MINUTES

GOVERNOR'S FILM COUNCIL

Tuesday, July 29, 2025• 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Meeting Location:
Upper Conference Room
Museum Resource Division / Udall Building
725 Camino Lejo on Museum Hill, Santa Fe, NM 87505

1:05 PM – Call to Order. Chairperson James Gollin called the meeting to order at 1:05 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 (via Zoom), Paula Dal Santo, James Lujan, Marj Ergas, Keagan Karnes (via Zoom), Sam Tischler, Jennifer Schwalenberg, and Milton Riess.

Guests in attendance included Steve Graham, NMFO Director, Rochelle Bussey, NMFO Sr. Program Manager, Rachel de la Torre, Robyn Reede, Melissa Chambers, Galen Walker, Tamas Nadas, Tina Presley-Borek, Candice Neu, Sale Taylor, Diego Romero and 32 people logged in via Zoom: Aleen L Martinez, Lane Luper, Penelope Richards, Dan Mathis, Sara Roybal, Marie McMaster, Delmone Taylor, Luigi Marquez, Greg Farinelli, Haraz Divine, Mark Vasconcellos, Delilah Andre, Amy Rose, Nani Riveria, Jennifer Weller, Christina Gopal, Colleen E. Moody and Elissa Kannon and more.

1:06 PM – Approval of the Agenda. Chairperson Gollin called for a motion to approve the agenda.

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

1:07 PM – Approval of the Minutes from May 8, 2025. Chairperson Gollin called for a motion to approve the agenda.

- **Motion:** Milton Riess
- **Second:** Jennifer Schwalenberg
- **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously. Minutes approved.

1:07 PM – New Mexico Film Office – Steve Graham, Director provided an overview of the New Mexico Film Office's activities, noting a significant 56% decrease in film spending for FY25 but an 18% increase in productions. He highlighted efforts to increase engagement with independent producers and discussed marketing initiatives, including new

promotional videos and targeted outreach to industry decision-makers. Graham also addressed concerns about the competitive film industry landscape and the potential impact of AI on physical production. The council discussed issues such as tax and revenue policies for productions in Southern New Mexico and the future of Santa Fe Studios. Keagan inquired about potential new tenants for Santa Fe Studios, and Graham noted that discussions were ongoing with industry stakeholders.

1:29 PM – Working Groups discussion: Chairperson Gollin addressed the current downturn in the film and media industry, noting that while New Mexico's situation is not as severe as in some other regions, the industry is still experiencing challenges. He stressed the importance of supporting New Mexico residents and businesses during this period, while also preparing for the eventual upturn. He emphasized the need for quick, actionable solutions that can provide immediate relief, rather than relying solely on long-term legislative processes. She also acknowledged the state's strong fiscal position, while noting the competition for funding from other priorities such as rural hospitals. Chairperson Gollin reported that the working groups are making meaningful progress on their recommendations, with the next meeting scheduled for December 1st to finalize formal recommendations. He proposed voting on immediate actions that can be taken to support the industry.

New Mexico Film Loan Program Changes: The council discussed proposed changes to the New Mexico Film Loan Program, which would transfer administration from the State Investment Council to the New Mexico Finance Authority. The updated program would offer loans at market rate plus 1.5% to ensure a return on investment, with a requirement for a bank letter of guarantee to mitigate risk. While the current focus is on reviving the loan program, there are also plans to explore additional funding sources and more favorable terms for New Mexico-based productions in the future.

New Mexico Film Fund Reopening: The council reviewed progress and next steps for reopening the New Mexico Film Loan Fund. Members highlighted the framework and projections for the fund, including the potential for 10 loans of up to $15 million each, capped at $150 million annually. The group expressed support for the Film Finance Working Group's recommendations and agreed to expedite the process with the involvement of the State Investment Council (SIC) and the New Mexico Finance Authority. An update was also provided on the Incentive Optimization Working Group's recommendations, which are already underway in partnership with the film office. The discussion concluded with consideration of prioritizing New Mexico cast within incentives, noting that legislative changes may be required.

Supporting Local Filmmakers in New Mexico: The council considered strategies to support local filmmakers, including providing incentives for local talent and productions, as well as stimulating private equity investment. Members discussed outreach to angel investors and the possibility of a screenplay competition tied to private investment. Additional proposals included offering rebates for local above-the-line talent, expanding education and training

opportunities for emerging filmmakers, and incentivizing productions that provide health insurance for producers. Updates were also shared on a successful NYU Tisch film school workshop on Indigenous storytelling and filmmaking, which will continue indefinitely and may lead to a partnership with a Santa Fe program.

Native Land Film Tax Incentives: The council discussed establishing tax-exempt filming on Native lands in New Mexico. It was explained that existing tax agreements between tribes and the state allow tribes to collect taxes and remit a portion to the state, creating the potential for tribes to offer 30–35% tax incentives for filming on tribal lands. A key clarification was made that the word "in" in existing agreements allows tribal participation in the program, whereas "by" does not. A meeting was scheduled for the 31st to finalize documentation and protocols with Commissioner Green, Steve Graham from Tax and Revenue, and Ed from the Navajo Nation. It was noted that Tax and Revenue would need time to review and respond to the proposal.

Tribal Lands Film Incentivization Plan: The council reviewed efforts to incentivize filming on tribal lands and approved a motion to move forward with this initiative. Reports highlighted an increase in commercial production activity in New Mexico and the need to modify rebate application processes to better accommodate quick-turn projects. Public comments raised concerns about promoting and supporting local talent. Tina Press, representing New Mexico actors, called for stronger recognition of local professionals and a more intentional strategy from the film office. The discussion concluded with ideas for incentivizing independent filmmakers and improving talent showcases across the state.

Boosting New Mexico's Film Industry: The council discussed promoting New Mexico's film industry infrastructure and talent base. Suggestions included creating an advertising campaign to highlight production equipment and facilities. Concerns were raised about the Film Crew Advancement Program (FCAP), specifically regarding recognition of department heads and key positions. It was noted that FCAP positions were recently updated to include more comprehensive roles, with an emphasis on the film office's commitment to supporting local talent and productions. The council agreed to continue discussions on improving local hiring practices and marketing efforts.

2:49 PM Public Comment. Delmone Taylor (via Zoom, Actor/Vault Studios): Asked what support is available from NMFO. Action: NMFO to follow up.Nani Rivera (via Zoom): Requested support for local theaters and local filmmakers. Tamas Nadas: Expressed interest in more film training opportunities. Robyn Reede: Requested increased social media presence on ATL and for actors in NM. Tina Presely-Borek: Advocated for more work opportunities for local actors. Greg Farinelli: Advocating for independent films in NM. Amy Rice: Suggested promoting NM talent. Luper Lane: Recommended improved marketing within NM. Sara Roybal: Asked what can be done to promote local heads/keys in NM.

3:18 PM - Chairperson James Gollin called for a motion to adjourn.

- **Motion:** Milton Riess

- **Second:** Marj Ergas
- **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 3:18 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.