



MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 24, 2011 MEETING

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

CALL TO ORDER

Commission President Saritzky called the meeting to order at 2:00pm.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present:
William Adams
Denise Bradley-Tyson
Jon Rubin
Robert Morales
Don Canady
Lorrae Rominger
Marlene Sharon Saritzky

Commissioners Absent:
Melanie Blum
Villy Wang
Debbie Brubaker
Peter Bratt

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER 26, 2011 MEETING (ACTION ITEM)

Commissioner Canady made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 26, 2011 meeting. Commissioner Rubin seconded the motion. Public comment was taken; the minutes were unanimously approved.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT (DISCUSSION ONLY)

President Saritzky acknowledged the recent winners of the COLA Awards that were held on Sunday, October 16. Gail Stempler, a local Location Manager and her Bay Area team which consisted of Peter Moody, Peter Newfield and Daniel Lee won for their work on the independent film, Big Sur, that shot in San Francisco.

President Saritzky added that the California On-Location Awards™ (COLA) is in its 17th year and is the awards ceremony saluting location professionals, production companies and public employees for professional excellence while working on location in the State of California.

President Saritzky asked for Commissioner comment.





STAFF REPORT (DISCUSSION ONLY)

Executive Director Susannah Greason Robbins informed the Commission of the following permit statistics and noteworthy projects:

- 1) Filming continues to rise, with 33 permits with 55 shooting days compared to last month at 20 permits and 39 shooting days. This equals a 65% increase in permits and a 41% increase in the number of shooting days.
- 2) The Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to expand the Scene in San Francisco Rebate program to include documentaries and unscripted television programming (also known as reality TV). They also approved the reduction in permit fee costs for films with budgets less than \$500,000 from \$300 per day to \$100 per day. Supervisor Mark Farrell was the sponsor of this bill. Announcements of this expansion have been relayed to industry professionals and reality TV producers who have worked here in the past.
- 3) Executive Director Greason Robbins attended the Director's Guild Annual Fall Mixer where Ami Zins, the recent Director of the Oakland Film Commission, was honored for her many years of service to the film community. Executive Director Greason Robbins was also given a plaque for the work she has done in the last year.
- 4) Executive Director Greason Robbins attended the Producer's Guild Annual luncheon Friday where she touted the new expansion of the rebate program. Screech Washington, Executive Producer of The Amazing Race, attended so she thought it was a good event to share information about expansion of the rebate program.
- 5) Film Collective update: There are currently three groups of filmmakers in the space at 134 A Golden Gate. One more will be added, Guetty Felin Cohen, in December. Guetty Felin Cohen would have started earlier but had to go to Paris to work on a portion of her film and won't be back until late November. One potential tenant, Matt Rutherford, who has been accepted into the program, is going to look at the space next week to ensure the space will work for him. Rutherford is in the editing process of a film called "The University" about an organization that studies the cutting edge of technology and how we can use it to save the world. There was another inquiry Friday about the space from another filmmaker who will look at it later this week. There is another filmmaker who is filling out an application and checking into insurance costs.

By December, the tenant number could rise from three film groups to seven. The hardest spaces to fill will continue to be the largest and most expensive spaces, offices J& K which rent for \$825 and \$2,225 respectively. There a possibility to have a larger film at the Collective for a short period of time as was done with independent film Big Sur. A documentary production might be interested but overall, she is not sure a long term tenant will want to rent the space.

The 9th Street Incubator has generously agreed to donate one of their projectors that they don't use anymore to the Film Collective. This will be a great addition, as it will allow for screenings throughout the year including





the “Kick off Party” at the Collective scheduled for Thursday December 1st from 6:30 – 8:30pm. There will be screenings of works in progress, food and beverages. A donation of wine for the event was made by Treasure Island Wines. A caterer from the Mid –Market area is being researched. Mayor Lee and independent filmmakers have been invited. There has also been an anonymous donation for the event.

President Saritzky thanked Executive Director Greason Robbins for her work on the legislation. She asked Film Coordinator Janet Austin to make sure information about the Film Collective event gets to the Commissioners.

President Saritzky asked for Commissioner Comment.

Commissioner Bradley-Tyson asked if the larger spaces at the Collective could be partitioned since it might be difficult to rent the space as it is.

Executive Director Greason Robbins said there are partitions in the basement of City Hall to do so. However, she added the drawback is that there isn’t a door for these spaces and it’s not secure to not have that with their equipment. However, she will need to look into the options.

President Saritzky asked for public comment.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO PROVIDE FUNDING FOR INTERNET TO THE SF FILM COLLECTIVE

Executive Director Greason Robbins outlined the proposal that would allow the Film Office to pay a one-time maximum payment of approximately \$1176 for the installation of wireless bridges to connect the Film Collective to the Department of Technology’s community broadband network (CBN). She added that there is extra money from the Film House fund on hold (approximately \$18,000) that could be tapped for this purpose. This could help attract more filmmakers to the program.

President Saritzky asked about the status of the internet service when the Collective moved in.

Executive Director Greason Robbins said that the Comcast service was fine for regular service (email) but not fast enough for uploading and downloading video, etc.

President Saritzky asked if we could just upgrade the Comcast service since they have many different classes of service.

Filming Supervisor Christine Munday said at this point, the service is now slower, a problem for filmmakers uploading videos. This same service is slower at her home so it seems to be an infrastructure problem. She mentioned that AT&T was not available and Comcast was the only choice.

A tenant from the Collective, Chris Thomas, said he did research and found that to upgrade the existing service, it would be very expensive and that Comcast couldn’t guarantee faster service.





President Saritzky apologized for the slow service knowing it takes faster service to complete work on films.

Chris said it wasn't that bad. He added that other services such as Monkey Brain does not serve this area and Sonic and Comcast are a lot more expensive. Filming Supervisor Christine Munday said the upload and download speeds the City offers is much better.

Filming Supervisor Christine Munday said there is an installation fee but no monthly fee at this time. The service is shared with other non-profits, low income housing units and some City buildings.

President Saritzky asked about maintenance fees.

Filming Supervisor Christine Munday said there isn't a number to call if something breaks down. The Department of Technology does not provide assistance if something goes wrong. The tenants would have to work with the others in the network to fix the problem and that she doesn't know how long it will take to fix it if there is a problem.

President Saritzky asked if the service goes down, who can Chris call and how long will it take to fix it?

Filming Supervisor Christine Munday said that they will keep the slower service in case there is a problem with the new, faster service. If there is a breakdown, the tenants will need to reach out to others in the network for assistance and at this point, they do not have a guaranteed time to fix problems.

Commissioner Canady said that time is an issue with filmmakers and is concerned about how quickly something could be fixed if there is a problem.

Filming Supervisor Christine Munday said the basic service will remain as a back-up so uploading and downloading is still possible but it will take longer. She added that the Grey Area Foundation of the Arts, of the non-profits on the CNB, has not had a breakdown yet.

President Saritzky said that she wants to see the most reliable service for the tenants used and is not convinced of this proposal. She asked Executive Director Greason Robbins if she was 100% confident in this process.

Executive Director Greason Robbins said if there was a problem, she didn't know how quickly it could be resolved.

Filming Supervisor Christine Munday said the feedback she received from tenants was that they are willing to pay for this.

President Saritzky responded saying the City of paying for it.

Filming Supervisor Christine Munday the City would pay for installation but not the monthly fees. Fees could be around \$170 a month.





President Saritzky asked about alternatives.

Executive Director Greason Robbins said there is nothing in between. She said there are either no monthly fees or they can keep the current contract but have much slower speeds.

Commissioner Canady asked if tenants are fine with this proposal.

Film Collective tenant Sara MacPherson thanked the Commission for the space and said it has been a great place for independent filmmakers. She has concerns about the monthly fee and that the best option would be to join the CBN. She added that because tenants would be coming and going, they would not have to deal with the administrative issue of having to figure out how to pay the monthly fees.

Film Collective tenant Chris Thomas thanked everyone and said the space is a benefit and keeps them more productive. He researched costs on the service - Sonic was \$325 for first month and \$90 every month after that. These costs would be split amongst all tenants. Installation would be about \$500. Comcast was \$435 for first month and \$235 for other months (\$3,000 a year). This amounts to \$50 per month for each tenant if five groups are present. The upload speed would be 10mg. The upload speed for the CBN would be 25mg.

Commissioner Canady wanted to know how long Grey Area Foundation for the Arts has been using this service?

Filming Supervisor Christine Munday said they have been on it about 3 or 4 months.

Commissioner Rominger asked about monthly fees through the CBN.

Executive Director Greason Robbins said there aren't any monthly fees with the City network, just the installation fee.

Commissioner Canady said it might be good to let new tenants know about this situation.

Executive Director Greason Robbins said that this information could be included in the lease. In the current lease, it says that the City doesn't provide WiFi, so this is a bonus for the tenants.

President Saritzky asked if the service can be transported if the Collective moves. Filming Supervisor Christine Munday said it depends on the location.

Vice President Bradley-Tyson asked about the money that was supposed to go to the Film House program. How will this impact that program?

Executive Director Greason Robbins said the Film Office has a surplus of \$18,000 in funds from the Film House Residency being on hiatus. Rent has not been paid since April and will not affect money in the budget or rent for the program. She said she spoke with Michelle from the Film Society to say she still wants to support the program. She will sit down once the new director is settled to discuss Film House Residency Program.





President Saritzky asked for Commission and public comment.

President Saritzky asked for a vote. All agreed. Motion passed.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT (DISCUSSION ONLY)

Commissioner Canady thanked the tenants and Commission for focusing on the Collective, a much needed service in the film community.

Commissioner Rubin said that he thinks the Film Office website could use some changes in order to attract more filming. He suggested clip reels and would like to assist in this process to make the website more exciting. President Saritzky suggested a conference call to discuss the changes and suggestions to the website. President Saritzky thinks it's important that clients are finding what they need to improve the site.

Executive Director Greason Robbins wanted to have some clear suggestions to understand better what is being proposed.

Filming Supervisor Christine Munday said an intern was coming in to assist with re-making the website. She has made a pdf of the website to start thinking about changes. Executive Director Greason Robbins added there are certain requirements the office needs to adhere to with regards to structure of the site.

Executive Director Greason Robbins said a volunteer came in who created an app with information from DataSF about where films in San Francisco were made. The office will be working with this volunteer on this project.

Vice President Bradley-Tyson commended Executive Director Greason Robbins of her work on the Scene in San Francisco Program and changing the rebate to be more inclusive of different budgets. She wants to make sure this information is publicized since San Francisco is the only city offering such an incentive.

President Saritzky suggested contacting Hollywood Reporter and Variety to let them know.

Executive Director Greason Robbins sent a press release to Hollywood Reporter but it has not been picked up. She is working on getting more coverage.

ADJOURNMENT (ACTION ITEM)

President Saritzky asked for a motion. Commissioner Canady made a motion; Commissioner Rubin seconded. Public comment was taken. The Commission approved the motion unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 2:40pm.

