Summary Report from the Administrative Officers

July 2, 2020

Your Administrative Officers of this Local hears and understands the Members/Non-Members frustration with a lack of information or updates of what is currently going on in the Entertainment District, along with measures taken to reduce costs related to the Organization. Therefore, the Administrative Officers has prepared a summary of events and actions while we have been facing the terrible issue of COVID-19 which has affected many of our I.A.T.S.E. family members.

First the report from the Business Agents Television & Theatre Combined

March 11, 2020 starting date of mandated shutdowns.

Attended “Champions of Change” at the Inglewood Casino celebrating the talented Female leaders for various major organizations including the new Rams Stadium. While attending this event with my Union Sisters’, Mayor Jim Butts signaled to B.A. Valentine to contact him thru messaging across the room. The Mayor gave BA Valentine the heads up that the industry is being shut down. Within 5 minutes a Member attending with the group informed BA Valentine her call for AGT was cancelled until further notice. Within the drive span from Inglewood to Burbank, 5 more projects had been shut down. The following day the industry went dark. Both Business Agents started receiving calls from employers and Members with concerns of uncertainty and all truly warranted. This was an ongoing process for the following 5-8 days, trying to come up with a reasonable answer as to what was thought to be a short period of 4-6 weeks.

Within 5 days of the shutdown, the Business Agents started an Effects Bargaining procedure with companies at the recommendation of Attorney Michael Weiner with Gilbert and Sackman Law. This is something the Company is not obligated to do. This was intended to get the employees more than the $465.00 a week at the time for unemployment. This process took over 3 weeks and many employers were very open to helping our membership although they did not qualify for the CARES Act since they had over 500 employees. Many people remained on payroll for up to 6 weeks, some were immediately “Furloughed” with severance with the understanding they will return to that very position and maintain all wage titles, seniority, accrued benefits once the production returns, this way giving the employee 2 weeks of pay and can immediately sign up for UI (unemployment benefits) without further delay. Two days later we were informed that an additional $600 for UI Benefits will be voted upon in Legislation. Back to the bargaining table with NBC, WGA, SoFi Stadium, and D.O.O.L. Negotiations were extended due to stay at home orders. The Ford Theatre was Organized and Ratified shortly before the shutdown. BA Pagnotta phoned Lee Zeidman to start effects bargaining and Mr. Zeidman was extremely generous to have a meeting with the AEG, Lakers,
Clippers, Sparks, Kings organizations to organize a fund to keep the house crew consisting of Heads and assistants along with 4 spotlight calls to remain paid to our members, on days games were regularly scheduled and cancelled, therefore feeding the benefit funds (AT HIS GESTURE). Television City Studios, formerly CBS, continued to pay 12% to the Health Fund per employee who served as staff or weekly callback to help keep our health fund going thru July 31, 2020.

Local 33 took part as a partner with E.I.R. (entertainment industry response) formed by Joe Lewis Company and Rob Paine in partnership with other vendors to assemble or assist in the assembly of a response camp for natural disaster and this COVID epidemic. Setting up a large area for patients. Business Agents spoke to West Coast Vice President Mike Miller about teaming up with Sister Locals for the return of business. Whoever was to return the soonest and needing assistance would phone the other Local, to help Members with meeting the bills. We did send 3 members to Local 80, at request of Local 80 to do a set up.

The Administration Officers consisting of your Recording Secretary, 2 Business Agents and your Financial Secretary Treasurer took measures to cut any non-essential item/spending to reduce costs to the organization. Not all items could be reduced due to the fact the administrative side of the organization was still very active with assisting members with UI Benefits (Thank you Lee Casady and Octavio Rogers) and producing letters of good standing and hardship allowance. Bills as you know in your lives still had to be paid; utilities, taxes, and payroll for those still coming into work with purpose and productivity. Trust figures still needed to be attended to and on days when the building was limited to a maximum amount of people, many of the ladies had worked from home still taking calls and assisting members with various items such as dues, stamps, and letters. See F/S/T’s list of reductions for a general view. The Business Agents took on the duties of keeping the facility in decent condition, clean, and up to Burbank guidelines for doing business.

The Business Agents who also serve as Trustees had multiple meetings with the Trust to discuss what can be done to help the members out directly from the Trust side. Thank you to all who serve on that Board, to work with the Employers to agree to a tremendous benefit to help our members out for a few months. Articles were written to various news entities and pod-casts by the Business Agents to help get the word out that the Entertainment side of the business was not getting the same treatment as other business models and our members are suffering because we have multi-employers and that is not fair. Senator Adam Schiff heard our cry along with our Sister Locals working in unity. IATSE Political Rep Thom Davis was the direct link between Adam and us. This expedited the UI process a little bit quicker and COVID-19 was added to the form so participants would not check natural causes delaying the benefits even longer. The BA’s kept Jerry Levey (Local 33 Political Liaison) busy with getting us information from City electives on progress of the return to work. Jerry on many occasions took emails from the BA’s and literally slid it under the door of LA City Film and TV Liaison Kevin James who is Garcetti’s top man. We had re-assured both Kevin and the Mayor that Local 33 will follow procedure and do what it takes to provide a safe environment for public events such as wearing proper PPE and masking up. During this COVID period Jerry Levey had set up a last-minute emergency meeting on how Local 33 and the Painters and Decorators Union work together with Teamsters to acquire more convention center work and having a clear understanding of jurisdiction and working together. This is a great start and time to come together.
The Business Agents attended multiple meetings with the International to devise our own set of guidelines to present to employers who may not have a guide to follow. This involved leaders from Los Angeles (Local 33), N.Y. Local 1, two Canadian Locals and President, Philadelphia, Chicago, San Francisco, and many more to form a “Stagecraft Return to work guideline” crafted towards Theatres, Local Broadcast, Live Entertainment. Many Zoom meetings with Councilmembers asking for support to get us back to work and our multi-employer UI benefit situation. These meetings are facilitated by Jerry Levey and his close relationship with these members. Councilmember Paul Koretz personally reached out to us and told us he was voting in favor of what we needed to get more members recognized for multi-employer and push it with Adam Schiff (and he did). Jerry got us correspondence with Councilman Busciano in regard to San Pedro still working on the new Amphitheater and Warner Grand Project. Discussions with Long Beach and Mayor Bob Garcia reaching out to Jerry expressing the Mayor is still pushing us for the Arena, and working on setting up another meeting. We have a friend to remain un-named at this time on the Board for a West Coast Convention Center Coalition. He, representing the proper Local in the proper district, is forming a relationship with other Labor Leaders who want a piece of it as well at every convention center. He does represent Local 33 for LA discussions. All seem to be on the same page of approaching un-represented venues in a mass to encourage unity and a solid working relationship benefitting the venue with superior talent.

Contract Negotiations resumed towards May with Television City being presented to the Membership and currently in talks with NBC West LLC. Visits were made to multiple studios and theatres to take part in the process of determining what can be done safely and what cannot. We did do an install in North Hollywood for a 4DX experience. The team did a great job. AGT was approved to load out of the Pasadena Civic Auditorium. The Bold and Beautiful have returned to work being the true leaders in going back to work. American Idol loaded out, The Hollywood Bowl had a fund raiser and a LA Phil Program with Chris Martin with plans for more fund raisers with the LA Phil during the summer. Microsoft is planning on hosting live boxing events without an audience but broadcasted. AGT will be loading in possibly the 2nd or 3rd week of July at the Dolby Theatre. NBC, FOX, and ABC have had slow start ups with minimal crews and limited content. Carpenter Shops have been the first to get back to work and a fine job at that. All of our shops are back and we are working on acquiring another shop in its legal DBA start-up phase and looking like we will not have to have an election, the owner is opening up to seeing the benefits and going union. Still some talks having to take place but looking promising. Working together to keep our shops Union.

We are watching TV coming back stronger as we move on. Yes, Live entertainment unfortunately is going to take a little longer. Our outdoor venues are trying to host controlled fund raisers, movie shoots (employing the heads), virtual concerts, town hall meetings, etc. keeping employment going. It is the large gathering that is the issue. As said employers are seriously looking at ways to keep business going and we may have to adjust to acquire more work.

The Business Agents would like to thank everyone who stepped up to the plate to assist on a food dispersion day by loading up cars, making food packages, and unloading trucks with both the International and the L.A. Federation of Labor. Keep it up this really goes a long way and LA Fed President Ron Herrera is definitely a friend of Local 33 and has ties with Long Shoresmen and
Teamsters for backings. We must continue to do our part to maintain that relationship, thank you again. To our Members who have reached out to some of our Seniors to assist with going to the store or a minor fix around the house, thank you. I am catching wind of Members here and there on their own calling Senior Members asking if they need any help, that’s the spirit thank you.

COVID-19 Crisis:

**Report from the Financial Secretary-Treasurer**

Prior to COVID I had already begun preparing the office to work remotely in case of a fire or natural disaster. When the City of Burbank and L.A. County announced the COVID crisis guidelines for workplaces, we were able to quickly comply with Officers and Office Staff who are able work from home. They can access their desktop computers and printers through their laptops.

The office phone system is installed on the laptops and we can place, answer, and transfer phone calls the same as if we were in the office. The Local installed plexiglass dividers between office staff, installed touch-free hand sanitizer dispensers, posted signage, provided face masks and gloves, logs the temperature of everyone entering the building, frequently disinfects office equipment, and maintains social distancing guidelines. Furthermore, everyone entering the building is required to wear a face mask.

The Call Stewards have VoIP telephones at their homes and with laptops can dispatch calls and transfer the phone lines same as if they were in the office. The VoIP phones caller ID is Local 33.

We can fully service the Membership, answering questions or pointing them in the right direction. Taking dues payments, filling out loan verification forms, member in good standing letters, EDD disability and unemployment forms.

From March 16th thru May 26th the main office had over 6,000 phone calls. From March 16th thru May 31st the Call Stewards Office answered over 7,000 phone calls.

I have set up all the numerous Zoom Meetings for the Board of Directors.

I asked President Wright to write a letter to IATSE President Loeb to waive the $100 reinstatement late fee; President Loeb granted the request.

The IATSE is crediting the second quarter per capita stamp. If you paid for the whole year you have a credit that will be applied towards the first quarter of 2021.

We have put the brakes on spending. I asked the Officers and Office Staff to only buy/use only necessities needed to do their jobs to reduce costs. They are doing an excellent job. I reviewed all the bills and expenses. I cancelled the window cleaning, pest control, water delivery, office training, and the gardener. I reduced services or asked vendors to lower their service fees such as Spectrum, BPA, email service, computer back up, and our Internet providers. The Business Agents have not scheduled weekend relief Call Stewards. The Officers stopped using Assistants and Replacements. The Office staff is not working overtime or 6th days. We are not scheduling special events, promotions, or an application day. The previous mentioned items for April to December 2020 have an estimated cost reduction of $ 219,721.
There are other items with the Board of Directors help that we can reduce such as committee pay, delegates traveling expenses, officer training, paid by local cards, printing and postage, could be a savings of $284,060 for a total potential savings of $503,781.

The picnic was cancelled this year and the funds were transferred to 125th Anniversary Fund. The 125th Anniversary event next year has been cancelled.

I applied on behalf of Local 33 for the SBA $10,000 emergency grant and loan. The SBA had approved Local 33 for a $140,000 loan and $10,000 grant. You must apply for the loan to receive the $10,000 grant. I agreed with the recommendations of our Financial Advisers, Merrill/Lynch, The Gilbert Group, and Duben and Associates CPAs to apply for the loan. The $10,000 grant does not have to be paid back. A portion or the entire $140,000 loan may be forgiven. The Board of Directors did not approve the SBA loan which forfeited the SBA Emergency Grant. The Board did not want to take on debt knowing we have money in the bank.

The IATSE Training Trust Fund did not allow in person training classes thru June. For future training classes the IATSE Training Trust Fund will require Members to fill-out a waiver not holding the TTF responsible if they get COVID.

I set up a Zoom AVIXA study group for the post online classes. Another eight AVIXA students have earned their AVIXA Live Event Technician certificate. We have about seventy certified AVIXA Live Event Technicians; with another twenty Students close to completing. We are positioned to capture more Audio Video work.

In closing, the COVID crisis is month to month driven and we have not seen the big picture yet. I am confident with the reserves in the bank, work starting to return, and Officers, Board of Directors, and Office Staff keeping expenses down, we can get through this together.

Be safe,

Ron Valentine, BA TV
Robert Pagnotta, BA Theatre
Joe Conley, FS-T, Chair of Safety & Training, Chair of Finance Committee
Jane E. Leslie, Recording Secretary