

Westercon Bylaws

As of Close of 2006 Westercon

The following document is the current text of the Westercon Bylaws and Standing Rules, as of the close of Westercon 59 (San Diego, CA, 2006). Material added or inserted by amendments ratified at Westercon 59 is indicated by underline type. Material removed is indicated by ~~striketru type~~. Kevin Standlee prepared this document based on the minutes of the Westercon 59 Business Meeting. One item of business is passed on to Westercon 60 (San Mateo CA, 2007), and follows the Standing Rules in the draft Agenda for the 2007 Business Meeting.

1 General Provisions

1.1 Name and Date

It is traditional, but not obligatory, that the West Coast Science Fantasy Conference (Westercon) shall take place over the July 4th weekend.

1.2 Guests of Honor

It is traditional, but not obligatory, that Westercon Guests of Honor and other notables be selected from among SF personalities residing within the Westercon geographical area.

1.3 Membership Classes

There shall be at least two classes of membership in Westercon: supporting and attending. The committee shall notify the members of their membership class in a timely fashion.

1.3.1 Supporting Members

Supporting members shall receive any progress reports or any other generally mailed publications published after the member joins the Westercon, including the Program Book, and may exercise any voting rights permitted by any other part of these bylaws, except attending the Business Meeting. All Westercons shall be required to offer supporting memberships until at least thirty (30) days prior to the opening of the Westercon, and such supporting memberships shall not cost more than one hundred and fifty percent (150%) of the voting fee charged when the site of the Westercon was selected. Any class of membership offered by a Westercon costing at least as much as a supporting membership shall include a supporting membership.

1.3.2 Attending Members

Attending members shall have all of the rights of supporting members, plus the right to attend the Westercon and the business meeting(s) held there, subject to the restrictions established by the other parts of these bylaws.

1.3.3 Restriction of Memberships

Each Westercon committee shall have the right to limit the activities of its attendees, either individually or in groups, insofar as such activities endanger, physically or legally, other persons or property. Such limitations may include, but are not limited to, closing down parties, ejecting persons from the Westercon, or turning offenders over to other authorities. No refund of membership need be given in such circumstances. Each member, in purchasing his/her membership, agrees to abide by these bylaws.

1.4 Name Badges and Membership Numbers

All committees shall issue name badges for all attending members. Name badges for pre-registered members shall display the member's name in no less than 24-point bold type. All committees shall assign a unique membership number upon processing of a membership. This number provided to each member with the site selection ballot and with each progress report, shall be printed on membership name badges, and shall be used for site-selection purposes. In the event a membership is transferred, the old membership number, if applicable, shall be noted, both on the badge and on registration information used for site-selection voting administration. Membership badges or other proof of membership remain the property of the Westercon committee for the duration of the conference and may be confiscated for cause; no refund of membership fees need be given in such circumstances.

1.5 Archive of Bylaws

The Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, Inc. (LASFS) shall act as an archive to the Westercon bylaws and the minutes of business meetings. Each committee shall reimburse LASFS for the costs of copying and forwarding copies of the Bylaws and Minutes to those who request them. A copy of the minutes, including the text of motions passed by the business meeting, shall be sent to LASFS within two (2) months of the close of each Westercon by the administering Westercon. LASFS shall maintain the Westercon bylaws and shall forward one copy of the current bylaws, including the text of any amendment to the bylaws awaiting secondary ratification, to the current Westercon committee within four (4) months of the close of the previous Westercon. The current Westercon shall provide copies of the Bylaws to the committees of all Westercon bids for the year which that Westercon is administering the site-selection.

1.6 Distribution of Bylaws to Members

The Westercon Bylaws, as well as the complete text of any amendment awaiting secondary ratification, shall be published in at least one (1) progress report and in the program book of the current Westercon each year. Failure to publish this information shall not affect the procedure to amend the bylaws as stated in Article 4.

1.7 Westercon Service Mark

All Westercons shall publish, in all publications such as promotional flyers, progress reports, and program book, the following notice: "Westercon' is a registered service mark of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, Inc."

1.8 Responsibilities of Administering Westercon

It is a responsibility of each Westercon to enforce the provisions of these bylaws.

1.9 Committee Failure

Should a Westercon Committee declare itself unable to fulfill its duties, the Board of Directors of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society shall determine alternate arrangements for that Westercon.

2 Westercon Business Meeting

2.1 Scheduling of Sessions

At least one (1) regular session of the Westercon business meeting must be scheduled at each Westercon. No regular session of the Westercon business meeting shall be scheduled to start prior to 11 AM, nor later than 2 PM, nor on the last day of the Westercon. A special session, at which site-selection business shall be the sole order of business, may be scheduled on the last day of the convention, provided that said special meeting is scheduled to begin no earlier than 11 AM nor later than 2 PM. All sessions occurring during the same Westercon, be they regular, adjourned, or special, shall be considered, for procedural purposes, as the same parliamentary session.

2.2 Site-Selection Business

Site-selection business shall be in order at any session of the business meeting. Site-selection business shall include, but need not be limited to, the announcement of the results of the balloting and of a winner if one is produced by the balloting, or of a site-selection resolution, as hereafter defined, if one is necessary [*see Section 3.17*]. The winner of the site-selection may be announced prior to the site-selection business meeting, if one is held.

2.3 Quorum

For business other than site-selection business, a quorum of fifteen (15) attending members of the current Westercon shall be required. For site-selection business, the quorum shall be those attending members of the current Westercon who attend the meeting. All those persons voting at any meeting must be attending members of the current Westercon. Except as noted in these bylaws or in such rules of order as may be adopted, all business requires a simple majority to pass.

2.4 Parliamentary Authority

The current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall be the parliamentary authority of the Westercon business meeting except where it conflicts with these bylaws or with any special rules of order which may be adopted by the business meeting.

3 Westercon Site-Selection

3.1 Eligibility of Sites

Any site on the North American continent west of the 104th west meridian, or in the state of Hawaii, shall be eligible to be the site of a Westercon, except as restricted by the provisions of these bylaws.

Provided that, upon the annexation of Australia by the United States of America or the annexation of the United States of America by Australia, Section 3.1 shall be amended to read:

“Any site in Australia, or on the North American continent west of the 104th west meridian, or in the state of Hawaii, shall be eligible to be the site of a Westercon, except as restricted by the provisions of these bylaws.”

[Note: On a parliamentary inquiry based on a question of when the annexation must take place for a site to be eligible, the 2002 Business Meeting decided that a bid for an Australian site is eligible, even if the annexation has not yet taken place, provided that the annexation has taken place by the filing deadline for the intervening Westercon (the April 15th following the Westercon at which the Australian Westercon is selected), and that if the Australian site has been selected, and the annexation has not taken place by that date, then this shall constitute committee failure, as covered by Section 1.9.]

3.2 Site Selection Zones

The following Site Selection Zones are defined within the area defined in section 3.1:

3.2.1: North: Sites in North America north of the 42nd north parallel.

3.2.2: Central: Sites in North America between the North and South zones.

3.2.3: South: Hawaii; California south of and including San Luis Obispo, Kern, and San Bernardino Counties; Nevada south of and including Clark County; Arizona; New Mexico; and all countries, states, provinces, territories, or other political subdivisions southward within North America.

3.2.4: Other: Any location otherwise eligible under section 3.1 not part of the above zones.

3.3 Exclusion Zone

No site within ~~seventy-five (75) miles of~~ the Site Selection Zone containing the site of the Westercon administering the site-selection shall be eligible to bid, except as provided in section 3.6. If no eligible bids are filed by the January 1st of the year of the site-selection balloting, then all sites defined in section 3.1 shall be eligible., except sites within seventy-five (75) miles of the the site of the Westercon administering the site-selection.

3.4 Filing Requirements

A Westercon bid committee must provide written evidence of the following: At least two (2) separate people declaring themselves Chairman and Treasurer; an organizing instrument such as bylaws, articles of incorporation or association, or a partnership agreement; and a letter of intent or option from a hotel or other facility declaring specific dates on which the Westercon shall be held; and, for a sponsoring organization from within the United States of America, evidence that the sponsoring organization is a non-profit association or corporation within the applicable state law of the sponsoring organization.

3.5 Filing Deadline for Ballot

Only those eligible bids whose filing paperwork required by section 3.4 is in the possession of the administering Westercon by the April 15th preceding the balloting shall be listed on the ballot. If no eligible bids are filed by the January 1st of the year of the site-selection balloting, then all sites defined in section 3.1 shall be eligible, except as provided in section 3.3.

[Note: On a parliamentary inquiry at the time of ratification of the current text of the above section, it was ruled that "If the filing paperwork can be verified to be at the address of the administering convention, it is in the committee's possession."]

3.6 Provisions When No Valid Bids Are Received

If no valid bids are received by the deadline in section 3.5, then all sites defined in section 3.1 shall be eligible and the other site restrictions in this article shall be suspended.

3.7 Eligibility of Voters

Site-selection voting shall be limited to those persons who are attending or supporting members of the administering Westercon and who have paid a voting fee toward their membership in the Westercon being selected. Other classes of membership may vote only upon the unanimous agreement of all qualified bidding committees. One person equals one membership equals one vote. Corporations, Associations, and other non-human entities may vote only for "No Preference." "Guest of" memberships must be transferred to an individual before voting for anything other than "No Preference."

3.8 Voting Fee

The voting fee shall be twenty US dollars (US\$20.00) or the local equivalent unless the committees listed on the ballot and the administering Westercon agree unanimously to charge a different amount.

3.9 Minimum Rights of Voters

The payment of the voting fee shall make the voter at least a full supporting member of the Westercon being selected, and may make the voter an attending member at the discretion of the winning bid.

3.10 Prototype Ballot

The Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, Inc. (LASFS) shall prepare a prototype site-selection ballot, including instructions for preparation of the ballot, and shall provide the prototype to each administering Westercon at the same time the bylaws are provided to the administering Westercon as provided for in section 1.5. Upon receipt of the prototype, the administering Westercon shall complete the ballot by filing in the information about the eligible bid committees, including the dates of the proposed Westercons, the voting fee, minimum membership requirements, including the cost of a supporting membership in the administering Westercon, and the address to which site-selection ballots should be sent. The administering Westercon shall be responsible for the publication and the distribution of the ballots to the

membership of the administering Westercon. All eligible bids received in accordance with sections 3.4 and 3.5 shall be included on the ballot. The ballot shall also include entries for “No Preference” and “None of the Above,” and shall provide space for at least one (1) write-in bid. The ballot shall be a secret ballot, specially marked for preferential voting with an explanation of the method of counting preferential votes.

3.11 Distribution of Ballot

The site-selection ballot and full rules for site-selection voting, including the deadlines for voting by mail, shall be mailed on or before the May 10th preceding the voting to all members of the administering Westercon as of one week before the mailing. The ballot and full rules for site-selection, including the hours during which site-selection will take place and the location of the site-selection, shall be given to all attending members upon registration at the Westercon, or such information shall be prominently displayed at the registration area throughout the Westercon.

3.12 Deadline for Voting by Mail

All ballots received by the administering Westercon prior to June 20 shall be counted.

3.13 Bid Presentations

Each eligible bid committee shall have at least fifteen (15) minutes of scheduled program time on the first full day of the administering Westercon for the purpose of making a bidding presentation.

3.14 At-Conference Voting

Site-selection shall be open for at least six (6) hours between the hours of 11 AM and Midnight on the day before the business meeting at which site-selection business is scheduled. All on-site balloting shall be from one central location, under the supervision of the administering Westercon. If no site-selection business meeting is scheduled, then site-selection shall be open for at least six (6) hours between the hours of 11 AM and Midnight on the next-to-last day of the administering Westercon.

3.15 Verification of Ballots

Properly completed ballots shall contain: the member’s printed name; the member’s membership number as assigned by the administering Westercon; the member’s dated signature; the member’s address of record with the current Westercon; the member’s current address if different; and the member’s vote(s) as defined elsewhere in this article. Verification of the ballots shall consist of matching the name and number of the member with the records of the administering Westercon. Ballots received by the committee prior to June 20, and any others received by mail which may be counted, shall be held by the administering Westercon until the opening of the Westercon, at which time they shall be verified by the administering Westercon and the bidders.

3.16 Counting of Ballots

The administering Westercon shall arrange for the counting of ballots, and each eligible bid committee shall be allowed to send at least two (2) observers to such ballot-counting. The count

shall be by preferential ballot. The winner shall be that bid which gains a majority of those votes expressing preference for a bid. For the purpose of vote counting, “None of the Above” shall be treated as if it were a bid. “None of the Above” and votes for ineligible bids shall count toward the total number of votes cast. Blank ballots, illegal or illegible ballots, and votes for “No Preference” shall not count toward the total number of votes cast. All vote totals of final results and of all intermediate counts shall be made available at or before the closing ceremony.

3.17 Procedures When No Bid Wins or is Eligible

Should no eligible bid gain the needed majority, or should there be no qualified bidding committee, or should “None of the Above” win, a three-fourths (3/4) majority of the site-selection business meeting of the administering Westercon may award the Westercon to any bid, or a simple majority of the meeting may decide that they are unable to decide. If the business meeting does not choose a site, the Board of Directors of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, Inc. shall choose a site within six (6) weeks of the close of the administering Westercon. If “None of the Above” wins, none of the bids which were on the ballot may be selected. A site chosen under the provisions of this section shall not be restricted by any portion of this article except this section and section 3.1.

3.18 Availability of Results

The results of the balloting shall be reported to the site-selection business meeting of the administering Westercon, if one is held. A record of the results of the balloting, including all intermediate counts and distinguishing between the by-mail and at-con ballots, shall be published in the first or second progress report of the winning Westercon.

3.19 Hand-Carried Ballots

The administering Westercon shall accept hand-carried ballots, which are otherwise valid ballots delivered to the administering Westercon by someone other than the member who prepared the ballot.

4 Procedure for Amendment of These Bylaws

4.1 Method of Adoption

Amendments to the Westercon Bylaws must be ratified by the majority vote of the business meetings in two consecutive years. Proposed amendments shall be read in full by the chairman of the business meeting immediately before being voted upon.

4.2 Primary and Secondary Ratification

The secretary of the business meeting at which an amendment receives primary (first year) ratification shall submit an exact copy of the amendment to the following year’s Westercon business meeting. The question of secondary (second year) ratification is debatable ~~but not amendable~~ and is amendable only to the extent that such amendments do not increase the scope of the original bylaw amendment.

4.3 Effective Date of Amendments

Unless otherwise provided, amendments shall take effect at the close of the Westercon where they receive final ratification. Operating rules for already-selected Westercons shall not be changed by amendments to the bylaws. Rules regarding eligibility and voting procedures for site-selection are not considered to be operating rules.

Standing Rules

1. Close Debate. Before proceeding to take a vote on a motion for the Previous Question, the presiding officer shall ask for a show of hands of how many people still wish to speak to the pending motion. This rule does not allow debate on the motion for the Previous Question.

Business Passed On and Draft Agenda for Westercon 60

1. Call to Order

2. Committee Reports

2.1 Oink-Oink Committee

A committee (Sharon Sbarsky, Chair) was established at Westercon 59 to study Westercon site selection, specifically the “75-mile rule” that existed prior to 2005. The committee is expected to report a bylaw amendment that would restore a requirement that, except in certain circumstances, bids from sites within 75 miles of the site of the convention administering the election are ineligible.

3. Pending Bylaw Amendments

The following amendment was passed at Westercon 59 and will become part of the Bylaws if ratified at Westercon 60. Comments, where shown in italics, are those of the motions’ advocates except as noted and are not part of the motions themselves.

3.1. Repair the Safety Valve

Moved, To amend Section 3.6 of the Westercon Bylaws by ~~striking out~~ and inserting text as shown, for the purpose of proving for situations where no eligible bids file before January 1st of the year of the site-selection balloting:

3.6 Provisions When No ~~Valid~~ Eligible Bids Are Received

~~If no valid bids are received by the deadline in section 3.5,~~ If no eligible bids are received by January 1st of the year of the site-selection balloting, then all sites defined in section 3.1 shall be eligible and the other site location restrictions in this article shall be suspended.

Comments: This “safety valve” provision allows bids from the zone that is otherwise excluded from bidding to file if no bids from the other zones file on or before January 1 of the year in which the site-selection election is happening. This rule existed in the two-zone rotation system that was changed in 2005 to the current “anti-zone” system; however, due to a drafting error, it was inadvertently stricken when the current wording of section 3.2 was adopted.

In 2006, it was noticed that the “safety valve” clause was missing from the bylaws, and inasmuch as no bids from the non-South zones had filed either by January 1 or April 15, while bids from the South zone had, a minor crisis ensued until the site selection administrator was able to make a ruling that allowed the two bids onto the ballot. This ruling was rather convoluted, however, and all parties involved would prefer to see this explicit provision restored to the bylaws.

The previous wording of Section 3.6, with its reference to Section 3.5, was intended for situations when no bids at all had filed by April 15; in which case the final restriction (a 75-mile exclusion zone around the administering site) was suspended. This 75-mile zone no longer exists, and therefore references to situations when no bids at all file by the April 15 ballot deadline no longer have any relevance, because if no bids file by January 1, all sites, including those in the administering zone, become eligible already.

Note that this only suspends site restrictions, and particularly section 3.3. All other requirements for bidding, such as a facility agreement, organizing document, etc. required by section 3.4, still apply even if the site location restrictions are suspended. A ruling by the Chairman of the 2006 Business Meeting confirms this interpretation.

4. New Business

Bylaws amendments passed by the Westercon 60 Business Meeting will be passed on to next year's Westercon for ratification.

5. Announcements

6. Adjournment

The above copy of the Bylaws, Standing Rules, and Business Passed On of the West Coast Science Fantasy Conference is hereby certified to be true, correct, and complete, effective as of the close of Westercon 59, July 4, 2006.

Ed Green, Chairman
Kevin Standlee, Secretary
Westercon 59 Business Meeting