

MINUTES OF THE MARK PROTECTION COMMITTEE
August 16, 2018

MEMBERS PRESENT

Members of the Mark Protection Committee (“MPC”) present at the meeting in San Jose, California, in Room 212D of the McEnery Convention Center on August 16, 2018, were Stephen Boucher (elected until 2018), Joni Dashoff (appointed by Worldcon 76 until 2020), Linda Deneroff (elected until 2020), Paul Dormer (appointed by Dublin 2019 an Irish Worldcon), Donald E. Eastlake III (elected until 2018), Bruce Farr (elected until 2018), Tim Illingworth (elected until 2019), Michael Lee (appointed by Worldcon 75 until 2019), Dave McCarty (elected until 2020), Mark Olson (appointed by MidAmeriCon II until 2018), Kevin Standlee (elected until 2019), and Ben Yalow (elected until 2019). Eight members were needed for a quorum.

Helen Umberger, John Lorentz and Ruth Sachter were also present.

The meeting was called to order at 2:01 p.m.

The members agreed that there were no substantive changes to the report we submitted to the WSFS Business Meeting.

There was one new item of business: Syd Weinstein suggested to Joni Dashoff and Linda Deneroff that the since the MPC is a 501(c)(3), we should obtain a G-Suite for Nonprofits account from Google. (In addition, Google has a commercial version, and an education version). With G Suite for Nonprofits we would have an almost unlimited ability to store data. Additionally, once the MPC (or WIP) has obtained the account, it can take over the YouTube channel that Kevin Standlee currently manages and can ask any Hugo-nominated media content creators to whitelist us for using their material as part of the Best Dramatic Presentation when streaming the Hugo Awards presentation and keeping in on line thereafter.

As noted in our report, we got Twitter to take the Worldcon account down, but now they won’t let us have it. Kevin Standlee tried to set up a Twitter account and was given Worldcon 10. Does that mean there are Worldcon 1-9 twitter handles? Kevin reported that Terry Neill has suggested we look into various social media sites to see if anyone is creating fake Worldcon accounts.

Ben Yalow has donated a computer to Worldcon Intellectual Property for use by WSFS. Bruce Farr will send a letter to Ben thanking him for his donation.

Another action item for 2019 is to settle out the domain names and get them consistently managed. We have administrative, technical and billing names to manage each account. We want the administrator to be the same person on all the domains.

Traditionally we have asked \$1 per site selection voter since 1984. At prior meetings, Kevin suggested we go to 50 cents per WSFS member, and some Worldcons have donated that amount. However, to make it an official recommendation, we need to settle the budget. Contested bids bring in more funds than uncontested bids, and thus the income varies from year to year. We need to look at long-term average expenditures. There are two philosophies in conflict here. One is we should be frugal, and that it is poor policy to have a lot of uncommitted money in the MPC bank account, so that when we have unexpected expenses, we solicit donations from past Worldcons with surplus funds. The other is we should build up a contingency fund so that we don’t have to do such soliciting.

We need to know what our expenses are and be able to budget from there. We have expanded our marks and therefore have more to defend. The same is true for the domain names under our control or bought on behalf of the MPC/WIP. We all agree we need money; what we need to do is codify what we need before we go to conventions asking for money.

The Hugo Award Administrator has created a new graphic for the YA award (“Lodestar”). That graphic is being passed on to the Hugo Award Marketing Committee (“HAMC”) for use by future Worldcons. If Lodestar has legs, we will probably need to register a service mark that as well.

One of the constitutional amendments up for ratification this year (Item C.1 on the agenda) takes the fixed mark protection text out of the Constitution and gives the MPC the authority to provide the verbiage as our marks grow. If this amendment is ratified, we will need to remember that one of our jobs each year will be to tell each Worldcon committee what that text is. Technically, the MPC could delegate this to the HAMC.

This is the final meeting of the MPC as constituted for 2018. The next meeting will be the first meeting of the 2019 MPC and will be held either at 11:30 a.m. on Monday in Room 230 or 15 minutes after the conclusion of the WSFS business meeting that same day, whichever is later.

The meeting adjourned at 2:32 p.m.