



Seattle Film Commission

Meeting Minutes – Monday, September 22, 2025, 10:00AM – 12:00PM

M5 Creative and Virtual

Commissioners Present: Champ Ensminger, Tom Florino, Mark Freid, KD Hall, Michael Huang, LexScope, Kat Ogden, Davis Powell, Anthony Tackett, Budi Mulyo

Commissioners Absent: Lowell Deo, KD Hall

Staffed by Office of Economic Development: Chris Swenson, Leslie Daniels

Members of the public may attend virtually or in person. In-Person Public Comment: Register to speak on the Public Comment sign-up sheet located inside Boards and Commissions Room. Speakers must be registered in order to be recognized by the Chair. Submit written comments to Seattle Film Commission: SeattleFilmCommission@Seattle.gov

AGENDA

1. Call to order
2. Roll Call
3. Land Acknowledgement
4. Public Comment
 - a. Ben Wilson - CEO of Color of Sound in Port Townsend, produce documentary films for social justice orgs, putting together emerging black filmmakers fund
 - b. Harold Phillips - SAG AFTRA member in Bellingham
 - c. Matt Lubetich – Looking for past meeting minutes, interested in catching up online; interested in where Position 11 selection is
5. General Order of Business
 - a. Approval of August minutes
 - i. Vote – Approved unanimously
 - b. OED
 - i. Commercial Film Attraction & Retention Initiative
 1. Vendor and labor meeting highlights
 - a. Mark – Matching LA is technical based, not matching vibe
 - b. Budi – Embrace emerging technologies
 - ii. Federal impacts information request
 1. Tom - \$100K tech talent requirement will be hugely impactful to larger corps, will trickle to other talent development, big conversation in tech sector currently. Global demand for talent, H1V additional cost will price US out of recruitment, updating education system will take years to build and produce talent
 2. Budi – Canceled project from China because of 100% tariff
 - c. Review of past commitments and events
 - i. August 26 – Scope Screenings
 1. Budi – Great festival, first time attending; representation matters
 2. Lex – Next installment is Sept 30, remainder of series is at Langston Hughes
 - ii. August 29 – WIF
 1. Attended by Council President Nelson
 2. Budi – Attended, appreciated the makers space element
 - iii. September 15-18 – AFCL Cineposium – Report by Kat Ogden
 1. Three days of panels, one day of networking



2. Every Film Commission is structured differently
3. Not all reps were commissioners
4. Hosted in Cincinnati and Kentucky; both Mayors attended; set up as a partnership between the cities
5. Hosted at compelling locations including halls and stadiums
6. Cincinnati: Very high energy, said they could only support one large feature production at a time with their crew level
7. Mayors presented on their priorities to bring film production to the region
8. Studio, Indie, Location focused; brand partners and how to partner with sports team
9. Washington Filmworks and Montana presented; Montana claimed they sent "Train Dreams" to Washington State
10. Bloomberg "Local Growth: Economic Development for Film Commissions" handbook, recommendations to create discount cards for neighborhoods, working closely with State Commissioner, working with neighborhoods to create film-friendly locations, recommend learning from this
11. Takeaways:
 - a. SFC has 11 commissioners, good ability to connect with community sectors
 - b. Who is our contact at sports teams for local content?
 - c. Can we develop a sense of belonging on set?
 - d. Proctor and Gamble setting up studio, difficulty is how to get into the pipeline; encouraged about Tom's work getting clients in the room for this discussion; combination of commercial and independent creative sector in Seattle sets us up for success
- iv. SIFF Gala – 9/18
 1. Champ – Attended, great produced event at Fremont Studios, SIFF discussed taking the helm of NFFTY and had youth filmmakers speak
- v. NWFF Local Sightings – 9/19
 1. Champ – Physical location for filmmakers to convene is an excellent opportunity – it's where you find work happening; good up and coming talent and special as a commissioner to see what is happening
 2. Lex – Hosted the Sci Fi shorts festival; next weekend is the closing, encourage everyone to go
- d. Preview of upcoming commitments and events
 - i. Inside Scoop
 1. September 25 – Lex
 - a. Interactive and community-based event, hearing from filmmakers on what is needed; create and discuss a resource pool, communicate on what we need, is there anyone in the room that can help
 2. October 22 – Michael
 - a. Discuss what it means to be in advertising post-federal election, gathering panelists now, focusing on demystifying the agency world on (1) emerging talent, (2) generally diverse or underrepresented communities, (3) connecting dots between film industry and agencies
 3. November 19 – KD
 4. December 10 or 17 – Davis
 - ii. Opportunities



1. September 25 –
Filmmakers of the African Diaspora – 2025 monthly series
 - a. 35 people attended the Inside Scoop, first time meeting and talking about their experiences in the film industry; two hours was not enough time so looking to continue it monthly, will meet monthly at M5 starting 9/26
2. October 8 – TASVEER kick off and tabling
 - a. Commission is interested, ask for more information; Lex, Kat, Budi interested
3. October 18 – Zeta Maya Lunch & Learn – Presented by + Panelist
Panel discussion will be on the future of the film industry, the diversity of our local creative economy, its importance, and the various tools and emerging technologies (like AI, robotics, automation, virtual reality, etc.) that will transform and impact artists, jobs, creative professionals, and filmmakers, and how we can effectively prepare for it now
Michael – Supports SFC as presenting partner
Mark – Supports SFC as presenting partner
Budi – Asks if org can promote SFC and SFC events
Vote – unanimous approval
4. November 13 – City Council presentation (slated)
 - a. Kat – Combine priorities from each committee, review of last year’s work; key priorities are SPD staffing, SB 5814, OED commercial film initiative
- e. Committee and workgroup updates
 - i. Economic and Workforce Development (Tom Florino)
 1. Commercial roundtables are hugely valuable in creating awareness that commercial work is the key to film production here and not a side hustle
 2. Industry concern about AI enhancement; technology impacts to actors are real concerns; proposals to restrict AI from gaining incentive dollars – preemptively putting cage around the industry will impact where productions can go; industry is extremely transient; important for commission to understand its use; patience is virtuous in this conversation
 - a. Mike – Sees a “for” “against” AI binary happening in the industry; is this something that SFC should spend time on
 - b. Davis – Complicated issue, SAG AFTRA has well known stance; SFC is part of OED, is OED interested in bringing in money by any means necessary, is the focus on well paying jobs, don’t want to get to a race to the bottom where everyone is trying to undercut the other; we as a body don’t have direct influence on State film incentive; would be doing a disservice to race forward with a quick turnaround conversation and determination; there is also a state commission considering and producing a report (December)
 3. Was in NC covering a series being shot there; hosted policy makers and crew that worked on the show; policy has caps on incentive programs, concern and conversation about how to attract work with limited crew; Cincinatti is a great case about how to represent itself realistically – Seattle is a great example with its commercial focus
 4. GSP – Great partner in the roundtables and in support of B&O to WF; want to work in the future to encourage creative industry prod co’s to be at the table to take an up close look at Seattle
 - ii. Policy (Mark Fried)
 1. Working with OED on commercial film attraction initiative
 2. Discussing federal impacts



3. SPD officer availability
 - a. SPD leadership re-org in process, OED meeting with SPD on 10/3
 - i. Davis – Recommend having union lead there because it may be CBA rule
 4. SB 5814
 - a. Mike – Sees this as impactful to every part of production
 - i. DOR is executing arm
 - ii. Legislator communication is key to this
 - iii. Already seeing notes on taxes being passed through
 - iv. Big question is how do clients not see this as an incentive to hire productions from outside of Washington to save the 10% tax
 - b. Kat – Workgroup opportunity – Kat and Mike offer to give time to this
 - i. Speed of notification because of urgency
 - ii. What can the City do? Need to get that in order to have parameters and any programs to off-set can do; OED will get information this week
 - iii. Marketing, Branding and Initiatives (Champ Ensminger)
 1. Keeping tabs on socials
 2. Considering organic ways to balance events and other posts
 3. Considering funding for a social media manager
 4. Looking ahead: Interested in how to discuss roundtables and tax issues; what's a good touch point to inform communities to find out more, etc.
 - a. Kat – Consider this for retreat conversation
 - f. Committee re-org proposal - **TABLED**
 - i. Public Policy (new)
 1. Include econ dev
 2. Policy recommendations/review
 - ii. Workforce & Professional Development
 1. Engaging with crew base
 2. Offering professional development (inside scoop, FCT, etc.)
 - iii. Branding & Marketing (no changes)
 - g. SFC Retreat planning - **TABLED**
 - i. Oct 13-21
 - h. GOIA Training in Seattle - **TABLED**
 - i. Oct 28 or 30
6. Adjourn
- a. Vote – Approved Unanimously