

MINUTES

GOVERNOR'S FILM COUNCIL

Thursday, February 26, 2026 • 1:00 PM – 3:30 PM

Greer Garson Theatre- Midtown Santa Fe, Building 1, 1600 St. Michaels Dr., Santa Fe, NM
87505

1:07 PM – Call to Order. Chairperson Gollin called the meeting to order at 1:07 PM and welcomed attendees. Roll call was conducted.

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

1:08 PM – Approval of the Agenda. Chairperson Gollin called for a motion to approve the agenda.

- **Motion:** Jo Edna Boldin
- **Second:** Sam Tischler
- **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously. Agenda approved.

1:08 PM – Approval of the Minutes from October 2, 2025. Chairperson Gollin called for a motion to approve the agenda.

- **Motion:** Keagan Karnes
- **Second:** Sam Tishler
- **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously. Minutes approved.

1:11 PM – Tom Bartos, Greer Garson Performing Arts Alliance: Tom described the theater's history, his personal connection as a College of Santa Fe graduate (1993), and the vision to make it a hub for film festivals, award shows, and presentations. Offered a post-meeting tour. The venue represents a significant revitalization opportunity and a potential partner for future film events.

1:16 PM – New Mexico Film Office – Steve Graham, Director: The New Mexico Film Office reported a relatively quiet legislative session, with three film-related provisions included in SB 219. While language clarifying qualified spend on tribal lands was removed due to fiscal concerns, discussions continue with Dark Winds, Tesuque Pueblo, and state partners. The Film Partner Status policy was successfully codified into law, and although the proposed Film Investment Act (loan fund) was not introduced during the shortened session, it received strong support and is expected to return next year. House Memorial 17 passed,

creating a task force to examine regulation of the talent industry. The Film Office is also preparing to launch a new automated registration system and updated crew/vendor database designed to streamline project registration and industry engagement. Outreach efforts continue through targeted marketing, industry events, and relationship-building with key studio decision-makers at Sundance, the American Film Market, Focus/London, SXSW, Cannes, and AFCl events. Additional initiatives include promoting New Mexico's video game industry, maximizing opportunities through the NBCUniversal film partner agreement, and supporting the upcoming opening of the Media Arts Collective (MAC) Railyard project alongside the expanded two-day Film and Media Conference. Production activity remains strong, with direct spending reaching \$360 million last fiscal year, up from approximately \$316 million the year before, and current spending already at approximately \$240 million, driven by returning productions such as Dark Winds and several new projects in the pipeline.

2:20 PM – Discussion of goals for the Council 2026 – Chairperson Gollin: House Memorial 17 — Talent Industry Regulation Task Force: House Memorial 17 established a Talent Industry Regulation Task Force under the Regulation and Licensing Department to examine regulation of currently unregulated segments of the talent industry in New Mexico. The bipartisan measure was developed in response to reports of individuals charging aspiring talent, particularly within Indigenous communities, thousands of dollars in upfront fees for opportunities that never materialized. The task force, comprised of representatives from 12 organizations and agencies, including film offices, legislators, the Indian Affairs Department, and the Attorney General's Office, will focus on regulating the activity of representing talent for a fee rather than specific job titles to prevent bad actors from circumventing oversight. The group is required to convene by July 2026, with statewide listening sessions planned beforehand in Santa Fe, Albuquerque, Las Cruces, Gallup, and tribal communities, and will provide recommendations by November 2026. A member of the Governor's Film Council should be a part of the task force.

Legislative Session Overview and Tribal Lands Qualified Spend: The 2026 legislative session was largely focused on budget matters and concluded without any significant negative impacts to New Mexico's film industry. Discussion centered on proposed language clarifying qualified film expenditures on tribal lands, which was ultimately removed from legislation after the Legislative Finance Committee issued a negative fiscal impact assessment despite a neutral assessment from the Taxation and Revenue Department. Efforts by the New Mexico Film Office and state analysts to demonstrate a neutral fiscal impact were unsuccessful before the decision was made. Stakeholders emphasized the importance of continued collaboration and education among tribes, the Film Office, and the Taxation and Revenue Department, while also expressing hope that the ongoing Dark Winds project at Tesuque Pueblo will serve as a successful model for future agreements. Additionally, legal analysis identified a potential pathway under existing statute that may recognize tribal taxation without requiring legislative changes. The pilot effort will continue, with plans to revisit legislative clarification during the 2027 session.

Film Investment Act (Loan Fund): Discussion continued regarding efforts to reactivate and modernize New Mexico's Film Investment Act loan program. While the existing law allows the State Investment Council (SIC) to invest up to 6% of its portfolio in film-related projects, the program has remained largely inactive due to SIC's primary focus on investment returns rather than economic development. After extensive stakeholder engagement, the New Mexico Finance Authority (NMFA) expressed readiness to administer a loan program, though utilizing SIC funds would likely require higher interest rates and stricter repayment terms. As a result, stakeholders have explored securing a new appropriation for NMFA, which would provide more flexible financing options and potentially support a broader range of film-related businesses and vendors. Although strong support was received from legislative leadership, the Governor's Office, and key agencies, the timing was not favorable for new funding during the 2026 session. The effort remains active, with plans to pursue a new appropriation during the 2027 legislative session while retaining the SIC-NMFA structure as an alternative option.

Working Group Structure Review: All existing working groups continue and recommendations for the 2027 session should be ready by September 2026.

2:45 PM – **Motion to create a Casting Sizzle Reel group:** Jo Edna Boldin

- **Second:** Sam Tischler
- **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously. Agenda approved.

2:50 PM – **Motion to create a TRD process group:** Marj Ergas

- **Second:** Sam Tischler
- **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously. Agenda approved.

3:07 PM – Public Comment: During public comment, attendees expressed appreciation for the New Mexico Film Office's engagement with industry stakeholders while raising a variety of issues and opportunities for consideration. Comments included discussion of film partner agreements, legislative changes, workforce representation, and marketing efforts. Several speakers advocated for greater representation of actors and other industry professionals within Governor's Film Council activities and working groups, while others highlighted concerns regarding local hiring practices, commercial production opportunities, and the impacts of incentive policies. Attendees also promoted industry and educational initiatives, including youth filmmaking programs and local content creation efforts. Additional suggestions focused on expanding marketing efforts to better showcase New Mexico's unique landscapes, supporting emerging filmmakers through micro-budget programs, and exploring future policy changes related to rural incentive uplifts and workforce development funding. Overall, public comments reflected strong support for New Mexico's film industry alongside recommendations to strengthen workforce opportunities, industry promotion, and collaboration across the state.

3:17 PM – Chairperson Gollin called for a motion to adjourn.

- **Motion:** Jo Edna Boldin
- **Second:** Jennifer Schwalenberg
- **Vote: Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 3:17 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.