

## **Joint Departments and Commissions Document Type Analysis**

### **Summary**

Shawn Rounds and Beth Lighthipe, Minnesota Historical Society, met with Robbie LaFleur, Legislative Reference Library, Michele Timmons, Revisor's Office, Greg Hubinger, Legislative Coordinating Commission, Lee Meilleur, Geographic Information Services, Michelle Pryce, Office on the Economic Status of Women, Denice Malone, Office of the Legislative Auditor, Lisa Diesslin, Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement, Susan Thornton and John Velin, Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources.

Robbie LaFleur began the meeting by introducing LCC staff to the project, and questions followed. One concern brought up numerous times during the meeting was the differences in perspective on what electronic and paper records to archive. Staff from the State Archives is interested in preserving documents with historical value and legal significance, while some agencies would rather save everything and connect it all.

Michele Timmons is mainly interested in using the SRB for disaster recovery purposes. Michele would also like to identify data in print that could be digitized for archiving and access (e.g. scanning the session law books since many of them are deteriorating and will not last forever). This is one issue that will be part of the appraisal process. Of course, converting paper to digital format may be expensive; options will be examined as part of the cost and analysis of this project.

Another issue brought up by LCC staff members was the longevity and trustworthiness of electronic records. We briefly discussed the Open Document Format and how it will be the standard for all documents in Massachusetts by 2007. We discussed the advantages of this format since it may make it possible to preserve documents long-term. A disadvantage to Open Document Format is that Microsoft currently will not support it. Shawn Rounds mentioned PDF-Archive, which is a fairly new format approved by the ISO that also makes it easier to preserve documents long-term. It is essentially a stripped-down version of PDF that demands such items as embedded fonts to ensure accessibility over time.

Discussion about legislative documents that the senate staff creates and/or manages followed.

### **Legislative Commissions on Pensions and Retirement**

The Legislative Commissions on Pensions and Retirement creates a background document on each bill in Word. Depending on the document, these are posted online in either PDF or HTML format. Beginning in 2005, committee hearings were recorded in mp3 format and are posted online. Documents have no retention schedule and most are currently online. Electronic documents from the early to mid 1980s are irretrievable because of access issues with format. Lisa also believes there are files on floppy discs from the 1980s. The LRL has reports mandated by the Pensions Commission and most of these are in Word, and a few are in PowerPoint and Excel. Legislative drafts are in the XTEND system. They have tried a few times to convert print to digital. They are committed to posting information online.

## **Office of the Legislative Auditor**

Denice from the Office of the Legislative Auditor briefly discussed documents created in the department. She said most of the electronic records are in HTML, PDF, or Word. They are moving towards Linux, but are having issues with Access databases.

## **Geographic Information Services**

<http://www.commissions.leg.state.mn.us/gis/index.html>

Lee considers map data and redistricting data the most important, including ESRI and caliber format. The geospatial community is considering using GML, which is a subset of XML, as format for ongoing use (converting to it). Maps are created in PDF for printing. The department also uses Word and HTML files and different databases (dbf, access, SQL server). They do not use digital audio files.

## **Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources**

Minutes of meetings and supplementary materials to meetings are posted in HTML and PDF. They try to post everything including abstracts and schedules. Summaries of past projects are kept online, but otherwise only keep files for current cycle (2 years). [The LCMR creates final reports, which are hard copy reports that come with electronic formats like maps. These are submitted in various forms and transferred to the LRL in a 2-year cycle.] Some documents are transferred to both the LRL and State Archives. Meetings are recorded in digital audio as mp3. The LCMR has an access database that contains internal reports, which may be of historical value.

## **Legislative Coordinating Commission**

Greg briefly stated that there are not many records he creates that he considers unique from any other documents already mentioned. He talked about documents from support task forces, which include reports and minutes of these groups. Most documents created are in Word and are posted online in PDF. Digital audio is in mp3 at present, with prior audio records on tape.

## **Office on the Economic Status of Women**

This is no longer a commission. They create documents in Word, PageMaker, PDF, and HTML. They post only current information (such as fact sheets) and session summaries online. They have historical paper files that they will contact the State Archives about should the office be abolished.