



BINDERS FULL of Axanar receipts and invoices were scheduled to be on display for just two hours for Axacon attendees. *Image/Axanar Productions*

Peters to Open Axanar Finances to Limited Inspection

Only Axacon Attendees Can Examine Records During Axanar Set Tour

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By  [Carlos Pedraza](#)

Axanar supporters get to examine the ill-fated fan film's financial records November 2, 2018, as part of Axacon, OWC Studios head [Alec Peters](#) announced.

In an interview published October 22 on his surrogate's Fan Film Factor blog, Peters said he was responding to continuing calls for accountability over how more than \$1.4 million was spent on the never-produced [Axanar](#) feature film.

“**[AxaMonitor editor]** Carlos Pedraza and his Axahater minions—none of which has any expertise or any facts—keep wanting to beat the drum of nonsense they spill, suggesting there is something nefarious about the financials,” Peters told blogger Jonathan Lane. “So I thought we should give even more people the ability to see the detailed financial records.”¹⁾



OWC Studios head **Alec Peters**

Open Records?

Peters said he planned to open Axanar's financial records to inspection by [Axacon](#) attendees during a two-hour tour of the fan film's unfinished bridge set at his OWC Studios in Lawrenceville, Ga., but he would cut off access after then.

Axacon attendees could “come over, look through any of the four six-inch thick binders of receipts and three binders of bank records and financial summaries,” Peters said. “They can ask me questions, take notes, and hopefully they see how buttoned up we are. But the books stay here, and the tour only lasts for a few hours.”²⁾

«Let's face it, you won't be able to silence Axanar's critics until you've released the two 15-minute segments. ... You need to put your head down, plow through production and not release anything substantial until the first of the two parts are done and you can promise a delivery date on part two that you'll meet without fail.» — *Axanar PR Director Mike Bawden's Advice to Alec Peters*

No Access for Axanar Critics

Axanar critics, however, would continue to be denied access to those financial records because, Peters said, they would only be “opening up the door to an endless point-by-point debate about minutiae.”³⁾

'I Wanted to Release the Financials'

Peters claimed he had once “wanted to release the detailed financials as I thought it was so clear cut no one could have an issue with them.”

However, he said, it was Axanar’s public relations director, Mike Bawden, who “felt strongly” that **AxaMonitor**’s [coverage](#) and [criticism](#) from “haters” would only result in “find[ing] things wrong, because facts weren’t what they were interested in.” Peters added, “Their agenda dictated everything.”⁴⁾



Axanar PR Director **Mike Bawden**

However, Bawden didn’t remember his advice being framed quite that way, telling **AxaMonitor**:

That’s an interesting take on my advice to Alec. Not entirely the tone I used, but the sentiment is, I suppose, true enough. Alec originally asked me for my opinion on having a panel discussion at Axacon on the financials. I told him I didn’t think that was a good idea because: a) I wasn’t sure a panel discussion about the financial records of a fan film production was particularly scintillating but would, instead, come off as defensive and b) I wasn’t convinced there would be any new revelations that would either convince Axanar’s detractors to change their opinion or make a case for those in support to be even more supportive.⁵⁾

How to Silence Axanar Critics

In addition, Bawden’s exact advice to Peters included his recommendation “on how to silence the #haters once and for all. It’s advice I suspect you might actually agree with”:⁶⁾

There is no amount of validation that haters are likely to accept or believe, so if you want to do something like this ... our accountant is likely to face unfair and harsh criticism from Axanar’s detractors while supporters are likely to say, “We knew all this already.”

Let’s face it, you won’t be able to silence Axanar’s critics until you’ve released the two 15-minute segments. I imagine you’ll face ... unfair scrutiny every step of the way. That’s why you need to put your head down, plow through production and not release anything substantial until the first of the two parts are done and you can promise a delivery date on part two that you’ll meet without fail.⁷⁾

So far, every delivery date promised by Peters for *Axanar* has passed without delivering anything.



Fan Film Factor blogger and *Axanar* surrogate **Jonathan Lane**

A Two-Hour Tour

Meanwhile, when questioned by Lane about what anyone could learn from only two hours inspection of the records he had chose to display, Peters defended his decision to limit access.

Lane asked: “The first thing [a detractor would] say is, “He’s still hiding something! No one can possibly look though all of those books in two hours!”

“Hiding what?,” Peters replied, “It’s all there in plain sight. People can see all of the expenses add up to \$1.4 million. ... We have a major professional accounting firm that not only has spent dozens of hours picking through the financials, but unlike the haters, they have both the actual financials AND the expertise to analyze where every dollar has been spent.”⁸⁾

Evading Question

While Peters answered the question of whether information was being hidden, he failed to address Lane’s second concern, whether two hours was enough time for anyone to draw any substantive conclusions about *Axanar*’s finances, likening the records to a museum display:

You go to a museum to look at the exhibits while you’re there. But you don’t get to take them home with you. You can buy a souvenir book or postcards or even take pictures of the exhibits sometimes, but they stay at the museum.⁹⁾

Straw Man Argument

Throughout the Fan Film Factor interview, Peters used the same rhetorical device, answering one of Lane’s questions but not another, and claiming his critics had accused him of things they hadn’t, using access to the records to refute allegations never actually lodged against him by AxaMonitor or even the majority of his critics.

Lane asked, “What if you left out those receipts that show you embezzling money from donors? Where’s the receipt for those [tires for your car](#)? Where’s your health insurance? Where’s all that delicious sushi?”

Lane’s question presupposed that Peters had been accused of embezzling money. None of **AxaMonitor**’s coverage has pointed to evidence of embezzlement; instead, its coverage questioned the [lack of documentation](#) produced by Peters to back up his claims, as well as Peters’ [management](#)

[decisions](#). AxaMonitor has only analyzed, at a high level, how he had previously reported on [Axanar spending](#).

In another instance, Lane asked, “Seriously, though ... what if this is all just a smoke screen? What if you took out all of the incriminating receipts and left in only the ‘safe’ ones? What if you just forged all of the receipts in those books?”

Peters railed, “Geez! Who takes the time to forge thousands of receipts? ... Let me ask YOU a question: who embezzles money and then comes away with LESS money than when they started?!? I’d have to be the most idiotic crook in the world!”

Previous Flawed Financial Reporting

Besides never alleging embezzlement, **AxaMonitor**’s coverage has never pointed to any forged receipts. Instead, the focus of AxaMonitor’s coverage has been the lack of documentation, or substantive financial reports Peters has refused to publicly disclose. Those include:

- [Two sets](#) of financial reports submitted to the court during discovery for the [copyright infringement](#) lawsuit against Axanar by [CBS](#) and [Paramount Pictures](#). Peters’ lawyers had tried to get the court to keep a potential jury from seeing [those reports](#).
- A report prepared in Axanar’s defense by an expert accountant during the lawsuit. [That report](#) was based on the financial statements Axanar’s attorneys tried to keep away from the jury and the public.
- Documentation backing up the thin and so-called independent [financial report](#) Peters released regarding the validity of expenditures reflected in [records Peters selected](#) for a panel of film industry personnel to review. Those panel members all had ties to Axanar.

Experts' Approval?

Peters also told Lane “lawyers, two sets of accountants, a panel of industry experts, and a number of donors have all seen the financials and approved of them.”

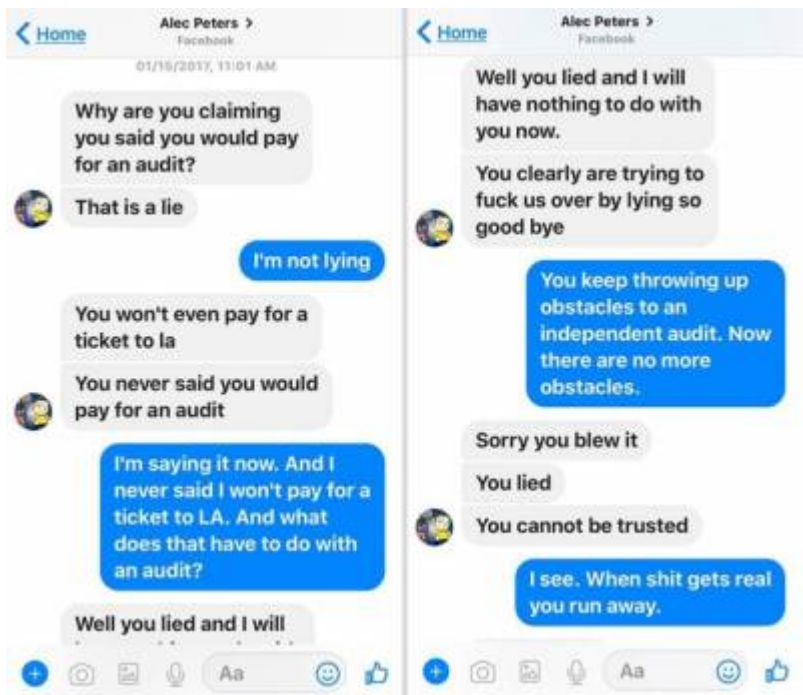
The lawyers, of course, were bound by confidentiality not to disclose any information about the financials; they also served as Peters’ paid advocates, not in any independent role.

Peters has never disclosed any conclusions reached by accountants who have examined his records, and none of those examinations was an actual audit. No accountants have released public statements that “approved of” the financials.

No donors have made public statements about Axanar’s finances, except one, Cedric Yau, who served on the financial review panel. He told **AxaMonitor** that despite the voluminous amount of financial records they were provided, Peters did not charge the committee to review all of Axanar Productions’ books, just the expenses he had attributed — [after the fact](#), according to court documents — to the money directly raised by its [Kickstarter](#) and [Indiegogo](#) campaigns. They were not, according to committee members, given records covering the totality of Axanar Productions Inc.’s finances.

Missing 'Independent' Review

The independent financial report Peters cited was never completed and signed off by the committee members. In fact, the short summary Peters did release has [disappeared](#) from the Axanar Productions website amid reports the chairman demanded its removal.




AUDIT REFUSAL In this January 2017 Facebook Messenger exchange, Alec Peters refuses the offer by an Axanar donor to pay for an independent audit. *Click image to view larger.*


Peters Refused Previous Donor Examination

On the other hand, Peters told Lane the records have always been open for examination by Axanar donors:

I've always said that any Axanar donor could come to our studio at any time to look over every receipt we ever paid and verify for themselves that every penny of donations was spent on reasonable expenses.¹⁰⁾

However, Peters had already turned down an offer in January 14, 2017, by one donor, Oregon businesswoman Jo Dee Moine, to pay for an independent accountant to audit Axanar. This week, Moine reaffirmed that offer; she also offered to pay for Peters' current accounting firm to publicly report its findings.

Lane dismissed that notion: "I doubt that. Also, the logistics don't work. You aren't the client, Alec is (and Axanar Productions)."¹¹⁾ 

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Keywords

[financials, Axacon](#)

1) 2) 3) 4) 8) 9) 10)

"Full Axanar Financials to be Displayed to Attendees During Axacon: Interview with Alec Peters," Fan Film Factor blog, 10/22/18.

5) 6) 7)

Email from Mike Bawden to AxaMonitor editor Carlos Pedraza, 10/23/18.

11)

Jonathan Lane comment, "Full Axanar Financials to be Displayed to Attendees During Axacon: Interview with Alec Peters," Fan Film Factor blog, 10/22/18.

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