

**ACTRA TORONTO
COUNCIL MEETING VIA ZOOM
TUESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2021**

PRESENT

Theresa Tova, President, in the Chair
Angelica Alejandro, Vice-President
Rebecca Applebaum, Vice-President
Angela Asher, Vice-President
David Gale, Vice-President
Richard Young, Treasurer
Dalmar Abuzeid
Shereen Airth
Heather Allin
Lisa Michelle Cornelius
Wendy Crewson
Paul de la Rosa
Maria del Mar
Aidan Devine
Shawn Doyle
Gugun Deep Singh, alternate for Kevin Hanchard
Art Hindle
Deb McGrath
Jack Newman
Leah Pinsent
Samora Smallwood
Joanna Swan, alternate for David Sparrow
Joy Tanner
Jocelyne Zucco

REGRETS

COMMITTEE & MEMBER CAUCUS CHAIRS, OMBUDSPERSON

Bree Ali, Chair, Apprentice Caucus
Karen Ivany, Ombudsperson
Steve (Shack) Shackleton, Chair, Stunt Committee

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
Luca De Franco, Public Relations Officer, ACTRA Toronto
Taisa Dekker, Industry Relations, ACTRA Toronto
Cass Enright, Media Relations, ACTRA Toronto
Jenn Paul, Industry Relations Specialist, 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.

The reading of the Land Acknowledgement by Shawn Doyle was followed by the reading of the Equality Statement by Lisa Michelle Cornelius and Samora Smallwood.

Ms. Tova welcomed Council, observers – Ombudsperson Karen Ivany, Stunt Committee Chair, Steve (Shack) Shackleton, Tania Cardwell, Stunt Liaison, Bree Ali, Apprentice Caucus Chair, and staff.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION #1

Moved by David Gale, seconded by Deb McGrath:

“That the Agenda for the ACTRA Toronto Council Meeting of January 5, 2021, be accepted.”

CARRIED

APPROVAL AND CORRECTION OF THE MINUTES

Page 1: Bree Ali, Chair, Apprentice Caucus was present.

MOTION #2

Moved by Joy Tanner, seconded by David Gale:

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

CARRIED

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Theresa Tova reported:

- Referring to the election of President, later in the meeting, Ms. Tova said that she is looking forward to sliding into the role of Past President.
- National President, David Sparrow, is taking a short personal leave. In the meantime, Keith Martin Gordey and Tova will be covering David’s files.
- Ontario has gone into a lockdown again until January 23, 2021. According to the new restrictions no more than ten performers are allowed on a film or television set.

Sue Milling said that we still have some tough times ahead but just as we made our way through 2020, we will make it through 2021. She said that Minister has made it clear that because of the work the industry is doing to make our workplaces safe, we are able to stay open. The limit of 10 people on set will be reviewed. Although there are people who have tested positive on our sets there has been no spread. The protocols on our sets are successful.

Further to a query, Alistair Hepburn said that the COVID tests are done by three laboratories in Ontario. Ms. Milling said that performers are asking for testing to be done on all sets. Some would like access to their tests so that they can share it with other productions. At the moment, Producers cannot claim all COVID expenses as tax credits, but they are continuing to shoot as shutting down would be more expensive. Mr. Hepburn said that studios, including voice recording studios have upgraded their HVAC systems. The Best Practices Guide is being followed by all the sets.

A robocall to all members was suggested stressing diligence on COVID safety precautions.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Milling invited Taisa Dekker and Jenn Paul will report on their outreach efforts.

Industry Report from Taisa Dekker:

- Met with a video game developer interested in learning about contracting ACTRA performers on various types of games. The studio has not engaged union talent before, so we discussed the process of signing onto an agreement with ACTRA Toronto, session durations and rates, and utilizing voice.actraonline.ca to find talented voice performers in the membership.
- The Commercial VO and Vocal Health Workshop happened on December 12th & 13th, 2020. Vocal coaches Alicia Richardson and Tracey Hoyt provided training to 10 members in commercial voice performance and vocal health. The "Diversity in Voice – Empowering the BIPOC Voice Performer" initiative was created by the Diversity & Inclusion Committee and the Voice Committee.
- The ACTRA Awards are taking place online this year, and various departments and members are working together to put on the show.
- Work continues with the Diversity & Inclusion Committee on the Demo Reel project. This initiative will develop seven scenes in total and each scene will feature two diverse performers showcasing their performance skills.
- This month, ACTRA Toronto will present to a group of high school students to promote the benefits of belonging to the union, how to engage performers, and the importance of ACTRA in the production ecosystem. This initiative is a partnership with Stratagem Group and the TDSB. Dalmar Abuzeid will be joining Ms. Dekker to provide the students with the performer perspective on the industry.
- In December, Industry Relations spoke with the following post-secondary programs:
 - St. Lawrence College – 21 Musical Theatre Students
 - Toronto Acting Academy – 10 performance students.

Industry Relations - Anti-Black Racism, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Report from Jenn Paul:

- Attended an information session regarding the effects of COVID on Ontario's Black Community Artists.
- Attended an information session for IMPACT and connected with Samantha Kaine and Mackenzie Donaldson to address some ACTRA questions that arose, as well as partnering on future initiatives.
- Began an inquiry with IT to find a solution for those wishing to add preferred pronouns to auto-generated ACTRA email signatures.
- Met with the Canadian Academy (Louis Calabro) and WarnerMedia (Melanie Hadley) regarding an online conversation about their Writer Program application, which was sparked by a series of tweets from ACTRA Member, Darrell Faria.
 - The application asked applicants to provide a personal statement / their unique perspective in 500 words or less sharing "the ways in which coming from an under-represented group has both enriched your experience and contributed to your unique creative approach and / or the ways it may have been a barrier for you to gain access and opportunities to advance your career".
 - Many applicants felt as though this question forced them to re-live past traumas, and repeatedly justify their art in a way that white artists are not asked to. It was later clarified in an open Q&A conducted by The Academy and WarnerMedia that this particular question would not be weighted heavily in the evaluation, and that the intent was to simply get to know applicants better.
 - The Academy and WarnerMedia are currently taking these comments and recommendations into consideration for future programs and are also going to be in touch with me regarding future ways that ACTRA Toronto may be able to collaborate with them.
 - Currently working on the Anti-Black Racism Workplan 2.0, expanding upon the initial workplan to add specific tactics and action items for 2021. This will be shared with the Executive later this month.

ELECTION OF ACTRA TORONTO PRESIDENT

Ms. Milling took the Chair and walked Council through the Election Rules that were distributed with the Agenda prior to the meeting.

The floor was opened for nominations.

David Gale was the only candidate nominated. David Gale was declared the new ACTRA Toronto President. David spoke about his vision and commitment to work with the Council to raise the visibility and a star system for performers in Canada to build bargaining strength. David also spoke about his deep commitment to the union's work for equality, diversity and inclusion.

ELECTION OF ACTRA TORONTO EXECUTIVE MEMBER(S)

The floor was opened for nominations.

Jocelyne Zucco was the only candidate nominated who accepted the nomination. Jocelyne Zucco was declared elected by acclamation. Jocelyne thanked the Council for their support and looks forward to working with the Executive.

Ms. Tova suggested holding off on the second election to replace Clara Pasiaka until the next Council meeting. Heather Allin also agreed to this suggestion. Further discussion ensued.

MOTION #3

Moved by Theresa Tova, seconded by Joy Tanner:

“That Council defer the election of Vice-President for further consideration by the Executive.”

Discussion

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

EXECUTIVE REPORTS

Vice-President, Rebecca Applebaum: The following are the reports under Ms. Applebaum's portfolio.

TAWC: Joanna Swan reported that the committee held a meeting prior to the Christmas break with Lisa Jordan of USW. They are putting together an education workshop and have invited IATSE, NABET and DGC to join them.

They have two new spearheads for their Content Development Sessions.

Rainbow Baby, TAWC's film is looking very good.

The Committee is continuing with their industry partnerships and will be meeting on Thursday.

Green Screen Report: Ms. Applebaum reported that the inaugural OGS Community meeting on November 26th was a big success with more than 130 people attending from across the industry.

Vice-President, Angelica Alejandro: The following are the reports under Ms. Alejandro's portfolio.

Ms. Alejandro thanked everyone for their kind words on the passing of her Father. The family made a donation in his memory to the AFC to honour the activism that her Father saw as so important to performers and the arts industry.

Background Performers: Ms. Alejandro thanked Council for supporting all Members, especially Background Performers and for the new accessible website.

Apprentice Caucus: Bree Ali, Caucus Chair, reported that the December meeting was cancelled because it clashed with the ACTRA Toronto Town Hall. The meeting will now be held on January 13th.

Vice-President, Angela Asher: Ms. Asher had nothing new to report on behalf of YEAA.

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

Diversity and Inclusion: Samora Smallwood and Lisa Michelle Cornelius, Committee Co-Chairs reported on *Working the Scene with Colour*. The meetings via Zoom are attracting a large number of Members.

The demo reel initiative is moving forward. There are 14 participants. Ms. Dekker and Ms. Paul are assisting with this.

Mr. Hepburn reported that they have 100 submissions that have met all the criteria for the *Black Performers Showcase*. These have been divided amongst five Casting Directors for review.

President, David Gale: Mr. Gale presented the reports under his portfolio.

AYA: Chair, John McGrath submitted the following report:

- December was a busy month for AYA. They held a Zoom workshop on *Maintaining the Voice as We Age* with vocal coach and ACTRA Toronto member Katherine Thompson on December 4th.
- The Committee also held an informal holiday virtual gathering on December 18th. They took some time to "blue sky" possible workshops for 2021 before spending time to catch up with each other before the holidays.

outACTRAto: Mr. Gale reported that today is the last day to submit an application for the *2021 Queer Your Stories Short Film Competition* with *outACTRAto* and the *Inside/Out Film Festival*.

Deb McGrath said that the committee is trying to encourage people of the LBGTQ2S+ community to feel that they have a place in the leadership of the union.

Awards: Karen Woolridge reported that 280 submissions have been received and the juries have been selected.

The Award of Excellence recipient Jani Lauzon's interview will be shared soon.

Editorial Committee: Joy Tanner reported that she is hoping to encourage new Members to get involved.

ACTRA TORONTO OPERATING PLAN 2021-22

Sue Milling reported on the Draft Op Plan that was distributed to Council. The final draft will be presented to Council for approval at the February meeting.

Ms. Milling thanked Luca de Franco for working on the new website.

NATIONAL REPORT

Marie Kelly, National Executive Director, reported that she has been working with Tova and Keith Martin Gordey while David Sparrow is away on a short leave.

She congratulated Mr. Gale on his election to President of ACTRA Toronto.

The National Finance Committee is working on the national budget for the next fiscal year. There is still a lot of work to be done.

The National Stunt Committee will be meeting later this week and they are moving ahead with the Stunt Hall of Fame.

The renovations to the National office are almost finished but staff is not expected to be brought in yet as the provincial lockdown measures continue.

Ms. Kelly has been asked to assist in the BCMPA negotiations.

The Game On Agreement will be negotiated via Zoom.

Olivia Nuamah, ACTRA National's new Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging, will be taking a look at the National Constitution and By-Laws and the Game On Agreement through a diversity and inclusion lens.

STUNT REPORT

Tania Cardwell, ACTRA Toronto Stunt Liaison and Steve (Shack) Shackleton, Stunt Committee Chair reported. The committees have met a couple of times via Zoom. They said that more COVID safety awareness and training is needed. The need for vaccine education for the community will be required. Stunt Coordinators and Riggers who are in supervisory capacity are concerned about their responsibilities and liability for hiring stunt performers who have not been following public health guidelines.

Mr. Hepburn and Ms. Kelly said that the employer is responsible for a healthy workplace.

The Women's Stunt Committee is working on mentorship for diverse female stunt performers.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION #4

Moved by Aidan Devine, seconded by Theresa Tova:

**"That the meeting be adjourned."
CARRIED**

THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 1:04 P.M.