CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Administrative (Chair Gus Corbella)
Called to Order by Chair Corbella at 10:02 a.m.

Roll Call:

Members:
Chair Gus Corbella
Pieter Bockweg
Marc Meisel
Chip Merlin
Vice Chair Seth Schachner
DeDe Davis
Suzanne Neidland

Yvonne Boice and Legislative Chair Horton excused absence

ExOfficio:
Tod Roobin, Jacksonville Film Commission
Michelle Hillary, Film Florida
John Lux, IDEAS
April Money, Career Source Florida
Diana Gonzalez, Enterprise Florida

Office of Film and Entertainment (OFE) Staff:
Traci Colson
Donyelle Marshall
Caroline Ross
Commissioner Niki Welge
Susan Simms

Welcome

Chair Corbella welcomed everyone and reminded that some members of council may have their appointments coming to an end. Caroline Ross will be reaching out to you to assist you in reapplying if you would like to serve on the FFEAC Committee again.
Chair Corbella reminded future meetings will be scheduled via email at a later date, most likely will be sometime during session which begins on January 12.

OLD BUSINESS

Approval of September 2015 FFEAC Meeting Minutes (distributed via email):

Chair Corbella asked if there were any suggested edits to September’s minutes. Representative Davis motioned to approve minutes. Member Bockweig seconded approval. Chair Corbella approved Minutes.

NEW BUSINESS

Legislative Update

Chair Corbella did legislative update for Representative Horton.

Reminded of current state of affairs in Tallahassee. We are expecting that legislation regarding the film and television industry to be submitted shortly by Senator Diedert in the Senate and Representative Miller in the House. There were two bills earlier in the year presented by Latvala and Dean that had to do with the Loan Program that were withdrawn. We are expecting the substance of those bills to be included with the Diedert and Miller bills. Chair Corbella stated it is an interesting time as it comes to leadership in the legislator. Chair Corbella stated we have great support in the Senate, which has traditionally been the case. Chair Corbella also stated that there is a substantial amount of support in the House, but the challenge with the House lies up top with the leadership of current and future. Chair Corbella stated that this not necessarily aimed at us as an industry, but at tax credits overall. Discussions in the House and Senate are taking place regarding this next year with our program sun setting this coming summer, and that the elimination of tax credits would have a detrimental affect overall on us as a state in luring, keeping and growing this industry here in Florida.

Chair Corbella stated he has spoken with Commissioner Welge to ensure that the Council is made aware of the latest developments with any bills that are submitted and released. Chair Corbella stated that in working with Film Florida we will make sure you have materials and a talk sheet so that everybody helping in our efforts can be well informed and up to date on the latest efforts when it comes to legislation.
Chair Corbella reminded everyone once again that Session begins on January 12, 2016 and ends Friday, March 4th, which is earlier this year and faster paced with it being an election year with legislators anxious to get home and start campaigning.

Chair Corbella asked Commissioner Welge if he has missed anything before moving on to the OFE Office report.

Commissioner Welge thanked Chair Corbella for giving the update in Legislative Chair Hortons absence and stated he covered everything.

Chair Corbella asked if any members of the council had any questions or if he missed anything that they would want to make mention of legislatively.

Member Tuscany asked if anyone has gotten any indication of when the two bills would be available to review, or when they may be released.

Chair Corbella stated that he has reached out to both Senator Diedert and Representative Miller to request drafts of those bills. Chair Corbella recognized Film Florida President Michelle Hillary to give a better update regarding the two bills.

Michelle Hillary stated that they are anxiously awaiting as well. She stated they believe there is a delay because the bills are currently going through dynamic scoring, so they want to see the outcome of that scoring prior to filing these bills, which is where the delay is lying.

Chair Corbella asked Michelle Hillary to give an idea of what dynamic scoring is for those who may be unfamiliar.

Michelle Hillary stated that many may remember there was a report that came out from the state that showed a $0.43 return for every $1.00 invested in our program. The report came out from Andy Bakers office which was a big portion of the uphill battle we had last year. One of the purposes Film Florida is advocating is a more conservative program this year, working with Representative Miller and get the dynamic scoring up to where we can at least get a 1-1, but from what they are hearing, the governor is actually looking for a 2-1. The purpose of the conservative approach this year is not something as an industry that we want to do, but is a strategic approach to get the dynamic scoring up and earn the support of the legislative leadership to get the bill to the finish line this year.

Chair Corbella thanked Film Florida President Michelle Hillary, and stated that once again we have a tough road ahead to get leadership to understand the impact we have economically and with jobs. Chair Corbella stated that the dynamic scoring is a positive move forward because of the effort and initiative to try and understand the state impact a little bit better.
Chair Corbella reminded to keep an eye out because as soon as the bills come out of bill drafting, we will be sure to provide everyone with the language for everyone to be able to review. Chair Corbella asked if there were any other questions.

NEW BUSINESS

Office of Film and Entertainment Team Report
Summary of Activities:

Office Updates (Commissioner Niki Welge)

Commissioner Welge stated the advisory has 2 vacancies currently, one in the senate and one in the house. If you know of anyone that may want to serve, or if you are interested in serving on the council, you can submit your application through the senate and house appointments and if you have any questions you can reach out to either Commissioner Welge or Caroline Ross.

Commissioner Welge stated we had a great intern, Mack Myrmo, who had his last day yesterday. He was an FSU Finance student and we are lucky to have another FSU Finance student that will be starting with us in January. Commissioner Welge stated that we are lucky to have a great university in our backyard that can provide us with wonderful interns to help us since we rely on their help with the little staff that we have.

Commissioner Welge informed that because session is earlier this year, we have been getting earlier requests for information. EDR has requested additional information from us and as Michelle Hillary had mentioned, they released a ROI Analysis on the program in January of 2015 and were updating their numbers. Commissioner Welge stated she had not seen an updated version of the RIO as of yet, but anticipated that it would look similar to the one they have released in January and would keep council posted if and when that information comes available.

Commissioner Welge stated that because the program is sun setting in June of next year, the incentives staff has been working hard to get the projects outstanding and have not submitted the audits to our office yet, to get that information, get the audit completed and the tax credits awarded because the tax credits that recycle back into the program can be recycled to a project on the waitlist before June 30, after July 1, 2016 those projects can no longer be available for certification. Commissioner Welge reminded that certification is different from award, that certification is for when you are setting aside tax credits for a projects, once those tax credits are set aside, those credits are attached to that project all the way till the end of the production cycle, until the project is wrapped in the state, they go through the CPA audit, they are audited here in house and then they are awarded the tax credits. Tax credits will be able to be awarded after June.
30, 2016 but will not be able to be certified. Commissioner Welge stated we are trying to get as many projects certified before the sunset of the program on June 30th. Commissioner Welge thanked staff for all the hard work they are doing to make sure the program is as complete as possible before the program sunsets. Commissioner Welge reminded that there is still a long life of this program because production companies have 5 years to have the tax credits awarded or transferred.

Commissioner Welge stated that our annual report was submitted November 1st and while many had time to review, wanted to go over the report because is encompasses a variety of things and a great deal of work goes into it.

Brief Highlights of Annual Report:

- Labor Market Statistics for Entertainment Industry: 2014 Date
  - More than 4,400 bricks and mortar companies producing content
  - Employing over 28,000 Floridians
  - Average wage of over $72,000 which exceeds the state’s annual wage across all industries by 62.4%.
  - More than 8,000 are employed in television

- Annual Performance Summary:
  - OFE worked on more than 1,360 projects across spectrum
  - 156 incentive projects we touched in some way
  - 94 awarded tax credits
  - 7 projects are pending OFE review
  - 55 projects completed production in Florida but haven’t gotten final report
  - Of 1,360 projects, 74% resulted in business in Florida.
  - Of 156 incentive related projects, they created more than 51,000 jobs with more than 364 million in Floridian wages and more than 615 million in qualified Florida spend, more than 91,000 hotel room nights and that represented more than 15,000 production dates in the state.
    - 64% were produced in the south east region of the state
    - 22% were produced in central region of the state
    - Remaining percentage distributed among other regions of state

- Annual Growth of Sales Tax Exemption:
  - 2014-2015 had highest estimated spend since 2001 in 1.1 billion dollars of estimated spending.
    - 823 application last year

- Travel:
  - Of $280,000.00 in operating expenses last year, roughly $23,000.00 was spent on traveling to events, meetings and trade shows around the state. We have a very target marketing matrix and plan but of course with reductions in staff and
marketing activities being reduced even further, Commissioner Welge stated she anticipates our travel expenditures to be reduced significantly during our annual report next year.

Commissioner Welge asked if there were any questions regarding the annual report and reminded that the information is all available on our website.

Commissioner Welge informed the council that she will be traveling to Orlando for the Film Florida Meetings over the next few days and will be participating in those events.

Film Florida President Michelle Hillary asked if she may ask a question or if she should wait till public comment.

Chair Corbella recognized Michelle Hillary to ask her question of Commissioner Welge.

Michelle Hillary asked Commissioner Welge regarding the numbers that she has of Floridians working and industry and wanted to know if those numbers include digital media or are they excluded.

Commissioner Welge stated that the Office of Labor Market Statistics does not include digital media because there is not a code that is specific to digital media companies that produce a film and entertainment product. It is her understanding that the code that produces digital media also encompasses software design and coding that goes along with software that is not considered to be in our industry and they have no way of separating them. Commissioner Welge stated that the numbers are great and paint a wonderful picture, but that Michelle Hillary is right in that they are incomplete.

Michelle Hillary stated she wanted to point that out because the tool kids on their website show the numbers a bit differently because the codes they have include the digital media numbers so there will be a discrepancy in the numbers.

Member Tuscany asked Commissioner Welge is it makes sense to note on the website that the report does not include digital media so that we are consistent with the messaging.

Commissioner Welge stated that she is reporting on the data the labor market office provides, and we try to be consistent across the board with the reporting that has been done over the years but can consider going in and revising and something to note for the future.

Member Tuscany stated it is really helpful to know it is not included in the state numbers as they look through all of the reporting.
Chair Corbella asked Commissioner Welge if the report is provided to the members of the legislator at large.

Commissioner Welge stated it is not, it is only distributed to the leadership.

Chair Corbella encouraged everyone to take a look at the report online if you haven’t already, and familiarize yourself with the statistics. Chair Corbella asked Commissioner Welge, with the permission of the council, if he may craft a letter with the report attached and distribute it to the members of the legislator so they are at least aware of the report and can get the general 30,000 foot view of the findings and dig in deeper if they so wish.

Member Tuscany echoed Chair Corbella’s thoughts and stated she thinks that is a great idea, and is still stuck on the fact that the digital media numbers are not in the report, and as the FFEAC is making this a tool for its distribution, we should comment in the body of the letter that this doesn’t include digital media numbers, because that information is not available to pull out via the resources we are using. Member Tuscany also asked is the document would be able to be sent to each of the individual members of the FFEAC as a communication tool.

Commissioner Welge informed Member Tuscany that is something we can send out to her via email.

Member Bockweig asked Commissioner Welge if he could ask a couple of questions related to her senate presentation in November. Member Bockweig asked how Commissioner Welge felt the meeting went.

Commissioner Welge stated that Senator Diedert is the champion for the industry and she really would like the bill to pass this year and in order for her to make it clear that there are issues with the current program she would like to see changed, she had to make it clear to all the council and committee members and individuals who are watching. It was Commissioner Welge’s understanding that this was her intention and asked Chair Corbella if he had anything to add to that.

Chair Corbella stated he was at the meeting and he echoes what Commissioner Welge stated, that Chairwoman Diedert is very adamant about seeing something happen this year with the program and understands that we are in a final countdown itself with the program. Chair Corbella stated that the challenge that legislators have is they tend to base their knowledge and information on what they read in the media and on top level information without digging into the weeds. Chair Corbella stated that is no fault of their own because the handle over 2,000 pieces of legislation every session so they have a lot on their minds. Chair Corbella state what he saw in that meeting was a renewed effort to inform local delegations on the facts, and the information in that meeting was unfortunately based on rhetoric and hyperbole and not on the facts, and as we get deeper into
session, people will dig deeper into things, but its important to not get caught up on the politics and the heated rhetoric. Chair Corbella said it is important to focus on the numbers and the incredible impact that this industry has had on our state and the economy and the potential impact it can have on the future. Chair Corbella said that he does know after reaching out to a number of people that we have strong support in the senate, and that Commissioner Welge and her staff are doing an incredible job with the parameters that have been given to them with the reduced staff and funding. Chair Corbella stated that members should use that meeting as an example and reach out to elected officials and show them the annual report, look to Georgia for the industry and what it’s doing for their state and how it is become one of the largest production centers in the world. Florida historically was always in the top 3 in film and television production, and we should be back in the discussion and play some prominence and be very much aware that 2 of the top film schools in the nation are in Florida, that we are training and educating this industry and a very large crew base is in Florida that is having to pick up their revenue, family, income and homes to another state. Chair Corbella reiterated that the meeting was a good example that we have passionate members and supporters, but it’s our responsibility to make sure that passion is matched with facts.

Member Bockweig stated he understands that politics come into play however he does have concerns with the overall perception, and while we deal with numbers and facts, politics is also about perception. Member Bockweig stated there is a certain perception that in his opinion needs to be fixed or changed, and while he understands the politics and has spoken to a majority of those committee members, the reason he is asking the question is to know what they as a council can do to change that perception, whether it is Latvala having or Diederts having interaction with Commissioner Welge. Member Bockweig stated he is looking to Commissioner Welge to let them know as a council what they can do to help with the perception because that is something that needs to be addressed, because while the numbers do look great, and Commissioner Welge did a great job with the annual report, there is still a perception issue with the return on investments because if they were to go by that report alone, we would not have any problems. Member Bockweig asks the question of Commissioner Welge because she was in that perverbial political firing line and wants to see what they as a council can do to assist the OFE office to help change that perception and there needs to be more overall involvement on our end as a council when it comes to the legislators and senators.

Commissioner Welge stated that the council was created to advise us, and we look to the council for their advocacy, and that each member brings different things to the table, because of the variety of areas, businesses and connections each member has. Commissioner Welge stated she values, the connections and relationships the council has with legislators of their delegation. We as an office administer the financial incentive program, but we also take direction from leadership, so we are unable to advocate for the incentive, but we can administer the program so that is what we do, administration, not advocacy.
Member Bockweg stated instead of looking to the council to advise her, she should also look to them as a tool to help them with certain things, other than stating the council needs to talk to their delegation members and senators and so on. Member Bockweg stated if Commissioner Welge’s hands are tied, she should inform the council, so they can help with their connections, but if she does not let them know or make those recommendation on what they could do to help her and her staff further the success of the program, then there is nothing more for them to do besides approve the minutes and say yes or no to allocations. Member Bockweg stated he was in Tallahassee for 3 days and there is a perception issue when it comes to our return on investments, and while the numbers look good, if Commissioner Welge’s hands are tied in a certain way, about her being able to go to different senators, legislators or leaders to brief them, not advocate, then that is something they should know as a council so they can do something to change that, but other than administering, there needs to be more interaction between the council and the film office.

Commissioner Welge said she understands what Member Bockweg is saying, and that they as a council through these meetings understand the challenges that the industry is facing during this legislation and the past three sessions. The number one challenge for us in return on investment as the governor does not support legislation or economic development projects that do not have long term job growth for the state or positive ROI, which is why his legislative agenda every year includes projects that have positive ROI on the state and as Michelle Hillary stated earlier, he is looking for 2-1 ROI to even get through the door to be approved, and since our ROI is $0.43 for every $1.00, legislators are using that to not support the additional allocation to our current program, because the ROI is not high enough in their eyes to support additional money being allocated to it. Commissioner Welge stated this is why the industry has gone to great lengths to draft legislation and work with Rep. Miller on creating legislation and working with EDR now to run it through dynamic scoring to see before it is filed what the ROI would be to combat any negativity toward our current program and any new legislation. Commissioner Welge said as a council is they would like to come together to support Film Florida’s legislation or other legislation that is completely up to them and something they can work out, we as an office are here to provide the council with information, answer questions from an administrative standpoint, support the current program and fulfill the statutory mandates. Commissioner Welge asked Member Bockweg if that helped answer his question.

Member Bockweg said no that didn’t.

Chair Corbella asked to expand on what he believes Member Bockweg is asking, but wanted everyone to first and foremost bear in mind that staff is professional staff in Tallahassee, their job is to gather the data and information and report it to the council, the senate, legislator and governor, it is not the job of the film office to advocate, sell or promote any piece of legislation or issue, their responsibility and duty is to gather the facts and make it available for leadership and elected officials to process and make decisions with. Chair Corbella stated he is sensitive to
the fact that many times people put the Office of Film and Entertainment in an uncomfortable position of them to become advocates for particular pieces of legislation and that is not their job or responsibility, that responsibility lays with us as members of this council. Chair Corbella stated he is appreciative of Member Bockweig for being in touch with the members of that committee, particularly in his area, the Miami-Dade delegation who are particularly in the house, very concerned with ROI, tax credits and film incentives, and that his constituency in Miami is one of the ones the council is constantly contacting and trying to keep informed because they are the ones that are (respectfully), most opposed to what we are trying to do. Our job as a council is to be out advocating while Commissioner Welge and her staff are providing us with the information to go out and do so. Chair Corbella reminded that Commissioner Welge stated that as a council, one this bill is released, we can come together to either support it or not and provide some insight on the legislation. Chair Corbella stated that the advocacy and the work is the councils and the councils alone, and he encourages all of the council members to do their part and report back on a regular basis to Legislative Chair Horton and the other Legislative Committee members on the feedback you are getting, along with the information and intel you are gathering on the ground. Chair Corbella state that perception is reality and if the perception is that only one or two of us are out there speaking on behalf of this council or this industry the perception may be that we aren’t engaged. Chair Corbella wanted to encourage to redouble the efforts this year more than ever, because we are at a very critical point for this industry in the near future, and while we have supporters in the house, they are not necessarily supportive of the way the incentive is being administered and we have delegates down the line who have a very different opinion of how this industry should be operated.

Member Bockweig stated that he never meant to imply that Commissioner Welge or her office should be an advocate, he understands that is not her role as the Film Commissioner, and understands it’s the council’s job to do that. Member Bockweig stated he understands the biggest problem child of this bill is a couple of members of the Dade delegation, and can assure that he has been doing everything he can to come to some sort of an agreement when it comes to the Dade delegation. He stated his comments were only intended to see how the perception that is out there can be changed, and believes that Commissioner Welge should not advocate but should be more active in briefing the leadership and the representatives and if that is not being done or she is unable to do that, that is something the council should know as a council and then maybe there is something the council could do about that, so that she does have that ability to brief the representatives and the senators, and that was the only intent of the comment.

Chair Corbella stated that is how it was understood and that he is just trying to clarify for everyone on the call what the responsibilities are. Chair Corbella stated that when you do meet with legislators, encourage them to reach out to the Film Office and ask for a briefing. As Commissioner Welge has made mention multiple times before, the Film Office is a resource and she will make herself available to anyone who would like a briefing.
Member Bockweig stated that with that being said, he would advise that Commissioner Welge become more proactive and instead of waiting for a call, she reach out to them and start briefing them on the state of the film incentives rather than wait for a phone call, because as Chari Corbella said, they are very busy, they look at over 2,000 pieces of legislation in 60 days and do not have a lot of time, and it would be more beneficial to everyone in the industry if Commissioner Welge’s office would reach out to them and brief them, not advocate, but simply brief them on the annual report and what is going on.

Film Florida President Michelle Hillary asked Chair Corbella to speak on this important topic, because had a couple of comments and could refrain until update if he wishes or could provide the comments now.

Chair Corbella asked to hold comments until her association report to get through the remainder of the agenda and asked if there were any more questions before we move to Susan Simms report. Chair Corbella stated one more piece of information is that Executive Director Pannucio of DEO this week presented his resignation to the governor and we wish him well. As the council knows the Film Office is housed under the Department of Economic Opportunity and we will be sure to keep the council informed as any information comes available.

Future Business (Susan Simms)

Susan Simms started by saying how lucky we are that through many negotiations between Commissioner Welge and Michelle Hillary, they came up with a way to save the LA Office. Susan Simms stated that the clients to not see it and the transition is seamless.

The state had committed to a few marketing items prior to the marketing budget being shifted and the next commitment we made was to Produced By in New York through the commitment we made Produced By in Los Angeles and is something we have continued to participate in since that event was started. Since Susan was unable to attend, Graham Winnick attended the one day event which worked out great for Florida and Film Florida. We also sponsored the La Femme Film Festival and the Finance and Distribution Panel which was once again standing room only. AFM was the first week in November, and while we did not have a banner or badge which we usually have, Susan stated she was able to manage to organize a number of meetings in that time.

Susan stated she also went as a guest of the Greater Miami Visitors and Convention Bauru for the kickoff of the 20th Anniversary of the American Black Film Festival. They were thrilled that Florida was represented and there was an amazing turnout. This is another great representation of the partnership we have. Susan stated later this week, she will be going to London, thanks to Film Florida, the Naples Office and the Key West Office she will be going to the Focus.
International Production Show in London which is over 100 exhibitors in over 40 countries and they are our biggest partner in international productions. This is an organization we have worked with in the last 3 years in partnering on events in London that we participated in as a state but never attended. They have a large focus on commercials which is a big focus for us as a state given that for the most part they are less “meaty” for incentives. Susan stated next month is Sundance and we are partnering again with Film Florida and there is a film shot in Miami and one in Sarasota that will be a part of that festival.

Susan stated we continue to keep our connections with payroll companies and incentive programs in the payroll companies, and that she is regularly talking to them and reminding them of all the reasons Florida should be kept top of mind. Susan stated she is taking more meetings, and during one of these meetings a person had to duck out early to speak with a locations manager regarding Rosewood, which is the series which the pilot was shot in Miami, hoping they would be able to film in Miami, and in the paper, showing how Eve Longaria’s show is another show that is supposedly going to be set in Miami. We are continuing to keep our head down and work and show up to everything we can.

Chair Corbella asked from her meetings and discussions, does she see anything outside of incentives that is attractive to luring productions here? Are there other things the state can be doing to luring productions here?

Susan Simms said she can’t tell about the state, but service is key. Service is good and free. Florida already enjoys the luxury of all the things you would want to have as a stated to attract business. Many of our competitors do not have the things that Florida has which is why we are the tourism capital of the United States for a reason. She stated is we are not going to have an inventive, which we have seen that at least 1,000 projects came despite the incentive, so clearly people are still coming for projects of a current type, and if they get great service, that is the best word of mouth there is. She stated we are lucky to have Locations International who chooses three states every year to promote, and through long term relationships, Florida was chosen as one of the states, so we will have international distribution to remind people around the world why they should come to Florida with or without an incentive. Susan stated clearly Georgia has doubled down on their incentive, and New Mexico and North Carolina have come back, so we as a state have a way to go.

Chair Corbella thanked Susan for continuing to promote and provide this information to all of our industry contacts out there.

Member Tuscany thanks Susan as well and reminded the sales tax exemption is a key thing as well.

Chair Corbella asked if there are any questions before Traci Colson gives her report.
Caroline Ross informed Chair Corbella that Donyelle Marshall will be giving her report first due to time constraints.

Chair Corbella recognized Donyelle Marshall and asked for her report.

**Sales Tax Exemption through December 3, 2015 (Donyelle Marshall)**

Number of Applicants Processed: 355  
Amount of Tax Exempted Based on Florida’s 6% Tax Rate: $10,512,459  
Estimated Florida Jobs: 20,789  
Estimated Florida Expenditures: $753,074,122  
ROI: 71.6:1

Member Tuscany asked if anyone has heard anything regarding Sales Tax Exemption and if it was a target like is was a couple of years ago.

Chair Corbella stated he hasn’t heard anything and asked Commissioner Welge if she had.

Commissioner Welge said there was discussion the past two years of a production company only being able to take advantage of one but not both incentives. Without any filed legislation to date, she is unsure if that will be included in either Senator Diedert or Rep. Miller’s legislation, but she would not be surprised if it was in one or both once they hit the airwaves.

Chair Corbella moved to Caroline Ross for Marketing and Advertising updates.

Caroline Ross informed that we would be going back to Traci Colson’s update.

Chair Corbella recognized Traci Colson for her report.

**Entertainment Industry Financial Incentive Summary Report (Traci Colson)**

Total Number of Projects Certified: 306  
Projected Total Florida Wages: $735,000,000+  
Projected Number of Florida Jobs Created: 117,000+  
Estimated Room Nights: 216,000+  
Qualified Florida Expenditures: $1,260,234,946  
Total Certified Tax Credits: $296,000,000  
Total Tax Credits Awarded: $184,000,000  
Total Projects Awarded Tax Credits: 240

Chair Corbella asked if there were any questions for Traci Colson.
Marketing and Advertising (Caroline Ross)

Caroline Ross reiterated that we are being featured in the Locations International Guide, and along with that we are renewing our subscription with KFTV with is a locations services website listing where we are able to do a listing on our office and state and what we have to offer.

Caroline stated we recently mailed off our notebooks and pens to the Produced By New York event and we were the only Film Office with “swag” in each of the bags at that event, which was a great opportunity for us.

Caroline Ross asked of the council to send an updated headshot and information if they have not already so it can be included on the new website.

Chair Corbella asked as far as the materials that are provided at trade shows and other events, if those are the Film in Florida ones.

Caroline Ross said they were.

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

Film Florida – Michelle Hillary, reminded that their Film Florida meeting coming up this week in Orlando. If someone would like to attend any of those meetings, check their website and feel free to join and introduce yourself. Reminded as Chair Corbella mentions, they have come out with legislative tool kit that is also on the website and will be at the meeting in Orlando. The kits include important information and press articles about lost business, the number of schools that have a structured film program, graduation statistics and other important information. Michelle also reported that as stated, there are pending two bills to be filed and awaiting dynamic scoring to take place. She said that Film Florida will be participating in Tourism Day in Tallahassee on January 20th and is partnering with Visit Florida to advocate for the film and television industry, talking about the relationships and partnerships we have that is much geared toward creating tourism in our state. Michelle stated that the next Film Florida quarterly meeting will be held in February in Tallahassee, so for those unable to attend Tourism Day this is another opportunity to get to Tallahassee and meet with legislators that day.

Michelle Hillary asked to circle back around to conversation in beginning of call with Member Bockweig. She stated she believes that topic was vitally important and that his question was right on point. Michelle stated she has been in this industry for 18 years, the president of Film Florida the past 2 years and the Deputy Film Commissioner of Palm Beach County for 18 years, and that
it was a huge surprise to her that the State Film Commissioner is unable to advocate on behalf of the industry, and that it has not always been the case, and film commissioners of the past were able to advocate for the industry and were able to go to committee meetings, make meeting with legislators, make program recommendations, testify at committee meetings and so on. She stated she was very surprised that our current commissioner is unable to do this, and that is of no fault of Commissioner Welge, which is the point that Senators Latvala and Diedert were making at the meeting, they were exposing the fact that our Film Commissioner is not able to do these things. That committee hearing has created a great deal of media attention and almost every day she is being asked what’s going on or why this is the case. Michelle stated she is using this as an opportunity to put the responsibility on the shoulders of our governor and say since we now know this is the situation with our film commissioner, it’s up to him to fix the problem. Michelle stated there are 37 states that have a program, some more successful than others, and Florida used to be 3rd behind New York and California, so instead of the Governor saying I will support whatever comes back with a positive investment, empower your state film commission. As we have seen from the numbers, this industry has a massive impact on our community, now how do we show it on paper? Empower your state film commissioner to go out, grab the best pieces of these other programs, come back, make recommendations and let’s fix this so we can show it on paper. Michelle stated she is very concerned for the LA Office. As Susan stated, Film Florida stepped up to help keep the LA Office when they found out it was going to be terminated. Susan is one of the key position the over 50 film commissions in the state use and she provides us all with business on a daily business. Susan is currently in a part time position with the state and in the next quarterly meeting for Film Florida, we need to plan for not only this situation, but if there are further cuts, how can we keep that LA Office open for the state. Michelle stated that this advisory board who can advocate is so vitally important to the industry right now and that she would conclude with that.

Member Bockweig thanked Michelle Hillary for her comments and everything that she and Film Florida are doing. Member Bockweig stated he agrees with her and he has come to the terms with the fact that the film office cannot advocate, so he is trying to come to the next best solution to have Commissioner Welge, reach out to legislators and take the initiative instead of just waiting for their call, because if Commissioner Welge would go to leadership without report, our battle would still be hard but a little bit less.

Michelle Hillary asked Commissioner Welge if she was able to do that.

Chair Corbella stated there is no reason to put Niki on the spot.

Michelle Hillary stated she understands and informed Member Bockweig Commissioner Welge is unable to do that.
Member Bockweig stated Commissioner Welge is able to brief the leadership, she just isn’t allowed to advocate, but is able to brief on the status of the film office. Member Bockweig stated he would like to know if she is being hindered from higher up from even doing that so they can know and address it with them. Member Bockweig said he has come to terms with advocating, but briefing is a different story and that is something that he said also came to light from the meeting that Commissioner Welge had. He stated he understands Commissioner Welge gets put in a tough position, but we all get put in positions and he is trying to find a way to come together and move forward.

Chair Corbella stated anytime you meet with a legislator to reach out to the Film Office for a briefing and they would be glad to give one, all it takes is a call or an email requesting a briefing and he can guarantee is will happen when requested.

Chair Corbella asked if any other Ex-Officios had any comment.

Chair Corbella asked if any members of the public had any comment.

Chair Corbella wished everyone on behalf of the council a Happy Holidays. He reminded we will be hitting the ground running in the New Year with session starting on January 12. Remanded to be on the lookout over the next few weeks for articles and information so if you run into these legislators while you are home, at parties or events, now is the time to push that we are in a critical time for this industry.

Chair Corbella thanked everyone for everything they are doing, their time and their work moving forward.

**ADJOURNED at 11:33 a.m.**