

## Business Meeting of Westercon 71

### A. Call to Order

The meeting of the 71st West Coast Science Fantasy Conference (Westercon) was called to order at 11:05 a.m. on Saturday, July 7, 2018, in the Serenity Room of the Hyatt Regency Denver Tech Center, Denver, Colorado, with a quorum present. The meeting officers were Kevin Standlee, Chairperson; Linda Deneroff, Secretary; and Ron Oakes, Videographer (using equipment provided by Lisa Hayes).

### B. Site Selection Results

Ben Yalow presented the results of the Site Selection for Westercon 73 as follows:

Candidate	Fri	
Elayne Pelz's backyard	1	
McCloud, CA	1	
Minneapolis in '73	1	
Seattle, WA	55	
Tonopah, NV	1	
Total With Preference	59	
Needed to Elect (Majority)	30	Majority
No preference	5	
Total votes cast	64	

Seattle won in the first round. Ben Yalow then moved to destroy the ballots. By unanimous consent, the chair ordered the tellers to destroy the ballots.

Sally Woehrle, the now declared chair of Westercon 73, then announced that the convention will be held Thursday-Sunday, July 2-5, 2020, at the DoubleTree Hotel, in Sea-Tac, Washington (across the street from the airport). They have a letter of intent from the hotel, but the rates were not yet available (they hope to have the hotel reduce the rates that are currently in the letter of intent). David Brin will be the Writer GOH; Ethan Siegel will be the science GOH; and Kevin Roche and Andy Trembly will be the Fan GOHs. Other guests will be announced at a later time. The attending membership price will start at \$50. If you presupported and voted, the conversion rate for an attending membership will be \$10. Supporting memberships are currently \$20.

Refer to their webpage, [www.westercon73.org](http://www.westercon73.org) for more information.

### C. New Business

The chair suggested a time limit of 8 minutes for each debate. There was no objection.

## C.1 Short Title: Membership Numbers

*Moved*, to amend Section 1.4 of the Westercon Bylaws by [inserting](#) wording to clarify that membership numbers are not considered confidential information and can be revealed by the convention committee.

### 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. [Membership numbers shall not be considered confidential information. Should a committee list the convention's members in their progress reports, program book, web site, or other public settings, the members' membership numbers should be included, space permitting.](#) 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.

**Moved by:** Billy Van Ark, Nikki Ebright

**Commentary:** Several people commented/complained that Westercon 71 did not put membership numbers on our website or other public place. The Westercon 71 Committee was operating under the belief that since the combination of name and membership number is the only thing needed to cast a site selection vote, and since the name is public, the membership number should be kept private until after mail-in site selection has closed. This proposal clarifies the status of members' membership numbers. If the Business Meeting wishes to declare that membership numbers should be considered confidential, the makers propose the following substitute in place of the proposed wording:

[Membership numbers shall be considered confidential information until the deadline for voting by mail in Site Selection. Should a committee list the convention's members in their progress reports, web site, or other public settings, the members' membership numbers should not be included.](#)

**Discussion:** Billy Van Ark, the maker of the motion, spoke first. According to the By-Laws, Site Selection is based off a name paired with a membership number. Since it's tradition to know who is a member, membership numbers should be private in order (to prevent anyone from hijacking someone else's vote) until after mail-in site selection closes. Therefore he wanted clarification as to whether membership numbers should be public before site selection closed.

Kent Bloom spoke against the motion. Worldcons and Westercons tend to over-specify what we need to do. This is philosophically a bad idea because it leads to more arguments when things don't work perfectly. Therefore we shouldn't be including this much detail in the By-Laws. Specifically for site selection, it's the member's signature that counts, not the

membership number. If there's a question, the site selection administrator will decide the issue.

Ben Yalow then moved to close debate. With more than two-thirds in the affirmative, debate was closed. By a show of hands, the motion to adopt item C.1 (Membership Numbers) failed, and the motion was defeated.

## **C.2 Short Title: Defining "First Full Day"**

*Moved*, to amend Section 3.12 of the Westercon Bylaws by [inserting](#) wording to clarify what the "First Full Day" of Westercon is for Site Selection purposes.

### **3.12 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. [The first full day of the convention is the latter of \(a\) the first day that the convention has scheduled programming starting before and after Noon or \(b\) the day on which the convention has an Opening Ceremonies or a reasonable equivalent, if there is such an event.](#)

**Moved by:** Billy Van Ark, Nikki Ebright

**Commentary:** Westercon 71 was hosted on a year where July 4th is a Wednesday. The committee wanted to include Saturday and Sunday in the event, so the committee opted to host the convention the 5th through 8th, and do light "Day 0" programming on the 4th. There was some confusion/disagreement about which day was the "first full day" of the convention (Thursday or Friday). This definition should help set expectations.

**Discussion:** Billy Van Ark, as maker of the motion, again spoke first. Westercon is usually held on the Fourth of July. Since the fourth fell on a Wednesday this year, the first full day of programming was scheduled for July 5. The By-Laws refer to bid presentations being required on the first full day of the programming, but don't define what that it is. Therefore he felt that it might be useful to set expectations going forward.

Ron Oakes moved an amendment to remove "the latter of (a)", remove all text following "starting before or after Noon or (b)", and then add text between "programming" and "starting", so the amendment would now read:

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. [The first full day of the convention is the first day that the convention has scheduled programming and other major convention functions for general members \(examples including dealers area, art show and convention or hospitality suite\) starting before Noon.](#)

Mr. Oakes felt that that his amendment was a better definition of "the first full day of the convention" because it encompassed all fundamental elements of the convention that members expect. A Wednesday start of a Westercon is not necessarily the "first full day" because it is generally consists only of limited programming.

Mr. Van Ark asked if the elements in Mr. Oakes' amendment was inclusive of all the items listed) or just representative. The chair ruled that the list was indicative, not exclusive. Seth Breidbart then asked if it was required to have "programming *and* other events" before Noon, or "programming *or* other events" before Noon. The amendment says "and other events." So programming and any other single event is required under Mr. Oakes' amendment would suffice.

Gary Blog said he was generally in favor of Mr. Oakes' amendment, but he objected to the addition of hospitality function being part of the amendment since that is not a major function along the lines of programming or opening ceremonies.

Rick Kovalcik spoke in favor. The chair ruled that it only required one additional item, so even if hospitality is not considered a major function, any one of the other major functions would suffice. He also felt that if only programming and hospitality were opened before Noon, that should be good enough, and we should stop arguing about it.

Kent Bloom against the motion. He again felt that this is motion is trying to over specify and over prescribe. We should leave these things to the individual committees, which are capable of declaring what they consider the first day of the convention to be. He urged defeat of both the amendment and the motion.

Sharon Sbarsky also spoke against the amendment. She agreed that this would put too much specification into the By-Laws. We already specify when voting at the convention ends as being the next-to-last day of the convention. She urged voting against this amendment and will make a new proposal next year since she had to make airline reservations before knowing there would be programming before the first official day of the convention.

With time expired, the vote was taken. With a serpentine vote of 14 votes in favor of the amendment and 16 against, the amendment failed.

Reverting to the original motion, Rick Kovalcik asked for a two-minute extension of debate, which was seconded and passed by a show of hands.

Ms. Nikki Ebright spoke in favor of the motion. It would give more clarification to people who have not been familiar with Westercon traditions in the past.

Mr. Kovalcik spoke against the motion. While he felt there should be more clarification in the By-Laws, but Mr. Oakes pointed out the flaws in the current proposal. Mr. Kovalcik felt we can come up with something better next year.

Ben Yalow spoke agreed with Mr. Kovalcik. He felt the opening ceremonies reference is confusing, and we should try this again next year. Seth Breidbart also spoke against the motion. He said there has never been a shortage of people to explain traditions to any committee that stands still too long.

By a show of hands, the vote to adopt item C.2 (Defining "First Full Day"), failed, and the motion was defeated.

### C.3 Short Title: Bidders at Site Selection Table

*Moved*, to amend Section 3.13 of the Westercon Bylaws by [inserting](#) wording to clarify that bidders are expected to provide observers for the Site Selection table for at-convention voting.

Site-selection shall be open for at least six (6) hours between the hours of 11 a.m. 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. [Each eligible bid committee shall provide at least one \(1\) observer for on-site balloting.](#) 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 a.m. and Midnight on the next-to-last day of the administering Westercon.

**Moved by:** Billy Van Ark, Nikki Ebright

**Commentary:** It is traditional and expected that the site-selection table at a Westercon should have both the site selection administrator and a representative of each bidding committee present. That way they can watch over the voting process, but also watch over each other. However, the bylaws only suggest a bid committee representative be present at the Verification of Ballots (for mail-in ballots) and Counting of Ballots. This proposal codifies the existing practice of having bidders help staff the at-convention Site Selection table.

**Discussion:** As maker of the motion, Billy Van Ark again spoke first. When they were bidding for Westercon 67, they bidders were told they needed to have someone at the bid table, someone to watch the watchers. But, he felt, if there is a strong expectation of this, it is better not to rely on oral tradition and to codify it.

Kate Hatcher spoke against the motion. She felt this was something that this type of expectation can simply be posted on convention website and is not needed in the bylaws.

Mr. Oakes spoke in favor. Speaking as a former site selection administration for WC65, he said the bid did not supply an observer and he was by himself for two days at the bid table without any oversight from the bid until it came to counting the vote. Fortunately it was an uncontested election, very low-key, not issues. Had it been a By-Law requirement to have an observer, the bid chairs would have known that an observer was required.

Ben Yalow also spoke in favor of the amendment. As the administrator for the vote that seated Westercon 71, he regretted that he had to spring the information on the bidders, and he felt in this case it would be worth adding it to the By-Laws.

LaMont Jones asked if bids were required, as opposed to expected, to provide observers.

Mr. Van Ark explained that having an observer is only an expectation. The wording of the amendment elevates that to a requirement.

With no further debate, there was no objection to putting the motion to a vote. By a show of hands, the vote to adopt item C.3 (Bidders at Site Selection Table), was adopted and will be sent on to Westercon 72 for ratification.

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The chair suggested adjourning and then resuming the meeting later in the day. A motion to adjourn was made and seconded.

Seth Breidbart spoke in favor of adjourning. He had an amendment he wished to make that would take us past the time we had for the initial meeting.

Rick Kovalcik was opposed to adjourning. He felt there was a move to postpone the next motion indefinitely that could be handled readily in the time allotted before adjourning.

Kent Bloom agreed with Mr. Kovalcik and suggested either refer the motion to committee or postpone it indefinitely.

The motion to adjourn requires a majority vote, and it failed.

#### **C.4 Short Title: Westercon for All North America**

*Moved*, to amend various sections of the Westercon Bylaws by ~~striking out~~ and inserting wording to make any location in North America or Hawaii eligible to host a Westercon and to change the “exclusion” system from geographic zones to a defined distance from the site hosting the site selection election.

1. Modify Section 3.1 to redefine Westercon’s scope so that it can be held anywhere in North America (as hereafter defined), and remove the contingent wording 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,~~ in North America as defined in these bylaws 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.”~~

2. Replace existing Section 3.2 to remove the geographic site selection zones, to define North America as including Hawaii as part of “North America” for site selection purposes even though is not part of the continent of North America, and to exclude U.S. territories such as Guam and American Samoa that are not part of the continent of North America. While U.S. territories in the Caribbean are included implicitly, they are also explicitly declared to reduce confusion. Other places that might be considered part of the continent of North America not listed here (such as Greenland, or parts of Iceland) are not considered part of “North America” for site selection purposes.

##### **3.2 ~~Site Selection Zones~~ North America**

~~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.~~

For the purposes of these bylaws, North America is defined as:

(a) Canada;

(b) The United States of America, including Hawaii, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, but not including any other U.S. territories not part of a state or territory listed in this section;

(c) Mexico;

(d) All countries in Central America;

(e) The islands of the Caribbean;

(f) St. Pierre et Miquelon;

(g) Bermuda;

(h) The Bahamas.

3. Modify Section 3.3 to replace the existing regional exclusion zone with an exclusion zone centered on the site of the convention hosting the site selection election and based on distance.

### **3.3 Regional Exclusion Zone**

No site within ~~the Site Selection Zone containing~~ five hundred (500) miles or eight hundred (800) kilometers of the site of the Westercon administering the site-selection election shall be eligible to bid, except as provided in this section. 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.

**Moved by:** Nikki Ebright, Billy Van Ark, Pablo Vazquez

**Commentary:** When Worldcon and Westercon were first established, travel was much more costly and difficult. In today's world, it is not unlikely to find fans interested in traveling to not only Westercon but also Worldcon, and on years Worldcon is outside the U.S., to NASFiC as well. On those years, it means there are three conventions for people to choose among, often leaving people to choose between NASFiC and Westercon. NASFiC and Westercon also compete for guests, panelists, and members, diluting both conventions. We also recognize that the world is getting smaller and people from beyond the Western region of the U.S. come to Westercon.

We propose to widen the boundaries of eligible sites for Westercon and choose to reflect those similar to NASFiC. This would allow Westercon and NASFiC to be co-hosted more easily (and thus reduce the competition for guests and other members); it reflects the wider nature that Westercon is already drawing from (Westercon 71 has members from over 10 states east of our current line); and it allows Westercon to reach all of the western hemisphere, which is more in line with modern transportation and interests.

**Discussion:** As maker of the motion, Nikki Ebright spoke first. Fandom is a family, and she was concerned about Westercon and NASFiC competing for its guests, panelists, and members. This proposal was an attempt to make Westercon stronger by allowing more people to join in as chairs, as committees, and in the years with a NASFiC, to combine a Westercon and a NASFiC more easily, if they so wish.

Rick Kovalcik appreciated what the makers are trying to do, but he felt the amendment was sprung at the last minute and needs more thought. While we could refer this to a committee, he felt postponing the proposal indefinitely would give more people a chance to discuss the issue over the next year and come back with a better proposal next year. Therefore he moved to postpone the motion indefinitely so that a better proposal can be brought up next year. The chair pointed out that a motion to postpone indefinitely is not a motion in favor or against and ruled Mr. Kovalcik's statement as one in favor of postponing indefinitely.

Ms. Ebright request that rather than postponing indefinitely she preferred to refer it to committee to report back next year. The chair ruled that a motion to refer to committee outranked a motion to postpone indefinitely. The motion to refer to committee was seconded.

Kim Williams spoke against referring the motion to committee. She preferred postponing the motion indefinitely and having a more free form debate next year since the motion was "dropped" on us so late this year. Sending it to committee also means a committee could also drop it on us at the last minute next year.

Billy Van Ark said that posting something indefinitely is a way of killing a motion, while sending it to committee is a way to keep the discussion going.

Lisa Garrison felt that the broad community of Westercon and Worldcon fandom need to be considering, not just a select committee. More voices need to be heard from across the country. A committee is not enough.

With time running out, the chair asked for and received unanimous consent to close debate on the two immediately pending motions: (1) the motion to send to committee and, if that failed (2) the motion to postpone indefinitely.

A majority vote needed, by a show of hands, the motion to refer to committee failed.

A majority vote needed, by a show of hands, the motion to postpone indefinitely passed.

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Sharon Sbarsky proposed some wording regarding the first full day of a Westercon, but the chair suggested that it would be better to submit it as an amendment at next year's Westercon.

**D. Adjournment**

The Westercon 71 business meeting adjourned *sine die* at 11:50 p.m.

Linda Deneroff  
Business Meeting Secretary