

**ACTRA TORONTO
COUNCIL MEETING VIA ZOOM
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2020**

PRESENT

Theresa Tova, President, in the Chair
Rebecca Applebaum, Vice-President
Angela Asher, Vice-President
David Gale, Vice-President
Heather Allin
Lisa Michelle Cornelius
Wendy Crewson
Paul de la Rosa
Deb McGrath
Aidan Devine
Shawn Doyle
Kevin Hanchard
Art Hindle
Leah Pinsent
Araya Mengesha, alternate for Dalmar Abuzeid
Kiley May, alternate for Angelica Alejandro, Vice-President
Jack Newman
Samora Smallwood
Joy Tanner
Jocelyne Zucco

REGRETS

Shereen Airth
Maria del Mar
David Sparrow, Past President
Richard Young, Treasurer

COMMITTEE & MEMBER CAUCUS CHAIRS, OMBUDSPERSON

Bree Ali, Chair, Apprentice Caucus
Karen Ivany, Ombudsperson

ALSO PRESENT

Sue Milling, Executive Director, ACTRA Toronto
Judy Barefoot, Director, Commercial Production, ACTRA Toronto
Alistair Hepburn, Director, Film, Television and Digital Media, ACTRA Toronto
Karl Pruner, Director, Director, Communications, ACTRA Toronto
Karen Ritson, Director, Finance and Administration, ACTRA Toronto
Nicole Valentin, Director, Member Services, ACTRA Toronto
Marie Kelly, National Executive Director, ACTRA
Tania Cardwell, Stunt Liaison, ACTRA Toronto
Taisa Dekker, Industry Relations, ACTRA Toronto
Cass Enright, Media Relations, ACTRA Toronto
Victoria Shen, Special Advisor, ACTRA Toronto
Karen Woolridge, Public Relations Officer, ACTRA Toronto
Freda Merritt-Gambrill, Recording Secretary, ACTRA Toronto

The meeting was called to order over Zoom at 10:03 a.m. with President, Theresa Tova, in the Chair.

Ms Tova introduced and welcomed all present. This was followed by the reading of the Land Acknowledgement by Shawn Doyle and the Equality Statement by Jocelyne Zucco and Paul de la Rosa.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION #1

Moved by Heather Allin, seconded by Joy Tanner:

“That the Agenda for the ACTRA Toronto Council Meeting of October 6, 2020, be accepted.”

CARRIED

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION #2

Moved by Jocelyne Zucco, seconded by Jack Newman:

“That the Minutes of the ACTRA Toronto Council Meeting of September 1, 2020, be accepted.”

CARRIED

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Theresa Tova attended and reported:

- Tova missed marching with our members and labour partners on Labour Day. Like other events during COVID, Labour Day was also celebrated virtually this year and Tova was able to record a message which was featured. She stated that if there is anything that the pandemic has reinforced is how Performers continue to be the most precarious of workers in the gig economy and how vitally important the work ACTRA and Council does together on behalf of artists.
- Tova reminded Council that Council must turn their attention to Succession Planning. She has almost done her second two-year term as President and in January ACTRA Toronto Council will elect the next President from Council to represent the ACTRA Toronto Membership. She encouraged Councillors to think about who they respect and trust and feel is ready and capable to take on the responsibility to represent 15,000 Members, to articulate Members’ concerns and needs with our industry partners, with all levels of government and at the National table. Ms. Tova said that it is a demanding job but gratifying and well supported.
- Tova attended TIFF virtually where she saw 24 films and attended five industry events. She was committed to seeing Canadian and women-led films and shared a list of notable and exceptional work.
- Festival season continues with Inside Out Film Festival, Reelworld and ImagineNative.
- Tova attended the Stunt Committee meeting and OSLO training session.
- EIC work continues reaching out to agents.
- An expanded Ad Hoc Sexual Harassment Committee will be meeting to look into education, coaching and self-tape safety.
- Attended Town hall calls with Minister Steven Guilbeault and Minister MacLeod.
- Attended the PAL AGM. Two new members were elected to their Board – Stephanie Belding and Scott Walker and re-elected were Elva Mai Hoover, Dini Petty, Doug Paulson, Aggie Elliot and Rex Hagon. Additional Board Members are Jocelyn Reneuve, David Plant, Barbara Sadegur, Rochelle Porter. Congratulations to all.
- Attended special CASCU meetings. She thanked Council for attending the Extra-ordinary Meeting of Council on September 23rd at which time Council voted in favour of the Asset Purchase Agreement and new partnership and merger with FirstOntario to rebrand CASCU as Creative Arts Financial a division of FirstOntario. A special

Zoom meeting of CASCU Members following this Council Meeting will be held at 1:00 p.m. to announce the results of the vote.

- COVID-19 information is fluid as decisions are being made every few days by the province and the Chief Medical Officer around targeted closures, testing and contact tracing, etc. It is confusing. Tova has talked to several members over the weekend as members are hearing rumours about positive tests. She shared with Council what she has been sharing with Members over the phone and on line –

Friends, As predicted we are in the second wave and like other workplaces, we are seeing isolated positive tests on our sets. This is hugely concerning to all of us. But, to date, there have been NO super spreader events from filming. The cases have been contained due to the stringent safety protocols in place. To be clear, the positive cases discovered from on-set testing were contracted from outside the work place.

We can get through this with strict adherence to safety protocols. Wearing PPE, distancing and washing of hands has proven to contain transmissions on our sets. Please heed public health advice and production guidelines.

Having said that, there is one set taking a two-week hiatus while people are tested and in isolation. They believe that the case is contained but want to be sure and are taking the time. Again, other sets are open. Producers are working daily with all unions and guilds to make decisions based on safety of all. Every set that has a positive diagnosis has tested everyone and continued only once they've been given the green light.

Of course, the worry is that mistakes will be made. And yes, you deserve to be informed. We encourage productions to communicate with all performers and to be as transparent as they can be.

If you are on sets please communicate your safety concerns with your COVID medical team, your agent and we're here as well.

We will be holding an ACTRA Toronto town hall this Thursday. Please join us as staff will be with us to answer your questions.

Tova reported that one Member was concerned about the lack of transparency and asked, "Why all the secrecy" and others wanted to know which shows were affected.

Tova replied that it is not secrecy. It is privacy under the Personal Health Information Protection Act. This information cannot be shared publicly. She assured Council that those Members working on the affected shows are aware.

Tova said that some Members were panicked about the return to Stage 2, however, Tova reminded everyone that the Minister, in her Town Hall on Friday, said that film and television sets are not affected by the restrictions that were announced as our industry has gold standard protocols and guidelines in place.

Tova asked Members to look after themselves and each other. By taking this responsibility seriously during their personal time off sets, it will help keep the industry open. She stressed that Members should stay home and not go to set if they do not feel well. She asked everyone to limit their activities to necessary outings and follow the recommended precautions of wearing masks, distancing and washing of hands as they work.

A Town Hall will be held on October 9th in place of the Fall Members Conference.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Sue Milling reported.

Things were looking better in September than they are now with the COVID numbers on the rise. The Film and Television Department and Commercial Department staff are working flat out to support performers, producers and engagers get back to work. The majority of staff are back working full or part-time. There is a skeletal staff in the office and a few staff are still on temporary lay-off.

ACTRA is working hard on behalf of the Members with AFC, AFBS and CASCU to ensure that there are supports in place for members as they go back to work.

Ms Milling said that we have made tremendous progress in our Operating Plan despite the impact of the pandemic on finances and the usual meetings and events ACTRA Toronto would host in a year. A full report will be provided during the October 8th Town Hall.

Staff and FilmOntario are lobbying the provincial government to include COVID costs in the tax credits and we are cautiously optimistic that this government will be covering these costs. These costs amount to 20 to 25 percent of a production's total budget.

The National Commercial Agreement has been ratified with a one-year extension.

The CBC Radio and Television Agreements have also been extended for a year.

The Ubisoft agreement was ratified at the end of August and a copy of the revised agreement should be available shortly.

In terms of member-engagement, Nicole Valentin is leading our team in the work of our new membership system. We are working on our new website as well as maintaining communications with our Members.

Regarding finances, Ms Milling said that we had very good response during the dues period. We are continuing to receive support from the federal government through CEWS.

Regarding CASCU and the proposed merger with FirstOntario, Ms Milling thanked everyone, especially Frank Manzo and Karen Ritson who have put in a lot of time and emotion in making this a reality.

Industry Report: Taisa Dekker reported.

- A production reached out to ACTRA Toronto as they were looking to cast a performer to host a reality TV competition. They realized after looking into the non-union sector that they needed a professional, unionized performer for the series, and so the production became signatory and an ACTRA member got the role.
- The producer of a radio play reached out to the union as they wanted to engage professional talent for the audio-only production, and the project went ACTRA.
- Spoke with a representative at the City of Hamilton's Planning & Economic Development Department, Tourism & Culture Division about changes in the industry since covid19 and how the municipality is promoting the area to content creators.
- Attended the TIFF 2020 Industry Conference, which was fully digital this year.
- Through attendance at TIFF, met a Canadian producer based in LA who is interested in shooting their feature film in Ontario. We have met twice since TIFF and will continue to connect about the process of engaging union performers on this film.
- ACTRA Toronto took part in Cinefest Sudbury industry panels and micro-meetings with content creators. ACTRA Toronto Council Executive Member Richard Young spoke on the "Thinking Independently Together: Creating Equal Opportunities" panel and Taisa Dekker spoke on the "CION Film Forum 2020" industry panel.
- On Tuesday, September 29th, over 150 members tuned in to the ACTRA Toronto webinar All About Animation. This panel featured ACTRA members Deven Mack, Ana Sani, Steph Seki and Nicole Stamp, and was moderated by Voice Committee Chair, Cory Doran. The panel will be posted on the Voice Committee page on the website, under "Resources," where previous voice-related panels are also available.
- Work continues with the Diversity & Inclusion Committee on the Demo Reel project, as well as further training in voice performance for BIPOC members.
- The ACTRA Spotlight continues to shine on union performers and signatory productions. Throughout TIFF, the union promoted ACTRA Toronto members and films in the festival. In October, the union will promote union content from Inside Out Film Festival, Reelworld Film Festival and ImagineNATIVE Film Festival.

Report from Cass Enright: Mr. Enright reported that he promoted on social media the TIFF films that were made out of ACTRA Toronto as well as films from other ACTRA jurisdictions which had ACTRA Toronto Members in key cast.

There was a lot of social media engagement regarding *Schitt's Creek* Emmy wins and an interview with Noah Reid. Mr. Enright continues to promote ACTRA Toronto members in upcoming events, i.e. Inside Out Film Festival, Reelworld Film Festival, ImagineNative Film Festival, etc. A number of videos were produced in the summer promoting our Members. A video about animators in collaboration with Ontario Creates Ready to Roll has also been produced.

SPECIAL ADVISOR'S REPORT

Special Advisor, Victoria Shen, reported. The industry is coming together to do an outreach to schools. They are encouraging them to incorporate respectful workplace training into their curricula.

Equity has joined HAVEN. Telefilm will be renewing their funding for the HAVEN Helpline. They were impressed that although the industry had shut down Members were still able to access the helpline.

Work through the Sexual Harassment Ad Hoc Committee is ongoing with the most recent meeting focused on preventing harassment in education and coaching environments.

Ms Shen will be participating on a federal cross-sectoral recovery roundtable along with other union and guilds.

ACTRA Toronto launched a new and improved Respect on Set Training last week. She thanked everyone for their help and input.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS

Vice-President – David Gale: Mr. Gale reported that the Communications released the NCA edition of ACTRA Toronto@Work with Jamaal Grant and Reid Janisse who shot two McDonald's commercials, one from home and one on location and ACTRA Toronto's Diversity & Inclusion Co-Chair Samora Smallwood and Robert Ifedi - her partner - who shot a Subaru commercial on location and played a couple. <https://youtu.be/ISXACCKsYo4>

outACTRAto: The Inside Out Festival - Sponsored by ACTRA Toronto, is featuring the short film contest winner *Body So Florescent* as part of its short film program BOLD. The queer film fest runs from October 1 to 11. Committee member Kinley Mochrie makes her film debut at the festival in the film *A brief history of the Unicorn*. <https://insideout.ca/toronto-films/shorts-bold/>

ACTRA National Constitution and By-Laws Committee, which Mr. Gale co-chairs with UBCP/ACTRA President Keith Martin Gordey, will be meeting next week to *discuss* among other issues:

- UBCP/ACTRA's - Potential change to membership rules for Indigenous performers.
- Montreal's AABP membership criteria.
- Montreal's interpretations of the rules for BG ACTRA members who are also agents and/or casting agents.

Editorial Committee: Joy Tanner reported. David Gale continues to re-SCALE the membership with the ACTRAToronto@Work podcasts. The current video, *We are Open for Business*, includes fellow Council Member Aidan Devine, as well Laura Vandervoort, Tony Nappo and Rainbow Sun Francks. Mr. Gale discusses with these talents, what it is like to film at this time. The link can be found here: www.actratorontoperformers.com/watch-actratorontowork-ipa/. She asked Councillors to share this on their social media platforms.

Upcoming focus is on NCA, IPA and Background.

AYA: John McGrath submitted the following report:

- AYA spent the month planning the next couple of workshops.
- They have a storytelling Zoom session with Collette Micks scheduled for Sunday, October 18th.

- They are also working on securing dialect coach John Nelles to do a session on accents, particularly the non-regional American accent.

Vice-President – Rebecca Applebaum: Ms Applebaum reported.

Ontario Green Screen Advisory Committee: Ontario Green Screen launched on September 10th. Please check out the website here: ontariogreenscreen.ca.

Ms Applebaum encouraged everyone to take advantage of Ontario Green Screen’s free Climate & Sustainable Production Training for Film Industry Professionals. A new block of sessions is available now. Anyone who works in the industry can participate.

<https://digitallibrary.ontariocreates.ca/DigitalLibrary/OGS/CarbonLiteracyTraining.aspx>.

TAWC: Joanna Swan submitted the following report:

- TAWC met on September 9th and had a fantastic meeting. They are putting a plan together for a series of workshops and panels throughout the winter to continue supporting our Members with tangible skills that can be implemented in supporting their careers, specifically during this time as Members adjust to new ways of working and auditioning.
- The TAWC Film Lab Film, Rainbow Baby went to camera September 12th and 13th. It was a hugely successful shoot, with a happy, healthy and positive cast and crew. A huge shout out to Lisa Michelle Cornelius, Monica and Kate for putting together a beautifully diverse and largely female cast and crew. TAWC is so grateful for the support that was shown for the Indiegogo campaign, as well as their industry partners for providing equipment and support. The team is currently beginning post production, and excited to see the first edit.
- TAWC had a super meeting with WIFT-T. They are putting together some ideas/plans that will be great for partnership in the future.

Voice Committee: Krystal Meadows, Co-Vice Chair, submitted the following report:

The Zoom Animation Panel on September 30th was a success. Amazing feedback well attended and well received. Big thanks to Cory Doran for moderating and members: Stephany Seki, Nicole Stamp, Deven Mac & Ana Sani for participating.

The Committee will be meeting in the next couple of weeks to launch part 2 of the Virtual Workshops to Empower the BIPOC Voice Performer initiative that they plan to continue this fall.

Vice-President – Angela Asher: Ms Asher submitted the following report:

YEAA: YEAA is planning a Zoom Social to help members connect during these strange times. Dates and time to be confirmed.

Special message from the YEAA Co-Chairs Clara and Kira: The Co-Chairs wish to thank ACTRA staff for their support of this year’s filmmakers and navigating them remotely.

Vice-President – Angelica Alejandro: Ms Alejandro submitted the following report.

- Initial draft has been proposed for the creation of a BG Page on the ACTRA Toronto website to help address specific areas, in order to assist our members. More BG Performers have since returned to work and as the number of performers increase there are issues, concerns and questions which are specific to Background Performance and Stand-In.
- Thanks to the ACTRA Staff for the general OSLO meeting September 9th. Have since completed Health and Safety COVID online training /certification. (Safe Sets, Panno, FTHSS Levels 1 &2, WSPS).
- Out on set as an OSLO (On Set Liaison Officer) for our adult and minor performers/parents (cast and BG). Including regular testing and production specific training modules as required.
- Participating in the ACTRAToronto@Work hosted by Mr. Gale, as well as the Return to Work Panel at the October 8th ACTRA Toronto Town Hall.

- Apprentice Caucus Meeting with the confirmation of a new Chair September 10, 2020.
- Invitations for Zoom Meeting for Parents were sent for September 22, however due to parents juggling and trying to manage the return to work and school this has now been postponed due to numbers. Increase in number of Parents writing in, and they will continue to be assisted on an individual basis. Hope to reschedule this for a future date when schedules and guest speaker participation allows. Many thanks to the ACTRA Staff and Child Advocate Christina Collins for putting this together and for the speakers who are eager to participate for a rescheduled date. The Committee values the wonderful ideas from Council on Zoom sessions for Parents. Ideas for topics should be submitted to Christina Collins (Child Advocate). They are finding that there is a need for this type of Zoom from attending various sessions offered by many in the industry. The Committee wants to leverage the economical benefit of doing this in-house for parents and performers. Focus continues to be on parents supporting their child's return to work, as well as the younger performers to help with questions on their career.
- Continue working with Richard Young on the rollout of Member Education on Zoom. ACTRA Toronto continues to offer Respect on Set (ROS) via Zoom sessions for members. They have now completed the September class with the new course material. Many thanks for the ongoing help of help of ACTRA Toronto Staff for revising the Respect on Set (ROS) material and planning/discussion of other education modules is on-going. Providing input as needed for the training as requested by Branches for Branch ROS.
- Continued to shadow Mr. Young and participate in ACTRA Toronto Diversity and Inclusion Committee meetings and initiatives that encourage, support and opportunities to our members.
- Attended: ACTRA Toronto Exceptional Meeting in September, ACTRA National Diversity and Inclusion Meeting, ACTRA Voice Animation Panel, Joint ACTRA Diversity and Inclusion Committee and ACTRA Voice Committee Pilot Workshop Part 2, Academy AGM, BIPOC/CIARS industry talks on new industry initiatives, FOFS The Future of Equity in Film, Virtual TIFF, Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries Town Hall.
- Member Assistance/Outreach – Due to more members returning to work the shift has been from initiating from Call Lists and checks/assistance to members and seniors (campaign started in March) to responding to more member initiated one-on-one calls or emails: questions from set by performers, Safety Training, COVID Testing, Declaration Documents for CRA to receive payments or applying for new benefits, Members wanting to use CRI or Create Work, Dues and Missed Deadline/Payments and membership status, NCA voting and permittees, Electronic Vouchers/Sign-in/Forms etc., CERB and CRB, HST/Tax questions, AFBS concerns with maintaining levels, answering questions on bookings or calls from Set after OSLO and engaging the assistance of ACTRA Staff to resolve the issue as needed, rising need for some members for programs to assist with Delivery Assistance and Support.

Child Advocate: Christina Collins submitted the following report:

Ms Collins has had several email queries regarding very young children wanting to get into the business - from 6 weeks old to 5 years. She generally tells them:

"To be honest, it is difficult to get legitimate representation for infant/toddlers. Most agents ask their own actors to submit their children. My own agent suggested my son at 3 weeks old for a commercial.

Perhaps contact a few agents and get a sense of how they feel about representing a child as young as yours. Check out this website for more info about getting started in the business. It also offers an agent directory that may be helpful. <https://www.actratoronto.com/performers/starting-out/>.

I cannot recommend any one agent. I strongly suggest you only seek out agents that are part of either TAMAC or EIC. These guarantee a professional code of ethics which is very important as there are many scams out there. Agent/Actor/parent relationships have to be mutually compatible."

In other news: Ms Collins is very disappointed that the parent/minor zoom information session, Stage Parents Survival/Online Safety Seminar scheduled for Tuesday, September 22 (*Stage Parents Survival Seminar: Are you new to the Film and Television Industry? Are your kids begging to be on TV? Do you know how to maneuver through this exciting but daunting industry? Do you or your kids Tweet, Snapchat, Instagram? What about COVID protocols and children?*) had to be postponed as they did not get a good response. As Alistair Hepburn pointed out, "Clearly with

kids going back to school, parents' minds are elsewhere". She will soldier on getting information out to parents and minors.

Background Advocate: Shereen Airth submitted the following report:

- Directed a number of members to the Radius Map on the ACTRA Toronto website.
- Assisted a number of Members with information and/or direction to specific staff (primarily Business Reps and Membership), as well to various information platforms including ACTRA Toronto, ACTRA National, AFBS, Canada.ca, Haven, and others.
- Continue to respond to many inquiries and posts regarding return to work and Section 21.
- Attended the Apprentice Caucus Meeting, welcomed the new Chair, and thanked the outgoing Chair
- Ms Airth has been in touch with many Background Performers for wellness checks, both as part of Nicole Valentin's 1,100-member project and general outreach to Background performers. This is ongoing.
- As productions are slowly starting, she has reinforced the necessity of updating members profiles on the ACTRA databases ensuring their availability calendars are current. As well as with Agents, and with casting and asking all members to read the COVID protocols and any and all emails in depth.

Apprentice Caucus: Newly elected Chair, Bree Ali, submitted the following report:

Apprentice Caucus is planning its first Educational Outreach for Apprentice members, in late October/early November, providing a summary of all the little details that have come out since reopening; all the information that they have received in pieces as they have been rolled out. This will also be a nice way to introduce the Apprentice Caucus to members. The Caucus will feature a panel of the very people who answer questions when members contact ACTRA, from Background, to OSLO, Member Services, IPA advisor, etc. This will give them an opportunity to speak at length to members about related issues that have come up in response to new COVID protocols.

The educational outreach will go through the entire cycle of work:

1. Getting Auditions (what more should I be addressing with my agent, what's shooting, what to expect, funding, how much more competitive).
2. Auditions (self-tapes, virtual casting rooms, in-person).
3. Prior to Being On-Set (what to/not to bring, COVID testing, ACTRA protocols)
4. Being On-Set

And finally, it will also be an opportunity for members to ask questions.

Treasurer – Richard Young: The following are the reports under Mr. Young's portfolio:

Diversity and Inclusion: Lisa Michelle Cornelius and Samora Smallwood submitted the following report:

Successful launch of the pilot program for the Committee's *Diversity in Voice* workshops in partnership with the ACTRA Voice Committee.

Successful launch of the pilot program for the Committee's "Diversity in Voice" workshops in partnership with the ACTRA Voice Committee.

Partnership with the Performers Mindset is going well and they have been able to provide scholarships to a few of the Diversity Committee members via contests through social media.

The Committee's demo reel initiative: *A Different Lens* has gotten many applicants and they are working steadily to bring the initiative to life with the help of industry partners. The Committee thanked Ms Dekker for her help on this.

The Diversity & Inclusion Committee meeting is coming up at which they will nominate industry leaders for the Sandi Ross Award which will be a stand-alone (virtual) award "ceremony" this year.

And lastly, Ms Cornelius and Smallwood are working with ACTRA Executive to find the perfect candidate for their Industry Relations position.

NATIONAL REPORT

National President, Marie Kelly reported.

National had layoffs as well. They are bringing back some staff. Almost all of the PRS and RACs have been recalled. Laurie McAllister has moved on but the department is the capable hands of Anna Bucci, Max Wagner and Darryl Kyte until a replacement has been found. Clare McCarthy has been promoted to Manager of RACS.

National is lobbying the federal government to provide re-insurance for our industry. They have argued that industry has a high standard for health and safety. They are seeking provision for severance pay if a production goes down due to COVID.

Theatre companies recording their productions and releasing them online during the pandemic want an exceptional agreement just for them. ACTRA will not agree to that but will deal with them on a case-by-case basis.

The search for a Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion continues. National has hired a BIPOC search firm which is also working to find the right candidate for the ACTRA Toronto diversity position.

OTHER BUSINESS

- The question was raised about being booked on "standby" for commercials. Judy Barefoot said that engagers are doing that so that they have their second choice available should the first choice fall ill.
- Ms Barefoot reported on concerns about the offensive wording on breakdowns.
- Heather Allin expressed her concerns about finding a reader for self-taping and about how exhausting self-tapings are.
- Applications for the successor of CERB, CRB, open on October 12th. One must be unemployed because of COVID to be eligible to apply.

THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 12:09 P.M.