

Michigan Film Advisory Commission
DRAFT MINUTES
February 8, 2008

I. Call to Order

A. Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Emery King (10:13 a.m.) at the Coleman A. Young Municipal Center, Detroit, Michigan.

B. A quorum was present with the following members: Emery King, Marcia Fishman, Howard Hertz, Cory Jacobson, Timothy Magee, Bob Brown, John Kelly, Bill Black. Also present was Janet Lockwood, Director of the Michigan Film Office and Mike Grabemeyer, Assistant Director of the Michigan Film Office.

C. Unable to attend were: Jim Burnstein, Karen Dumas, Richard McLellan, Emily Loeks, Sue Marx, Brendan Ringlever.

II. Introduction of Members

-Members of the Michigan Film Advisory Commission introduced themselves.

III. Adoption of Agenda

-Motion made and duly supported to adopt the agenda of February 8, 2008.
Passed unanimously.

IV. Adoption of Minutes of December 7, 2007

-Motion made and duly supported to adopt the minutes of December 7, 2007.
Passed unanimously.

V. Director's Report – Janet Lockwood

A. Incentives

1. As word of a possible and exceptional incentive increase gets out, there is an increase of inquiry calls and emails re: Michigan as a film location.
2. Janet Lockwood asked that all MFAC members contact their friends in the Legislature and ask that they support the new incentive bills.
3. Bill Black discussed how Mike Binder and Mitch Albom have been actively campaigning for an improvement of film incentives.

B. UTA Activity

1. There was a conference call with people from ABC Studios and Janet Lockwood, arranged by United Talent Artists.
2. This activity concerns a 22 episode television series.

C. Additional Potential Activity

1. CAA, since hearing about the potential incentives, has interest in placing clients' films in Michigan if incentives are realized.
2. Six new scripts have been submitted in the last four weeks, with budgets ranging from \$1.5 million to \$40 million, along with *Transformers 2*.
3. A Canadian producer is interested in co-production of a television series, initially 12 episodes, in Detroit and Windsor.

D. Scouting

1. Film office staff has recently done four and contracted an additional scout, all in the Detroit area.
2. There are two upcoming scouts and another possible scout from Dream Works. The scouts have included steel companies, neighborhoods, malls and the newly closed section of Jackson Prison.

E. Meetings and Interviews

1. Janet Lockwood has met with the Governor, her staff, legislators and their staff, staff at MEDC, the Governor's new Mark Davidoff and others, all dealing with the new incentives for the most part.
2. Janet Lockwood has done at least six interviews for radio and print.

F. Miscellaneous Activities

1. Janet Lockwood attended the West Bloomfield High School 5th Film Festival, where she read a letter of congratulations from the Governor – to a very enthusiastic crowd. Marcia Fishman, representing Screen Actors Guild, attended with her. The main film was called *Staff Infection*, a film where the staff also participated.
2. Janet Lockwood attended the “Wolverines in Hollywood” event sponsored by the U of M Alumni Association, which featured Jim Burnstein, who is an engaging speaker.
3. Janet Lockwood met at MEDC with Michelle Richards of Wonderstruck Animation. Michelle Richards continues her plans to build an animation studio in Detroit.
4. Janet Lockwood is working with Detroit Film Office on an auto documentary from a Discovery Channel series, being shot in Flint and Detroit. Jan Lockwood also worked with the Detroit Film Office on a Japanese television series. She also worked very peripherally with the DEA series that shot in Detroit – that series was handled by the DFO and FilmDetroit.

G. Staff

1. Mike Grabemeyer is now the assistant director in the Film Office.
2. Katy Rogers is the new intern from MSU. There is an article featuring Katy Rogers on the MFO webpage under “Film Office Assistant Goes to Sundance.”

H. Upcoming Film

-There is a premier February 8, 2008 of the film *Offshore*, shot both in India and Michigan, with Diane Cheklich as producer. The film is a clever film about outsourcing and will have a limited run.

VI. Chairperson's Comments

- Thank You

1. Chairperson Emery King thanked Al Fields of the Detroit Film Office for hosting the MFAC meeting.
2. Al Fields encouraged people to attend the Winter Blast which includes a film festival, announced a possible upcoming program with Screen

Actors Guild, and mentioned the Detroit Film Office support for the Detroit Windsor International Film Festival, beginning June 26, 2008.

3. Chris Baum of the Detroit Visitors and Convention Bureau introduced Carolyn Artman, who mentioned their letter to the editor in support of the incentives, and Xenia Castillo-Hunter, who reported that they recently hosted potential Michigan filmmakers.

VII. Old Business – Tabled Motion

A. Motion made and duly supported to move the following motion off the table: “To recommend – to the governor’s office – that MFO be moved to MEDC.”

B. Discussion

1. Keep the motion tabled because the governor has new interest in the industry and there is already discussion of moving MFO to MEDC.
2. There is a need to take major steps to increase the industry and a department with a large staff and budget would help grow the industry and give MFAC the perception of greater importance. MFAC would be more effective.
3. It took too long to pass the original incentive bills.
4. Those bills did not pass easily because of the politics of certain legislators and members of MFAC, in spite of the good work of many members of MFAC.
5. MEDC could give monies for more projects and studies that might be necessary, i.e. a greater budget than one from History Arts and Libraries (HAL)
6. Louisiana has only three staff people in its film office and it has one of the largest film industries in the country.
7. If there is no increase in the Michigan film incentives, then the MFO need not move because the present staff and budget will suffice with the status quo of activity.

C. Motions and Votes

1. The motion to remove the motion of December 7, 2007 was again repeated. Passed unanimously.
2. Motion made and duly supported to amend the motion so that it reads “To recommend – to the governor’s office – to move forward an increased incentive package and that MFO and MFAC be moved to MEDC.” Passed by a majority.

VIII. Incentive Update – Bill Black

A. Informational Hearings

1. Representatives Andy Meisner and Bill Huizenga arranged for an informational hearing in November 2007 for the House Commerce Committee. Mitch Albom and Mike Binder were among those who testified and emphasized the importance of an improved film incentive package for the state of Michigan.

2. A similar hearing occurred at the Senate Committee of Commerce and Tourism, Jason Allen, Chair. Mitch Albom and Mike Binder again testified.

B. New Bills

1. New bills are currently being written with a possible 40% rebate.
2. Janet Lockwood reported that sponsors are being gathered and that the bills could be introduced as early as next week.

IX. "Keep One Home" Campaign – Marcia Fishman

A. Review

1. Marcia Fishman reviewed the KOH campaign which asks corporate leaders and advertising executives to consider bringing at least one out-of-state commercial production back to Michigan.
2. Marcia Fishman stated that chiefs of staff Dale Hull (of Representative Huizenga's office) and Ellen Rodman (of Representative Meisner's office) are writing a resolution that supports the KOH campaign. The resolution will go to the House and the Senate for support.

B. Report from Gary May, GMayTV

1. Gary May, who works with Marcia Fishman on the KOH campaign, reported that he was able to get several leaders to support the campaign. They are Don Colman from Global Hue, Jim Palmer from Campbell Ewald, and Meijer Corporation.
2. Those on board have been waiting for publicity for the campaign and a knowledge that they will be recognized for their efforts.

X. Baseline Study – Bob Brown

- A. Bob Brown asked if any MFAC members had questions about the baseline study.
- B. MFAC members complimented Bob Brown's great efforts in the study.

XI. Commission Member Remarks and New Business

- A. Bob Brown's film, *Bonneville*, will be in limited theaters at the end of February, but there will be a special showing on February 25 at the Emagine Novi.
- B. John Kelly reminded people about the Detroit Windsor International Film Festival that will begin June 26, 2008.

XII. Public Comment

1. Ellen Finn of Nakota Sun Productions asked for urgency for MFAC's efforts to help increase the film industry in Michigan.
2. Hopwood DePree of Waterfront Film Festival and TicTock Studios welcomes MFAC members to Saugatuck for its June meeting, and encouraged everyone to book their rooms early.
3. Candace Lazar of Communicore, a video production and post house, thanks members of MFAC for their efforts.

4. Mark Adler of Michigan Production Alliance, remarked that incentives are not the only keys to the industry, but foundations (e.g. a new Michigan production guide) are important. He also hopes that commercials will continually be promoted.
5. Jean-Claude Lewis of Beneath the underdog Productions, reported that he is working on the pre-production of a film on Martin Luther King, and that he would like to see more aggressive approaches to increase the film industry.
6. Scott Paul Dunham gave updates on the Detroit Windsor International Film Festival.
7. Eric T. Jackson of Buffalo Soldiers Filmworks, hopes for more aggression in the Michigan film industry.
8. Serenity Sherie Brooks of Michigan Women in Film and Television reminds people of her organization and their annual awards of June 14, 2008.

XIII. Adjournment (12:20 p.m.)

Respectfully submitted by,

Marcia Fishman, Secretary