

**FLORIDA FILM AND ENTERTAINMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL**

March 22, 2023 (3rd Quarter Meeting)

10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Florida Department of Economic  
Opportunity

Teleconference Information

1-850-988-5144

Phone Conference ID: 282 173 022 #

<b>AGENDA</b>
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**CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME**

- I. Welcome (Chair Lisa Scott-Founds)
- II. Administrative (Chair Lisa Scott-Founds)
  - A) Call to Order and Roll Call
  - B) Future Meetings to be scheduled via email

**OLD BUSINESS**

- III. Approval of December 2022 FFEAC Meeting Minutes

**NEW BUSINESS**

- IV. Legislative Update (Commissioner Welge)
- V. Office of Film and Entertainment Team Report
  - B) Summary of Activities:
    - 1. Office Updates (Commissioner Niki Welge)
    - 2. Future Business Development (Susan Simms)
    - 4. Marketing and Advertising (Blair Bisbee)
    - 5. Sales Tax Exemption Report (Helena Sadvary)
- VI. Association Updates: (Film Florida, SAG-AFTRA, IATSE, etc.)
  - A) Chris Ranung, President of IATSE Local 477
  - B) Gail Morgan, President of Film Florida
  - C) Michael Viera, SAG-AFTRA
  - D) Ex-Officio Updates: (Enterprise Florida, Inc., VISIT FLORIDA, and CareerSource Florida)
- VII. Public Comment
- VIII. **ADJOURN**

**FLORIDA FILM AND ENTERTAINMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL**

2nd Quarter Meeting

December 6th, 2022

10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

**107 East Madison St.**

**Tallahassee, FL 32399**

<b>MINUTES</b>
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**CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME**

Administrative (Film Commissioner Niki Welge)

Call to Order by Film Commissioner Niki Welge at 10 a.m.

Roll Call:

*Councilmembers:*

Lisa Scott-Founds

Aaron Bellamy

Brooks Timmons

Ryan Neves

Kevin Ambler

David Yates

Ex-Officio Members

None present

*Members of the Public:*

John Lux, Film Florida

Gail Morgan, Film Florida

Todd Roobin, Jacksonville Film & Television Commission

Michele Hillery, Palm Beach County Film & Television Commission

DJ Viola, Director / Producer, DGA Films

AJ Jordat, Palm Beach County Film and Television Commission

Gary French, Orlando, Florida

Mo Fitzgibbon, Owner, Walker Fitzgibbon TV & Film Productions

Dana Pellerin, Universal Studios Florida Production Group

Courtney Coleman, Coleman Collective

*Office of Film and Entertainment (OFE) Staff:*

Commissioner Niki Welge

Susan Simms

Helena Sadvary

Blaire Bisbee

## **WELCOME**

Film Commissioner Niki Welge welcomed everyone and said the next FFEAC meeting will be decided via email.

Blaire took roll.

Commissioner Welge started out by introducing Florida Office of Film and Entertainment's new Production Coordinator, Helena Sadvary. Helena replaced Donyelle Marshall, the previous Production Coordinator, who held the position for the 8 years prior.

Helena Sadvary introduced herself and provided her background. She stated she started as the new Production Coordinator on October 24<sup>th</sup> and her previous role was Assistant Executive Director at Mission San Luis in Tallahassee, Florida. She mentioned her previous acting experience and love of acting.

Commissioner Welge thanked Helena for her intro and addressed recent changes to the FFEAC Council. Pamela Tuscany's term expired over the summer, and she thanked her for her leadership. Councilmember Fred Piccolo resigned from the council as he relocated to Washington, DC and is no longer a Florida resident. Niki thanked him for his short service. Chair Ana Siegal's council term expired, and she resigned from her position on the council. Niki thanked Ana Siegal for her leadership and years of service.

Niki introduced new councilmember David Yates. David introduced himself and his background as a Florida film producer. He mentioned he was appointed by Speaker Chris Sprowls. David's background includes running the Iron Man triathlons, productions for NBC, and ESPN TV shows. His latest credentials include producing the 'Dolphin Tale' movies with Warner Brothers Pictures. He was the CEO of Clearwater Marine Aquarium where he wrote the story for 'Dolphin Tale'. He currently is producing films locally around Florida, including on set in Tarpon Springs. David looks forward to working on the council and to make an impact.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **2022 2nd Quarter Meeting Minutes**

Commissioner Welge called for a motion to approve the June 2022 meeting minutes.

Councilmember Kevin Ambler made a motion to approve the minutes.

Councilmember Lisa Scott-Founds seconded the motion to approve the minutes.

The June minutes were approved unanimously and adopted.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Commissioner Welge stated because we do not have a full council of 17 members that elections were to be held for Chair today and not for Vice-Chair. She will continue to be the Chair's backup for running meetings. Due to several members being unable to attend, including Durand Adams who was severely affected by Hurricane Ian and still has no cell or internet service, Chair nominations were able to be made via email prior to the meeting. One nomination for Lisa Scott-Founds was received from councilmember Sandy Lighterman via email. Lisa said she would entertain the nomination and is happy to support the FFEAC.

Commissioner Welge opened the floor for other nominations for Chair. No other nominations were declared, and the nominations closed.

Sandy's email was considered a motion to nominate Lisa. Commissioner Welge asked for a second motion to nominate Lisa. Kevin Ambler motioned a second.

Lisa was asked to share information about her background for new members, and she shared her qualifications and background with the committee, including her work as the President and CEO of Winterfest Parade. She has also been on a committee for film and tv since the 1990s.

Commissioner Welge asked if all were in favor of the motion to adopt Lisa as the new FFEAC Advisory Council Chair.

The motion was adopted unanimously, and Niki congratulated Lisa as the new Chair.

Chair Scott-Founds took over the agenda and moved on to the legislative update.

### **Legislative Update (Commissioner Welge)**

Commissioner Welge began her legislative update by stating the legislators were formally sworn in during organization session the Tuesday of Thanksgiving week and dates for special session to address property insurance and Hurricane Ian relief were established for December 12th – 16th. The formal call of the Special Session laying out what issues will be discussed and addressed has not yet been issued.

Commissioner Welge ended her report by stating there will be seven committee weeks in all this year, starting this month and ending in late February. Regular session starts March 7<sup>th</sup> and will end in May.

### **Special Guest DJ Viola, Director / Producer with DGA Films**

Chair Scott-Founds introduced the Special Guest Speaker DJ Viola.

DJ Viola introduced himself and thanked the group. Viola explained his efforts for the Florida film industry in the past year, including working with the city of Fort Lauderdale and Broward County on the construction of 12 sound stages on 63 acres with 18,000 to 24,000 square feet of studio space with volume LEDs. Viola has a commercial production, movie, and music video background and he said the last few movies he has worked on were in Atlanta. The goal was to stay in Florida due to how production rich Florida is with untapped potential. Florida can regain its status as a production hub in the realm of New York City, Los Angeles, and Atlanta.

His initiative is to help build the crew base and bring enough production and reinvigorate the film industry in Florida. The Broward government has bought into the plan and provided the land. The project is filling the need for sound stages in Broward County.

Commissioner Welge thanked DJ for his update and invited him back for future meetings to provide updates on the status of the sound stage project.

#### Office of Film and Entertainment Team Report

##### Office Updates (Commissioner Niki Welge)

Commissioner Welge stated it was announced yesterday that our Agency Secretary Dane Eagle will be leaving DEO at the end of the calendar year. Once a new secretary is appointed, we will go through the transition process. Welge thanked Secretary Eagle for his leadership over the last 2.5 years and wished him the best.

Welge stated the last FFEAC meeting was cancelled due to Hurricane Ian. She stated we are thankful that hurricane season is officially over for the year, however there is a long road to recovery for parts of the state, including some of our own FFEAC members. Durand Adams, who lives in southwest Florida is still without phone and internet at his home. The state is resilient and will continue to work towards a full recovery.

There are still a few state parks closed that were significantly impacted by Ian and by flooding. We have a hurricane resources section of our site linking to the DEP's website with a list of closed parks. There are locations in parts of the state most impacted by Ian that were destroyed. We are in constant communication with the local film offices in Florida and each of them are open, however some are only handling permits on a case-by-case basis. Beaches in Lee and Collier Counties are slowly reopening after being closed due to storm debris and unsafe conditions.

We don't really have a good handle on how much production activity was lost as a result of the storm. There are several major projects that were planning to film in the state that week that have since rescheduled their productions, including the remake of the film "Roadhouse," which is filming in the Florida Keys as we speak. Of course, anytime there is a weather event like a hurricane, there is an increase in television coverage which adds to our numbers in an unfortunate way.

## Future Business Development (Susan Simms)

Susan began her report by speaking about the events and tradeshow we have attended recently. Many industry events were pushed to June so it was a busy month for her. She attended the Film Florida meetings and connected with many industry people, ending with a reception at Brandstar Studios in Broward.

The most important marketing opportunity this year was AFCI Week with 213 film commissioners from around the globe attending the 4-day event. Susan met with clients to discuss projects and attended meetings and panels with the other Florida Film Commissioners. Susan thanked Sandy Lighterman and Gail Morgan for letting her attend their meetings at the event, including Netflix, HBO, and Warner Brothers. There was a lot of interest in filming in Broward County. Susan and Gail also met with the military entertainment industry liaison as Florida is one of the top 3 states for military bases and personnel in the United States.

Susan also attended The Microsoft Virtual Production Summit, which was a 2-day event in Burbank, California. Florida speakers from Brandstar Studios were on three panels. Susan was invited to speak with the panel speaker after the even and the speaker expressed an interest in filming in Florida and virtual production.

Susan next attended the AICP reception in Los Angeles. We sponsored the event, and our logo was featured on the screen. Next Susan attended the Location Managers Guild International Awards in Los Angeles. It was a fantastic opportunity to talk to location managers face to face.

The first week in November was the American Film Market in Los Angeles. St. Petersburg/Clearwater Film Commissioner Tony Armer and The Florida Keys Film Commissioner Chad Newman attended. Tony's office sponsored the opening event. Tony is leaving to become the Dallas Film Commissioner at the end of the year, so the event was well attended.

Susan said she will be attending the Film Florida meeting in Orlando next week and the WIFT Jingle Mingle event which our office sponsored. Next month, Susan said she hopes to attend the Sundance and Slamdance Film Festivals, which she has attended for many years. Miami has a lounge every year at Slamdance which she staffs for three days straight. AFCI will also host a reception with five minutes to talk about Florida, and the British Film Commission hosts a brunch every year and we are the only state film office invited.

Susan closed by saying business is volatile right now, with layoffs across the industry and everyone is looking at their future. Hurricane Ian was a huge tragedy in Florida, which delayed multiple Florida based projects. Susan said she will have more updates in March at the next FFEAC meeting.

### Sales Tax Exemption Report (Helena Sadvary)

Helena provided her Sales Tax Exemption report. She reviewed a report showing all the data since the Sales Tax Exemption was implemented in January 2001. Niki, Susan, Blaire, and Donyelle have worked with you all to set a high standard and have done great work with this program.

Helena stated fiscal year 2022/2023 started on July 1, 2022, and the numbers reflect the data as of December 1, 2022:

- Number of Applicants as 411
- The Amount of Tax Exempted based on Florida's 6% Tax Rate as \$24,288,018.36
- The Estimated Florida Jobs as 12,425
- The Estimated Florida Expenditures as \$1,401,453,129
- With a 42.9 to 1 Return on Investment

Helena finished her report by reminding everyone that we still have more than a half a year to go, and we are excited to work with each one of you to spread the word about the Entertainment Industry Sales Tax Exemption Program.

### Marketing Report (Blaire Bisbee)

Blaire began her report by detailing the social media and Film in Florida app analytics, which in the past 90 days, have reached 7,595 accounts and increased our followers by 237 for a total of 1,932.

In the last 28 days our Facebook posts have reached 34,790 people. Our page has increased by 46 new followers.

The Film in Florida app has been downloaded 51 times in the past 90 days which is an increase of 4%.

Blaire stated a social media paid advertising campaign ran August 1- September 30th. The advertisements ran for 60 days targeting film and entertainment industry professionals nationwide and Canada. The tagline "Florida. And Nowhere Else" was used highlighting beautiful Florida filming locations. The ads reached 223,000 people and had 4,336 website link clicks.

We ran a digital advertising campaign with the same 5 banner ads rotating for 7 days during June 3-10th on The Hollywood Reporter's website. The campaign results were 423,000 impressions total and 195 link clicks.

A student outreach campaign was launched with the help of our former intern Brenda Sands. We reached out to Florida film schools asking if we could ship our flyers to hand

out to students or post on a bulletin. We shipped the brochures to film schools, created graphics for social media posts encouraging students to list in our production directory and shared these graphics in film school Facebook groups. In addition, we asked the film schools to share to their socials.

The past few months we have participated in the following sponsorships and events:

- WIFT Jingle Mingle Sponsorship
- Fort Lauderdale International Film Festival Sponsorship
- Produced By Sponsorship
- LMGI (Location Managers Guild International) Awards
- Tallahassee Film Festival
- Film Florida Meeting and Governor's Conference on Tourism

Blaire finished her presentation by reporting on the new Reel-Scout self-submit your property location function. Since launching in June, we have received 98 new properties as Florida filming locations. The link to self-submit your property can be found on our website under the locations tab.

Blaire opened the floor for questions. DJ Viola mentioned he did not know we had an app and said he would be downloading the Film in Florida app.

FFEAC member Kevin Ambler, Palm Beach County Film Commissioner Michelle Hillery, and FFEAC Chair Lisa Scott-Founds asked if Blaire could ship brochures for handing out at upcoming film festivals and events.

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

Gail Morgan, President of Film Florida, began her update. She stated Film Florida and the Fort Lauderdale International Film Festival hosted a networking event in November and 75 people attended. Film Florida members are attending Focus in London, the Realscreen Summit, and the Sundance Film Festival. On January 31<sup>st</sup> Film Florida will be hosting the Location Managers Guild International Florida Virtual FamTour event on Zoom. Film Florida coordinated with 25 local film offices and liaisons from all over the state to create a video to showcase the locations of Florida. State Film Commissioner Welge, John Lux with Film Florida, and two location managers will panel the event.

Season 5 of the Film Florida podcast is in full swing and the 100<sup>th</sup> episode is being released next week, Film Florida continues their Film Florida Fridays and Friday, December 9<sup>th</sup> is the next virtual meeting with a script supervisor discussion.

The Don Davis Finishing Fund and Film Florida's Emerging Filmmakers Fund, which award grants from \$1k to \$2k to Floridians filming projects in the state continues to be open for submissions. Film Florida awarded \$8k to projects in 2022 across the State of Florida.



Gail provided a legislative update and said Film Florida started engaging new candidates running for the Florida House and Senate in May, introducing the candidates to Film Florida and asking the candidates to fill out a survey to learn more about their platform. 65 candidates responded to the survey.

Film Florida is encouraging industry professionals to reach out to their legislatures, especially newly elected officials to educate them about the film industry in Florida. They are also working with members to speak at delegation meetings throughout the state.

The next Film Florida Board meeting is December 15 -16 in Orlando. Events will include meetings for the committees, councils, and board of directors. Women in Film and Television is hosting their Jingle Mingle event in Orlando on Thursday, December 16<sup>th</sup> and both Film Florida and the Jingle Mingle event are being held at Universal Studios Orlando.

Michelle Hillery asked for the dates of the LMGI virtual event and said they were reshooting the content for Palm Beach County. Gail provided the date and congratulated Michelle on her new title as Palm Beach County Film Commissioner.

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

No members were present to provide updates.

Public Comment

Chair Scott-Founds opened the floor for public comment.

FFEAC councilmember Kevin Ambler stated the Gasparilla International Film Festival is open for submissions. He provided the website and told others to contact him for more information.

Commissioner Welge thanked Kevin for the update and suggested Gasparilla International Film Festival tag us on social media and connect with Blaire to reshare their content to help promote the festival.

Commissioner Welge also asked Palm Beach County Film Commissioner Michelle Hillery to share the LMGI Palm Beach County video content with us to share on our YouTube channel.

**ADJOURN 12:00 P.M.**

## ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY SALES TAX EXEMPTION FISCAL YEAR COMPARISON

Fiscal Year	Number of Applicants	Amount of Tax Exempted based on Florida's 6% Tax Rate	Estimated Florida Jobs	Estimated Florida Expenditures	ROI
2000/2001	227	\$ 2,539,395.00	4,877	\$ 148,593,718.00	58.5 : 1
2001/2002	463	\$ 7,556,334.00	17,424	\$ 433,372,673.00	57.4 : 1
2002/2003	621	\$ 10,796,831.00	25,854	\$ 645,025,051.00	59.7 : 1
2003/2004	624	\$ 13,768,814.00	20,154	\$ 721,914,295.00	52.4 : 1
2004/2005	705	\$ 11,867,191.00	29,116	\$ 705,255,688.00	59.4 : 1
2005/2006	762	\$ 10,683,581.00	31,189	\$ 655,792,268.00	61.4 : 1
2006/2007	809	\$ 12,721,834.00	27,338	\$ 719,035,205.00	56.5 : 1
2007/2008	841	\$ 14,389,854.00	56,476	\$ 816,462,452.00	56.7 : 1
2008/2009	762	\$ 14,038,041.00	33,353	\$ 780,849,043.00	55.6 : 1
2009/2010	824	\$ 12,452,842.00	42,844	\$ 760,722,482.00	61.1 : 1
2010/2011	871	\$ 15,286,392.12	43,820	\$ 1,002,218,205.00	65.6 : 1
2011/2012	815	\$ 14,657,152.00	48,137	\$ 1,015,136,941.00	69.2 : 1
2012/2013	858	\$ 14,615,081.10	56,149	\$ 1,104,234,332.00	75.6 : 1
2013/2014	834	\$ 15,414,173.82	66,721	\$ 1,106,752,836.00	72.0 : 1
2014/2015	823	\$ 17,608,623.00	39,555	\$ 1,150,244,724.00	65.3 : 1
2015/2016	836	\$ 18,420,419.00	38,082	\$ 1,143,739,614.00	62.0 : 1
2016/2017	848	\$ 16,309,925.00	33,724	\$ 1,061,184,228.00	65.1 : 1
2017/2018	955	\$ 15,113,131.56	32,031	\$ 1,035,570,048.00	68.5 : 1
2018/2019	1,024	\$ 16,831,179.66	32,926	\$ 1,078,461,946.00	64.1 : 1
2019/2020	868	\$ 19,242,009.90	34,148	\$ 1,126,446,312.00	58.5 : 1
2020/2021	963	\$ 19,689,425.34	36,103	\$ 1,179,670,500.00	60.0 : 1
2021/2022	1217	\$ 28,916,235.72	40,389	\$ 1,479,645,948.00	51.2 : 1
2022/2023	753	\$ 35,985,384.78	45,385	\$ 1,604,993,236.00	44.6 : 1

\* As of 3/20/2023

