



MINUTES

SPECIAL EFFECTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Date: December 16, 2002

Meeting Location: Walt Disney Studios
Burbank, CA

Members Present:

Mike Richwine, Chair, Division Chief Fire Engineering Division
Patricia Sanchez, SFM Fireworks Program Coordinator
Al Adams, Technical Assistant
Kevin Brueckner, Fireworks America
Gary Brown, Pyro Spectaculars (for James Souza)
Harold (Mickey) Aronson, Disneyland Entertainment
Dennis King, AMPTP
Chuck Hughes, NBC Studios
Manny Chavez, Walt Disney Studios
Thaine Morris, M.P. Associates
Kief Adler, Western Pyrotechnic Association
George Jackman, De La Mare Engineering

Members Absent:

Lisa Dowdy, Program Assistant
Craig Canfield, Burbank Fire Department
Don Martin, Universal Studios
Jon Belyeu, ASEPO
Cal Acord, Warner Bros. Studios

Guests:

Tassilo Baur, De La Mare Engineering
Jim Souza, Pyro Spectaculars, Inc.
Michael Kelly, California Film Commission
Tom Newman

CALL TO ORDER

Mike Richwine called the meeting to order at 10:20 a.m. The roll was called and a quorum established.

INTRODUCTIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Mike Richwine introduced himself as the new Division Chief of Fire Engineering and Chairperson of the Fireworks Advisory Committee. Self-introductions by committee members followed. Mike discussed the break up of the original Fireworks Advisory Committee into three different committees consisting of a Safe & Sane Committee, a High Power Rocket Committee and the Fireworks Special Effects Committee. Also discussed was the consideration of new committee appointments from within the fire service and the performer licensing classification. Mike asked for a motion to allow voting alternates at committee meetings. The motion was made and approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The meeting minutes from February 14, 2002 were approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Air Show Pyrotechnics

The correspondence from Steve Stavrakakis, with regards to air show pyrotechnics, was discussed. His correspondence discussed the need for modification to current regulations to include licensing for these types of shows. The committee agreed that operators of these shows must meet the current regulation requirements.

2. Update on Current Regulation Process

Al Adams explained that the theatrical experience package was submitted to the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) and that it was sent back. OAL wants more detail as to specific amounts of pyrotechnic material and a better definition of the word "theatrical". The package at this point remains in a "dead" status unless the committee agrees to go back and make required changes set out by OAL. Al Adams stated that he feels this issue should be a top priority. Mike asked for a motion to bring the regulations package back to the committee so the required changes could be made. A motion was made and passed.

3. Public Displays for Motion Picture/Television

Al Adams explained that the Attorney General's opinion is very clear in covering those who have been admitted to view the discharge of special effects material for motion picture/television filming. He also explained that the SFM, ASEPO and the AMPTP had previously come to an agreement on public display licenses for motion picture/television productions. Fire Engineering staff will pull the A G's opinion, speak with previous administration and look at the historical references then bring back their findings to the next committee meeting.

4. Reference Letters

Al Adams discussed that the subcommittee had re-drafted the language for reference letters and a committee decision was needed to either move forward or drop the issue. Mike asked for a motion to move the issue into a regulations package. A motion was made and passed.

1. Unlicensed Assistant

Subcommittee was asked to draft new language and submit finding to committee during next meeting. Subcommittee will also look at other sections of Title 19 that may be relevant to the issue. Mike asked for a motion to approve subcommittee. A motion was made and passed.

Subcommittee was formed with the following individuals being appointed: Gary Brown, Tassilo Baur, Dennis King, Manny Chavez, Al Adams (liaison), Jon Belyeu, Don Martin

7. Mighty Mite Mortars

Committee decided that it might be necessary to change regulations so they accommodate current technology. Mortars have been used for several years in the special effects industry and variances have been given for their use in aerial displays. Mike will contact Mr. Weeth and provide him a copy of the last meeting minutes for his response with regards to testing and data. Mr. Weeth's response will be brought back to the committee for further discussion.

8. High Explosive Materials

Committee needs to decide whether to address or drop the issue with respect to using other types of materials not listed on Table 14A. Current procedure for pyrotechnic operators is to get approval from the local authority having jurisdiction for use of high explosive materials.

9. Rewrite of Pyrotechnic Operators Exam

The need to establish a working group for this subject was discussed. Chuck Hughes recommended that, under the current Special Effects/Theatrical test, those questions that are no longer applicable be thrown out (in the interim until a new test has been developed). A working group was formed to review test questions pertaining to the following: Special Effects 1st Class, Special Effects 2nd Class, Special Effects 3rd Class, Theatrical Trainee, Theatrical and Performer.

A working group was formed of the following; Tassilo Baur; Kevin Brueckner; Manny Chavez; Chuck Hughes; Tom Newman; George Jackman. The working group will review the process and come back to the committee with recommendations.

New Business:

1. Gary Brown brought up that Orange County has gone to requesting all public displays be electronic and not hand-fired. Manny recommended that the local Fire Departments be invited to the FW Advisory Committee meetings in the future. Al Adams was to contact Orange County to see what the motive was for electronic shows vs. hand-fired and report back to the FW committee. The SFM will communicate with various FPO groups to see if they will come to advisory meetings.
2. Jim Souza indicated he would be attending the meeting on Federal licenses and will report back to the committee.
3. Al Adams announced that ATF had sent out a questionnaire regarding special effects' licenses.

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