

Minutes of the Meeting of UBCP/ACTRA Members who work Background

Held on the 24th of April, 2016

Notes taken: Sabrina Prada

Called to order at 3:15pm at the UBCP office

Attendance

Chair, J.C. Williams, E-Board Rep

Alvin Sanders, E-Board President

Chris Webb, E-Board

Sue Brouse, Director of Member Services

Other Staff: Lori Stewart, Lesley Brady

53 members signed in

Business

1. Sabrina led the meeting until J.C arrived at 3:50pm

2. Membership Report – Sue Brouse

Membership numbers as of April 2016:

4,395 Paid-up Members

2996 – Full; 708 – Apprentice; 291 – Background

Late fees are going out to 716 Full Members and 203 Apprentices

“Close-Up” is coming out next week.

New courses are launching, especially in dialect and voice training. Make suggestions to Membership if you want to lead or attend certain types of programs or courses.

The Diversity & Inclusivity Committee is getting started, focusing on gathering statistics, recording stories and encouraging diverse submissions for awards.

The next UBCP/ACTRA Awards show will be November 12, again at the Playhouse. Watch for the call for nominations in May.

3. Film, TV and New Media department initiatives

UBCP/ACTRA has hired a 4th full-time union rep, especially so they can increase set visits. They will also be implementing a pilot OSLO program, training and dispatching eligible members, when needed, on an honorarium basis. Watch for more details as they become available. You must have been a Full member for 5 or more years to qualify.

Film reps also had a meeting with BG coordinators in late February, to address challenges faced between wranglers and BG performers, including lateness and professional conduct, the security of personal information on set and bullying and harassment. In light of these discussions, the “Code of Conduct” has been

updated by staff to include language about propane safety and social media, and remove outdated language. It was distributed to meeting attendees and will be sent to the BG coordinators. Staff is open to feedback on the document.

UBCP/ACTRA staff also liaise monthly with “The Association,” which is a body of representatives from all the unions that work in the film industry, such as IATSE and the Teamsters. They will next be meeting with Canadian and US producers in order to focus on health & safety and fatigue.

4. How to Handle on-set bullying & harassment – 4:10pm

Lori Stewart spoke and distributed handouts titled, “Managing Bullying & Harassment in the Film Industry,” “Injury & Incident Reporting,” “How to recognize Workplace Bullying and Harassment,” and a “Worker Fact sheet.”

Since 2013 it is now a compensable infraction to allow bullying and harassment in the workplace. It is the employer’s responsibility to fix deleterious situations and to provide a safe and harassment-free workplace.

An email address has been created to informally receive information about incidents that happen on set which are delicate in nature. Typically, if you have a problem, first give the Wrangler (production) an opportunity to solve it. If you have trouble with the Wrangler, go to the 1st AD. Members are urged to support other members and when necessary email report.it@ubcp.com

Step 1 is to report a situation to an employer – the BG Coordinator, an AD or the Safety Hotline. Step 2 – call the union so they can follow-up with production. If the situation persists, UBCP/ACTRA will get WorkSafe BC involved.

If you witness or experience it yourself, it is your responsibility to report it, as a union member, because we all need to take action to insure a safe workplace for all workers. The union can mainly put pressure on the employer and support the worker through the process, but they need our voluntary compliance with reporting.

5. SAE: Success Stories & suggestions – 4:45pm

Chris Webb led a round-robin which included some ideas about how stunts intersect with background performance. Sometimes the interpretation of SAE is vague on purpose, primarily so that production can creatively acquire the skills they need on set, but when we recognize that a fellow performer has done a task which goes beyond “ordinary behavior” is important to encourage that member to report and advocate for the upgrade and to file for it right away. Time is always of the essence.

Some risks are “automatic upgrades” but to different types of pay categories. such as being squibbed (stunts) or discharging a firearm (SAE). Other skills such as tactical and swat formations have not yet been recognized by the MPA as SAE, but we are hoping to change that during the next round of contract negotiations.

Members are also reminded that they always have the right to refuse unsafe work.

6. Other Business – 5:15pm

- How to deal with BG Casting Directors when they insist that we’re “Pending”

Best practice is still to say “book or release.” Our MPA is with the Producers, not the CD’s who are the one’s relying on this “practice.” We tried to address it in the last round of negotiations, but will have to continue to fight for that clarification in 2018. In the meantime, UBCP/ACTRA is investigating the creation of an alternate on-line booking system that could potentially boost the priority of engagement factor for Members.

Since these “holds” are elusive to prove, take screen shots of what is happening on your on-line calendar and note when the phone calls happen.

- Best line reading of the meeting:

How to make it clear to production that they’ve asked you to do something that should be upgraded – Reply, “Sorry, I am not comfortable doing that in my category.” Now, go home and practice that in the mirror, daily.

- BG are encouraged to explore the Member’s Only section of the UBCP/ACTRA website to review minutes from previous meetings for helpful tips about a range of issues. For example, Tax Tips were covered in February 2014 and references to the IT-525R (Consolidated) bulletin may be found in those minutes as well as on the “Resources for Performers” section of the Home page: <http://www.ubcp.com/resources-for-members/>

The meeting adjourned at 5:55pm.