

Minutes
EVALUATION SUBCOMMITTEE
Legislative Audit Commission
May 19, 2021

Members Present:

Senator Mary Kiffmeyer
Senator Matt D. Klein
Senator Mark W. Koran
Representative Sondra Erickson
Representative Rick Hansen
Representative Tina Liebling

Senator Mary Kiffmeyer, Chair, called the Legislative Audit Commission (LAC) Evaluation Subcommittee to order at 9:31 a.m. Chair Kiffmeyer introduced Judy Randall, Deputy Legislative Auditor for the Office of the Legislative Auditor's (OLA's) Program Evaluation Division.

Ms. Randall reviewed the six criteria that the subcommittee uses when selecting topics (i.e., state resources, state control, impact, timeliness, feasibility, and balance). Ms. Randall added that feasibility was an especially important criterion this year, given the shortened timeline. She noted that a new feature had been added to the background papers—a “Revised Evaluation Questions” section—to help OLA think about how to scope the topics so the evaluations can be conducted in a timely, yet valuable, way.

Ms. Randall then went through the background papers for the 15 topics that had been selected at the May 6, 2021, meeting. In addition to those 15 topics, a new topic, “Office of the State Archaeologist,” had been added, having been requested by several legislators. Ms. Randall said, however, that it was a topic more ideally suited for a special investigation.

Chair Kiffmeyer opened the meeting for questions.

Representative Hansen said he was going to make a motion to narrow topics by keeping the “Medical Emergency Ambulance Services” topic and removing the “Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board” and by having the “Office of the State Archeologist” be a special review, to help eliminate two topics from further consideration.

Chair Kiffmeyer asked Ms. Randall, which, if any of the topics, would be more suited for financial audits. Representative Erickson responded that she had understood from the earlier discussion that “Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board,” “Minnesota Housing Finance Agency,” and “Trunk Highway Funding” would be the topics suitable for financial audits. Ms. Randall also responded that audits on two of those topics would be underway shortly in OLA's Financial Audit Division, but that the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency is regularly audited by other independent organizations and that information should be available to members already.

Members agreed to remove from the list “Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board,” “Minnesota Housing Finance Agency,” “Office of the State Archaeologist,” and “Trunk Highway Funding.”

Senator Klein asked if “Medical Emergency Ambulance Services” was also related to “Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board” (EMSRB) and could be moved off the list. Ms. Randall said that the questions for the ambulance services topic were not financial in nature but that the questions around

EMSRB were more related to governance and control—topics often covered in financial audits—so that was why that topic was more suitable for a financial audit.

With more discussion, Chair Kiffmeyer said she would be willing to remove the “Election Software” topic if other members would agree to remove “Use of Force by State Patrol and DNR Conservation Officers,” leaving the commission with ten topics. Members concurred.

Chair Kiffmeyer asked Ms. Randall to list the ten remaining topics.

Representative Hansen moved that the ten remaining topics be selected for adoption. Representative Liebling asked if further discussion could take place about the “Revised Evaluation Questions” that had been added by OLA within the background papers. Representative Hansen withdrew his motion so further discussion could take place on the “Revised Evaluation Questions” for all topics. Subcommittee members also discussed suggestions for revisions to project titles, where relevant.

After discussion was complete, Representative Hansen moved that the ten topics, as revised, be sent to all legislators for the legislative survey. The motion passed unanimously. The ten topics were:

1. Commerce Department’s Oversight of Insurance Fraud
2. DHS Direct Care and Treatment
3. Discharges from Minnesota Security Hospital
4. MDE’s Role in Addressing the Achievement Gap
5. Medical Emergency Ambulance Services
6. Minnesota’s Energy Reliability and Resiliency
7. Petroleum Remediation Program
8. Problem Gambling
9. School Health Services
10. Unemployment Insurance Fraud

Chair Kiffmeyer adjourned the meeting at 10:33 a.m.

Senator Mary Kiffmeyer, Chair
Evaluation Subcommittee

Maureen Garrahy, Recording Secretary