MINUTES

GOVERNOR'S FILM COUNCIL

Thursday, October 2, 2025• 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Meeting Location Santa Fe County Administration Complex: 2nd Floor
240 Grant Ave., Santa Fe, NM 87501

10:06 AM – Call to Order. Chairperson James Gollin called the meeting to order at 10:06AM and welcomed attendees. Roll call was conducted.

The following Council members were present, constituting a quorum: James Gollin (Chair), Jo Edna Boldin, Ramona Emerson (via Zoom), Paula Dal Santo (via Zoom), James Lujan, Marj Ergas, Keagan Karnes (via Zoom), Sam Tischler, Jennifer Schwalenberg, and Liz Pecos (via Zoom). Not in attendance: Milton Riess.

Guests in attendance included New Mexico Film Office Director Steve Graham, Santa Fe Film Commissioner Jennifer La Bar-Tapia, SAG-AFTRA Executive Director, Colorado and New Mexico Locals Bronwen Murray, SAG-AFTRA Member Lucinda Maker, Mark Steinig, Maleko Grip, Flower Hulihan, UPM and over 35 attendees on Zoom.

10:12 AM – Approval of the Agenda. Chairperson Gollin called for a motion to approve the agenda.

- **Motion:** Jo Edna Boldin
- **Second:** Jennifer Schwalenberg
- **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously. Agenda approved.

10:13 AM – Approval of the Minutes from May 8, 2025. Chairperson Gollin called for a motion to approve the minutes.

- **Motion:** Sam Tischler
- **Second:** Jennifer Schwalenberg
- **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously. Minutes approved.

10:13 AM – Santa Fe Film Office – Jennifer La Bar-Tapia, Film Commissioner. Jennifer expressed gratitude for the council's collaboration and offered her office's support for future meetings.

10:15 AM – New Mexico Film Office – Steve Graham, Director: provided updates on the film industry's progress, highlighting the need for automation in registration processes and the

hiring of new staff. He also mentioned ongoing efforts to attract productions to New Mexico, including potential collaborations with major projects like "Dark Winds" and "Joseph of Egypt." Director Graham reported on progress on the New Mexico Media Arts Collective's training initiatives and website changes, while highlighting ongoing work with legal to streamline commercial requirements. He also provided an update on efforts to qualify expenses on tribal land, noting complexity due to sovereign nations involved. Director Graham shared insights on the industry's financial performance, noting slight positivity after a tough year, and emphasized the importance of maintaining work and keeping people employed.

10:26 AM – Chairperson Gollin discussed the need to finalize and submit formal recommendations to policymakers by December 1, with plans to summarize and consolidate working group recommendations for clarity and ease of review.

10:32 AM – Film Finance Subcommittee – Council member Sam Tischler

The group discussed recommendations for encouraging local hiring in New Mexico's film industry, including two-tiered tax incentive proposals and strategies for implementation through either the State Investment Council (SIC) or New Mexico Finance Authority (NMFA). The group discussed a proposed loan program for filmmakers and local businesses in New Mexico. The group agreed to recommend removing the distribution requirement and expanding the program to include favorable terms for New Mexico-born projects. They also discussed the possibility of offering interest-free loans to local filmmakers and businesses. The conversation ended with a discussion on hiring requirements for non-New Mexico productions, with the group deciding to keep requirements minimal to avoid potential issues with labor availability.

- **Motion to finalize report:** James Lujan
- **Second:** Ramona Emerson
- **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously. Approved.

10:54 AM – Native Filmmaking Incentive Subcommittee – Council member Ramona Emerson

The group reported progress on Native American tax incentives, noting that Taxation and Revenue Department is receptive to modifying existing tribal agreements, with Commissioner Greens' office working on preparing example expense reports to demonstrate how the incentives would work. The group also addressed ongoing challenges including tribal access issues, the need for film liaisons with tribes, and the loss of funding for Native filmmakers, along with highlighting the importance of creating directories of tribal talent and addressing technology access barriers. The meeting discussed the qualification of expenses for tax credits, focusing on “Dark Winds” submissions and the need for a separate ledger of eligible expenses. The group clarified

that these expenses do not necessarily have to be part of the tax credit submission but can be reviewed separately.

- **Motion to finalize report:** Jennifer Schwalenberg
- **Second:** Jo Edna Bolden
- **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously. Approved.

11:13 AM – Education and Training Subcommittee – Council member Sam Tischler

The group reviewed recommendations for workforce development in the film industry, including assessments of film training programs, support services for below-the-line workers, and targeting underserved communities for recruitment. They also emphasized the importance of creating clear paths for job placement and advancement within the industry, with a suggestion for a mentorship program to address skill gaps. The meeting focused on workforce development and film industry support in New Mexico. Liz discussed upskilling union members and partnerships with film employers and state programs. The group approved recommendations for education and training, including adding mentorship and upskilling training.

- **Motion to finalize report:** Liz Pecos
- **Second:** Sam Tischler
- **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously. Approved.

11:26 AM – Workforce Development - Education/Above-The-Line Subcommittee – Council member James Lujan

The group presented proposals for supporting New Mexico filmmakers, such as screenplay contests, crew competitions, and funding for Native filmmakers. The group also discussed incentivizing health insurance for producers and expanding mentorship opportunities with major streaming platforms. The group discussed establishing a pipeline program for local university film graduates, like the Duke City Shootout, with a proposed budget of $100,000 per location.

- **Motion to finalize report:** Jo Edna Bolden
- **Second:** Sam Tischler
- **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously. Approved.

11:39 AM – Commercials and Small Productions Subcommittee – Council member Keagan Karnes

The meeting focused on reviewing recommendations from various working groups related to film and commercial production incentives in New Mexico. They approved recommendations for customizing tax credit registration processes for commercials and

productions under $1 million, aiming to simplify and expedite the application process. The group reported progress on commercial production initiatives and recommended increased PR efforts, physical presence at commercial conferences, and a mandate for state film contracts to be awarded to New Mexico-owned companies.

- **Motion to finalize report:** Jennifer Schwalenberg
- **Second:** Jo Edna Bolden
- **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously. Approved.

11:55 AM – Incentive Optimization: Process and Regulatory Subcommittee – Council member Jennifer Schwalenberg

The team discussed progress on implementing several initiatives, including simplified registration processes, faster approval times, and increased use of New Mexican talent and businesses in state-funded productions. Key points of discussion included streamlining the tax incentive application process, modifying requirements for smaller productions, and potentially requiring state agencies to prioritize local talent and crews.

- **Motion to finalize report:** Sam Tischler
- **Second:** Jo Edna Bolden
- **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously. Approved.

12:02 PM – Incentive Optimization Subcommittee – Council member Liz Pecos

The group presented legislative recommendations to maintain New Mexico's competitive film tax credit program, focusing on closing loopholes, simplifying processes, and ensuring program stability. Key new recommendations included tightening film partner status criteria, eliminating super loanouts, and introducing an optional qualifying director shadow credit. The group also proposed simplifying rural and facility uplift qualifications, implementing a stability clause for tax credit changes, and expanding qualifying expenditures to include tribal lands and facilities. The discussions also highlighted the need for better coordination between the film office and Tax and Revenue Department to address implementation challenges.

- **Motion to finalize report:** Marj Ergas
- **Second:** Sam Tischler
- **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously. Approved.

12:23 PM Public Comment. Comments included: local filmmaker content for grants, next step with the film council’s recommendations and Senator Pinto priorities.

12:32 PM - Chairperson James Gollin called for a motion to adjourn.

- **Motion:** Jo Edna Bolden

- **Second:** Marj Ergas
- **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 12:32 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.