

WESTERCON 56 BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

1. Call to Order

The business meeting of the 56th West Coast Science Fantasy Conference was held in Room Cascade 13 of the SeaTac Doubletree Hotel, Seatac WA, on Saturday, July 5, 2003. The meeting was called to order at 12:03 PM, Ben Yalow presiding and Kevin Standlee serving as Secretary.

The following people signed the attendance list: Judith Bemis, Seth Breidbart, James Briggs, Jordan Brown, Sandra Childress, James Stanley Daugherty, Kathryn Daugherty, Linda Deneroff, Ed Green, Saul Jaffe, Rick Kovalcik, John Lorentz, Linda McAllister, Christian B. McGuire, Beth Moursund, Ruth Sachter, Sharon Sbarsky, Elisa Sheets, Michael Siladi, Hank Smith, Kevin Standlee, Roger S. Wells, Mike Wilmoth, Ben Yalow.

2. Committee Reports

There were no committees created or continued by Westercon 55.

3. Unfinished Business

There were no bylaws amendments or other business passed on by Westercon 55.

4. New Business

4.1. Membership Number Usage

Ms. Sbarsky introduced the following Bylaw amendment.

Moved, To amend Section 1.4 of the Westercon Bylaws by ~~striking out~~ and inserting text as shown, for the purpose of clarifying the intent of the membership number requirements.

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 shall be ~~printed on the label of all progress reports, provided to each member at the time the site-selection ballot is distributed,~~ shall be printed on membership name badges, and shall be used for site-selection purposes....

Ms. Sbarsky spoke in favor of the amendment, explaining how the existing requirement potentially conflicts with changing technology of progress report distribution, making it difficult to meet the letter of the rule. Mr. Lorentz spoke against.

Mr. Breidbart moved to modify the amendment by striking out and adding text as follows (deletions in ~~bold strikethrough~~, additions in **bold underline**):

This number shall be ~~printed on the label of all progress reports, provided to each member at the time the site-selection ballot is distributed~~ **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....

Mr. Breidbart spoke in favor of the amendment, saying that the purpose is to make sure that the membership number gets to the member. Ms. McAllister asked how it would impact people who do not want their names or numbers printed in publications or placed on the convention's web site. The Chair ruled that the Westercon would need to inform such people of their numbers by paper mail. Mr. Brown asked about ballots distributed by private individuals. The Chair ruled that this rule has no effect upon

them, as it only applies to the administering Westercon. The Chair further ruled that ballots handed out at the Westercon where the election takes place are not affected by this rule, as membership numbers are easily available at the convention.

The amendment passed on a voice vote. The motion as amended passed on a voice vote and is passed on to Westercon 57 for ratification in the following form:

Moved, To amend Section 1.4 of the Westercon Bylaws by ~~striking out~~ and inserting text as shown, for the purpose of clarifying the intent of the membership number requirements.

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 shall be printed on the label of all progress reports 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....

4.2. Housekeeping. Committee Failure

Ms. Sbarsky introduced the following Bylaw amendment.

Moved, To amend the Westercon Bylaws by moving section 3.20 to 1.9, to clarify that the committee-failure provisions apply to the entire Westercon, not just to site selection.

~~3.20~~ 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.

The Chair ruled that this change was non-substantive, and, without objection, instructed the Secretary to make the change immediately. This change will appear in the Bylaws passed on to Westercon 57.

4.3. Site Selection. Exclusion Zone Clarification

Mr. Briggs introduced the following Bylaw amendment:

Moved, To amend the Westercon Bylaws by adding a provision to Section 3.2 to clarify that the exclusion zone around the administering convention site still applies when no eligible bid from the current zone files by January 1 of the current year.

3.2 North-South Rotation

Only sites north of the 37th north parallel shall be eligible in odd-numbered years, and only sites south of that parallel shall be eligible in even-numbered years. 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.

Mr. Briggs spoke on the intent of the motion. The maker's argument attached to the proposal read as follows:

Section 3.3 defines the 75-mile exclusion zone around the administering convention. When no bid from the current zone files by January 1 of the current year, bids from the other zone may file (and if they file by April 15, they are listed on the ballot). The existing wording in 3.2 can be interpreted to override the 75-mile exclusion zone when the January 1 deadline passes. This amendment explicitly declares that the exclusion zone still applies in this case. Section 3.3 includes its own override clause, in that if no bid at all files by April 15, all Westercon region sites are eligible — even the administering site, if the voters so choose.

The motion passed on a voice vote and is passed on to Westercon 57 for ratification.

4.4. Site Selection. Filing Clarification

Ms. Sbarsky introduced the following Bylaw amendment:

Moved, To amend the Westercon Bylaws by changing the title of Section 3.5 to clarify that it April 15 is the filing deadline for appearing on the ballot and adding a word to clarify that administrators need only consider filing paperwork from eligible bids, as follows.

3.5-Deadline for Filing Bids 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.

Ms. Sbarsky spoke on the intent of the motion. The maker's argument attached to the proposal read as follows:

Section 3.5 specifies the filing deadline to appear on the ballot, but its title implies that it is the final deadline to be eligible to win the election. The Bylaws are currently silent on the subject of the final filing deadline; in practice, the deadline for eligible write-ins is the close of site-selection balloting. Inserting "eligible" before bids confirms the common-sense interpretation (which it appears all past administrators have followed) that the site selection administrator need only consider bids from eligible sites as defined elsewhere in the bylaws, and that the administrator cannot be compelled to list an ineligible bid on the ballot.

The motion passed on a voice vote and is passed on to Westercon 57 for ratification. The Chair ruled that the title change was non-substantive, and, without objection, instructed the Secretary to make the change immediately. This change will appear in the Bylaws passed on to Westercon 57. [Note: The Westercon 56 Secretary has modified the enacting clause in the copy passed on to Westercon 57 so that it refers only to the additional word, not the already-enacted title change.]

4.5. Membership Badges. Type Size Requirement

Mr. Brown introduced the following Bylaw amendment:

Moved, To amend the Westercon Bylaws by ~~striking out~~ the second sentence of Section 1.4:

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 shall be printed on the label of all progress reports, shall be printed on membership name badges, and shall be used for site-selection purposes

Mr. Brown spoke on the intent of the motion. The maker's argument attached to the proposal read as follows:

This sentence requires 24-point type on name badges. It cannot be enforced, is impractical to implement for long names, and serves no Bylaw purpose because it is traditional to allow the member to select an arbitrary "badge name" and so no authentication is required. A type size recommendation is appropriate to a "best practices" document, not to [the Bylaws].

Mr. Lorentz spoke against the motion, saying the rule serves as useful guidance to Westercon committees even though it is sometimes ignored.

Mr. Green spoke in favor of the motion on the grounds of the current rule being impossible to enforce.

Mr. Siladi spoke against, saying the technology does exist to handle long names and we should continue to encourage Westercons to print names in large type.

Mr. Brown spoke in favor, saying he is in favor of large type, but people should not be forced to truncate their names because of it.

Mr. Kovalcik spoke against, saying that there must be a better way than truncating names to meet the requirement.

Mr. McGuire spoke in favor, saying that forcing names to be truncated is discouraging.

Mr. Breidbart spoke against, pointing out that *most* of the Bylaws are unenforceable, and that the current rule does not require incompetent performance. Enforcement of this particular Bylaw may be limited only to complaints, but because it's a Bylaws violation, it has more teeth than most complaints.

Mr. Green spoke in favor, asking "when did a bid ever lose because their previous Westercon's badge type was too small?"

Mr. Daugherty spoke against, saying that his name was truncated at this year's Westercon, although that had never happened to him before.

Ms. Deneroff spoke in favor, saying that minutiae such as this should not be in the Bylaws.

Ms. Sachter spoke against, saying it is a matter of concern to the Westercon community, as shown by the amount of emotional reaction this issue generates every time it comes before the Business Meeting.

Mr. Brown spoke in favor, reiterating that this requirement does not belong the organization's Bylaws.

Ms. Daugherty spoke against, saying that point size is a marker between fan-run conventions and "gate shows" that use badges primarily as tickets rather than membership indicators.

Mr. Standlee moved the Previous Question (Close Debate). After taking a show of hands to determine who still wanted to speak to the pending question, debate was closed on a 2/3 vote.

The motion failed on a voice vote.

4.6. Westercon Site Eligibility. Australia

Mr. Brown introduced the following Bylaw amendment (as restated by the Secretary)

Moved, To amend the Westercon Bylaws by ~~striking out~~ the provision in Section 3.1 regarding Australia:

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."*~~

Mr. Brown spoke on the intent of the motion. The maker's argument attached to the proposal read as follows:

As there seems little chance of Australia and the USA merging, this sentence can be interpreted only as a joke. Jokes are fine, but they do not belong in a permanent [governing] document.

Mr. Standlee spoke in favor, noting that the parliamentary note attached to this section (addressing certain implications of the provision and its enforcement) would then be dropped as well.

Mr. McGuire spoke against.

Mr. Wells, the Bay Area Science Fiction Association's Ambassador to the US Congress, spoke in favor, citing the potential conflict between his obligations to BASFA and his mundane diplomatic career.

Mr. Breidbart moved by substitution to replace the original motion with the following:

Moved, To amend the Westercon Bylaws by striking out the provision in Section 3.1 regarding Australia and to implement the revised wording contemplated in the provision:

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.”~~

Ms. Deneroff spoke against the amendment, saying that she doesn't think Australia should be eligible to host a Westercon.

Mr. Lorentz spoke in favor of the amendment, saying that there are past Westercon sites that probably should not have hosted a Westercon -- so what?

Mr. Brown moved the Previous Question (Close Debate) on the pending amendment only. After taking a show of hands to determine who still wanted to speak to the pending question, debate was closed on a standing 2/3 vote.

The amendment by substitution passed.

The Previous Question was then moved on the resultant motion (Mr. Breidbart's amendment, above). After taking a show of hands to determine who still wanted to speak to the pending question, debate was closed on a 2/3 vote.

On an inquiry, the Chair ruled that Australia should be interpreted as the political entity, not the geographic definition. (That is, the country of Australia, not the continent of Australia.)

The motion passed on a standing vote and is passed on to Westercon 57 for ratification.

5. Announcements

5.1 Site Selection Business

The Westercon Bylaws do not require a Site Selection Business Meeting. Unless there is a disputed election, tie, or other unusual event, there will be no such meeting, and the Site Selection Administrator will publicize the results through the convention newsletter and other means. Should a special Site Selection meeting be required, the need for such a meeting will be publicized in the convention newsletter and other means.

6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned *sine die* at 12:59 PM.

Kevin Standlee
Secretary