ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE RECORDS OF CONGRESS
MEETING # 37
NOVEMBER 16, 2009
ARCHIVIST'S BOARDROOM
NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

Members of the Committee in attendance: Lorraine Miller, Chair (Clerk of the House); Nancy Erickson, Co-Chair (Secretary of the Senate); David Ferriero (Archivist of the United States); Don Ritchie (Historian, U.S. Senate); Terry Birdwhistell (Associate Dean of Special Collections and Digital Programs and Co-Director, Wendell H. Ford Public Policy Research Center, University of Kentucky); Joseph Cooper (Department of Political Science, Johns Hopkins University); Bernard Forrester (Archivist and Coordinator, Special Collections, Robert J. Terry Library, Texas Southern University); Jeff Thomas (Archivist, Ohio Congressional Archives, The Ohio State University); Sheryl Vogt (Director, Richard B. Russell Library for Political Research and Studies); Steven Zink (Vice-President of Information Technology, and Dean of the University Libraries at the University of Nevada, Reno).

The meeting opened at 10: 00.

I.   Chair's Opening Remarks – Lorraine Miller

Miller opened the meeting and called the meeting of the Advisory Committee on the

Records of Congress to order.

Miller welcomed the returning committee members and thanked them for their service

and welcomed the newest committee member, Steven Zink. Dr. Zink is the Vice-

President of Information Technology at the University of Nevada, Reno. He oversees all

of the information operations at the university, including academic and administrative

computing, instructional technology, media classroom services and networking, and

telecommunications infrastructure. The university's National Public Radio station

reports to him, and he also serves as the university's representative on the board of directors of Reno's PBS television affiliate, KNPB. Miller said it was a pleasure to have Zink join the Advisory Committee and invited him to speak to the group.

Zink said he was pleased to be on the committee and pointed out that in addition to the positions mentioned by Miller, he also is the Dean of the University Libraries.

Miller stated Zink's addition to the committee constitutes a full slate. Miller thanked the Secretary of the Senate, Nancy Erickson, for her camaraderie in their work together. Miller welcomed the new Archivist of the United States, David Ferriero, and invited him to give opening remarks.

Ferriero said he was pleased and honored to spend his very first morning as the Archivist of the United States with the Advisory Committee. Ferriero said he had heard nothing but high praise for the work the Center staff has provided concerning congressional records services in the preliminaries to his confirmation hearing, and from his visits to Members' offices, so he was particularly pleased to be launching his tenure as Archivist with the Advisory Committee. He said that his new position required a steep learning curve, but that he was a quick study and expected to hit the ground running, and looked forward to the work ahead of him.

Miller thanked the Archivist and introduced Adrienne Thomas, who had been the Acting Archivist before Ferriero was appointed.

Thomas thanked Miller and said she had been pleased to spend most of the past year as Acting Archivist, but probably not as pleased as she was to turn it over to the new Archivist.

Miller thanked the Archivist for allowing the committee to have the meeting in the Archives building in the beautiful Archivist's boardroom. Miller said she would begin her discussion with highlights of the accomplishments in the Clerk's office, and then would turn the discussion over to her friend Nancy Erickson, Secretary of the Senate.

Miller reported that the Clerk's office is developing a project to manage the live and on-demand streaming media content of House activities. The final product will contain links to legislative documentation and voting results. Transparency of the legislative process is the desired outcome of the project, something the leadership of the House has requested. It will allow the public to use keyword searches to access the website. For example, if a Member introduced a bill, a keyword search would retrieve the video of the floor proceedings and the text of the bill; kind of a one-stop shopping. Miller said they were currently working on the cost analysis and the consumer demand predictions of the project and hoped to have this portion completed in the near future.

Miller reported that the House was honored to host the annual World e-Parliament Conference. Miller said that she was sent to Brussels to review the state-of-the-art electronic voting system being used by the European Parliament since the House is redesigning its electronic voting system. The result of the trip was a two-and-a-half day

conference hosted by the House with approximately 400 people in attendance from different parliaments around the world. The conference was a continuing effort to advocate transparency, accountability, and effectiveness in government.

Miller said there were several developments in the Office of the Clerk revolving around digital history. Since the committee last met, the House's YouTube channel was launched on *HouseHub*. The initial offering was the first multimedia history production for the House: *"Florence Kahn: Congressional Widow to Trailblazing Lawmaker."*

Also, the Office of the Clerk's history staff is completing work on the House oral history website. The oral history program is extensive, including hundreds of hours of interviews with key staff members. Some examples of the interviews include Cokie Roberts talking about growing up in the Capitol; the first African-American House page talking about the 1965 debate over the Voting Rights Act; and a reading clerk recalling witnessing Jeanette Rankin's momentous vote against U.S. entry into World War II. The website is robust and contains transcripts, audio, video clips, and materials for teachers. The website was created not only for House Members and staff, but for the public as well.

And finally, Miller said the House history website has been revamped. The House history essays—more than 400—are now searchable, interactive, and linked to teaching materials.

Miller then introduced Nancy Erickson, Secretary of the Senate.

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

Erickson thanked Miller and welcomed everyone, in particular Zink at his first meeting.
Erickson noted that in celebration of American Archives Month, the Senate assembled
approximately 40 staff members in the Senate's LBJ room to discuss the topic: "What
can an archivist do for you?" Since September 11, 2001, there has been a dramatic shift
away from paper to electronic record-keeping in Senate offices. Erickson said that with
this change, there is a greater need for committee and Members' offices to hire trained
archivists, or to provide archival training to existing staff. The group of archivists from
Senate committees discussed the role they play in preserving their committees' historical
records for future retrieval and research. Archivists from individual Member offices
discussed their role as liaisons with their Senator's designated repository, helping with
the deposit agreement and assisting with the selection of records for the permanent
collection. Erickson said an example of a properly planned individual Senator's
repository is the McConnell Center at the University of Louisville, which opened
November 12, 2009. The McConnell Center will house the papers of Republican Leader
Mitch McConnell and his wife, former Labor Secretary Elaine L. Chao. Located in a
wing of the university library, this center includes archival storage, a research room, and
a permanent exhibit area. Erickson praised Nan Mosher, who was unable to attend the
meeting, for her excellent work during the past three years serving as McConnell's
archivist in his personal office.

Erickson reported that Senate staff and archivists, as well as archivists from the Center for Legislative Archives, rose to the occasion when Senator Ted Kennedy's staff needed to close his office within 60 days of his death. Senator Kennedy had served for 47 years and had occupied his office in the Russell Building suite for 22 years, accumulating an enormous volume of records and memorabilia. Megan Manning led the staff in transferring over 1,300 boxes from Senator Kennedy's office to the JFK Library. The Center for Legislative Archives loaned the services of Tom Eisinger and Natalie Schuler to assist with archiving Senator Kennedy's committee records, adding approximately one thousand boxes of records to the total archived at the Center. Staff will continue to work on electronic records archiving since some of the older electronic records must be converted to more sustainable formats. Given the monumental nature of the office closing, Senator Kennedy's staff and Center for Legislative Archives staff offer a model for how archiving and preserving history can be accomplished in a collaborative way and in a limited amount of time.

On October 29, 2009, Bob Spangler from the Center for Legislative Archives gave the Secretary and members of the Senate Historical Office a presentation on the Congressional Instance of NARA's Electronic Records Archive (ERA). Erickson said it was reassuring to observe that in response to the explosive growth of electronic records being created in the Senate, the Center is building on the existing safekeeping and preservation applications of ERA, such as geographically remote storage and redundant copies, and also working on a customized solution to meet the Senate's protection and access needs for its electronic records.

Another milestone in the Secretary's office has been the publication of *An American Political Archives Reader*, edited by the Senate's archivist, Karen Paul, together with Glenn [Gary] Gray and Rebecca Johnson Melvin. The book was recently described by reviewer Linda Whitaker of the Arizona Historical Foundation as "nothing short of a milestone in archival literature." The reviewer noted that the book focuses on every possible aspect of building, managing, and assessing congressional records collections. Erickson noted she was very proud of Paul's work on this project.

Erickson reported she was pleased to announce that Alison White has joined the Senate Historical Office staff as deputy archivist. Previously, White served as Archivist and Special Collections Librarian at the University of Virginia Law Library, where she acquired expertise in electronic records and in creating online finding aids. Erickson said her experience would be invaluable to the Senate's goal of maintaining access to its collection into the twenty-first century.

Erickson concluded her remarks by saying it seemed rather strange to have an Advisory Committee meeting without Dick Baker, former Senate Historian. Baker retired in August 2009. A reception was held in his honor before the August recess and was attended by the Senate Leadership, Members and their office staff, and many of his colleagues from the National Archives, to thank him for his public service. At the reception, Senator Reid presented Baker with a copy of a Senate resolution naming him *Senate Historian Emeritus*, and Minority Leader McConnell observed that there were

very few things that had ever ruffled Dick Baker, but that the one thing that really got his goat was the fact that the Senate galleries had remained closed to visitors during Senate recesses since September 11, 2001. Senator McConnell, along with Senator Reid, announced that in honor of Dick Baker, the Senate galleries would now be open to the public when the Senate was in recess. Erickson said she was proud to say the galleries were open to visitors during recess and that the opening represented a wonderful, lasting tribute to Dick Baker. Erickson said those who worked with Baker found him to be an inspiration, and that it had prompted her to want to learn more about the Senate as an institution, but that there was no one more inspired by Dick Baker than Don Ritchie, who served side-by-side with Baker for 33 years. Ritchie is now the new Senate Historian, and Erickson said she could emphatically state that the transition had been a seamless one. Ritchie leads a tremendous staff in the Senate Historical Office. Erickson remarked that she was extremely proud of their hard work and grateful for their service to the United States Senate, and for their support to this committee.

Erickson concluded her remarks by welcoming Ritchie to the Advisory Committee.

Miller also welcomed Ritchie as an official member of the Advisory Committee.

III.   Approval of the Minutes of the Last Meeting

Miller asked if there were any objections to dispensing with the reading of the minutes from the last meeting on April 27, 2009. Hearing none, Miller asked if there were any corrections. Hearing none, the Chair entertained a motion and a second for approval. Minutes were approved.

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IV.   Discussion of on-going projects and activities

Miller recognized the Senate Archivist, Karen Paul, for her report.

Paul started her report saying that the minutes of the last meeting spoke about the establishment of a task force on twenty-first century finding aids for the records of Congress, and asked Richard Hunt, Director of the Center for Legislative Archives, if he would report on the progress made. Hunt said that he would.

Paul said that from her perspective in the Senate, the creation, transfer, preservation, and access to records are all part of a seamless process. Paul said she became concerned and thought that there was a need to look at the kind of information they were gathering in the Archivist's office, in particular as to how the information would relate to the goals of the finding aids project. To accomplish that, there were two meetings held. The first meeting was conducted by Rebecca Johnson Melvin of the University of Delaware and hosted by the Center for Legislative Archives. Melvin presented a history of the evolution of congressional finding aids and emphasized the importance of incorporating standards in description, standards being the hidden facilitator that allows researchers to search across various platforms. Paul said this is particularly significant for the records of Congress, because there are actually two fairly separate traditions of standards. One set of standards has been created by the Library of Congress, mainly for the description of and access to Members' papers.   The second standard was created by the National Archives (NARA) and is the standard used for committee records.

Paul said the history of the evolution of finding aids was very helpful because it pointed out to all of the archivists in attendance that more attention needed to be devoted to the availability and use of these standards in their work. That particular meeting culminated with a suggestion to explore the potential of encoded archival context (EAC) as the next evolutionary step in providing access across congressional collections. Paul said for researchers it is relatively easy to go into a Google-type search engine and find information about Members' personal collections, but it is much more difficult to search and find information about official congressional records that reside at NARA.

The discussion from the first meeting led to a second meeting, which was also hosted by the Center for Legislative Archives. At that meeting, Mary Lacy of the Library of Congress (LOC) was invited to come and explain the standards they use. Lacy explained that LOC used encoded archival description (EAD), but is also currently developing encoded archival content (EAC) to be included in their description standards. Paul said they were given a lengthy explanation about describing archives content (DAC) which is also a content standard.

Paul reported as a follow-up to those two meetings that her office is experimenting with using the LOC authority guide and subject terms, and also with using the subject terms of the Congressional Research Service legislative indexing vocabulary when preparing series descriptions and adding information about document types in data fields. These new data fields are consistent with the DAC content standard and provide consistency across platforms.

Assistant Senate Archivist, Alison White, has been working with the HELP Committee's Archivist, Will Arthur, on subject terms. Paul said that they were beginning to see additional advantages to use this approach with managing email. Elements of EAC can include information about staff in the series descriptions, including such things as length of service, title, and area of expertise. Paul said a workshop was being planned to evaluate the usefulness of this new descriptive information. An additional goal is to develop an electronic transfer form, something many committee staff have requested. Paul said the task force on description would evaluate this information.

Paul reported that since the last Advisory Committee meeting, where the discussion of electronic records was extensive, much progress has been made with committees and the transfer of their electronic records. The Judiciary Committee under Mike Donahue and Stuart Paine has begun the work necessary to transfer their share drives, H drives, and emails. Also, Katie Saley with the Agriculture Committee has begun to transfer electronic records. Paul said with these additions, the HELP Committee under Will Arthur's direction and Elisabeth Butler's pioneering work with email, that her office has made many breakthroughs. They now have four committees transferring electronic records.

Paul reported using several sources to develop training for committees on the archiving process, including The Association of Center for the Study of Congress (ACSC) and the Congressional Papers Roundtable. Based on these sources, she had created three Power

Point presentations that will be used to train committee staff during the Secretary's brown bag luncheons.

Paul concluded her remarks by thanking Tom Eisinger and Natalie Schuler from the Center for their assistance to the HELP Committee with processing its records after Senator Kennedy's death.

A member of the audience asked Erickson if she envisioned a day when there would be an actual rule that Committees must archive their electronic records. Erickson noted that Senate rules and statutes require committees to archive records regardless of the format.

Miller recognized Joe Cooper who expressed concern that even though scholars are going to have a vast variety of materials available to them in the future that people in the past have not had access to, one key resource that will not be available are letters because people don't write letters much anymore. Cooper said what worried him even though the amount of material that is kept electronically or in paper will expand it will not make up for letters. Cooper said he commended the House and the Senate Historical offices for their work with oral histories as an answer, but he was still concerned with the distinction between committee papers and Member's papers. He expressed that what has become very important in this century wasn't so important in the last century, such as the party offices, the leadership offices, the whips' offices, and the policy committee papers. He asked if they were considered to be Member papers.

Paul said with the exception of the Policy Committee, they are Members' papers.

Cooper responded that even though these papers legally belong to the Members of Congress, they are an incredible resource for historians. Cooper expressed hope that there could be some way to record the whole dimension of activity with Members' papers.

Paul responded that she thought the easy answer would be for the leadership offices to have a professional archivist on the staff, particularly for electronic records. Paul said paper records can survive, be taken care of, and processed at some point in time, but electronic records require attention from the beginning of their creation. Paul introduced Jan Zastrow from Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid's office, pointing to her as a wonderful example of someone who was doing exactly that.

Miller asked Robin Reeder, House Archivist, what happened with House records.

Reeder said the same rule applies with the leadership papers that are considered the property of the Members. So for example, Speaker Pelosi's papers will go to the repository where she donates her congressional papers. The same applies for Majority Leader Hoyer as well.

Cooper asked about caucus meetings records and policy committee records, saying he knew it was a sensitive subject.

Miller said she knew the records were kept, but did not know if they were made public or archived.

Cooper asked if would be prudent to guarantee confidentiality to Members for however long it would take to preserve these types of records because they would be incredibly valuable papers to future researchers and historians.

Miller agreed the papers would be incredibly valuable.

Erickson asked Ritchie to speak about the Senate caucuses.

Ritchie reported having good relationships with both caucuses in the Senate. He said all proceedings up to 1964 had been published. He said that they were now working on the Democratic Conference minutes up to 1981. Starting in 1973, those records will be published verbatim. It is a huge project. Ritchie said that as soon as the Democratic Conference minutes were finished, they would start with the Republican Conference to publish a similar volume. Ritchie said both parties had been very cooperative with sharing those records.

Cooper said he brought up the subject because he thought it was extremely important to make sure that Member's papers were preserved and wanted the Advisory Committee to think more deeply about the subject.

Miller acknowledged there were real challenges relating to the subject.

Miller asked the House Archivist Robin Reeder to report on her office activities.

Reeder began her report by introducing the newest staff member, Assistant Archivist Alison Trulock, a graduate of the University of Michigan's Library School. Trulock also interned at the Center for Legislative Archives, making her well aware of procedures when she helped with the movement of the 108th Congress records to the Center. Trulock also worked at the Library of Congress on the veteran's oral history project. Reeder said they were very pleased to have her onboard.

Reeder reported that at the last Advisory Committee meeting, she spoke about recommendations that the House was working on regarding its activities with capturing electronic records. She said they were putting the finishing touches on the recommendations and would be sending them out to the committee members very soon.

Heather Bourk, Assistant Archivist for the House, has been working on creating a digital asset management system to catalogue the photographs that have been collected from different offices over the years.

Reeder concluded her remarks by saying that one of the biggest projects her office is currently undertaking is the installation of compact shelving in their storage space in the

Madison building. Because of this project, the records of the 109th and 110th Congresses are being sent to the Center for Legislative Archives on an earlier schedule than usual.

Miller thanked Paul and Reeder for their reports and asked the committee members for comments or questions.

Sheryl Vogt responded that she was impressed with Paul's efforts to have committee staff use archival methods to process records before being sent to the Center for Legislative Archives.

Paul remarked that in the past, her office had to rely on committee staff to perform the archival process, which was frequently assigned to interns. She said with paper records it was not as critical to have a professional archivist on staff, but that with electronic records that is not the case. Paul said that the House and Senate will spend a large sum on technology to create records, but very little for the management of records. Even if system administrators are willing, they simply do not have the requisite training to do the appraisal, arrangement, and description work on electronic records. Paul said that her future focus and her message to committees would be to persuade them to spend money on managing their records by hiring a professional archivist.

Miller said they had been working with committees in the House also. Bob Spangler, from the National Archives, has been visiting with committee staff. Miller said when she is on the floor for votes, Members ask her about "that archivist person," and ask her to

send him back to their office because you want us to archive our records. Miller said it was hard because Members are oblivious to what they should or should not archive. She said committee staff directors have regular meetings, and she was trying to arrange being at the meetings to reinforce the importance of archiving records with Members.

Cooper said that he thought it was also important to keep track of the administrative offices' records. He said when he was staff director for the Obey Commission in the seventies, they could not trace the history of the administrative offices. He felt it was important to capture this type of information for historical purposes and wondering if any work was being done in this area in the House and Senate.

Erickson called on Betty Koed, the Assistant Historian for the Senate, to report to the committee about the project she is working on.

Koed said she has been working on an administrative history of the Senate from 1789 to present, particularly the Secretary of the Senate's records, to determine how voluminous the records are. Koed said it had varied greatly from one secretary to the next, but in fairly modern times archiving became a regular process. She said there are a lot of missing links to the story when you get into the latter part of the 1800's, but into the twentieth century the records are much better preserved and archived.

Miller asked Farar Elliott, Chief of the House Office of History and Preservation, to report on the House experiences.

Elliott said the House actually has a similar history to the Senate, in that twentieth-century-record-keeping practices have been much better.   She also said that Reeder, for the last year or so, has been working on completely rewriting and updating records schedules for all the officers in the administrators' offices, so she has anticipated your need and is meeting it.

Miller, addressing Erickson, said there must be a way to not only keep the Advisory Committee aware of events in their offices, but also to inform the general public of what kind of tools and records are available to support the goal of transparency.

A Committee Member said that at meetings he had attended the discussion focused on the level of misinformation the public receives, citing the healthcare bill as an example. In these meetings, at least 60% of the quotes were from Fox News.   There should be an official site comparing Medicare and the new health bill. It should detail the historical aspects of this bill. One of the major problems is that people do not understand the history behind this new healthcare bill. Most of that historical information exists on paper and is not readily available. I hope that the committees responsible for the new health care bill collect this information so it can be made available to the public.

Miller said that in the House there is a three-day rule requiring the bill to be available to the public. It was online, but as a 2,000-page bill, it was a huge volume to download. But for transparency's sake, that was the House's way of making it available to the public. One of the things that the press calls our office for is the information behind the

bill. They want to understand the processes before the bill is actually cobbled together.

Many people watched the Rules Committee deliberations, which was very interesting but

not very illuminating about how the process works. It was difficult to get a sense of what

the Members were actually voting for or against. We are working to bring a more real-

time and behind-the-scenes peek at what's going on within the legislative process, but it

is   difficult. The culture is changing, however, and we are trying to open the process up

a little more.

V. Center for Legislative Archives Report

Miller introduced Richard Hunt, Director of the Center for Legislative Archives, and

asked for an update regarding Center activities.

Hunt said there were five topics he would touch upon. First, Hunt introduced Charlie

Flanagan, the supervisor for outreach and educational programs. He said Flanagan has

been a godsend for him and for the agency. Flanagan is actually running the National

Archives education shop as well. Hunt mentioned the promotional brochure in the

briefing material for the Center's publication on the history of Congress. He said that the

Center is in an active promotion and fundraising mode, working with the Foundation for

the National Archives to raise money for a first-class project. Hunt said he was very

excited that the National Archives is working to advance public understanding of

Congress.

The second topic Hunt touched on, and noted that this would be an ongoing concern for the Advisory Committee, was the question of available records space in this building. The House transferred the 109th Congress records—two to three thousand cubic feet— and soon the 110th Congress records will be coming in as well. The Senate had over 850 separate accessions last year. The National Archives is working on a space plan, which will be of interest to the committee.

Third, Hunt reported on the electronic records front, and informed the committee that a staffing and technology plan would be required to handle the increasing volume of electronic records coming in from the House and Senate. Hunt introduced Bob Spangler to brief the committee on what has happened so far with House and Senate electronic records.

Spangler began by saying that giving a presentation to an important group of people on a Monday morning can seem like an obligation, but in this particular instance, it seems more like an opportunity. He is very excited about the work we've been able to do in a short period of time using existing resources and existing programs that are going on within the National Archives to tackle the electronic records problem in an efficient manner. Spangler said he would be speaking from the presentation that was given to the Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House offices. He gave those presentations in the Legislative Vault where the local system that is being built is located.

Spangler turned his attention to ERA, the Electronic Records Archive. It is NARA's congressionally funded solution for long-term storage and preservation of electronic records. It has been an ongoing project for five or six years at this point, and is really starting to come into its own in terms of being rolled out and put into production. Until recently, there have been two current instances of ERA: one is what we internally call the base instance, the system for federal records, which are brought into the National Archives when they are deemed to be permanently valuable under specific business rules.

The other instance that has been recently put into production is what we call the EOP (Executive Office of the President) instance. This was put into place when the Bush 43 administration left office, and the Archives' responsibility was to bring in all paper and electronic records. Those are the two major instances that are in production right now.

What we are calling the congressional records instance is another instance of ERA, and it is an instance for the records of the House and Senate. It is a portion of ERA dedicated to the processing, safekeeping, and preservation of the electronic records of both the House and Senate. At this point, it has generally been geared to the records of committees, but it is being built in such a manner that it can take in any electronic record that we need to provide safekeeping for at this time. It is customized to fit the specific protection, access, and records needs of the Hill.

Spangler said it was fair to say that this instance had been rolled out quickly and efficiently and its success was a function of the level of interaction between the Hill and

the Center for Legislative Archives. The model is simple. Electronic records are provided to the Center, who is then responsible for returning them to committees within 24 hours when requested to support the current business needs of the committees. As we continue developing the system, it will provide more capabilities, but at this time it is geared to protection, integrity, and making sure that the records can be returned to committees if needed in the same timeframe that we promise for paper records.

The instance of congressional records that we're setting up leverages the existing and the developing infrastructure of ERA. So we're using the best pieces of the larger congressionally funded program to do what we need to do for congressional records, although the front end is largely geared to Congress's specific needs.

A congressional instance was needed because there has been an enormous growth in the creation of electronic records on the Hill. Eventually, as time passes, the process of creating records will be completely electronic. That does not mean paper records are not still being created at this time, but in the future we expect electronic records to be the norm.

The goal of the congressional instance is to maintain the integrity of the records that are received and to be able to provide them back to committees with the same integrity. Spangler said he would talk later in the presentation about the geographically remote and redundant storage capabilities that are being created for preservation. The issue facing electronic record archiving is to be able to return records in the future in a useable format,

regardless of the format in which they were created.   The ERA program has been working on this problem.

To reiterate, the philosophy behind the design is safety, redundancy, integrity, local control over access and reference, and the return of records within 24 hours.

Spangler discussed the physical locations involved. Capitol Hill is where the records are created. Archives I is the building in Washington, DC that houses the Center for Legislative Archives and the initial processing and access system. Archives II in College Park, Maryland, will provide the redundancy and backup center for the records that are created as a safety measure. It is a way of making sure that the records are in as many safe locations with as much physical redundancy as possible. Finally, there is the Allegany Ballistics Lab, or ABL, as it will be called through the rest of this presentation. The ABL, in Rocket Center, West Virginia, provides geographic separation.

Spangler described the accessioning process. The records are created on Capitol Hill, assigned an accession (tracking) number, and processed at NARA. The initial generation of the accession tracking number is created through the Secretary and Clerk's archivists. Pickup and delivery of the media, and the accompanying documentation for electronic records, will be handled directly by the Center for Legislative Archives, as it is now for paper records.

Once the records are received at the Center, the initial processing on the local system begins. Metadata is created and entered, coming from information generated on the Hill about the records. Center staff controls the physical inventory processes, including bar coding. Next, the records are volume copied or cloned. Spangler explained that electronic records are a different animal from paper records. Paper records are easy to return to committees, but electronic records require extra care to guarantee the authenticity of the records, and that committees receive back exactly what was sent to the Archives. Spangler said the first step taken when a hard drive or CDs arrives is to use a specialized software that creates an exact volume copy of what was received. Later, virus scans and different tests are performed on the copies going to different locations, but it is very important to do that initial capture of exactly what was given to us for authenticity and forensic purposes.

Spangler explained the malware scanning process. "Malware scanning" is the umbrella term for virus scanning. This is an important step and considered a best practice in the IT world and important in the preservation of Congressional records. We anticipate receiving a high volume of email. By nature, email is very virus-laden. And although the House and Senate have robust networks with very up-to-date virus checking capabilities within their email systems, it is just the nature of the beast that there will be viruses in electronic records that are attached to email. The Archives does not want to perpetuate any viruses into the ERA system, so the records will be scanned and viruses removed. The original media will be maintained so that there is always an exact copy of what was given as the official records.

Spangler explained the file-level copies of the records. The hardware used is from a company named Data Robotics—the shorthand term is Drobo—a very flexible business class direct-attached storage array that manages itself and automatically makes copies and alerts users if the process is not working correctly. It also makes something called a "robocopy." This is a standard industry copy utility that performs extensive integrity checks to make sure that all files were copied with perfect integrity.

Spangler described the verification process and the steps to do a verification of the records received. Even though there is a lot of legwork with the committees on the House and Senate about how to archive and how to manage records electronically, again, it is the nature of the beast of electronic records that unwanted material, for lack of a better word, can creep in. If we receive a lot of email, for example, it is easy to include parts of the system that were not intended to be there, so part of the process is looking for things like that, to make sure we were given what was intended. We were also looking at ways of checking and cataloguing each file type as it is given to us. Again, this is part of the long-term preservation plan. We want to make sure if we receive some obscure or older file format, we are able to know upfront so that we can take preemptive action to transform that if we need to for access.

After copying and verifying the information, we start preparing copies for deep preservation in ABL in West Virginia. The same robocopy parameters are used, which is very important to the process. There is a very elaborate encryption algorithm created for

transporting the records to West Virginia so nothing can be compromised. Center for Legislative Archives personnel physically transport these deep-archives hard drives to West Virginia.

Once the records are received at Rocket Center, control of the records switches to ERA proper. It is a controlled data center where we begin to process the records into the existing ERA instances. Lockheed Martin, the contractor on the ERA process, replicates the steps that the Center has taken up to this point in the process. Personnel at Rocket Center sign nondisclosure agreements to protect the information. The system is being set up so that casual browsing or casual access by personnel will not be permittted, but to cover all the bases we have been working with the House and Senate to come up with nondisclosure agreements to make sure that there is safety regarding your data there. Once the copies are made and are in the deep archive, the media will be returned to the Center for reuse.

There is an upcoming event with Lockheed Martin at College Park called the TRR, Technical Readiness Review. This is actually the last step before NARA management and Lockheed feels comfortable actually rolling this out. Spangler said he thought it should just be a *pro forma* event as things have gone very well, and we've done a lot of dry runs. In early 2010, we will have the persistent identifier and the metadata ready. The persistent identifier is the transfer number assigned to electronic records provided by the House and Senate that will allow identification of the records throughout the process and provide the ability to return electronic records in the aggregate. By that, I mean if

you give us a hard drive, we give you a hard drive back. It's similar to returning a box of paper back to committees.

Spangler looked to the future and closer integration with ERA, including a non-media-based transfer and access process. In other words, in the future the House and Senate could send their files electronically to be archived. It is not a difficult process, but it is something that needs to be done carefully. It requires the attention of network security people. Things need to be carefully planned and rolled out. We also anticipate the need for sophisticated local indexing and searching of content -- something like a local Google where we can quickly implement file-level retrievals. Rather than the aggregate of everything you gave us on the hard drive, we want to be able to give you specific files and folders using something like a local Google with index and search capabilities and return file-level content upon demand.

Miller thanked Spangler for the presentation and said it was exciting to hear. Miller asked if the committee had any questions for Hunt or Spangler.

A committee member congratulated Hunt for moving the project ahead.

Vogt asked at what point do the records go onto a server, or do they at any point at this time? Is that something to the future? You mentioned transportable hard drives several times. Do the records stay on that the whole time until it gets to West Virginia?

Spangler answered that when a hard drive is supplied to the Center, it is copied onto what he referred to as a drive but is in fact a server. It is also copied onto a server in West Virginia. The individual hard drive environment is very quickly replaced as the process is completed.

Vogt said she brought it up because they have had hard drive failure in the past.

Spangler agreed that that is a problem with hard drives.

Paul asked Vogt if she thought it would be helpful for the Center to write a briefing to share with the Congressional Roundtable Papers on the specifications of the system the Center created? Vogt said she thought it would be good, and Hunt agreed that the Center could do so.

Vogt said a lot of repositories have these same issues with electronic records and it would be helpful to share solutions.

Joe Cooper said he worried about the capability of the Center's ability to meet the needs of the House and Senate with the staff and the resources available to be able to do what is necessary to preserve electronic records.

Terry Birdwhistell asked if the sophisticated local indexing and searching, when you get to that point, will be compatible with the Next-Generation Finding Aid that the Center is working on?

Spangler said yes, he thought so.

Birdwhistell asked when in the process would it take place?

Spangler said that would be part of the discussion of the metadata, common descriptive standards, and elements captured about committee records, which would allow you to find anything and everything that a researcher might need or a committee might need. Spangler said he thought it a very exciting add-on which we never really anticipated.

Erickson said that at some point we need to have a working group to take a closer look at some of the things that have been transferred to see what is lacking and what more could be done. Alison White is beginning to work on that now, so in a month or two, I think we'll have enough for a preliminary analysis.

Birdwhistell asked if that would be part of the task force's responsibility.

Jeff Thomas said he thought it essential, especially later on down the road when the volume of electronic records increases exponentially, to have some kind of intellectual

control. He said to get down to the file-level content would be terrific and reiterated what Cooper had said about staffing needs being the big question.

Miller said that Thomas raised a good point about the resources and support the Center would need. She promised that she and Erickson would be as much help as they could on the Hill to make sure the need was known, but it always came down to the juxtaposition of congressional records against executive branch records.

Bernard Forrester remarked that in 2007 there was approximately one terabyte of electronic records at the Center which grew to six terabytes of electronic records within a year. He asked Spangler what the current total of electronic records held by the Center was.

Cooper asked Spangler to forecast what might be received in the future.

Spangler said that his answer would depend on the amount of video sent from the House and Senate recording studios in the next year. The volume of recordings could skew his predictions; however for planning purposes, we anticipate having the ability to ingest 30 to 150 terabytes over the next 18 months. Currently there are approximately 10 terabytes of electronic records, but we expect transfers over the next few months from both the House and Senate, bringing that number up to approximately 30 terabytes. It is a difficult question to answer with certainty, because we don't really know yet exactly what

electronic records will be transferred or in what volume. But the architecture design, both locally and at ABL, is one that can be added to easily as needed.

Miller asked, given that congressional records are archived in West Virginia, how accessible would the records be.

Spangler said that the local instance would be the version used for reference, access, and committee requests for the records. The West Virginia facility conceptually is a deep archive in case of disaster.

Steven Zink questioned the West Virginia location saying it was the minimal radius from the original location and business application for a backup copy in standard business practice—150 miles approximately—and said that he considered physical transportation much riskier than network transmission.

Spangler said he agreed and could not speak about the entire ERA program, but thought it fair to say that he did not anticipate physical transportation as the long-term solution and said the goal would be to get network-oriented transfers of records in place. Physical transportation allows transfers of records presently.

Paul asked Spangler what advice her office should be giving to systems administrators regarding migration of older formats.

Miller asked Zink to respond.

Zink said that he did not think you would want staff trying to convert formats and moving them forward.

Paul questioned why he thought that was not practical.

Spangler said that could be the case in selected situations. If you identify older formats that a committee knows they will need operationally on an ongoing basis, then it might be worth their while to do that sort of transformation. Those kinds of transformations can be expensive and time-consuming. In addition, once transformations are made, you have to go back and make sure that the information transformed duplicates what was there originally. Spangler told Paul it was best to let Center staff do those sort of transformations, but there could be selected instances where it may be appropriate for committee staff.

Miller said it would be an ideal world if everyone on the Hill used same the kind of systems, but that would never happen

Hunt asked Miller for five minutes to introduce the next-generation finding aid.

Miller agreed.

Hunt reported that the committee had nominated ten people, including himself, to serve on the task force on description. The Archivist, Secretary, and Clerk have made a selection from five political scientists since we would like the political science community represented. The Clerk has added the House librarian, and we've asked The Archivist to nominate someone, perhaps from the New York Public Library. At that point, we will have a task force of 13 and will be ready to work and report by the next committee meeting. Hunt introduced Sharon Leon, who works at George Mason University's Center for History and New Media, recommending that she be appointed as the chair of the Next-Generation Task Force.

Miller welcomed Leon saying that the committee had talked about a next-generation finding aid for some time

Leon thanked the committee and spoke about the Center for History and New Media, a division of the history department at George Mason University for 15 years. Our mission has been, since our founding, to democratize history, which Leon said she thought was the committee's goal as well. The Center for History and New Media wants to provide as much access as we possibly can to a full range of historical materials, and so Leon was looking forward to the opportunity to work with the task force to think about workable descriptive standards for this type of material. As Karen Paul mentioned before, the key to making anything work in this system is metadata interoperability. It's just not going to work unless we establish a core standard and a data dictionary to go with it. Leon thought the next key task would be to establish clear workflows that would work for the

House and Senate, and the Center. She thought it important to think about who the

audience is, and how to create a system that serves the key constituencies that need these

materials. She said she was looking forward to the possibility of doing that, and hoped

that they could move quickly on this project, so what has felt like an eternity to the

committee will not continue on.

Miller noted that they had been talking about this task force for quite a while, and said

they were at a point now where she felt they could move forward and get some

professionals on this task force that will really bring a next-generation finding aid to

fruition.

Miller entertained a motion for the committee to advise the National Archives to commit

funds to support the travel and administrative needs of the task force. Miller asked

Ferriero if he was prepared for this.

Ferriero replied he was onboard.

Miller asked for a motion. A motion was made for the National Archives to commit

funds to support the travel and administrative costs of the task force, and seconded by the

committee.

Miller called for the vote. The Committee unanimously approved the motion.

Ferriero commented that he was very excited about this project, especially in partnership with George Mason. Josh Greenberg, his Director of Digital Strategy and Scholarship at New York Public Library for the last four years came from George Mason, and Greenberg would be the person that he would nominate to join the task force.

Miller thanked Hunt for his report and said they always appreciated his contribution. Miller asked the committee member if there was any other business to discuss.

Vogt said she was looking forward to the work with the task force, because she thought it was the culmination of a goal that has been going forward for over a decade. She thought many in the universe of congressional papers and records would be looking at this very closely because they would be very excited about it.

Thomas said he was looking forward to what the task force suggested and that it was long overdue.

Miller asked if the task force would be appointed within the month.

Hunt replied yes.

Zink remarked that they would have a huge job.

Cooper said things seem to be going very, very well, and the Advisory Committee is probably more useful than ever.

Birdwhistell and Forrester were both pleased.

Miller said that even though the committee will have a task force that will do a lot of the work, they as committee members would have to be actively involved with advising the task force. She said Hunt, Paul and Reeder would keep the committee informed. Vogt added that once the work of the task force is done and the Center actually started the work, Hunt would need the resources and staff to complete the project. There needs to be a dedicated staff working on the next-generation finding aid who is trained to carry this project forward. Erickson thought it critical to the project. She said she hoped that the National Archives will support the project by providing the Center with the staff and the resources it needs.

Hunt said with the culmination of the report from the task force, I think, we can make an educated guess as to what we can do and how much we can accomplish over a period of time, so we can come back with a realistic assessment of resource needs.

Cooper said it was a point worth emphasizing. This whole effort, in many ways, has been the committee and the Center working together to propel this project forward over a decade.

Miller asked Ferriero what he thought about his first day and first meeting.

Ferriero said he was really very excited about this project, but he would also create some urgency around it. He said he was kind of startled to read that the recommendation to establish a task force originated two years ago. This is too important to take that long, and he thought some timetables should be established on how the work is going to be carried out and when the committee could expect to see some recommendations. Ferriero said that they would hear—those of you who would be working with him during his time at the Archives—a lot of talk about creating a sense of urgency because that's how he operates.

Miller said that she appreciated that.

Erickson thanked the committee for their discussion this morning, and their participation and commitment to the committee.

Miller entertained a motion to adjourn. Motions was seconded and approved.

Committee adjourned at 11:40.