

FILMONTARIO

ONTARIO FILM & TELEVISION CONSORTIUM

September 2005 Update

FilmOntario welcomes new Board members Alex Raffe (Savi-Media) and Laszlo Barna (Barna-Alper Productions)!

CTF/Telefilm

Work continues on the CTF position paper with FilmOntario and the Ontario Producers Panel and the Toronto Film Board. Our hope is to have documents finalized and submitted by October 31st.

The Province / Finance

As we know, Minister Sorbara has recently stepped away from his Ministerial position, until the current investigations are completed. Sorbara and his staff have been warmed by the supportive letters and calls that they have received from our industry. The FilmOntario Board unanimously agreed to extend the invitation to Sorbara to maintain his Guest Speaker spot at the upcoming AGM, and he has accepted!

In the meantime, we continue to meet with the Finance Chief of Staff, as planned, to discuss our issues in more detail, and develop some next steps to take together towards achieving our goals.

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City of Toronto and Toronto Film Board

(i) The Mayor announced:

a) The Mayor announced that there would be a new, senior Film Commissioner position, however, it would be a shared position with Strategic Economic Development Director. The good news is that this is the first time the Film Commissioner has been this far up the system. The news was received with disappointment, although it is regarded as a positive step towards our goal of a dedicated full time Film Commissioner. The Mayor agreed to review this position in future in light of the industry's comments.

b) The Mayor declared a goal of this Film Board the development of some position papers on national and provincial policies that discriminate against Toronto, specifically with regard to the CRTC, CTF and tax credits. He also wanted to develop a strategy for the media on these issues. FilmOntario offered to work closely with the Toronto Film Board to craft these position papers.

c) The Mayor also informed the room that he would be authorizing the secondment of an Executive Assistant position to serve the Film Board and the various working groups in their research/documentation work, position paper development and navigating City Hall processes.

(ii) Marketing and Promotion Working Group

Co-Chair Mimi Wolch announced that they recommended “You Belong Here’ to be the common brand phrase for the film and television industry for City, Province and industry use. A common graphic was agreed to as well.

This was recommended to, and passed by City Council. The legal work has just been completed between the Province and the City (October 20th) and now all marketing and promotion product for our industry sector will have the same brand phrase and look.

This is the culmination of 2 years of work by FilmOntario, trying to get the City and the Province to use a common brand phrase and layout for all marketing and promotion materials specific to the film and television industry.

(iii) Strategic Infrastructure Working Group

There were several pieces raised by the SIWG at the Board meeting, including:

a) a call to review the Exhibition Place film policy. It was decided that Don Carmody, Sue Murdoch, Ron Haney and Sarah Ker-Hornell meet with Deputy Mayor and Councillor Joe Pantalone (Chair of Exhibition Place) to review specific problems and propose some solutions.

b) A position paper for the City's "Designing Toronto's Future Streets" stakeholder review be submitted to Planning and Transportation.

c) The City staff report "Film Industry: Available and Suitable Space" was discussed, and sent back to staff to rework the lists in conjunction with Ron Haney and Sue Murdoch, to qualify the list as per the SIWG recommendations: nothing under 10,000 clear span space, only available space not already in long term contracts.

As well, the staff were asked to review land use in the Portlands in conjunction with TWRC to identify all parcels for 5, 10 and 15 year use potential during the revitalization transitions, and report back to the Film Board at the next meeting.

(iv) Inter-departmental Working Group

a) Version One of the competitiveness matrix is completed. The jurisdictions include Toronto, Vancouver, New York and LA. The Film Board asked that it now be reviewed in detail by the co-Chair, Sue Murdoch, in conjunction with Ron Haney and his team.

b) As neither the City nor the Province currently track studio production activity (film, television and commercial), it was decided that the TFTO would, effective immediately, track total shooting days, via additional questions on their permit info sheet.

A date has not yet been set for the next Toronto Film Board meeting.

**Don't forget, the AGM is 5pm Wednesday, November 9th at
The Four Seasons Hotel, Yorkville.
Guest speaker: Greg Sorbara, MPP**

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