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Progress Report



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Entertainment Industry Council Replaced by the Office of the Film Commissioner

at a glance

During the 1999 session, the Legislature adopted one of our prior report's recommended options of replacing the Florida Entertainment Industry Council with an Office of the Film Commissioner under the Governor's Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development. The Office of the Film Commissioner will be responsible for promoting Florida's entertainment industries, and developing performance standards and outcome measures.

Purpose

In accordance with state law, this progress report informs the Legislature of actions taken in response to our 1997 report on the Florida Entertainment Commission and the Florida Entertainment Industry Council.^{1,2} This report presents our assessment of the extent to which our prior report's findings and recommendations have been addressed.

Background

The Florida Entertainment Commission was established as a direct support organization of the Department of Commerce in December 1993. The commission operated as a not-for-profit organization headed by a board of directors appointed by the Governor, with day-to-day operations handled by a board-appointed executive director.

The Florida Entertainment Commission's purpose was to help promote and develop Florida's motion picture, television, video, recording, and entertainment industries. Its mission was to be a catalyst for developing Florida's entertainment and production industries, identify new markets offering new jobs and revenues, and protect and develop Florida's existing core entertainment industries. Following the Department of Commerce's, abolishment in July 1996, the Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development (OTTED) in the Executive Office of the Governor was given responsibility for overseeing the commission. On October 8, 1996, OTTED contracted with the newly created Florida Entertainment Industry Council, a not-for-profit organization, to assist it in promoting and developing Florida's entertainment-related industries. The Florida Entertainment Industry Council was essentially the same

¹ Section 11.45(7)(f), F.S.

² *Review of the Florida Entertainment Commission*, [OPPAGA Report No. 96-60](#), February 1997.

entity as the commission. The council's board was composed of members who were former board members of the commission and the council had the same executive director. The council was also contracted to perform similar services as the commission, such as developing a directory of Florida entertainment production services, producing and distributing magazines to promote Florida venues and resources, and providing information and assistance to the entertainment industry.

Prior Findings

In our 1997 report, we reviewed the commission's performance accountability system to determine whether it provided the Legislature with information needed to assess the commission's progress toward achieving desired outcomes. We identified two major concerns with the commission's performance accountability system: the commission had not developed measures for assessing the outcomes of its major activities, and entertainment industry revenues and employment data presented in the commission's quarterly reports were overstated.

To address these concerns, we recommended that the Florida Entertainment Industry Council develop outcome measures to be incorporated into its contract with OTTED. We also recommended that the Legislature consider two options if it was not satisfied with the council's performance: incorporate the council's responsibilities into another public-private partnership, such as Enterprise Florida, or replace the council with a separate unit in OTTED, which would have the advantage of creating a high-profile entity.

Current Status

In February 1997, the Florida Entertainment Industry Council adopted performance measures that were incorporated into its contract with OTTED. However, these measures only provided information on the organization's outputs, such as the number of publications distributed, rather than the outcomes of its services.

Since our report's release, studies made by the House Tourism Committee and the Governor's Inspector General's Office identified major concerns with the council's performance and fiscal controls. During the 1998 session, the Legislature attempted to address these concerns by making the council's appropriation contingent on the passage of bill designed to improve the state's efforts to promote its entertainment industries. This bill, however, failed to pass. As a result, the council was not appropriated state funds for Fiscal Year 1998-99.

The 1999 Legislature took further action to address these concerns by passing a bill, Ch. 99-251, Laws of Florida, that adopted one of our report's recommended options of replacing the council with an Office of the Film Commissioner under the Governor's Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development. The Office of the Film Commissioner will be responsible for promoting Florida's entertainment industries and developing performance standards and outcome measures.

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