

Westercon Bylaws

As of Close of Westercon 75, November 26, 2023

The following document is the current text of the Westercon Bylaws and Standing Rules, as of the close of Westercon 75 (Los Angeles, California, 2023). There was no new business. Linda Deneroff and Kevin Standlee prepared this document based on the results of the Westercon 75 Business Meeting and shows the Bylaws as amended below.

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 a.m., nor later than 2 p.m., 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 a.m. or later than 2 p.m. 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 3.16*]. 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 ten (10) 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 Regional Exclusion Zone

No site within the Site Selection Zone containing 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.

3.4 Filing Deadline for Ballot

Only those eligible bids whose filing paperwork required by section 3.5 is in the possession of the administering Westercon by the April 15th preceding the balloting shall be listed on the ballot.

[Note: On a parliamentary inquiry at the time of ratification of the 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."]

3.5 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.

3.6 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."

3.7 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.

3.8 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.

3.9 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.

3.10 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.

3.11 Deadline for Voting by Mail

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

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.

3.13 At-Conference 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.

3.14 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.

3.15 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.

3.16 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 two-thirds (2/3) 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.

3.17 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.

3.18 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 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.

Westercon 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.

Draft Agenda for Westercon 76

A. Call to Order

B. Committee Reports

There are no active committees of the Business Meeting.

C. Pending Bylaw Amendments

C.1 Remove Date Restriction

Moved, to remove the reference to the traditional dates of Westercon:

~~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.~~

Commentary: This rule, which has only been advisory and could always have been ignored, can be removed if the purpose of future changes is to give Westercon a larger scope, including the possibility of being “attached” to other conventions.

C.2: No Zone

Moved, to remove the zone restrictions from Westercon Site Selection:

~~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 Regional Exclusion Zone~~

~~No site within the Site Selection Zone containing 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.~~

Commentary: It does not appear that Westercon has so many sites clamoring to host the convention that the zonal restrictions that seemed worthwhile a generation ago are still needed. Should a revived Westercon site be perceived to be monopolizing the convention, the members could in the future adopt some sort of new rotation system or zonal exclusion such as the distance-based system currently used by Worldcon. (Currently, Worldcon sites must be at least 500 mi / 800 km from the site hosting the election.)

C.3: Relative Filing Deadline

Moved, to set the filing deadline for bids to appear on the ballot to a relative number of days, rather than as a specific filing date, and to provide for situations where a convention is postponed:

3.4 Filing Deadline for Ballot

Only those eligible bids whose filing paperwork required by section 3.5 is in the possession of the administering Westercon ~~by the April 15th preceding the balloting at least sixty (60) days before the first day of the administering Westercon~~ shall be listed on the Ballot. Should the administering Westercon be postponed for any reason, the filing deadline shall be accordingly extended, even if this happens after the original deadline has passed.

Commentary: Currently, the deadline for appearing on the ballot, April 15, is 77 days before July 1. This proposal would not only set the filing deadline relative to the actual date of the convention, but it would also give bids slightly longer to get their bids filed with the administering Westercon.

In addition, this proposal explicitly provides for the case where a Westercon is postponed for any reason with less than sixty days before the convention, requiring the administering Westercon to accept bids relatively to the revised date, even if that means allowing bids after the original deadline relative to the original date. This is not an academic consideration. The 2021 Worldcon postponed its dates after the initial filing deadlines for bids had passed. A new bid filed based on the revised dates, and the 2021 Worldcon initially refused to consider the bid, claiming that the original deadline based on the original dates was the only date that applied. They did eventually change their decision and permit the new bid onto the ballot. This provision makes the interpretation clearer and explicit.

C.4: Distribution of Ballot

Moved, to make the date when the administering Westercon is required to distribute the site selection ballot relative to the date of the convention:

3.10 Distribution of Ballot

The site-selection ballot and full rules for site-selection voting, including the deadlines for voting by mail, shall be sent by postal or electronic mail at least 30 days before the first day of the administering Westercon ~~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.

Commentary: The current May 10th deadline is 52 days before July 1. This changes the mailing date to 30 days before the start of the Westercon, and explicitly authorizes electronic mail as a valid method of distribution. However, this change does not contemplate *requiring* members to have email addresses.

C.5: Deadline for Voting by Mail

Moved, to make the minimum deadline for accepting mailed ballots relative to the date of the convention:

3.11 Deadline for Voting by Mail

All ballots received by the administering Westercon ~~prior to June 20~~ at least ten (10) days before the first day of the administering Westercon shall be counted. The administering Westercon may count ballots received less than ten (10) days before the first day of the administering Westercon at their discretion.

3.14 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~~ the deadline in section 3.11, 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.

Commentary: The current deadline requiring the administering Westercon to count mail-in ballots is June 20. This change requires that the administering Westercon must count any ballots received at least ten days before the convention, but also explicitly states that the convention may count ballots received by mail after that. In other words, the convention is not *required* to reject ballots received less than ten days before the convention, but they do not have to count them if it is impractical for them to do so.

The change to section 3.14 is to make the deadline referred to in this section parallel to Section 3.11. As noted earlier, this will almost certainly need to be renumbered by the Secretary should other changes in this document be adopted.

D. New Business

There are no active bylaw amendments for the Business Meeting.

E. Announcements

F. 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 75, November 26, 2023.

Kevin Standlee, Chairperson
Linda Deneroff, Secretary
Westercon 75 Business Meeting