



MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 26, 2009 MEETING

1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
City Hall, Room 416
San Francisco, CA 94102

CALL TO ORDER

Commission President Morris called the meeting to order at 2:03pm.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present:

Melanie Blum
Denise Bradley
Don Canady
Maurice Kanbar
Robert Morales
Jim Morris
Lorrae Rominger
Marlene Sharon Saritzky
Villy Wang

Commissioners Absent:

Peter Bratt
Joan Chen

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE NOVEMBER 24, 2008 MEETING (ACTION ITEM)

Commissioner Canady made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 24, 2008 meeting. Commissioner Kanbar seconded the motion. Public comment was taken; the minutes were unanimously approved.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT (DISCUSSION ONLY)

President Morris told the Commission that over the past few months he has found it gratifying to hear praise of San Francisco along the award circuit from those involved with the production of *Milk*. They have gone out of their way to endorse San Francisco as a desirable place to film. President Morris also congratulated Commissioner Bratt on the successful premier of *La Mission* at the Sundance Film Festival. President Morris closed his report with a discussion of the positive press the FilmHouse residencies have been given in the local press.

Public comment was taken.





STAFF REPORT (DISCUSSION ONLY)

Executive Director Coyote told the Commission that there were 24 projects consisting of 41 film days in December 2008 in comparison to 39 projects for 73 days in December 2007. In January 2009 there were 22 projects that produced 33 film days in comparison to January of 2008 when 28 projects produced 42 days of filming. The large projects filming over the 2 months included a Korean Air ad, the feature film Funny People, an ad for PNC Bank and an ad for Fidelity Investment. In December there was also a 4 minute commercial for Acura starring Andy Lau (the Tom Cruise of China) and directed by Andrew Lau (thought of as the Martin Scorsese of China).

Executive Director Coyote told the Commissioners that Supervisor Alioto-Pier introduced legislation designed to improve the rebate program by replacing the current cap with a \$600,000 per production cap and removing Sales and Hotel tax from refund eligibility while extending the program through June 30, 2011. It is our belief that this new proposal will more effectively attract production while addressing the City's current fiscal crisis. Executive Director Coyote was also excited to announce that Supervisor Dufty had agreed to co-sponsor the proposed legislation.

Executive Director Coyote told the Commission about the December 5th meeting of the California Film Commission. She noted that like our meetings there were very few members of the public in attendance and the primary focus of the Commissioners was the loss of production across the State. Commission President, Stan Brooks, discussed Governor Schwarzenegger's proposed production incentives but no clear strategy for regional Film Commissions to assist in lobbying their representatives for passage of the legislation was established.

Executive Director Coyote announced that the Film Commission's new website was again making progress and was approaching the establishment of a June launch date. She also announced that thanks to the Department of Technology the Film Commission was now able to accept permit payments via credit cards, a service that has been well received by our clients.

Public comment was taken.

NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF COMMISSION PRESIDENT (ACTION)

President Morris thanked the Commissioners for allowing him to serve the past 3 years as President. He then nominated Vice President Rominger to serve as the Commission's next President. Commissioner Canady seconded the nomination and thanked President Morris for his service. Commissioner Kanbar also thanked Commissioner Morris. No other nominations were made; public comment was taken. Vice President Rominger was unanimously elected to serve as President by a roll call vote of the Commissioners.

NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF COMMISSION VICE PRESIDENT (ACTION)

Commissioner Blum nominated Commissioner Saritzky for the position of Vice President. She noted that Commissioner Saritzky's expertise in both government service and the film industry would serve as a benefit to





the Film Office and Commission as a whole. Commissioner Morales seconded the nomination. No other nominations were made; public comment was taken. Commissioner Saritzky was unanimously elected to serve as Vice President by a roll call vote of the Commissioners.

AMENDMENT TO ADMIN. CODE SECTION 57.8 (ACTION)

Executive Director Coyote reiterated that File Number 090024 proposed on January 13, 2009 by Supervisor Alioto-Pier would change the cap on individual rebates from the total amount of taxes that the qualified film production paid to the City to a maximum rebate of \$600,000, remove sales and hotel tax from eligibility, and extend the program through June 30, 2011. Executive Director Coyote recommended that the Commission pass a resolution urging the Board of Supervisors to pass the proposed legislation.

Vice President Rominger asked Executive Director Coyote to explain the process for the legislations consideration by the Board. Executive Director Coyote explained that once introduced the legislation is required to sit for thirty days at which point it is assigned to committee. The committee would then, hopefully, pass the legislation onto the full Board with a recommendation for passage. From here the Board would consider the legislation.

President Morris asked if the Office had any insight as to how the new Board Members would receive the proposed legislation. Executive Director Coyote expressed hope as the Boards previous concerns had been addressed by the removal of both sales and hotel tax from eligibility. She did acknowledge however that passage of this legislation will rely on the outreach of film community members and unions. Executive Director Coyote also noted that *Milk's* critical success paired with the positive impact and reaction of the communities where the filming took place would hopefully contribute to encouraging the Supervisors to vote favorably on this proposal.

President Morris asked if the Film Commission had figures on *Milk's* direct spend. Executive Director Coyote said this figure was hard to come up with but that the below the line budget was \$10 million and while some of this money was spent in neighboring cities the bulk was spent in San Francisco. She noted that their refund was just below \$100,000 but with the revised legislation it would have been approximately \$300,000. President Morris noted what a small investment this was for the City especially once the multiplier effect is calculated.

Commissioner Canady made a motion to urge the Board of Supervisors to adopt file number 090024. Vice President Rominger seconded the motion. Public comment was taken; the motion passed unanimously.

HOURLY EQUIPMENT RENTAL FEE FOR SFPD FILM DETAILS 10B (ACTION)

President Morris explained to the Commissioners that the SFPD had notified the Film Commission that they would be adding an equipment fee to the staffing of all 10b officers including those working on film details. He noted that while this fee is not high dollar (\$6.75/hr for motorcycles and \$13.00/hr for cars) it presents a negative image to out of town filmmakers. He asked the Executive Director what the Office felt the appropriate response to this fee would be.





Executive Director Coyote suggested that the Film Commission express to the Chief of Police that this fee would have a dramatic impact on the work of the Mayor and the Commission to keep filming rates down in order to encourage local growth of the film industry. Executive Director Coyote recommended that the Commission go on to request exemption from the equipment fee for 10b officers working on film details.

Commissioner Morales asked if this fee was in addition to the 14.7% fee levied on officer salaries by the Board of Supervisors. Executive Director Coyote confirmed that this fee would be in addition to the 14.7% and noted that this would effectively raise the hourly rate of an officer to over \$100/hour.

Commissioner Canady motioned that the Film Commission direct the Executive Director to write a letter to the Chief of Police requesting that the equipment fees be waived for 10b officers assigned to film projects. Vice President Rominger seconded the motion. Public comment was taken; the motion passed unanimously.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT (DISCUSSION ONLY)

Commissioner Bradley acknowledged Ave Montague, the founder of the Black Film Festival, and informed the commission that Ms. Montague has passed away.

Commissioner Blum thanked the Film Office for their work on the FilmHouse Residencies program. She said that watching the program unfold has been a pleasure and is resulting in an abundance of opportunities for local filmmakers.

ADJOURNMENT (ACTION ITEM)

Commissioner Morales made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Kanbar seconded it. Public comment was taken. The Commission approved the motion unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 2:36pm.

