures according to Dick Baker, Senate Historian. Preparations to archive their records began for Members announcing their retirement, senators who were defeated, and for Members who learned that they would be Cabinet nominees.

Erickson reported that that all but two Members had selected a repository in which to archive their papers. Two Senators who did not select a repository indicated that they planned to do so later. Erickson said that Dick Baker and Karen Paul, Senate Archivist, believed that H.R. 307 was instrumental in emphasizing the importance of preserving their papers to Members. She noted great success from leaders in committees, Member offices, as well as staff from the Senate Rules Committee, whose leadership on archiving served as a role model, particularly for new Senate offices.

A little over a month ago, Erickson said she had the opportunity to attend and observe the discussion led by some of the Senate committee staff veterans who met with several staff members representing new Senators, and that it was a great discussion. She reported she was also pleased with the lively listserv that exists for archivists in the Senate, and applauded Karen Paul, Dick Baker, and their staffs for their hard work.

Erickson noted two very important departures from the Senate, Senator Obama and Senator Biden. There is a resolution in the Senate when a Member dies in office or resigns, their staff come under the direction of the Secretary of the Senate for a 60 day period. It provided Karen Paul and the historical staff an opportunity to work closely with the Obama and Biden office staff to help them with the transfer of their records to the National Archives. She reported that the process went well, and that Paul, Clark, and Steve Huseman from New Mexico University, the recipient of Senator Domenici's papers, would be talking about this particular effort at next week's meeting of the Association for the Centers for the Study of Congress.

Erickson said a favorite story of hers stems from the archiving effort in Senator Ted Steven's office. He had barely two months for his staff to box and inventory 5,000 boxes weighing 60 tons. The collection traveled by land and sea to the University of Alaska in Fairbanks. Senator Stevens who took great pride in his service saved everything, and also had employed an archivist for the last ten years. Again, another model for other Senate offices to follow. It is certain to be an extremely rich collection.

Before turning to the Acting Archivist of the United States, Erickson took a moment to commend the Center for Legislative Archives. When the orientation for new Senators-elect was held this past November, one of the highlights of the evening at the National Archives was a tour into the Legislative Treasure Vault where they saw precious early Senate documents. At the reception later that evening, Senator Carper and Senator Alexander spoke of the fine work of the staff at the Center.

Erickson said she had been thinking about the challenges of the Center for Legislative Archives. The Center is a unique entity that not only reports to the National Archives, but also to the House and to the Senate. Anyone who fully appreciates the unique cultures between the House and Senate can empathize with the challenge the Center has to serve the needs of the Congress. A sympathetic contemporary would be Stephen Ayers, the Architect of the Capitol who also has to balance the demands of the House and Senate. Later in the meeting we will discuss the challenges the Center faces to preserve the electronic records of the House and Senate.

Erickson mentioned again the impressive work of the Senate Historian Dick Baker and the Senate Curator Diane Skvarla as the Senate celebrated two important anniversaries this year. The Senate Russell building was completed in 1909, about a year after the House Cannon Building. Erickson's staff began planning almost two years ago with the Architect of the Capital staff to a publication and a website on www.senate.gov about the Russell Building. Staff inventoried the collection of historic furniture in the building. There were a little over 3,000 pieces of furniture built for the Russell building, and there are a little over a thousand left. There is an exhibit in the basement level of the Russell Rotunda of this classic furniture. It is hoped that the people who have this furniture in their offices will be inspired to take good care of it and to realize what a treasure it is. Finally, Erickson noted that this year the Senate is celebrating the 150th anniversary of the Senate Chamber. One of the privileges of being Secretary of the Senate is to be on the floor quite often, and a privilege never taken for granted. Erickson said she still got goose bumps when entering the Senate Chamber and is reminded of the Senate giants who have served in that chamber over the years. When speaking to the Senate pages, she tells them that what happens on that Senate floor every day matters in the lives of people throughout this country, and demonstrates another reason why the work of the Advisory Committee is so very important in the preservation of the history and the work that goes on in both institutions.

III. Recognition of the Acting Archivist of the United States – Adrienne Thomas

Erickson then introduced Adrienne Thomas, Acting Archivist of the United States. Thomas said she did not have lengthy remarks. She was delighted that all were here today at the meeting, and said she valued the partnership that exists with both the House and the Senate offices. Thomas noted the anniversaries of the Russell building and the Senate Chamber, and remarked that the Archives is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year. Thomas said she thought 1909 was probably one of the years that American Historical Association started the campaign to create a National Archives, and it took them until 1934, when the Archives was created. Thomas said that it has been delightful to be in partnership with the House, Senate, White House and the other federal agencies served by the Archives. Our staff are really dedicated to what we do.

Thomas then said Richard Hunt, the Director of Legislative Archives would report later in the meeting..

IV. Approval of the Minutes of the Last Meeting

Miller asked if there were any objections to dispensing with the reading of the minutes. Hearing none, Miller asked if there were any corrections.

Paul noted on page six of the second paragraph, third line, staff member Adam Sedgewick is democratic or with the majority and that should be inserted there.

Miller asked if there were any other corrections. Hearing none, the Chair entertained a motion and a second for approval. Minutes were approved with noted change.

V. Discussion of on-going projects and activities

Miller then turned the discussion to the efforts in the House to grapple with electronic records. Miller said that because the Senate also has been grappling with these same issues they created an electronic records taskforce to assist with recommendations regarding electronic records.

Miller asked the taskforce members present to stand for recognition and thanked them for their service.

Miller then recognized Martha Morphy, Assistant Archivist for Information Services and Chief Information Officer for the National Archives. Morphy will discuss the Electronic Records Archives system (ERA) and the plans to ingest congressional records.

Morphy described her role at the National Archives as being responsible for all of the information technology. She reported working closely with Richard Hunt and Ted Clark's team to look at the issues that are related to House and Senate electronic records. The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) has its largest IT project underway called the Electronic Records Archive. It is in the second year of the development. To date we have been working on the transfer of federal records. The second phase of ERA was to insure that the records of the Bush Administration were transferred. While all of the Bush records have not been ingested into the ERA system yet, the system is working for the Presidential records. NARA has been looking at the requirements to see how the House and Senate records might fit into the ERA system.

Currently, the ERA staff has been working with the contractor Lockheed Martin to create a separate instance of ERA for House and Senate records. If everything goes well, the work would start in the May to June timeframe to develop the House and Senate instance. The cycle for adding new developments to the ERA system is about 9 to 12 months. In the meantime, ERA is working to get additional storage so that it can support House and Senate records until the system is ready for the transfer of those records. Those are two paths being taken to get House and Senate records in the ERA system safely and securely.

Erickson asked if a finding aid would be included as part of the system.

Morphy said you would be able to do a search on the records. Currently that capability exists for Presidential records. One can search across the collection to find records.

Miller asked the committee members if they had any questions.

Sheryl Vogt asked if ERA was using the current archival standards for description.

Morphy responded that currently the system does not have the capability for description, meta data description, or archival description. Description is not currently in the system, but will be and have some capability in the 2010 timeframe. In 2010, public access will be provided for those records that are open to the public.

Vogt asked if when the system goes public, then the finding aids will be according to archival standards.

Morphy answered yes. Until ERA is ready, Morphy reported that for many of our records the Archival Research Catalogue (ARC) can be used to search NARA holdings. All of NARA's holdings in ARC will be moved into the ERA system which will become a portal for accessing all of our records.

Miller asked if it was user friendly.

Morphy said it will be.

Terry Birdwhistell asked Morphy to speak generally about how the priorities are being set for moving into those record groups.

Morphy said the priorities are based on functionality. The main priority is to work on public access and to make it user friendly, and also to work on preservation strategies. The challenge of electronic records is to ensure that we can preserve them over time and make them accessible. The preservation component of ERA is the most difficult and complex.

Bernard Forrester asked what was being defined as electronic records.

Morphy answered everything from emails to photos, and ultimately to video. Anything that starts out digital, or if it is paper, has been scanned, and is now a digitized image, that as well. So it is the whole spectrum of record types in digital form..

Forrester asked if this would include you the phenomenon of social networking sites such as Tweeter and Facebook.

Morphy responded that those types of records have not been accessioned, but we are considering those challenges to preserve wikis, blogs, and those kinds of technologies. Like everyone else, we are only beginning to understand archiving of those types of records and the records management issues related to them.

Birdwhistell asked how ERA would prioritize and capture email versus trying to capture electronic records from committee reports suggesting one would be harder than the other.

Morphy said all kinds of records can be captured, but the challenge is to capture emails with their attachments. However, Morphy said she had seen the capability of the ERA system to not only find the email, but also to have the capability of viewing the attachments to those emails. Normally records are received in collections, so the data types are usually pretty specific to the collection.

Richard Hunt noted Ted Clark would be speaking in a few minutes about working with the committees so that they are organizing and transferring their files reflecting the way they work. You see folders, office files, and the work flow represented in the records organization.

Vogt asked if the system would guarantee the authenticity of the records.

Morphy said yes.

Vogt asked if the system could handle access to restricted files when the electronic record includes restricted material as well as what could be open to the public. Is there a mechanism in the system to go from a preserved record to what can be made accessible to the public and still honor restrictions that will have to be made?

Morphy said there are access controls in the system. We anticipate that all of the congressional records would be together. There would certainly be a separation from federal records and Presidential records. Based on access restrictions and so forth, we would work with you to ensure that if you wanted to make records available to the public, only open records would be accessible.

Karen Paul noted when electronic records are sent, access is indicated.

Hunt said there will be a mixed universe of mostly closed records given the 20 and 30 year rule, and then increasing amounts would open. The system is going to have to manage those closed and open records.

Morphy responded that we are still pretty dependent on human beings there in terms of identifying access.

Thomas stated that the development of the legislative component of ERA will start in June of this year and be completed over the next nine to twelve months. Those questions are going to have to be addressed.

Forrester asked if preservation for future migration was being considered.

Morphy replied that the first thing done was to always make a copy of the original record that is stored in another location.

Forrester asked if it was a paper copy.

Morphy said no, an electronic copy. She said that when an electronic copy is received, the first thing we do is make a copy of the original, and store it somewhere else. We always have a copy of the original record. While we have not had the challenge of migrating to new formats, we are looking at preservation strategies this fiscal year. We are looking at techniques like XML, a language that you can convert many kinds of applications to make them more accessible to users. In the computer science world, there are many that believe that is a good strategy for future access.

But one of the challenges that occurs over time is the continual need to analyze the records that are accessioned and evaluate migration strategies based on software, as well as hardware because both will become obsolete. The evolution strategy challenge when building the ERA system is how to build a system that over time will continue to provide access to the records. The migration issue will be addressed as part of the preservation strategy and is the biggest challenge faced.

Miller asked if there was a clear cut path on the technology at all.

Morphy said no. When this project started back in the '90s, There were many people who were working on the same problem. As you can imagine, pharmaceutical companies have to track things over time, and in a scientific world where there's vast amounts of data, we actually thought that by this time, that there would be a much clearer strategy, but there isn't. So we are looking at the literature, trying to choose the most practical and the most cost effective paths, knowing that we will have to revisit the architecture and revisit the software to ensure that we are preserving records over time.

Miller asked if applications from private industry outside of the government are being considered.

Morphy responded yes. Lockheed Martin is the contractor who is helping NARA build the system. They have been looking at the problem, as well. In addition, we have been

working closely with the National Science Foundation in some of their grant programs to try to insure that the problem is being looked at, particularly in the science area, that's where the National Science Foundation is most interested in preserving records over time. We have people working with them on a regular basis so that anything they learn we can take advantage of.

Miller said it was a fascinating report, and hoped that if this committee could be of help with moving the project forward that NARA would consider them a partner.

Morphy said that certainly by being early adopters was helpful in itself.

Miller thanked Morphy for her report.

Miller then recognized the esteemed Karen Paul, the Senate Archivist, to talk about the Senate's efforts with regard to electronic records.

Paul thanked Miller and began by reiterating Erickson's thanks to the Center for Legislative Archives staff during the past few months. As we approached the November elections, we were expecting a tsunami to hit us, and in fact, what happened was more like a sustained hurricane. It went on for about three months. We were all just hanging on dealing with the volume of records that were being sent from the Senate, but also because of the early startup of the incoming Presidential Administration, with the incredible number of loans that were being called back to the Senate. There were literally days when the archives staff were, I'm sure, running around the stacks down there and we certainly were seeing a lot of each other and hearing a lot from each other over those days. Paul particularly wanted to thank Janet Davis and Sharon Fitzpatrick for putting up with all of her telephone calls. Sometimes they were slightly excited telephone calls during that time, so I thank them very much.

When the Center visited the Senate Historical Office last August to announce that NARA was ready to begin accepting larger transfers of electronic records we were at once

excited, but knew that we had some real work to do. It was becoming increasingly apparent that the quality of paper documentation that was being sent to the Center was changing. The records were more in the form of research documentation. The actual storyline and the decisions made were sitting on Senate committee servers. While some committees had sporadically been transferring electronic records, only the Homeland Security Governmental Affairs has been doing it systematically for five years and it was and still is the only committee without an archiving backlog of electronic records.

To get ourselves up to speed on ERA, the Senate sent several staff to the two day conference that the Archives had last fall. Paul thought this was especially helpful for all attending, but particularly for the IT people because it afforded them the opportunity to learn first-hand from the people developing the system. Very fortuitously, our CIO, Kim Wynn had selected Susan Sewell, from the Senate Sergeant-at-Arms office, to attend this conference. Paul introduced Sewell who was in attendance.

Miller welcomed Sewell to the meeting.

Paul stated that Sewell's unique background in history and computer technology made her the perfect choice to work with our office. Since Sewell was hired, we have been working together to try to figure out the next step to move things forward on the electronic records front. Paul also complimented the computer team in the Sergeant-at-Arms office, especially for the extraordinary work that they did in closing members' offices this year. Nancy Davis with her team of customer support analysts was also particularly helpful.

Paul said the next step was to meet personally with all of the committee chief clerks and systems people during the fall to brief them about the Archive's readiness, and to remind them that the Secretary's office has been asking for these records for the past several years. It was time now to begin to think about how to deal with this. There exists a wide diversity as to how committees perceive the issues. From these meetings, it became really

more evident than ever that a tremendous amount of significant information does reside on committee servers.

From these meetings, we have identified two challenges. The first one is to deal with the backlog. The second is to establish procedures that will allow committees to move forward in a more systematic manner. This of course would involve committee resources. The key to the archiving success of electronic records lies in their organization and how well they are described before they are sent to the Archives. Our goal is to have them described as well as our paper records are when they leave the Senate.

We need to find ways to help committees to be able to meet this goal. We have one excellent example in HSGA and we are encouraging other committees to follow this example. As a result of these fall meetings, we are fortunate that the Judiciary Committee now has a staff in place to begin the process of archiving their electronic records. The Finance Committee also has an archivist who is here today, and hopefully she will be encouraged to also to begin this process.

Miller asked Paul to restate the two committees.

Paul said the two committees were Finance and Judiciary. She reported that the Judiciary committee has two archivists; one for the Democratic committee members, and one for the Republicans. The Agriculture committee also has hired an archivist who will begin working in May on electronic records. Paul thanked Vogt for her influence with the Agriculture Committee. Vogt worked with them on a portrait unveiling within the past year, and Paul thought that really did help to enhance their appreciation of their own history as a committee, and one of the oldest committees.

Paul said her office is in the initial stages of an enormous transition, one that touches on every possible sensitive records issue, from access and privacy, attorney client privilege, the definition of record, to the commitment of committee resources. As an institution, the Senate confronted these same issues with regard to paper records when the archival

program began in the early '80s. Paul said her office was turning to some of the same strategies and procedures that worked in the past to try to build a consensus among the committee staff to share good archiving practices.

To date, as part of our educational efforts, Paul has developed Quick Cards, something Sewell suggested, and incorporated them into committee staff briefings and the IT training and demo days. Also Sewell suggested the development of an enhanced archive's web presence that includes our traditional guidance, but also new guidance specifically targeted to all committee staff. We traditionally have communicated through the chief clerk, through the archivist, but we now realize that we need to communicate to all staff and make certain that staff realize that they have a vested interest in saving their records. Paul said they had devised some programs that are now being reviewed to be incorporated into the web presence.

So having survived what can only be described as a sustained hurricane of committee staff changes and waves of archiving, we have recently been able to focus attention to other building blocks. We have widened the circle to include our friends on the Senate Rules Committee and have set up a volunteer electronic records working group primarily composed of committee staff. At its first meeting, which was very recent, the Rules Committee was sympathetic about the backlogs that exist, and stated that the rules are clear and that we must all begin to work to address this. Records really can't be removed from servers without archiving being done. Our first goal was to gain this acknowledgement.

The newly formed working group is tasked with devising archival solutions in the broad sense. It hopes to determine the requirements of different types of offices to identify best practices and to update any supporting rules and regulations if necessary. The Senate community has begun to realize that relevant documentation today is electronic and if we cannot meet the challenge of proper archiving, there simply will be no historical records preserved in the future.

Within the past week, as a result of a meeting with Hunt, Fulgham and Clark from the Center, the Rules Committee, and Sewell, we developed a work plan that will incorporate the appropriate advice and information from the Archives into the trainings for our systems administrators. We recognized that this is the crucial time to establish these procedures so that a solid foundation is laid for future growth. Paul said she was confident that they were finally on the right track, but realize that it will not happen overnight.

Paul then reported on the Modern Archives Institute held in January at the National Archives. There were six congressional staff from the House and Senate who attended. There was a breakout day on records management where we had a panel discussion. It was designed to be a quick way to tell the staff what they needed to do for archiving and arranging their records.

Paul concluded saying that with the closing of the Obama and Biden offices, not to mention Salazar, Clinton, and others, particular attention was paid to assist with their electronic records. Paul said she specifically wanted to thank Ted Clark, who dropped everything to help and provided invaluable service in that regard.

Paul also recognized Mike Donaghue, who was particularly helpful with the Obama office for a smooth transition.

Paul said the experiences with the members' offices that closed provided insights into best practices that will be shared with the institutions that are collecting these records in the states.

Miller asked if there were any other questions from the committee for Paul.

Vogt inquired about the volume of electronic records sent to the Center.

Hunt said that Clark would report on those figures. He has a presentation that will be eye opening for the committee to see. We have been talking about electronic records for decades. Hunt said he had never understood anything about them until the Center actually had received electronic records. He said even though reality has set in, it is not as scary as he thought it would be. There are challenges, but the Center is certainly making a transition with Ted's good work, so hold that question.

Paul asked Donaghue if he wanted to speak about his experiences.

Donaghue said Senator Obama did not hold office long enough to create the sort of volume that we had, but there were some problems in terms of getting the staff to cooperate, especially when running a campaign. And there were things that I would urge other folks to get involved with. Karen is trying to address these issues. Members need to be informed and take seriously the need to get themselves organized from the beginning when opening their offices.

Donaghue also said that he thought there are two important reasons for doing so. One obvious reason is the important historical value of the files. The second reason is if the files, whether electronic or paper are organized from the beginning, you are able to retrieve them relatively easily. Donaghue said the correspondence management system that his office uses has a number of different modules that if used appropriately, would be able to keep track of everything in a very organized way. But as everyone sitting here knows, that's an ideal world. This is the Congress of the United States and folks will do as they please.

Forrester asked if they found any unique or unexpected situations when processing the records.

Paul said that she agreed with Donaghue about records being organized from the beginning of opening an office. The extent of the lack of organization of the files and the

electronic records will make it very difficult to even identify some staff 20 years down the road when all you have is the last four digits of their phone number.

Hunt said what was unique was the actual request to come capture members' papers, since we don't typically deal with members' papers.

The fact that they will go to a future presidential library and that we'll assume that those records will track that way, Presidential libraries was not particularly excited about going in to capture Senator's papers, so we really had to fill the void. That was a surprise request.

Paul stated that there is still the need for outreach to train staff. There is still the need for the archival science trained person in the offices to provide the descriptive work that will allow sensible searching in the future. You cannot expect an IT person who has his or her hands full running all of these systems to provide that kind of arrangement and description that an archivist is really trained to do. Paul said she sees that with members' offices who leave a lot to be done by the repositories.

Vogt said that over the course of time, she has seen that every office has its own way of doing things. There are lots of commonalities, but most of them use different software systems. With electronic records, that causes problems. Not every institution getting members' papers is prepared to take them, and they don't always have the resources or people who are trained to receive them and work with them. So it seems, to follow up on what Karen said, that when some of these offices start up, they may have professional people on staff who have been on the Hill a long time and know how to set up an archiving system, but the office will sometimes just do their own thing.

Vogt said now that H.R. 307 existed, she thought the next step would be to start working with members' offices to make it clear that when you have an office in Congress, you will need to have good archiving practices to ensure the preservation of your papers. That would really be helpful.

Hunt said best practices were being developed by the Center for electronic records archiving.

Miller said it was something the taskforce would focus on. Miller said it is a daunting task to manage 441 offices on the House side as well as Erickson's 100 on the Senate side, especially when members die, retire, or resign. We manage their office until a successor is elected.

Paul mentioned that staff turnover was also a problem. The Senate had only 11 staff directors, including Republican and ranking staff directors, out of 38 who carried over from the previous Congress. The staff director is really calling the shots. We are devising ways to use our intranet to get to them quickly, but also to reach out to any new staff that they might be bringing along with them. It requires a massive, sustained, perpetual educational effort.

Birdwhistell asked what percentage of the offices have full-time archivists.

Paul asked him to clarify if he was asking about members or committees.

Birdwhistell said both.

Paul said there was about half a dozen members offices. For committees it is Agriculture, Judiciary, and Homeland Security.

Birdwhistell said the members with archivists on staff was a small number.

Paul said yes. Even if one office sets up Share Point or something similar, there is still a lot of variation in different offices. We do have one committee who has done that. It really does require that to be someone's job to archive in each office

Vogt said that she finds when working with offices for the first time is how different their schedules are from ours. They are responding to whatever is the current thing that is going on, so they are really frazzled sometimes. We come in to talk about records that have a life beyond this office, and they are not ready to hear that.

Miller said she thought they don't want to hear it.

Vogt agreed and said somehow we have impress upon the staff that archiving is just as important as everything else they are doing in the office.

Miller then acknowledged the two deputy clerks from her office, Debra Spriggs and Robert Reeves, and then introduced Robin Reeder, the House Archivist to talk about the efforts of the Office of the Clerk.

Reeder thanked Miller and said her office had been very busy. She said she and the Clerk have been with a lot of different committee offices to get improved background information on how they're working and to do fact-finding missions to identify the records they're creating. Before the last Advisory Committee, they had already met with 20 committees and three support offices, and we had three committees that were still pending. We met with them and then in October and November, Ted Clark and Reeder hosted nine meetings on specific electronic formats. The meetings focused on email, video, audio, web files, and Microsoft Office documents. So far we have received electronic records from two committees for records from the 110th Congress. The committees have been very positive in their response. Many of them work solely in electronic formats. They create their records that way, so transfer is much easier for them. In some cases, they were actually creating records electronically but printing them out to give us to send to the Archives.

We have approximately ten committees that have said they have electronic records and they would like to transfer them. It is just a matter of following up with them and getting them onboard archiving that way. So we are very excited.

Reeder introduced the new archivist hired by the Clerk, Heather Burke, who would be assisting with the outreach and electronic records efforts. Heather comes to the Clerk's office from the law school at Georgetown University, and before that she was with the university main campus. She also has worked with the JFK Assassination Records at the National Archives. We are very happy to have her in the office.

There are now three of us, including Joe Wallace, my other colleague. At the end of the 110th Congress, we met with 45 offices that were closing, which is 66% of the offices that closed. That is up from 43% from the previous Congress, so we are steadily increasing our contacts. Our goal is to get to 100%. So far this year, we have met with 15 members' offices since January. This was a direct result from the letter that the Clerk sent to all members at the beginning of the Congress offering archival assistance. We also provided a copy of HR 307 which seemed to help them get a perspective of what they should be archiving. We also distributed our records management publication.

Reeder thanked Hunt and the Center for Legislative Archives saying they could not do their jobs without them. Reeder said they really appreciate the Center's assistance.

Miller thanked Reeder for her report and her efforts to reach Members and their staff. She said Reeder sent letters to all of the Members that she personally signed, because it is important that to stress archiving records even though it is difficult. Given all the other things that are going on in the Congress that Members have to prioritize, you see their eyes glaze over when we talk about archiving their records.

Miller introduced Ted Clark, IT Specialist from the Center for Legislative Archives. The Clerk said Clark is one of the busiest men on the hill. He has surely worn out several pairs of shoes because he is responsible for all of the electronic records for the House and the Senate.

Clark introduced himself as an IT specialist assigned to the Center for Legislative Archives. He explained that he started with the National Archives in November of 2007 with the Special Media and Electronic Records division in College Park with Robert Spangler, who has briefed everyone here before on the status of electronic records of Congress.

He explained that for the past year, he's been responsible for all of the Center's IT records issues for both the House and Senate. He recently completed and have posted online the website harvest for the 110th Congress, which was performed in November through the beginning of December to incorporate as much as possible recent changes as Congress went later and later into the year following the election. He said the group was able to capture every website and look at every single website, both committee and member offices for both the House and Senate to ensure that they were not missing anything. He explained that it was a major undertaking and that they were very glad it was well received and that there were no problems reported.

Besides the website harvest, he explained he's been taking a number of meetings throughout the House and Senate, as well as issues with the White House and their transfer of electronic presidential records. He explained that he lost track and lost count when it got over 122 different meetings and events within the last year. He clarified that when he started, they really had a variety of different pieces of information about the total record holdings of the electronic records of Congress. And from going through and compiling all that information, they realized that the total transfers for predominantly the Senate up to 2006 had been around 1.46 gigabytes. He explained that bytes are the smallest amount, then there are kilobytes, which are a thousand bytes. For an example he said an email is around 27 kilobytes. He continued on to explain that there were megabytes, which is a thousand kilobytes, and then a gigabyte is a thousand megabytes, and then finally there is a pentabyte with is a thousand gigabytes. So the total collections through December of 2006, totaled around 1.46 gigabytes. The Center received additional transfers from the Homeland Security and additional Senate committees and there were

around 450 gigs in August of 2008. So there is a rapid increase from 1.4 gigs to 450 gigs in a very short amount of time.

Miller asked if this was just in the Senate.

Clark said really it was a compilation of both, and that he'd go through the details of both the House and Senate records. Then at the end of October of 2008 the Center accounted for the 9/11 Commission records, which is estimated to be around 1.5 terabytes or 1,500 gigabytes. That takes the total to almost two terabytes in terms of total holdings now. In addition to that, the Center received 900 DVDs from the Senate, which are the public hearings of the committees on the Senate side. That gave the Center what they estimated to be an additional four terabytes, bringing the Center's total holdings to six terabytes now. In March of 2009, the Center received additional transfers from working with the Senate archivist and offices within the Senate to transfer the Obama, Cheney, and Biden electronic records. This is another example of how the volume is really increasing very quickly. In just three personal offices of what the Center collected, there is an additional terabyte alone, compared to what the committees transferred in total of about 1.5 gigabytes just a few years ago.

Clark explained that these special transfers resulted from his assistance the Obama and Biden transfers, as well as assisting the Senate with the Cheney office closure to preserve their electronic records. And that is a collection of just those three offices that the Center is holding for the Senate. The Center expects to receive electronic records from will 10 to 11 committees in the future. From the meetings that he has had over last year and from conversations with those offices, there is essentially an additional gigabyte of mini-transfers on the House side. Video from the recording studio will be a large transfer of files.

There is an explosion in the creation of different electronic files and the volumes are getting so large that we have to figure out how we must preserve them. Committees are turning to the Center for assistance. Additionally, the Center is expecting the House video

and 1,600 DVDs that the Senate recording studio will be transferring. The totals with all of that is around 21,000 gigabytes or 21 terabytes as the estimated amount of transfers that the Center could be holding at the end of this year.

These are the numbers that the Center has on the Senate based on volume, in terms of the total gigabytes that they have transferred. The Homeland Security Committee on the Senate side has an overwhelming higher volume than all other committees combined. A lot of the changes in volume has resulted from offices which have been doing periodic copying of files, mainly because the volume that one can transfer on a CD or DVD-ROM is a finite amount. And the Center is increasingly, because of the Obama transfers, taken on a process of using USB drives, which allow the Center to receive a lot larger volumes, which open up doors for greater collections that will be received.

If one looks at the counts on total gigs that other committees have, the Health Committee on the Senate side provides the Center with a large single transfer of a number of CD-ROMS and video. But in terms of the frequency, Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs have been the overwhelming predominant leaders in the number of transfers and frequency of transfers. He explained that the recording studio graph shows the initial transfer, which is almost infinitesimal in comparison to the other two. The initial amount is around 450 gigabytes, which in comparison to 7,200 gigabytes and in comparison to a total of 11,000 gigabytes of video alone that the Center has received or will receive within this year from the Senate recording studio. However there are additional issues.

The Obama transfer was about 304 gigabytes. The Cheney transfer was about 170 gigabytes total and the Biden was about 415 gigabytes, mainly being a large collection of video that they had. Again, video keeps surfacing as the large problem in all of these. With a total transfer of around 889 gigabytes, which is just shy of a terabyte.

The total collections that for the Senate committee transfers so far, not including future transfers, is around 509 gigabytes. The special transfers of the Obama, Biden and Cheney offices was 889 gigabytes and the video collection for the Senate is around 1,100

gigabytes. The total collection is 12 terabytes. On the House side there is an additional explosion in records.

Hunt made the clarification that when Clark was talking about videos, he was talking about committee hearings.

Clark agreed and added that they weren't committee proceedings.

Hunt then added that they were not floor proceedings either.

Clark confirmed this and added that because the floor proceedings are in HD, it could become an issue.

Erickson asked Clark what committee was missing on the Senate side, was it the Finance Committee.

Clark answered yes, and apologized for the missing data.

Birdwhistell asked if there were transcripts to the committee hearings.

Clark asked if he meant the video.

Birdwhistell said transcripts of the video.

Clark answered that the transcripts of the hearing are provided as public material as part of the committee.

Birdwhistell confirmed this.

Clark added that the video itself does not constitute an official transcript because it's not added to the dialogue of the actual hearing.

Birdwhistell clarified that he was just thinking of the appraisal process of the video if it becomes so large that it is impossible to handle.

Clark confirmed that the Center still has the committee hearing and their official documents with the committee hearing.

Birdwhistell agreed.

Clark then replied that the transcripts had not been provided thus far.

Birdwhistell responded that he was just trying to think about what was possible and some things that aren't possible. And trying to figure out, as a researcher, what's the backup plan? And the fact that the transcript is there is good.

Clark said that the graph shows the committee transfers to the House from what he had already discussed and what the Center anticipates. The total estimated so far is around 870 gigabytes of information from the hearings on the House side. Then with the House video, around six terabytes in terms of what they have, plus the number from before of 870. That gives a total of around 6,870 gigabytes of House collection. Those are the total—that's all of the information about what the Center is receiving right now in terms of electronic records.

Clark then offered to take any questions.

Miller thanked Clark and asked Thomas for some help for the Center.

Miller responded positively and then asked if the Committee has any questions for Clark. She then said he had done a marvelous job. She said that Clark was willing to work with everyone and that she knew Paul and Reeder work with Clark a lot. She also said that they appreciated his work.

Forrester asked if they had hit the tip of the iceberg.

Clark answered yes.

Forrester said that the sheer volume is totally overwhelming.

Clark said that it was an exponential explosion of volume. He explained that the more they had meetings and talked, more was found. There is an enormous volume out there in terms of potential records that people want to provide. As others have mentioned, it's figuring out the process, procedures, and how the Center is actually going to make this a regular process. With the examples that the Center has done so far and what they are receiving by beginning the process right now, they are developing a lot of good insights that will help facilitate more regularity in the future. But it is the tip of the iceberg and there will be larger issues that will have to address about things such as video transfers and their preservation. It will become a major issue because of the volume that the Center is receiving. Because when one takes regular video and saves it to video file, it's one size. But if one takes HD video, saves it, it's a totally different size and it's a much larger size. And as everyone makes the transitions to HD, there is going to be volumes from formal proceedings to committee video being exceptionally larger and that will need to be addressed.

Forrester asked if it was possible to look at a server for the government.

Clark said that was a big concern because there is going to require a lot of storage capacity.

Paul added that it might be helpful to keep use statistics on electronic records, because, at some point, it might be use that determines the ultimate value forever. She explained they had recently seen that with committee hearings. She said they sent two years worth and

all of a sudden, they were getting a lot of use. But it might be that over time those that are useful the Center ends up keeping forever, because of the record and the transcripts.

Miller asked if in relation to videos whether they were keeping everything or making priorities.

Clark explained that the rule stipulates that the Clerk of the House and the Secretary of the Senate provide video of the floor proceedings to both the Library of Congress and National Archives to preserve those videos. Now, committee video, those right now have been recorded as they're being broadcast and in many cases by the committees themselves through their website. The problem there is that those have been captured and stored by many committees too—so they have a history of what they've done, but the quality is not the best. The Center identified in talking to the House recording studio that they have a lot of those same broadcasts recorded themselves and stored for committee references. So when committees ask for a copy of their video, if they didn't record it on their website, they go to the recording studio. In their meetings with the different committees, with Reeder in October and in early November, one of the outcomes and one of the views by many of the staff was to determine original source record. So if the recording studio became the definitive video transcript in the original source for video, that would alleviate the role of the committees having to take care of that video recording themselves and allow the Center to systematically transfer things and actually control the amount of volume. Right now, the determinations for committees is their own choice of what they want to provide in terms of video, but with the formal proceedings, because of current rules, actually all of them are recorded and then provided for later transcript or for later reference.

Miller asked Paul, Vogt, and Forrester if they had any questions.

Vogt asked Clark if the materials brought in go directly into ERA.

Clark replied that they were using USB drives, which he added was not the most elegant, instead the most practical way to transfer the records right now. And then from there they are received at the Center. Then they are duplicated, one copy of the drive is identically duplicated to another drive which is sent out to College Park, where it's currently being stored for later transfer into ERA. It is not going directly into ERA. The Center performs a duplication process, and keeping a reference copy at the Center for Legislative Archives so that when committees ask for their files back the Center can provide them in their original format.

Vogt asked if the Center had the storage and equipment needed for doing that now.

Hunt replied that it was bought on the recommendation of Clark. Clark built it, and the Center began using it.

Clark added that it is an interim solution right now for the long-term goal of ERA being the ultimate destination. But due to the fact that the Center has these records coming in, because committees have them, and because of his conversations with them about electronic records, the Center is receiving them. One of the concerns is that the committees have had these records for a very long time, and in many cases there is a backlog on their own servers, which is presenting a problem. The Center must deal with these records immediately and start helping them take care of what they have, the concern is that they—without an answer of where things may go, may find an easier solution in their delete button.

Forrester asked what format the records were in, AVI, WMA, or MPG.

Clark replied that when he talked to the committees on the House side about their records and record formats, they broke it down into six categories of video, audio, photographs, what he refers to as work files or office files or files inside folders, and email, so they are talking about PST file and email formats. With video, the standard formats are predominantly windows media player files. There are MPG and Apple QuickTime files

here and there depending upon what the offices have done inside each committee. Now, this is one of the reasons why the Center talks to the committees and especially with video. The Center wanted to alleviate any need for worrying about QuickTime, AVI, Windows Medial Player or any other formats that they're creating.

Forrester asked who would set those standards.

Miller responded the committees.

Forrester clarified that the standards were set by those who are creating the files, which is the House and Senate.

Miller responded that was what they were trying to do. The taskforce was developed internally to try to do it. The taskforce is developing the standards that Reeder recommends. She added that they don't have anything that absolutely says this is the format. But short of doing that, they are trying to offer them some suggestions of what the committees could do.

Clark added that they have found that there is already a common standard pretty much already in practice. It's not that there was a de facto decision made for standards, but through the evolution of different use inside the committees and inside the offices of the Sergeant-at-Arms in the Senate, or the CAO in the House, and in the Clerk's and the Secretary's offices, people have come to a common standard. For example, email. Everyone uses, for the most part, Outlook Exchange Email in the House and Senate for either side. The number one office productivity suite is still Microsoft Office. Now, there's a variety of different versions of that throughout the House and Senate, but it's still Microsoft Office. There is a variety of websites on the House side, but there's a lot of standardization on the Senate side. So there are a lot of opportunities for de facto standards of the House and Senate already in place, it's just they're not codified. He explained that there could actually be a benefit in not codifying to some degree, because it would eventually lock people into only one option. And as technology evolves, ways in

which people work change and what they need to do is to keep the focus on products that they're creating rather than the formats. Offices are already using web 2.0 products to collaborate and create work.

Forrester asked earlier about the migration problems with electronic records.

Clark responded that migration is a constantly moving target and where and what formats there ultimately will be, no one knows. One of the greatest challenges of both House and Senate records is that with whatever the Center receives, they're closed predominantly for 20 or 30 years. Can anybody here think of anything that they use on their computer today that they created on their computer 30 years ago? The fact is that no one knows where computer technology is going to be 20 or 30 years from now, let alone five years from now. Look at where ERA was in the late '90s and look at the computer technology explosion of the web.

Hunt said that there was an ambiguous tone in the room, which was asking if this is a victory and success that the Center is getting so many records or if it is too large, too big, or too much.

Clark replied that he was somebody who has a slight background in military thinking in terms of approaching a problem. He said that we have engaged the enemy but we don't know how big of an army they have yet.

Miller agreed.

Clark added that they will have to figure out how to arm up to combat them.

Miller then added that as they have initial engagement they will see.

Clark agreed, and added that they were getting into the engagement right now so it is a learning process. From just the Obama, Cheney, and Biden transfers they have learned an

enormous amount about what will work and what won't work and what is the best way to actually go about things from simple documentation to the need for more elaborate and better documentation. Because if there isn't a lot of information captured about how it is preserved, it will be a big challenge. People will look at this and say, "I know what you have here and how we actually use it."

Miller said that this was all fascinating.

Clark said thank you.

Miller said she thought this was a perfect segue way to bring a real live example of a committee that's actually producing their electronic records and what it takes in order to do that. She invited Mike Twincheck with the House Homeland Security to brief them.

Twincheck thanked the committee for having him there. He started by saying that he had a prepared statement, however, many of these issues have already been addressed. Many committees have the issues of trying to figure out what the problems associated with transference of electronic records were. He said that they have to examine changing technologies. For example, in the past some committees save things on microfiche. Turns out years later, having been on a committee that drew documents back that had already been scanned into microfiche, and their papers were disposed of. Unfortunately the committee did not have a microfiche reader. To review the files they had to use a flashlight.

Miller asked in disbelief if he was serious.

Twincheck said yes, it was hard to believe. They were in the process of trying to locate a reader in the Library of Congress but it was after regular business hours. Electronic records like other technologies offer tremendous promise when it comes to creating convenience and providing long-term storage. At the same time, there are the perils of incompatibility and backwards compatibility, especially with electronic files. Years ago,

committees saved things on tape drives, real drives. Then they saved them on eight inch floppy disks, five and a half inch or five and a quarter inch, now three and a half, none of which are used now. Those are some of the issues that need to be addressed.

Additionally, committees are overcoming other electronic record challenges, such as content, compatibility, the composition of the files, coordination of the staff, and in some instances, as with our committee, classification issues. On the content side, they have to decide which versions of the documents they are trying to maintain? Do they want to have a history of the documents, the transformation of the document and the legislation as it begins through all the generations of it, or do they only want to archive the final document? As a historian, we want to maintain the history of the document. But getting that information from the staff involves active participation on the part of the committee staff and from the clerks and the archivists. It also involves constant guidance from the chiefs of staffs of the committees. Capitol Hill is no different from the rest of America when it comes to new and changing technology storage media, competing software programs, systems, and the like. Today they receive, create, and maintain documents in multiple formats, ranging from Adobe PDF files, Word, Word Perfect, PowerPoint, Photo, and the advent of website files such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and the like. Native files are always the best to maintain our files in, however, they cannot always be sure that they are backwards compatible. A Word document written only in the late 1980s may not be readable in the current Word. Still the same company, same program, but sometimes the information is not transferred. Committees need to address how they want to compose electronic information. What is the organizational structure? How do they want the electronic files to mirror the paper copies that they have in the files? Do they want to have duplicative files straight across or should they tie in together? And if they're tied in, how do you maintain the accuracy of the information?

By far coordination is the most difficult part of any clerical staff, committee staff, clerk staff. The ability to work with committee staff and coordinate what information should be maintained and how it should be accessed, filed, organized are all essential. When committee leadership changes and the previously accepted way of doing things changes,

it is a problem. Archiving staff must make sure that the decision makers understand where a committee has been and how it has done things in the past to try to promote some kind of consistent approach over time. He added that he has been lucky to work on fairly new committees, but that he has worked with a few other committees that were well formulated and set in their ways on how they maintained paper files. They were still in the process of learning electronic data files.

In his new committee, they have been able to start from scratch. The committee has already had four changes in leadership in three generations of the committee. Some committees have experienced difficulty not only with the classification designations, but also how a committee handles electronic records for items which are unclassified but are security sensitive or sensitive but unclassified information. For example, official use only designations. These are documents which are not publicly available but do not fall under the standard data release program that applies to classified holdings.

As the newest standing committee in the House, they have been working to develop a consistent electronic records management system with the understanding that most of the staff has never known a life without computers. They have attempted to develop a system that encourages proper filing and an understanding of the significance to the archival process. This system includes a scanning and optical character reading of all paper correspondence. Specifically, the files are scanned in, OCR'd and saved as PDF files. This is done so that they have a format that is saved as a PDF so that we can maintain the appearance of the document as it existed when it was first generated or provided to the committee. At his suggestion, the committee OCRs the data to maintain the searchable database and an ASCII exportable file. At a minimum, future researchers will be able to access the ASCII text if the PDF file is unopenable due to newer technologies. The committee has also developed an internal standard filing system for electronic records. This system allows all staff to access and save their files according to a standard naming and file tree structure. The systems are fairly straightforward and logical. Items are filed by who, what, and when. Specifically, they organize a file by subcommittee of origin.

What kind of a meeting generated the file? Whether it was a hearing, a briefing, or a mark-up, and then by date. The structure mirrors the paper archive filing system.

Moreover, the contents within the file tree contain the standardized naming system. This assists the committee in two ways. First, similar items are filed together and past Congresses have the same filing structure, enabling staff to locate items as they go—do research further back in time. He added that as Clark mentioned earlier, there are some staff who as is the case in all offices, choose not to learn or follow this system. Committee clerks and chiefs of staff who maintain the files, however, all follow this naming structure and it has worked out well so far. The system that they use has the ability to be locked. Adding that they have a set drive within their system where items can be saved, and where they are accessible as read-only files. They can be reviewed by staff but they cannot be edited or altered or deleted except by the clerking staff.

He explained that they had a situation where a staff inadvertently deleted six months worth of committee files. Luckily, they had the backup drive and they caught it the day before that drive was going to be copied over. So we have learned from our mistakes.

The Committee on Homeland Security is moving into the electronic age as best as they can, but he has come to realize that archivists and the staff approach this work from different perspectives. Archivists find the value in the development and the story behind its document and its creation. Staff often worry about the future use and interpretation of the draft comments. As a result, they continually butt heads on certain issues. Having worked on three committees, he has found that the younger the staff, the less importance they have placed on the historical records of the Congress and the committee. He believes that the House and Senate should make a more concerted effort to instill in staff the importance of the historical integrity of the committees and their files. He added that this is reflected most starkly in the records generated by committees and the personal offices. He thanked the committee for letting him speak and offered to take any questions.

Miller thanked Twincheck for speaking and giving the overview from the committee's perspective. She then asked if the committee members had any questions. She added that she believed the discussion had been robust.

Vogt said that she didn't have any questions, but thought this was very helpful. She added that she thought that each committee probably goes through its own work process to determine what they're going to do. She was very happy to hear that they have set up standards for dealing with records, but that she didn't know how across the board it would be for other committees.

Twincheck said that it varied, adding that the charts Clark showed, 20 gigs of information, were only committee hearing files, and that it did not include any video files. He said that it may include our correspondence, but no background information. So none of the committee work products are included, none of the legislation is either. He said that they have been phasing it in, trying to get staff used to the idea of archiving. They get a lot of resistance from certain staff, like investigatory or oversight staff who feel it is their products and they should not be in the realm of accessible information. But they are improving and they are learning as they go.

Birdwhistell said that he wasn't surprised by Twincheck's comment about the younger staff. But that it seemed that if they're working in a public policy context, that if it's presented as public policy rather than history, that that might be something that has more meaning to them. Because this isn't just a way down the road issue. There are times when people need this information readily and it's for public policy access as much as history. They might pay more attention to that.

Twincheck responded that he firmly agrees, adding that they need to try to instill in staff that the committee records are the committee property so that the comments and the records that are there will help impact legislation in the future.

Birdwhistell agreed.

Hunt added that these records are a real asset to the committees, so they really need to treat them with care.

Paul agreed yes, and also said they were historical.

Forrester asked to clarify if Twincheck's committee was the newest.

Twincheck said yes, the newest standing committee.

Forrester continued by saying that someone could bring an eight and a half floppy and a five inch and a zip drive. The new word has docx and the other old versions of windows can't read it because it has that docx extension on it.

Twincheck said that some of the staff is experienced at that. The staff is transitioning currently to Word 2007, which is the docx, and some staff still is in the .doc Word 2000. They also have some incompatibility problems there. They are also experiencing a new change in staff migrating towards using Macintosh computers. So they're using a parallel system to use Microsoft Office programs within it. That creates another set of issues. He said they were going back to the situation of having two different format files.

Forrester asked how many of these offices use a Mac and how many use a PC.

Clark responded that the difference between Macs and PCs is overstated, adding that there really is not too much to be concerned about. For example, we use a Macintosh system in duplication work because it has the best pickup.

Forrester affirmed this.

Clark continued, it sees hardware more universally than any Windows computer. The formats of Mac versus PC are not really a major issue. It's a bigger issue with Office

2007 and Office 2003. That creates a much bigger problem because of the incompatibilities between older versions than between Mac and PC. It's not a big issue. The Center sees them both. Just to answer Forrester's question, there are, on the Senate side, a number of personal offices that use Macintosh equipment outside, but the overall majority.

Forrester interjected that Clark brought up another point about migration. He asked if the incompatibilities of Word, Excel, any other productivity software, or statistical software would need to be addressed.

Clark answered that with the incompatibility issue, the National Archives has a number of different ways to deal with it. There are a number of work groups looking at formats and transformation issues, and making sure that records remain accessible. To make sure ERA can provide the capability for original records to be taken as long as they meet certain criteria. They are trying to expand the number of formats that ERA can accept. And once they're received, if there is a case where it's becoming incompatible, they may transform it into a different format. So PDF may be the current format in which they convert the Excel document. It may be some other image format or some other data format such as XML. It is my understanding that with ERA they are addressing those issues, in fact a number of different taskforces and groups are addressing that.

Miller added that this all gets involved in what they hope the guidelines will include.

Clark agreed.

Miller added that they will need to make some strong recommendations to the committee so they can make sure that the formatting is as uniform as they possibly can get it. She reminded the committee that they were at the seven minute mark for ending the meeting.

She said that there were a few things that she would like for the committee to consider in the next few minutes. One of the things was the Next-Generation Finding Aid. She said

that at the last meeting they discussed the Next-Generation Finding Aids Project. She continued to say that she would like to recommend the creation of a taskforce that will help work on this and that the Center would help with suggesting some names. She also said that they would need to work out what it would be that they wanted them to actually look at, the size of the committee, this taskforce. She said that she would really like Erickson, Thomas, and herself to come up with something this summer, and not move slowly on it. So that at the September meeting, they can really have some kind of real substantive kind of meeting on it and try to figure out what they are going to do. She asked to take two or three minutes to discuss this and ask if the committee wanted to do this and how they wanted to proceed. She asked Baker what he thought.

Baker said that they weren't going to move unless the Center moved on it. He said the real question was how the committee could support the Center in a helpful, constructive, step by step way.

Miller affirmed this.

Baker added that the committee has been talking about trying to achieve this for a very, very long time and it's an overwhelming project. So the question goes to Hunt, how would a taskforce help move things along?

Hunt said that there were two dimensions to the problem and one that the taskforce doesn't need to concern itself with, which is a hands and eyes resource issue. The Center needs to have sufficient dedicated staff to open boxes and do the archival descriptive work on 30,000 cubic feet and a growing amount of records that are described but they don't have an enhanced description. Enhanced description gives you those qualitative judgments of what is the relative value of sets and series of records to the scholarly community, whether it's historians or political scientists or whatever flavor and variety they come in. That's going to take some time and some resources. He explained that he will need to go to Thomas for help on that, not the taskforce. The issue that the taskforce can assist in is the conceptualization issue. By definition, no one has seen this type of

description yet because it is next generation. There will need to be some pretty imaginative, creative, and bright people working and revisiting how information is being created and disseminated today. With a panel of traditional archivists, they probably wouldn't help solve the problem. There needs to be a group that can see the issues and problems outside of the agency. He added that he thought that is what would be helpful, asking if that made sense.

Birdwhistell said that he agreed with that approach. He said that a taskforce might come up with some ideas that would impact the amount of blocking and tackling that has to be done in terms of the day to day stuff. They could come up with a new approach that maybe saves some time, actually, in this new generation. It would be very helpful to everybody.

Hunt agreed.

Miller asked the committee would submit some recommendations, adding that they are the world's experts.

Vogt said that they had just done something very similar to what Hunt has ahead of him at her library on a much smaller scale. But it was taking their old finding aids, getting them into electronic versions and then all finding aids brought to current standards, so that would be their legacy records. Now everything that comes in and how it is handled fits into this format and this is what you want to do. Having a young staff that can envision this and has the training and so on for doing this kind of work, and making it available, where things can be searched on the web. Their new website will be debuted this summer.

Miller asked if Vogt would let the committee know when their website was up so everyone could see it.

Vogt said yes, adding that some of it was up already. At Oklahoma, the Carl Albert Center, they have a Google search mechanism on theirs for searching their collections, and in Connecticut, the Dodd Center already has something up, as well.

Forrester said that he was doing some research on this topic the night before and it seems that five people at the University of Illinois just came up with a whole new thing for doing finding aids, basically templates, it's called Archive. He asked if anyone had heard of it.

Vogt said that she had heard about it.

Forrester said that it is just out, and that last year, they had the Archivists' Toolkit.

Vogt confirmed this.

Forrester added that there were all sorts of new open source technologies out there. And that since libraries are marrying into these computer schools, it's an explosion of things that are coming. They are finding new and easier ways. This one is supposed to be very simple, just templates that allow you to do the finding aids. And again, it's all based on XML translations, so there's a lot of ways to do it. He offered to send things as he found them. He said he was working on a new grant for the Barbara Jordan papers with Rice University and UT and they are trying to find a simple way of getting it done.

Miller asked Hunt if he minded being the contact for everyone to send their information.

Hunt said that he would be happy to have all of the information sent to him at the Center.

Forrester said yes, and added that the committee had come out of a symposium and that it may be time to look into something like that for the experts. He said that we could have a symposium and discuss what steps that were needed.

Vogt said that next week at the Association of Centers for the Study of Congress there will be a session on finding aids and the need for them and the possibility of drafting a grant to go forward to have a national database on the congressional collections. Miller said thanks everyone for contributing and said next on the agenda was a briefing from Hunt.

VI. Annual Report of the Center for Legislative Archives – Richard Hunt

Hunt said that he was going to be very short. He said that the committee has an image filled midyear report and that he included a work plan. He said that the Center now has a plan in place for the beginning of the year, a mechanism to collect data that is relevant to this committee and the Center's activities at the midyear, which will help fulfill the Center's requirement to do an annual report. Rather than hustling in the last three weeks before the annual report was always due, the Center is actually collecting the data to give managers a little better idea of where the Center is working and where there are needs.

On resource issues, which in the last few committee meetings there have been some questions about, some prioritization of resource issues are required. He reported that the Center has concentrated on electronic records needs. There is a posting that is closed right now, and there'll be a pool of applicants for another Clark position. It'll be somebody to help Clark. And Thomas has approved another position that will be posted as soon as we complete the position description, which is being drafted. The Center is going from zero to three this year. Where the center should look next, and Thomas and Michael Kurtz will need help, will be for some bench strength on the archival side of the equation, which has gone somewhat untended over the last few years. That will create an opportunity to bring in some younger IT savvy people, as well, and add them to the Center.

There is a certain type of person that succeeds at the Center and one has to understand the unique cultures in the House and Senate and so it's not easy to pass people through that job and then for them to be able to deal with congressional staff and members. The Center would like to keep their people, but the question is whether the Center is

adequately compensating them so they're not going to wander off for some brighter pastures. It's always something to look at.

And then there's always the question of the level of investment in the Center. And I think we've talked about this today, which is if the Congress is really aware of its stake in the Center's responsibilities, programs, activities and mission? He said the answer is probably not yet. There could be greater awareness and appreciation and some involvement, investment by the Congress in those who are taking care of its records. He encourages the committee to look into any opportunity that might open those doors.

Baker said the fact that there is three empty seats around the table suggests that there is some work to do in getting some appointees.

Birdwhistell asked if there was any way to get additional funding for collections that come down on the Center, like the 9/11 Commission because it seems to take you away from your primary responsibilities.

Hunt said that it had been quite a drain in the last year. And he added that the Commission on the Weapons of Mass Destruction has just been transferred to the Center.

Birdwhistell said that those certainly need to be documented and preserved.

Hunt agreed.

Birdwhistell said that if there's some strategy for helping people who send that material understand the need for additional funding, it wouldn't impact that's what's getting you further behind. Every time you have a special commission.

Hunt said yes, because there is a drop dead date when the commission goes out of business. They turn over everything, including hard drives and directories and the Center can't just let them sit unprocessed.

Birdwhistell said that he assumed Hunt had a formula for how much that would cost based on what is coming so he could give people a price.

Hunt said that he is sure he could derive one.

Birdwhistell said yes, give them a reasonable price.

Miller thanked Hunt.

Hunt thanked the committee.

Miller said that she appreciated and supported all of his efforts. She asked Thomas if she had anything to add.

Thomas said she had nothing to add except that she thought they were making tremendous progress on electronic records. And it's not a unique problem by any stretch of the imagination. It's a problem that everyone is facing with all the federal agencies and with the White House records and so forth. For example, the National Archives took in around 130 terabytes of Bush 43 records to compare that with the congressional records received. She said she knew that the Center has a lot more to identify and to bring, but it's just a monumental problem throughout the government that the National Archives is facing.

Miller asked Birdwhistell, Vogt, and Forrester if they had any additional questions.

Forrester asked if one of the former members of the committee is now the director of the Bush Library.

Thomas said that Alan Lowe was the director.

Miller said that she appreciated the cooperation and the folks that were sitting around the wall, adding that she was a House staffer for a little while so she understands that all of this work that the committee had talked about was because of them. She thanked them for all of their work. She asked Erickson for any last words.

Erickson thanked everyone for their participation.

Miller asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion was made, seconded, and approved.

Miller once again thanked everyone, and said farewell until September. The meeting adjourned at 11:38 am.