

FLORIDA FILM AND ENTERTAINMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

March 27, 2018 (1st Quarter In-Person Meeting)

10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

107 East Madison St.

Tallahassee, FL 32399

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Administrative (Chair Nicholas Popp)

Call to Order by Chair Nicolas at 10:03 a.m.

Roll Call:

Members:

Kevin Ambler

Pieter Bockweg

Sandy Lighterman

Marc Meisel

Ryan Neves

Nicholas Popp

Michael Williams

Members of the Public:

Michelle Dennard, CareerSource Florida

Dani DeStafney, VISIT FLORIDA

Chris Ranung, IATSE, COMPASS

Tyler Martinolich, Film Tampa Bay

John Lux, Film Florida

Gail Morgan, Emerald Coast Film Commission

Herb Miller, Univision

Dana Pellerin, Universal

Susan Albershardt

Office of Film and Entertainment (OFE) Staff:

Commissioner Niki Welge

Susan Simms

Donyelle Marshall

Allie Pratt

Jason Rojas

WELCOME

Chair Popp welcomed everyone and apologized for not being at the meeting in person.

Commissioner Welge introduced Jason Rojas, the new Strategic Business Development director. Jason received his bachelors and juris doctorate from the University of Florida. Before joining DEO, He worked in the Florida House of Representatives as staff director for various committees and councils, and he worked as staff director for the Majority Office. Commissioner Welge emphasized how important his experience is to the film office and the division. Commissioner Welge invited Jason to say a few words.

Jason explained that he has come to facilitate the communication between the legislative and executive branches. His current priority is to help the division communicate its successes.

Commissioner Welge and Chair Popp thanked Jason for stopping by the meeting to introduce himself.

Chair Popp welcomed the two new members of the council, Sandy Lighterman and Kevin Ambler.

Sandy said she is honored to have been appointed. She has been a film commissioner for nine years and has been with the Miami Dade film office for 11 years. Prior to this, she worked in the industry for more than 30 years.

Kevin said he has been an attorney for more than 30 years and served in the legislature from 2002 to 2010. Kevin served as vice chair on the Tourism Committee in 2003 when the first film and entertainment incentive bill was created. He cosponsored a film and entertainment tax credit bill that took almost eight years to pass. He said he would like to see the previous incentive bills resurrected so the film industry can generate more jobs in Florida.

Chair Popp said he believes both new members will be great additions to the council.

Chair Popp asked the new Florida Office of Film and Entertainment staff member, Allie Pratt, to introduce herself.

Allie explained that she grew up in Central Florida and attended the University of Florida, where she received her bachelor's degree in public relations. She met her husband at UF, and they moved to Tallahassee upon his acceptance to FSU Law. She was with the FSU Foundation before coming to the state film office. She said her love for the arts has been lifelong and is grateful to be a part of promoting the film and entertainment industry in Florida.

Chair Popp said the next FFEAC meeting will be decided via Doodle poll.

OLD BUSINESS

Approval of December 2018 FFEAC Meeting Minutes

Film office staff announced that a quorum was not reached. The minutes from the December 2018 meeting could not be approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Legislative Update (Chair Nicholas Popp)

Chair Popp provided an update on S.B. 526 and House companion 1401: These two bills are supported by Film Florida, Associated Industries of Florida, the Florida Chamber and Florida TaxWatch. These bills outline a fiscally conservative targeted grant program, which effectively guarantees positive ROI for the state. Chair Popp said the state has lost many productions due to the 2016 sunset of the prior incentive bill. Chair Popp believes a new bill would bring business back to the state while remaining fiscally conservative. S.B. 526 passed unanimously out of Senate Commerce and Tourism Committee and is now in the Industry and Technology Committee. Senator Gruters was the primary sponsor, and the bill has garnered bipartisan support. Chair Popp said he will email updates as the bill moves forward. Chair Popp encouraged council members to send letters to their representatives asking them to vote for bill. Chair Popp offered to share the letter he sent to Governor DeSantis.

Chair Popp asked if there were any questions about S.B. 526 and House companion 1401.

Sandy Lighterman suggested the FFEAC send a collective letter to the Governor, Senate President and Speaker encouraging support. Chair Popp said he would bring this back up at the end of the meeting for council members to discuss.

Chair Popp continued with his legislative update by explaining Tourist Development Tax S.B. 726 would allow local counties to use the tourist development tax revenues to provide local incentives for film and television productions. 63 of Florida's 67 counties impose some portion of tourist development tax, which is payable on all short-term rental income of less than six months. This bill has not been heard in any committee.

Chair Popp said S.B. 1014, the Florida Motion Picture Capital Corporation bill, is sponsored by IATSE. The bill would create private capitalization of motion picture productions in the state. The bill has been referred to committee but has not been heard.

Additional incentive bills include S.B. 1394, introduced by Senator Torres, and S.B. 1750, introduced by Senator Taddeo. Both bills were created to reinstate the former film incentive bill.

S.B. 1808, is not a substantive bill but a resolution that recognizes film and TV as an economic

catalyst in Florida and encourages legislative support of the industry. The resolution passed unanimously in Commerce and Tourism Committee and is now in the Rules Committee. Chair Popp thinks the resolution could pave way for opportunities in the future.

Office of Film and Entertainment Team Report

Office Updates (Commissioner Niki Welge)

Commissioner Welge thanked Chair Popp and said that Governor DeSantis has been very clear on his goals as Governor. Through DEO's new agency head, Ken Lawson, SBD's focus has changed to increase Florida's economic resiliency, hone in on compliance, diligently oversee public funds and ensure a safe and plentiful water supply by encouraging green technologies, investment and jobs.

Commissioner Welge explained that Division Director Greg Britton left SBD and welcomed Jason Rojas, previously introduced. At this point, the film office and film and entertainment industry is still a blank page in the eyes of Governor DeSantis. Commissioner Welge said she is working with Jason to tell the right story.

Commissioner Welge said Allie Pratt started as the new marketing and outreach coordinator in late February. Allie has completed a strategic analysis of our marketing and outreach efforts and has set some goals for the rest of this year and into next fiscal

Commissioner Welge said the office's marketing matrix for fiscal year 2019 to 2020 is in the approval process. Thus far, Director Lawson is very supportive of our efforts and Susan's office in LA.

The film office's strategic plan was put on hold until after legislative session. Commissioner Welge hopes to have additional updates at the next quarterly FFEACE meeting.

The film office is working with Reel-Scout to develop an Apple app. The app will allow users to search crew, support services and locations. She will keep the FFEAC updated on the app's development.

Commissioner Welge announced that, in 2017 in Florida, the average annual wage for workers in the film and entertainment industry was \$81,720, which exceeded the state's 2017 annual wage for all industries of \$48,460 by 68.6%. At John Lux's request, Commissioner Welge said she would share these statistics with the council and interested parties.

Future Business Development (Susan Simms)

Susan began by thanking OFE partners, local film offices, crew and talent base in Florida.

Susan said independent films continue to flourish in the state, and FSU's College of Motion Picture Arts has been doing a great job of being present at film festivals. She said filmmakers talking to filmmakers makes a huge difference.

Susan briefed the council on the Sundance Film Festival. She collaborated with Sandy Lighterman and Gail Morgan, who hosted two film panels with receptions at Sundance. Susan said great leads resulted from the panels. Tarell Alvin McCraney's "David Makes Man" held a sneak preview and critics question-and-answer at Sundance. The cast was also present at these events. Susan said Tarell and cast spoke well of filming in Florida. Hollywood is abuzz with "David Makes Man" and how they managed to pull the show off without an incentive.

Susan said Tarell was also at Slamdance and "David Makes Man" had a presence at SXSW. In addition, Andrew Hevia was at Slamdance and SXSW, and he spoke highly of Florida.

Susan gave an overview of the impact of SXSW due to the size of the festival. She noted that Miami's "Liberty" won best short narrative at SX. Matthew McConaughey was present at SXSW question-and-answers, receptions and screenings to promote "Beach Bum."

Susan explained that it is important to be "present to win." She gave an example of this motto: Two producers from Brazil came to Film Florida booth at SXSW. The producers were looking for information on how to film a music video for Anita in Miami and left with plans to make three music videos. Subsequently, a production coordinator working on these music videos reached out after SXSW looking for help with a commercial shoot in Naples.

Susan said she will be at AFCI next week along with five other Florida local film office representatives. AFCI will be a week of events with a brief tradeshow. Susan said the Office of Film and Entertainment was one of only 12 film offices (out of 233 at AFCI) to attend a Cast & Crew dinner.

Chair Popp said it is good to hear the industry and the film office are doing well even without a statewide film incentive.

Spanish Language Production Report (Donyelle Marshall)

Donyelle Marshall reminded the council that Super Bowl 2020 will be hosted in Miami, Florida. She said there will be a lot of resulting content produced because of the Super Bowl.

Cynthia Angelos chimed in to mention that FSU has one of the best film schools in the country, and it blows her mind how many of these graduates are still looking for work in the industry. She mentioned that she was appointed by Senate President Negron, who has strong relations with President Thrasher. She suggested the film office partner with the FSU College of Motion Picture Arts and said she would also talk to legislators on behalf of the industry if she received help with talking points. Commissioner Welge said the film office has had good relationships with FSU in

the past. Commissioner Welge suggested Cynthia reach out to Bonnie King and John Lux from Film Florida to discuss this.

Chair Popp suggested the film office seek opportunities to speak about industry opportunities in Florida in film school classes.

Donyelle briefed the council on her attendance at the Latin Songwriters Hall of Fame in Miami. While down in Miami, Donyelle met Jose Abdul, Director of Digital Strategies at Sony Latin America. Sony Latin American has a production company that filmed for a special in January and February. Donyelle hopes to connect the rest of the Sony Latin America team to discuss the tax exemption program.

Donyelle said she also visited Viacom International Studios while in Miami. Viacom donated to the Hurricane Michael Morale Committee. Viacom's studios are completely booked, and they are also shooting in five countries in three different languages. Donyelle said Telemundo is in the process of filming the second season of MasterChef and La Voz. Donyelle said she included an article on the 2018 Latin Power Players List in the meeting packet. Out of all the corporations listed, roughly 80% are based in Miami. She thinks this is a huge opportunity for business outreach from our industry. Donyelle noted that she plans to target South American and Central American business owners who are looking to establish residency in Florida.

Marketing and Advertising (Allie Pratt)

Allie explained that she is in the process of developing a strategic marketing and communications plan for the film office. The plan will be the basis for how the office decides to allocate marketing budget. She said she will share more of this plan at the next FFEAC meeting.

Allie said she has implemented an unpaid social media strategy based on industry best practices. She shared the following statistics:

- OFE tweets have appeared in forty-two hundred (4,200) people's feeds in the last month. This means we reached 400% more people than last month.
- In the last month on Facebook: OFE posts have appeared on twelve thousand seven hundred (12,713) people's screens. This number is about the same as last month, which is impressive because we do not have our paid ads running this month, and FB's algorithm favors paid ads.
- Finally, OFE had its most successful organic Facebook post ever last week: the Bad Boys for Life casting call announcement appeared in thirty-eight hundred (3,840) people's feeds and almost 800 people engaged with the post. She said that is fantastic for an un-promoted post, which she believes means there is a strong interest in our content online.

Allie said she is confident our online reach and impact will continue to improve as we implement the strategic marketing and communications plan. In addition, the film office will sponsor Realscreen West and ProducedBy LA in June of 2019 and will send notebooks and pens for use at these events.

Allie said she will be in touch with Marc Meisel, Paul Mueller, Kevin Ambler, Ryan Neves concerning headshots for the website. She said the next quarterly meeting will be in June and will be in touch regarding a meeting date in late May.

Chair Popp congratulated Allie on being able to complete some successful social media advertising without paying for ads.

Sales Tax Exemption (Donyelle Marshall)

As of March 20, 2019

Number of Applications Approved: 781

Amount of Tax Exempted Based on Florida's 6% Tax Rate: \$16,253,129

Estimated Florida Jobs: 27,472

Estimated Florida Expenditures: \$1,046,628,014

ROI: 64.4:1

Association Updates: (Film Florida, SAG, IATSE, etc.)

Chair Popp turned the discussion over to Chris with IATSE. Chris corrected Chair Popp's S.B. 1014 explanation. Chris said the bill is based on efforts of COMPASS and IATSE was not involved in the bill's creation. Chris told the council that this bill is not gaining any traction and can be taken off the watch list.

Chris said he is energized by the production environment in Florida right now. He said he continues training and working to grow Florida's crew base. Chris said it is important that even in seasons of less production it is important to ensure there is crew to staff the consistent commercial production as well as additional production. Chris said there were 14 new IATSE members at a recent Tampa orientation, and 12 new members at an orientation in Orlando. Chris is set to speak at Ringling's film school and Full Sail, which both produce crew for the state. IATSE has seven classes scheduled on topics like classes VMX lighting, CPR, special effects, smoke and fog, and harassment protection. Chris noted that Hallmark movies do not provide as high a salary as other productions.

Chair Popp asked John to discuss Film Florida. The call cut out just as John Lux was about to speak.

When the call reconnected, John said he attended the Florida chamber legislative fly-in in late February. Film Florida is working with AIF, Florida Tax Watch and the Florida Chamber to maintain continued support of the industry. You have probably seen these organizations' statements on the film and entertainment industry in the media. John said Film Florida's latest quarterly meeting was on Monday. Guest speakers from FSU's College of Motion Picture Arts and FL Tax Watch were in attendance. Film Florida members were able to attend the S.B. 1808

resolution. John said he and Chris exchanged business cards with Americans for Prosperity. Film Florida had 19 meetings at the Capitol yesterday which resulted in 4 new sponsors for S.B. 526 and H.B. 1401. Film Florida will follow up with the new sponsors and other legislators who expressed interest. John said that he gathers that bill language is resonating and getting the attention of legislators. Film Florida has been present at recent film festivals and will be at upcoming Tribeca, Reelscreen West and Produced By. Film Florida will also partner with Women in Film for a drone seminar on April 13 at Full Sail. The event is free for WIFT and FF members and will be a charge for the public. Film Florida will hold meetings June 24 through 26 in St. Pete.

Ex-Officio Updates: (Enterprise Florida, Inc., VISIT FLORIDA, and CareerSource Florida)

Chair Popp asked ex-officio members if they had any updates.

Dani DeStafney said VISIT FLORIDA has been watching H.B. 6031 and S.B. 178. She said there have been many visits to Tallahassee and a lot of interest in these bills related to their office. She said VISIT has made varying degrees of progress. Chair Popp asked for Summary of bills and Dani summarized that the bills are intended to remove the sunseting of VISIT that is set for this year.

Michelle Dennard with CareerSource FL introduced herself by explaining that she has history with the film office because she started her career in OTTED and was the SBD director in DEO for a time. She said she is excited about the FFEAC since the heart of the FFEAC is keeping Florida employed. She is also excited about the Governor's push for apprenticeships, and she thinks this coincides with IATSE's work. CareerSource is working with DEO on hurricane recovery efforts.

Chair Popp asked if Enterprise Florida had a representative on the call. No one answered.

Chair Popp circled back around to the letter that Sandy Lighterman proposed to send to elected officials. Chair Popp said the challenge is that the letter cannot be officially decided on at the meeting because a quorum was not reached. Chair Popp said he would work with film office staff to circulate a draft of the letter to the council. He said could call a special meeting in an effort to be able to have a quorum and officially approve the letter. Chair Popp noted that the wage statistic that Commissioner Welge provided should be included in the letter.

Kevin Ambler thinks it would be important to indicate councilmember credentials, titles and, or background on the letter to exemplify the years of industry experience that exists within the council.

Sandy Lighterman said the letter should also include mention of the \$1 billion plus lost business that has been lost without a statewide incentive. She also suggested that the council use Film Florida's letter as a starting point.

Chair Popp said if the letter is sent out before the end of session, then specific language regarding

bills and their potential ROI can be included.

Public Comment

Chair Popp opened the floor for public comment. There was not comment.

Since a quorum was not reached, no official adjournment was made. Chair Popp wished all well and ended the meeting.

ADJOURN 12:00 PM.