

MINUTES

GOVERNOR'S FILM COUNCIL

Thursday, May 8, 2025 • 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Meeting Location & Access Information: Flue Shop, 777 1st St. SW, Albuquerque, NM 87102

10:39 PM – Call to Order. Chairperson James Gollin called the meeting to order at 10:39 PM and welcomed attendees. Roll call was conducted.

The following Council members were present, constituting a quorum: James Gollin (Chair), Jo Edna Boldin, Ramona Emerson, Paula Dal Santo, James Lujan, Marj Ergas, Keagan Karnes, Sam Tishler, Jennifer Schwalenberg, Milton Riess (via Zoom), and Liz Pecos (via Zoom).

Guests in attendance included Steve Graham, NMFO Director, Rob Black, Cabinet Secretary, NMEDD, Candice Neu, Tom Ragan, Alan Trever, Mateo Frazier, Royd McCougish, Cyndy McCrossen, Luis Alvarez.

10:39 AM – Approval of the Agenda. Chairperson Gollin called for a motion to approve the agenda.

- **Motion:** Council member Paula Dal Santo
- **Second:** Council member Ramona Emerson
- **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously. Agenda approved.

10:40 AM – Approval of the Minutes from March 13, 2025. Chairperson Gollin called for a motion to approve the agenda.

- **Motion:** Council member Marj Ergas
- **Second:** Council member Sam Tishler
- **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously. Minutes approved.

10:41 PM – New Mexico Film Office – Steve Graham, Director: Director Steve Graham introduced himself and shared his professional background in the film industry, including roles in Los Angeles and his return to New Mexico in 2018. Director Graham mentioned the addition of an admin person to handle incoming emails and phone calls, aiming to respond within a day. On the marketing side, Dolores Martinez has created a marketing plan focusing on decision-makers and social media outreach. He also mentioned her ongoing work with the New Mexico Media Arts Collective and Stowe Story Labs for screenwriter intensive training. Director Graham also mentioned the upcoming conference at the end of the month.

New Mexico Economic Development Department – Rob Black, Cabinet Secretary: He emphasized the importance of the department's resources for the city's future and expressed his passion for the industry. Cabinet Secretary Black also mentioned the need for the department to look forward to and be grounded in what is important for the industry's success. He asked for feedback on how to move forward and collaborate on issues.

11:05 AM – New Mexico Media Arts Collective – Mateo Frazier, Executive Director: Mateo discussed the progress of a grand project in New Mexico, highlighting the collaboration between the city of Albuquerque, CNN, and the State. He mentioned a 20,000 square foot soundstage planned in Las Cruces, with Arrowhead Park and NMSU involved. The goal is to complete the project by June next year. Mateo also stated that they have had about 449 students or attendees in their programs this year, with plans to reach over 500 by the end of the year. He highlighted the importance of safety training, which is transferable to various fields. Mateo also mentioned their presence in Taos for firearms on-set safety and their connection with students in Gallup.

Matero discussed the recent Gallup Expo, which was well attended with over 400 students and CNM present. He provided an overview of a new building project, with two-thirds of the space to be occupied by CNM and the remaining portion dedicated to a soundstage and flex space for experiential training. The focus is on preparing students for emerging technologies in the film industry, with plans to collaborate with CNM and other partners to deliver these programs. Mateo also mentioned ongoing initiatives like the MAC safety pack, below-the-line training, and the MAC Crew expander event. He addresses questions about a soundstage project in Las Cruces, explaining that it will be used for both production and educational purposes. Mateo emphasizes the importance of remaining flexible in their approach to training, adapting to industry needs and collaborating with various stakeholders to provide targeted and relevant programs.

11:15 AM – CNM Film Program – Alan Trever, Interim Director: Alan discusses the goals and plans for the new facility. CNM aims to support MAC initiatives while continuing and developing new training programs. They are working with industry partners to identify essential needs and are developing new degree tracks, including audio engineering and a direct track to UNM for filmmaking. Alan mentions ongoing collaboration with Liz Marshall from Local 480 to determine strategies for the new facility.

11:25 AM – Working Groups discussion: Commercials and Small Productions Working Group – Council member Keagan Karnes reports on the Commercials and Small Productions Working Group's meeting. They defined their scope to include commercials, industrial shoots, and small productions with budgets under \$15 million, emphasizing those under \$1 million. The group identified pain points for commercial producers, including the need to clarify that they can file with less than 30 days lead time. They plan to work with local film offices and invite commercial producers and ad agency executives to discuss barriers to bidding in New Mexico. Long-term goals include recommending a

simplified registration process for commercials and productions under \$1 million, which could streamline workload and support job training in the industry.

Tribal Inclusion in Film Industry: Council Member Ramona Emerson expressed concerns about the exclusion of tribal communities from the film industry in New Mexico, particularly regarding tax incentives. She emphasized the need for tribal liaisons to be involved in educational support meetings to understand and work around these tax incentives. Ramona also highlighted the lack of outreach to tribal communities and the need to involve tribal colleges in film training pipelines. She suggested the need for technology to facilitate communication with tribal communities and the importance of funding opportunities for native filmmakers in New Mexico. Ramona and Jim discussed their meeting with the Governor, who was supportive of these matters. They also discussed the need to reach out to tribal liaisons for the next meeting.

Supporting Above the Line Talent: Council member James Lujan discussed the importance of creating an infrastructure for above the line talent in the film industry in New Mexico. He emphasized the need to support above-the-line talent to ensure the sustainability of the industry, particularly in the face of potential reductions in incentives. He also highlighted the need to connect trained talent with industry professionals for mentorship opportunities and to create meaningful connections within the industry. He mentioned the potential revival of the Governor's Cup and the need to recommend its new form.

Film Finance – Council member Sam Tishler: He discussed the need to articulate the benefits the State stands to gain from investing in above-the-line talent and the possibility of leveraging the State Film Investment Fund to support homegrown talent. He concluded by expressing the goal of bringing together more stakeholders to speak as one voice and have consistent recommendations.

Post-Production and Gaming Progress – Council member Paula Dal Santo: The sub-committee plans to meet with Dr. Choi from UNM about animation, gaming, and VR after finals. Council member Liz Pecos and Paula are arranging a meeting with Dave Cordis about post-production. The council acknowledges the need for better technology at future meetings.

12:03 PM Public Comment. Cindy McCrosson from Albuquerque's Economic Development and Film Office expresses appreciation for increased communication with the state film office and highlights their rapid permit turnaround. Cabinet Secretary Black notes that Film Office Director Steve Graham, used the council's previous recommendations as a basis for his plans to improve production in the state.

12:15 PM - Chairperson James Gollin called for a motion to adjourn.

- **Motion:** Council member Jennifer Schwalenberg
- **Second:** Council member Keegan Karnes
- **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 12:17 PM.

Disclaimer: These meeting minutes were generated with the assistance of artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance efficiency and documentation accuracy. The content has been reviewed, edited, and approved by the New Mexico Film Office to ensure it reflects an accurate and official record of the proceedings.