

#25

Eggers, Dave

From: Pinellas County Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller
<noreply@mypinellasclerk.org> on behalf of noreply@mypinellasclerk.org
Sent: Monday, January 25, 2021 11:15 AM
To: Board of County Commissioners Distribution Group

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Topic Production agreement with ATOL Film LLC for production of the film, "A Taste of Love."
BCC Agenda Date 1-26-2021
Your Stand on the Issue Oppose

Comments

PROVIDES
NONE

According to a January 14th article in the Tampa Bay Times, the \$500,000 requested in this Production Agreement will be spent to finance a film with a budget of only \$500,000 to \$800,000. This amounts to a 60% to 100% "incentive" to produce an ultra-low budget movie. I submit that this is a very poor use of Pinellas taxpayers' money. Notwithstanding the "marketing benefits" purported in the Agreement, a production of this low-budget level will not generate significant economic impact in the communities where it is filmed, nor will it provide industry-standard wages and benefits to its cast and crew - the declared rationale of incentivizing motion picture production. If Pinellas County wishes to incentivize film production to stimulate economic activity, \$500,000 of its taxpayers' money could be used much more effectively as a 20% incentive to attract a \$2.5 million production, which would provide good jobs, spend generously throughout the county, and still deliver the desired tourism marketing benefits. I question the prudence of this Agreement, especially in light of the stipulation (in Section 10, page 3) that the Production Company will own 100% of all "right, title and interest in the Production Program." This means in effect that Pinellas County will be underwriting potentially 100% of the cost of this production and owning none of it.

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**International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees,
Moving Picture Technicians, Artists and Allied Crafts**

MOTION PICTURE STUDIO MECHANICS LOCAL 477

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- Via email only -

January 25, 2021

Dave Eggers, District 4 Commissioner and 2021 Commission Chair
Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners
315 Court Street
Clearwater, Florida 33756

re: January 26th meeting of the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners

Dear Chair Eggers:

Earlier today, I submitted a comment at the Pinellas County BCC website concerning an item (#25) on the January 26th meeting agenda entitled Production agreement with ATOL Film LLC for production of the film, "A Taste of Love." I trust my comment has already made it to your inbox.

As you can see, I am an active representative of the motion picture workforce throughout the entire state of Florida. I am also deeply invested in efforts to return our state to a competitive position in the domestic marketplace for motion picture production and, as such, have extensive experience in the issue of incentives, particularly their effectiveness or lack thereof.

I would like to be able to explain in more depth the reasons for my concern over this proposal and hope also to be a resource for you as you prepare to cast a vote at tomorrow's meeting. As there is little time remaining, please feel free to contact me directly at 904/806-6369 if you have any questions or would like a brief conversation on the issue. I would be happy to speak with a member of your staff as well.

If we cannot connect by phone today, I have confidence that you will take my comment to heart and evaluate pragmatically the value of the proposed Production Agreement as opposed to other means through which this very substantial amount of money could be used to create and stabilize an infrastructure for motion picture production in Pinellas County, generate good jobs for its residents, and positively impact tourism over the long term.

With my best regards,

Chris Ranung
President, I.A.T.S.E. Local 477