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Industry veteran named capital region's new film commissioner

VICTORIA, B.C. — Peter Hayman has been appointed as the new head of Vancouver Island South Film & Media Commission, its board of directors announced today.

Armed with enthusiasm and 25 years of experience in film, media and entertainment, with an impressive track record as a prolific fund-raiser with superior organizational skills, Hayman succeeds Kathleen Gilbert, who is retiring April 30 as Greater Victoria's longest-serving film commissioner after 14 years on the job.

The new film commissioner will assume his duties May 1. He was selected from dozens of candidates who applied during a nationwide search that began Dec. 7. Gilbert will remain until June 1 in a training and consulting capacity during a transition period.

Hayman, who recently moved to North Saanich, is no stranger to the unique and ever-changing challenges in the entertainment industry. After his beginnings as a studio musician and songwriter for Crested Butte Records in Boulder, Colorado, he attended Algonquin College Film School and studied film at UCLA. It prepared him for years of experience working in a multitude of crew positions before being hired as a film editor for The 25th Frame Film Production Company, and then by its parent company, CFTO/Glen Warren Productions, to produce and direct non-scripted productions.

After traveling to the Red Sea and Hawaii to work on an IMAX movie about humpback whales and sharks, Hayman returned to Toronto and founded Imagitions Film & Video Corp., producing TV commercials, films and early music videos for bands such as Rush.

Hayman was later appointed President, Entertainment of ICE Inc., specializing in the integration of traditional and new media. He also produced live television specials including the Genie and Gemini awards and scripted and variety series for CBC.

After moving to Los Angeles in 1995 as CEO of Torch Television, Hayman went on to create and oversee television series for broadcasters including Turner, TLC, Teletoon

and Discovery. Other noteworthy credits include his work as executive director and business agent for The International Cinematographers Guild of Western Canada.

“I’m thrilled for the opportunity to carry on the great work of The Vancouver Island South Film & Media Commission,” said Hayman. “Kathleen Gilbert and her team have done an amazing job over the past 14 years, and as we enter a new era of film and media production fuelled by new technology and innovation, the possibilities are boundless.”

In addition to the capital region’s familiar assets — its locations diversity, tax incentives, skilled crews and so on — Hayman said he is inspired by its burgeoning tech sector.

“I look forward to sharing my own enthusiasm with those looking for the perfect place to create their film and media projects,” he said.

Board president Don Enright said the commission is “extraordinarily fortunate” to have been able to land someone of Hayman’s calibre from a pool of worthy candidates.

“Peter brings an extraordinary range of industry experience, as well as a vast skillset,” Enright said. “He has produced, directed, developed, managed, innovated and delivered; been a seriously successful money-raiser and highly effective labour leader; and he has a lifetime’s worth of professional relationships here and in the U.S.”

The Vancouver Island South Film & Media Commission is a not-for-profit organization with a mandate to market the capital region to the global film industry. Now headquartered in Langford, the commission has been reinvented several times since it was founded in 1974 as the Victoria Film Commission by the late Brian Small, who first operated it on a shoestring through The Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce.

The commission currently receives financial support from Creative BC via the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport; municipalities including Victoria, Esquimalt, Langford, View Royal, Oak Bay, Colwood, Saanich, Sidney, North Saanich, Sooke and Metchosin; and through the generosity of its membership and local businesses.

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