



STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: July 7, 2009
To: Honorable Mayor & City Council
From: Alison Maxwell, Director Economic Development and Marketing
Subject: Beverly Hills Global Partners request for City Council to discuss support of a Beverly Hills Documentary Film Festival and associated Chinese Production Summit.

Attachments: 1. Beverly Hills Global Partners: Outline of Proposed Beverly Hills International Documentary Film Festival and Associated Chinese Production Summit

INTRODUCTION

Beverly Hills Global Partners (BHGP) will present an outline of the proposed Beverly Hills International Documentary Film Festival and associated Chinese Production Summit and request City Council support for the project.

DISCUSSION

BHGP (the Sister City organization) board members have been working with a team lead Mr. Richard Rosenzweig to develop and launch a Beverly Hills International Documentary Film Festival in the City in the fall of 2010. BHGP has been involved from a Sister City perspective, looking at the connections that could be made with Sister City partners in Israel, France and China as well as researching options for international sponsorship and support.

A key area of opportunity, as expressed by BHGP, is to connect the Beverly International Documentary Hills Film Festival with the extensive Chinese Film Industry, through, amongst other things, a Chinese Production Summit that would be hosted in connection with the Festival, as a pre-event. The Summit would be held in Beverly Hills and would provide the opportunity for senior Chinese officials to meet and do business with leading members of the Beverly Hills/LA entertainment industry.

Prior to pursuing this opportunity more formally, BHGP is seeking to gauge City Council's interest and level of support for the proposed China Production Summit project.

BHGP has stated that it is not, and does not plan to, request City financial support for this program. However, there was some discussion at the Council Committee regarding support from the City for BHGP/Film Festival to use City facilities, and/or other facilities in Beverly Hills to which the City has access, such as the Paley Center or the Academy.

Attached to this staff report is an outline of the BHGP proposal and request to determine if there is City Council support for the proposed China Production Summit.

FISCAL IMPACT

BHGP is not requesting any financial support from the City for the proposed China Production Summit or the Beverly Hills International Documentary Film Festival.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Sister City Council Committee met on June 25, 2009 to receive a general update on Sister City matters. The Committee received a presentation on the proposed Beverly Hills Independent Film Festival and the associated Chinese Production Summit. The Committee agreed that it would be prudent to review the proposed program with the whole City Council before taking next steps to reach out to Chinese film officials.

RECOMMENDATION

Receive the report from BHGP and provide BHGP with a determination of City Council's support for the Beverly Hills International Documentary Film Festival and an associated Chinese Production Summit.

Alison Maxwell

Director Economic Development & Marketing



**Beverly Hills Global Partners
Report to City Council**

PURPOSE: To determine if the BH City Council supports having a Chinese Production Summit in Beverly Hills, attended by senior Chinese Government Officials and leaders of the US film, TV and entertainment community. There is no anticipation of seeking any City funding for this project. A summary is set forth below.

ISSUE: For BHGP as producers of both events (Beverly Hills International Documentary Film Festival and the Chinese Production Summit) to go forward with further discussions with the Chinese governments media arm, The State Administration for Radio, Film and Television "SARFT", it is essential that there is no opposition from any member of the City Council regarding the non-financial support of both these events.

We are asking the Mayor, on behalf of the City, to write a letter of support to SARFT which will be delivered to Beijing by GHGP in mid July.

BEVERLY HILLS INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL

OVERVIEW:

A city built by the pioneers of the motion picture industry, Beverly Hills is the true home of Hollywood for both film and television. The historic nature and prestigious reputation of the city creates an ideal location for filmmakers, audiences, and industry executives to gather in celebration of the finest cinema from around the world.

Documentaries provide us with a window into other people's realities. They have the power to inspire and entertain. Contemporary documentaries have proven their influence in the mainstream arena, often grossing just as much, if not more than studio films. As public demand for high-caliber non-fiction films continues, the market demands a venue for these works of art to be showcased. Their profound impact on society deserves tribute and The Beverly Hills International Documentary Film Festival (BHIDFF) aims to do just that.

In order to further understand the market, research on documentary festival dates, as well as, cultural events, film festivals and awards ceremonies taking place not only locally, but also globally was conducted. Also taken into consideration are holidays that could possibly jeopardize attendance and participation. After all was examined, late September, early October 2010 seems like an ideal timeframe for this festival.

Through a strategic partnership with Beverly Hills Global Partners, Inc. (BHGP) the BHIDFF is exploring means to globalize the festival and address issues within the world entertainment community. The Chinese Production Summit will focus on the numerous

issues between “Hollywood” and its means of navigating through China’s rigid bureaucracy. The Summit is tentatively scheduled to take place the week prior to the inaugural Beverly Hills International Documentary Film Festival and will generate not only additional sponsorships for the event, but will have an impact on the local economy through additional heads and beds, spending in the market and added exposure with additional impressions throughout the world in entertainment, business and financial media.

The combination of location and content will create a premier event that will surely garner worldwide media attention. The festival will be comprised of premieres, screenings, parties and award ceremonies all centered on excellence in documentary filmmaking. The festival’s proximity to studio executives, agents, managers and distribution companies adds a unique component to the festival as films seen by industry professionals gain valuable exposure.

BHGP:

The International focus of the Beverly Hills International Documentary Film Festival will be accentuated by the relationship with the cities involved in the Beverly Hills Sister City Committee: The Pudong District of Shanghai, China; Herzliya, Israel; Cannes, France; and Acapulco, Mexico.

Through the global partnership between the BHIDFF and BHGP, the organization strives to: Cultivate relationships, encourage any possible business potentials mutually beneficial for the sister cities (in partial China’s production community), establish a tradition of cultural exchanges that enhances both cities global awareness, develop networks between cities that can be made available to business, cultural organizations and educational facilities, cross-promote cities to mutually increase tourism, support educational exchanges and cultural events and build lasting friendships based on the common goal of trading ideas, culture and commerce.

Chinese Production Summit:

With China being a recognizable force within the production industry as well as one of the world’s most populous nations in the world today, the time has come for leaders of the entertainment industry to get together and address the many concerns and misconceptions that have surfaced.

The Beverly Hills International Documentary Film Festival’s – Chinese Production Summit will set itself apart from other like events in the market as the festival will bring together Senior Chinese Government Officials and leaders of the entertainment industry.

Senior management and influential individuals from all areas of the business including: creative, production, technology, trade organizations, distribution, finance, music, exhibition, and the financial sector will convey their concerns and issues to the forefront with these Chinese leaders.

Such areas to be explored and items to address include: co-production opportunities, censorship, growing content needs and requirements, digital conversions, piracy, production incentives, regulatory crackdowns, theatrical releases, distribution methods, location shoots, web and changes in technology and standards.

The ultimate goal of the Chinese Production Summit will be to offer a comprehensive arena for the U.S. and China to mutually benefit from a production partnership and build a continuing relationship supporting many aspects of the entertainment industry. As an arm of the Beverly Hills International Documentary Film Festival, it will bring cultural exchange and learning to both areas.

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June 24, 2009