



MINUTES

**California Film Commission Board Meeting
November 8, 2013
1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
SAGAFTRA Conference Room
Los Angeles, California**

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE

Fred Baron
Bob Blumenfield
Lindy DeKoven
Chris Essel
Mike Gatto
Wendy Greuel
Janet Knutsen
Megan McGuinness
Mike Miller
Anthony Portantino
Keith Weaver

EX-OFFICIOS/DESIGNEES IN ATTENDANCE

Ben Ho, Chief, State Fire Marshal's Office
Eve Honthaner, Deputy Director, California Film Commission
Tonya Hoover, State Fire Marshal, State Fire Marshal's Office
Amy Lemisch, Director, California Film Commission

GUESTS

Catherine Adamic, CFC
Janice Arrington, Orange County Film Commission
Betsy Butler, CA State Assembly
Sheri Davis, Inland Empire Film Commission
Erik Deutsch, Excel PR Group
Pauline East, Antelope Valley Film Commission
Ted Johnson, Variety
Kenn J. Logan, Fox
Leah Medrano, CFC
Cindy Moore, State Fire Marshal's Office
Michael Walbrecht, Warner Bros.
Erik Rodriquez, Office of Councilmember Bob Blumenfield
Brian Watt, KPCC

I. CALL TO ORDER and WELCOME; INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS/GUESTS - Keith Weaver, Chair

Chairman Weaver discussed the role of the California Film Commission and its board to promote California for filming. The CFC administers the Film & TV Tax Credit Program which has rules and regulations and all functions are transparent and accountable. As this was Mr. Weaver's last meeting as Chair, he expressed his thanks to the board and CFC Director Amy Lemisch for all their support. He expressed his commitment to the work of the CFC and will continue to work on the board. Mr. Weaver then opened up the floor for self introductions.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Keith Weaver, Chair

Motion to approve the Minutes from May 14, 2013 was made and unanimously approved.

III. APPROVAL OF REVISED CFC BY-LAWS - Keith Weaver, Chair

Motion to approve the revised CFC By-Laws was made and unanimously approved.

IV. NOMINATING COMMITTEE – PRESENTS NOMINATIONS - Janet Knutsen, Boardmember FOR OFFICERS (POSITIONS OF CHAIR, VICE CHAIR AND SECRETARY)

Nominating Committee member Janet Knutsen presented the committee's recommendations for Officers of the Board. The Committee's nominations for officers were:

Steve Dayan for Chairperson;
Hilary Armstrong for Vice Chair; and
Lindy DeKoven for Secretary.

Motion to elect the proposed slate of officers was made and unanimously approved.

V. DIRECTOR'S REPORT - Amy Lemisch

CFC Staffing / Operations

- Appointments – July, 2013 – Director Amy Lemisch and Tax Credit Director Nancy Stone were reappointed and Deputy Director Eve Honthamer was newly appointed by Governor Brown.
- Go-Biz – transition to Go-Biz has gone smoothly and GO-Biz has been very supportive.
- Deputy State Fire Marshal Cindy Moore will be transferring to another position with the State Fire Marshal's Office. Al Adams, who is back part-time with the State Fire Marshal's Office, will fill in pending the selection of a new Deputy State Fire Marshal, motion picture liaison.

Director Lemisch acknowledged State Fire Marshal Chief Ben Ho for his continuous support, guidance, and assistance to the CA Film Commission. Chief Ben Ho has been with the State Fire Marshal for 23 years and will be retiring at the end of this year.

CFC Events / Marketing

Nov. 3 – 19th annual California On Locations Awards (COLA) will be held at the Beverly Hilton Hotel and CFC is a sponsor. Two of the CFC's most important film liaisons were nominated – CHP Officer Miguel Luevano and Caltrans Engineer Roger San Juan. Roger took home the award for Public Employee of the Year in the State Category.

FLICS board meeting and workshop on social media.

AFM – Film LA invited the CFC to participate in their exhibit space at AFM.

Upcoming Events:

SAVING MR. BANKS screening – Dec. 12th – CFC co-hosting with Disney; Governor has been invited to attend.

AFCI – March 2014 - Locations Trade Show; CFC will be sharing a booth with FLICS.

CFC VIP Breakfast – April 24, 2014

California Locations Conference – June 28, 2014 – Hollywood Museum

Outreach – Public Engagements:

Ms. Lemisch gave a summary of her public and speaking engagements.

May 15 – Lake Tahoe – Filming in the public and private sector

June 13 – Century City Chamber Women's Conference

June 27 – Cast & Crew incentive panel at AFCI

July 30 – California Channel – Portantino show, guest with Ed Brown of IATSE Local 44

Sept. 19 – Ventura County Economic Development Council
Sept 24 – Fire Safety Class
Oct. – Latino International Film Festival - panelist
Oct. 21 – Tour of Port of L.A. / met with Coast Guard film liaisons
Oct. 28 – CPA orientation seminar
Nov 6 – Ease Incentives panel

Upcoming:

Hollywood Chamber's Entertainment Industry Conference – panelist - Nov. 12th
(Mayor Garcetti and Tom Sherak featured speakers)
Beverly Hills Bar Assoc. – panelist with Councilmember Fuentes – Nov. 20th

Media

A summary of news articles on film production and the CA Film & TV Tax Credit Program were highlighted.

Location California Magazine – The CFC is working closely with the editor on various feature articles, a pictorial section, an article on green practices in location production and other stories covering commercials, TV series and feature films working in California. First distribution of the magazine will be at Sundance. This publication will replace the CFC's Locations Directory and will include a condensed directory of regional film offices.

Tax Credit Program

Legislative Analyst Office (LAO) Report – The legislation that passed in 2012 extending the tax credit program included language requiring the LAO to issue a report on the economic effects and administration of the tax credit program by Jan. 2016. LAO has begun to conduct research. At Director Lemisch's invitation, LAO staff came to L.A. to attend the AFCEI location trade show in June. This helped them to get a sense of the level of competition that California faces. In October, LAO staff came back to L.A for a day of meetings which included – Entertainment Partners (to discuss California's loss of entertainment wages), IATSE, "Pretty Little Liars" and Warners tour. The CFC has begun to provide them with program statistics.

Regulations

Director Lemisch and Tax Credit Program Director Nancy Stone are working with GO-Biz on some revisions to the regulations. These are all administrative in nature. Any regulatory changes will require board approval before submitting to OAL.

Legislation:

There has been a lot of activity by the industry stakeholders (the Alliance) gearing up for next year's legislative session.

The Alliance has been holding meetings across the state to get local stakeholders engaged in the legislative efforts. They held meetings with the assistance of FLICS offices in: San Francisco, Sacramento, Santa Barbara, San Bernardino, and Riverside.

The modifications discussed for consideration include – additional program funding, broadening eligibility to include high budget films and network and pay cable TV series, prioritizing allocations for relocating TV series, and adding a "bump" (additional credits) for productions that shoot outside of the 30-mile zone.

AICP is working with Senator Ted Lieu (SB370) to create a Commercial production incentive.

Ms. Lemisch will continue to provide technical expertise to stakeholders as needed.

Joint Oversight Hearing – Oct. 9, 2013

Assembly Committee on Rev & Tax (Bocanegra – Chair) and
Assembly Committee on Arts, Entertainment, Sports, Tourism & Internet Media (Ian Calderon – Chair)
Director Lemisch presented an overview of the tax credit program at this informational hearing.

VI. Tax Credit Program Report – Nancy Stone, Tax Credit Program Director

Program Director Nancy Stone presented a progress report on the Film & TV Tax Credit Program:

Current Program Year:

- 380 Applications were received on the first day of the application period – an 18% increase compared to 322 applications received last year.
- 34 projects were selected by lottery.
- When projects drop out of program, CFC pulls from waiting list. There are currently 331 projects on the waiting list.
- Estimated Aggregate Direct Spending by 34 projects = \$827 million; \$303 million in qualified wages; \$246 million in non-wage expenditures; \$278 million in non-qualified expenditures.
- Estimated Hire: 3,800 crew members; 3,200 cast members; 83,000 background players.
- Number of Projects breakdown by Production Type: Feature Films - 14; TV Movies – 5; TV Series – 12; Relocating TV Series - 2; Mini-Series – 1

Program years 1-5

- 269 Approved Projects Aggregate Spend: \$4.75 billion
- Total Below-the-Line Wages: \$1.48 billion

VII. OPERATIONS REPORT – Eve Honthaner, Deputy Director

Film Offices:

San Diego - The city council has not taken action to temporarily fund the San Diego Film Commission until a more permanent solution can be forged between the city, county and port. While the film office remains closed, there are San Diego City and County offices responding to permit requests. The CFC continues to advocate on behalf of reopening the film commission.

Ventura County - Karen Kelley is now the full-time Ventura County film liaison (not just the city of Ventura). CFC Director Amy Lemisch and Deputy Director Eve Honthaner met with officials from several Ventura County municipalities, as well as small business owners, hotel owners/managers, location services, etc. – all who are willing to do whatever they can to support filming in their county.

Ordinances:

The CFC has reviewed draft film ordinances for: La Canada Flintridge, San Jacinto, Riverside County, Paramount, Pico Rivera

Filming Issues:

Courthouses - The LA Superior Court announced that they would be closing several courthouses in L.A. County. With the assistance of Grace Arupo Rodriguez, GO-Biz attorney, the CFC Director and Deputy Director were able to get a meeting with Sherri Carter, the new Executive Officer of the L.A. Superior Court. The result was that productions would be allowed to shoot the exteriors of working courthouses during non-working hours and the interiors and exteriors of most closed courthouses.

Michael Mann's new feature wanted to shoot on courthouse steps. It was a simple shot, and the production was having difficulty getting approval. CFC was able to assist in getting approval for this shoot.

Bolsa Chica Wetlands – the show "Dexter" was interested in shooting at this location, although it had never been allowed before. But after discussions with Parks and Fish & Wildlife, the CFC got permission for the production to use a service road that had little or no impact to the surrounding environment.

UCLA - doesn't allow filming of the full facades (rooflines and towers) of Royce Hall and Powell Library, but in late May, they decided not to allow filming of those two iconic buildings at all. The CFC was able to get the old policy was reinstated.

Mt. Tamalpais – CFC has made progress with issues of lengthy permit process at Mount Tamalpais. New Parks Sector Superintendent, Bill Lutton enacted new guidelines that make getting a permit there quicker (4-day turnaround), and made sure there would be enough monitors.

Ms. Honthaner has attended: L.A. Film Task force meetings, county meetings, SAFFE, L.A. County Fire/Entertainment Industry meetings and will be attending a community workshop in La Canada Flintridge, which is being set up to develop solutions and recommendations to revise their film ordinance.

VIII. REGIONAL FILM OFFICE REPORT – Santa Barbara – Geoff Alexander, Film Commissioner

The Santa Barbara County Film Commission has created an incentives program in order to encourage production in their area.

The incentives program provides support for Unscripted Television, Commercials, and Still photography shoots, in addition to Scripted Television and Feature Films. Although the program is limited in terms of the financial resources available, their hope is that the program will communicate their commitment to production.

The incentive provides a cash rebate to qualified productions, which is capped at a maximum of \$2,500 per project. Permit Fees and 50% of CHP or Police costs are reimbursed up to the \$2,500 cap. Productions qualify by housing crew at hotels in “Incentives Zones” and booking minimum numbers of room nights in an Incentive Zone over the course of the production.

Currently, there are two separate “pots” of incentives, one provided for the South Coast Incentives Zone and one provided for the Santa Ynez Valley Incentives Zone. Each pot will provide up to \$25,000 total over the course of the fiscal year. Projects are qualified on a first come, first served, basis until all available funds have been utilized for the year.

IX. NEW BUSINESS – Keith Weaver, Chair

None

X. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

XI. BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2014:

April 22, 2014 (SAC) – subject to change
July 25, 2014 (L.A.)
November 7, 2014 (L.A.)

XII. ADJOURNMENT – Keith Weaver

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.