

Minutes
EVALUATION SUBCOMMITTEE
Legislative Audit Commission
October 22, 2013

Members Present:

Representative Rick Hansen, Chair

Senator Warren Limmer
Senator James Metzen

Members Absent:

Representative Andrew Falk
Representative Mary Liz Holberg

Senator Mary Kiffmeyer

Other Legislators Present:

Representative Phyllis Kahn

Senator Ann H. Rest

Representative Hansen called the meeting of the Evaluation Subcommittee of the Legislative Audit Commission to order at 9:57 a.m. The purpose of the meeting was to release the evaluation, *MnDOT Noise Barriers*.

Representative Hansen called on Jim Nobles, Legislative Auditor. Mr. Nobles gave a brief summary of the evaluation and introduced David Kirchner, evaluation manager, to give more details. Mr. Kirchner provided an overview of the evaluation's findings and recommendations. He said that the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) spends \$2 million annually on a state-funded noise barrier program. He said the report recommended that MnDOT should (1) change their voting process on federal projects; (2) allow communities outside the metropolitan area to become eligible for state-funded noise barrier projects; (3) revise its method of prioritizing state-funded noise barrier projects; (4) develop a long-term noise barrier maintenance schedule and funding mechanism; and (5) increase transparency in its noise barrier policy decision making.

Representative Hansen invited a representative from MnDOT to address the subcommittee. Jon Chiglo, Division Director of Engineering, said his agency generally agreed with the report recommendations. He said that MnDOT will be reviewing both the voting process and the process for prioritizing projects to find ways of making improvements. He added that MnDOT will also look for ways to create additional transparency in its decision making and will assess the possibility of expanding the current Metro District Highway Noise Abatement Program to a statewide level. He then thanked OLA for its work on the evaluation.

Mr. Nobles said that in early November, OLA will be releasing the evaluation, *Sustainable Forest Incentive Program*. With no further business, Representative Hansen adjourned the meeting at 11:12 a.m.

Representative Rick Hansen, Chair

Shelly Watterud, Recording Secretary