



**Advisory Board Meeting Minutes**  
Tuesday, February 2, 2010  
Governor's Large Conference Room, State Capitol  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

**ADVISORY BOARD**

**Present**

Lt. Governor Jari Askins  
Steve Alter  
Lael Erickson  
Margo Gray-Proctor  
Kathy Henry  
Chris Salyer

**Absent**

Byron Berline  
Chad Burris  
Robyn Elliott  
Jim Rodgers  
Max Weitzenhoffer

**STAFF**

Claudia Conner  
Yousef Kazemi  
Chris Kucharski  
Abby Kurin  
Julie Porter  
Jill Simpson  
Hardy Watkins

**Guests**

Joe Wertz, *The Oklahoma Gazette*

**OPENING REMARKS**

The meeting was called to order by Lt. Governor Jari Askins at 2:15 p.m. in compliance with the Open Meeting Act.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chris Salyer moved and Lael Erickson seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the November 17, 2009 meeting. All voted in favor. Motion carried.

## HIGHLIGHT OF RECENT FILM & MUSIC OFFICE ACTIVITIES

- Legislative Session 2010
  - OF&MO has one bill under consideration this year, SB1351. The bill proposes adding the Oklahoma Film & Music Office to the Oklahoma Open Records Act. The act currently offers some exemptions to open records for the purpose of business development and business recruitment. OF&MO's inclusion in the Oklahoma Open Records Act would bring our commission in line with the exemptions extended to the Oklahoma Department of Commerce and CareerTech. The act provides for information falling under the categories of business plans, feasibility studies, financing proposals, marketing plans, financial statements or trade secrets to be kept confidential as required to promote the successful development of businesses in our state.
  - Due to the current economic crisis within the state, OF&MO is only pursuing one legislative item. OF&MO will continue to tighten the policies and procedures which are already in place until the budget crisis in Oklahoma is resolved.
- Potential Projects
  - Two films have declared start dates for 2010: *Heaven's Rain* and *Just Crazy Enough*.
  - Another project, *A Christmas Snow*, has prequalified for the Oklahoma Film Enhancement Rebate. Helmed by Tracey Trost, this production will primarily utilize Tulsa-based talent and crew.
  - OF&MO addressed the continual shifting of film productions within the rebate cue by highlighting the prequalification process. Prequalification letters serve to earmark funds for productions which meet all designated rebate requirements. A qualified film production has only two opportunities to push their start date while remaining in queue for funds. Movement within the queue is based on meeting aforementioned requirements.
- South by Southwest (SXSW) 2010
  - OF&MO will participate in SXSW 2010 and host the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Oklahoma Showcase on March 18 from 2-5 p.m. at the Copa in Austin, TX.
  - OF&MO is currently working with Norman Music Festival to book bands. Five headlining spots and four acoustic spots are available. Confirmed headliners include Fiawna Forté and the Pretty Black Chains.
  - OF&MO is still seeking sponsorship of the showcase in order to offset the cost to the agency for this event. Encouraging everyone to reach out to potential sponsors which in 2009 included the Department of Commerce and ACM@UCO.
  - OF&MO changed the location of the venue to The Copa per the request of many who felt last year's showcase lacked adequate space for business dialogue/conversation. The Copa features an upstairs lounge allowing for interaction between attendees and easy access to both stages.

- New Mexico Film Commissioners Webinar
  - Jill Simpson recently participated in a webinar hosted by the New Mexico Film Office regarding the effective operations of film commissions.
  - The third party review, which OF&MO has in place, was a big topic of discussion among film commissioners as the need to adopt this policy grows. OF&MO is in the process of entering into a partnership agreement with New Jersey-based Amper, Politziner, and Mattia to create best practices for the reviews that will include CPA training for those interested in participating in Oklahoma. *Heaven's Rain* or *A Christmas Snow* would be the first productions to undergo the third party review utilizing OF&MO's newest rebate guidelines.
- True Grit
  - A question from Chris Salyer regarding *True Grit* opened up discussion on the film's final decision to shoot in Granger, TX. Julie Porter explained that Oklahoma was too young to meet the 1860's style architecture required by the locations of this production. While Northeastern Oklahoma was scouted, Chris Kucharski acknowledged that the architecture found there was too heavily steeped in more modern influences.
- Sundance Film Festival 2010
  - Jill Simpson represented OF&MO at the 2010 Sundance Film Festival held in Park City, Utah. During her time at the festival, Jill attended the world-premiere of *The Killer Inside Me*, which was shot in Oklahoma last summer. Jill also attended the premiere of *Biker Fox*, a documentary made in Tulsa centering on the life of Biker Fox.
  - Jill had the honor of speaking at a webinar on tax incentives hosted by 411 Publishing and the PGA. The webinar was sponsored by Entertainment Partners and Variety. Variety ran two ads on both coasts. Abby Kurin reported that the estimated subscriber audiences for Variety in Hollywood were 35,000 and 19,000 on the East Coast. This advertising alone in those markets has an estimated value of \$75,000, and does not include ads which Variety ran online.
  - OF&MO was not slated to go to Sundance. Because of the current budget crisis, OF&MO felt the trip was not prudent. However, as more and more valuable opportunities were presented including an invitation for Jill to speak at a panel on Oklahoma's film incentives alongside states like New York and Utah, the trip became very worthwhile. Additionally, native Oklahoman Sterlin Harjo (*Barking Water*) served as an adjudicator for the Short Films Program. These events, along with the premiere of both *The Killer Inside Me* and *Biker Fox*, provided a huge platform to represent Oklahoma.
  - OF&MO had not budgeted to attend the 2010 Sundance Film Festival; however, we were able to have a presence at the event because of the generosity of a few donors to whom we are so thankful. Funding for the Sundance trip was provided by private donations courtesy of Ira and Sandy Schlezinger and the Governor's Roundtable. This occurrence exemplifies the necessity for a separate pool of money from which agencies like OF&MO can pull to compensate for these special opportunities. This dialogue sparked a conversation on funding.

- Funding
  - Chris Salyer was willing to donate \$1,000 and referenced a previous discussion in which all OF&MO Advisory Board members had discussed donating \$1,000 per member. Jill Simpson reiterated that this discussion did not result in a mandatory policy for board members to donate money but rather it was a strong suggestion. After confirming the possibility to receive funds in this manner, Lt. Governor Jari Askins and Hardy Watkins both concurred that both finding the minutes in which this was referenced and sending them out would be a great way to garner interest. Watkins also mentioned the ability of donations to be made to OF&MO within the State Parks Foundation. Questions as to whether donations are a tax deduction are to be investigated. Also, Watkins stated that a way to earmark the funds to OF&MO would have to be found.
  - Jill Simpson stated that networking is the biggest key in securing many of the film productions which come through the state. Nothing is more crucial than face-to-face interaction. Consequently, when budget cuts force OF&MO to cut travel, these face-to-face sales opportunities are the first casualty.
- 2010 Trail Dance Film Festival
  - OF&MO was a sponsor of the 2010 Trail Dance Film Festival. OF&MO Staff were thankful to attend the successful festival and meet with filmmakers.
  - Lt. Governor Jari Askins was awarded the prestigious James P. Garis Memorial Award.
- Norman Music Festival 2010
  - Sponsored by OF&MO.
  - OF&MO is thrilled that this year the Norman Music Festival is holding a separate call for entries for Oklahoma bands and musical talents. This will continue to promote and provide opportunities for talent within the state.
- Produced by Conference 2010
  - OF&MO will be attending the conference in June hosted by the Producers Guild of America (PGA).
  - Last year's attendance proved to be one of the most successful conferences our agency has attended. Our office was able to connect with producers registered with PGA, all of which worked hard to attend the conference. Jill Simpson provided Oklahoma materials to James Cameron and Clint Eastwood among many other industry luminaries at this event.
- OF&MO Website
  - OF&MO is working with OK.gov on the redesign for the Website. The Website is being developed in phases. It is a long process, but well-worth it as evidenced in the training session OF&MO staff attended the previous week.
  - A key feature in the second phase will be the online music database which will do for music what Reel-Scout and Reel-Crew did for film.

## NEW BUSINESS

- OF&MO Staffing Changes
  - Julie Porter introduced the board to Yousef Kazemi, OF&MO's new administrative assistant.
- Open Records Exemption Bill
  - Jill addressed the passing of the Open Records Exemption Bill (7-0) out of committee from which she had just come. The committee asked a lot of questions. Jill made a strong point of establishing that the amendment is presented to support film recruitment efforts. A portion of information required by OF&MO includes individual salaries, budget, and other trade information, and allowing this to be included in open records is something to which the film industry often takes exception. Of a total final rebate payout, only 25% can be comprised of Above the Line (ATL) salaries. Full disclosure of an actor's salary could in some cases be a deal-breaker. Additionally, if a production is required to hand over a script, budget, and other confidential materials as part of an open records request, it can negatively impact their ability to negotiate the best distribution deal, and they will be hesitant to film here. This is a very serious and challenging obstacle to overcome as a film commissioner.
  - Lt. Governor Jari Askins concurred adding that certain areas must be kept confidential, comparing this case to that of Central Service bids from different companies which are closed from open records.
- Social Media
  - Margo Gray-Proctor brought up the appropriateness of agencies to utilize resources like Facebook for funds or tax incentives.
  - Julie Porter noted that Facebook and other social media are currently being addressed by OF&MO. Blogs have changed how our jobs function. OF&MO has Google alerts in place to monitor discussion regarding OF&MO and film production within the state. Most blogs only have a piece of information as opposed to the whole picture.
  - The new OF&MO Website will feature a sharing capability with which users can share links via mediums like Facebook and other approved sites.
  - Jill noted that many film commissions are feeling the strain of budget cuts based on her conversation with them during the New Mexico Webinar. Julie Porter concurred noting that it would be wonderful to hire a webmaster, instead our office has assigned duties to each employee to handle regarding the redesign of the OF&MO Website.
  - Jill applauded Chris Salyer and Kathy Henry for their work on *The Killer Inside Me* rebate and attested to the overwhelming amount of work OF&MO staff provided to complete the rebate process. OF&MO is currently striving to find a balance as we take on new, exciting opportunities that our office has never previously encountered.

## ADJORN

The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m. with a motion by Chris Salyer and a second by Margo Gray-Proctor. All voted in favor. Motioned carried.