

MINUTES OF THE MARK PROTECTION COMMITTEE
August 20, 2018

MEMBERS PRESENT

Members of the Mark Protection Committee (“MPC”) present at the meeting in San Jose, California, in Room 230 of the McEnery Convention Center on August 20, 2018, were Judy Bemis (elected until 2021), 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, until 2021), Donald E. Eastlake III (elected until 2021), Bruce Farr (by special appointment; see below), Tim Illingworth (elected until 2019), Michael Lee (appointed by Worldcon 75 until 2019), Dave McCarty (elected until 2020), Daniel Spector (appointed by CoNZealand until 2022), Kevin Standlee (elected until 2019), Mike Willmoth (appointed by 2019 NASFiC until 2021), and Ben Yalow (elected until 2019).

Elliott Mitchell was also present.

The meeting was called to order at 11:37. This was also the Annual General Meeting of Worldcon Intellectual Property (“WIP”), as specified in the WIP bylaws.

Because we are a nonprofit public benefit 501(c)(3) corporation in the State of California, we are required to have a member from California on the board. As of now, there is no one on the board who is a resident of that state. Therefore, Kevin Standlee asked (and received) unanimous consent to appoint Bruce Farr as a nonvoting member of the board, as provided in the WIP bylaws. Kevin then asked if anyone object to suspension of the rules to elect himself, Linda and Bruce as the president, secretary and treasurer respectively as officers of the board. Without objection, the officers were re-elected.

An item of relative importance concerned the prior evening’s live-streaming of the Hugo Awards. While there were no problems with the live stream, a copyright bot from the BBC stopped anyone from replaying it after the awards concluded. Cheryl Morgan, on behalf of at the direction of Kevin Standlee, the chair of the MPC and Hugo Awards Marketing Committee (“HAMC”), contacted the BBC and got the live stream back on line almost immediately.

This ties in with Friday’s discussion regarding Syd Weinstein’s proposal that MPC obtain a Google for Nonprofits G-Suite account for Worldcon events so that we can have a free YouTube continuing account and can whitelist the dramatic presentation Hugo Award nominees. This will involve (1) working with the technical staff and finding out what clips they wish to display at the ceremony; (2) going to the rights-holders and obtaining their permission to use the clips; and (3) going back to Google to get those rights whitelisted so that Google itself won’t cut us off. We might have to use a new YouTube channel, in which case Kevin would have to download everything we currently have and then re-uploading the files. In addition to this, we would be able to build a private MPC area on G-Suite and keep our materials there, including archiving all the MPC/WIP minutes.

Lodestar has officially been adopted as the name of the Young Adult Award, so we now need to add that to the WSFS marks language that we use. The chair suggested that we asset it as a service mark until we decide to register it after Lodestar comes up for re-ratification in 2021 (since we should not take any position on the re-ratification). After further discussion, the consensus was that instead, the first time any convention uses Lodestar in any of its publications (even if the convention is not in the U.S.), we should begin registering the mark. We have enough money to proceed with registration in Europe as well. If we do this before Brexit takes effect, perhaps we can be grandfathered in to any decision regarding marks in Great Britain.

We still need to review the budget to be able to defend a request to charge \$0.50 per WSFS member (or whatever amount we decide to ask for). We need to think about this more when we are all caught up on past Worldcons. It is our policy to not ask for money until after a seated Worldcon is finished.

Donald Eastlake found the original trademark certificates for our first five trademarks. He will send the originals to our attorney, Esther Horwich, after scanning them.

We have a new mailing address now that Kevin resides in Nevada. The new address is P.O. Box 61363, Sunnyvale, CA 94088. (This is the post office box of San Francisco Science Fiction Conventions, Inc., of which Kevin Standlee and Bruce Farr are directors.) Cindy Scott collects the mail (what little there is). Kevin paid for the CoverItLive using his just-renewed WIP debit card.

We should plan to hold a special meeting of the corporation (WIP) and MPC at SMOFCon in Santa Rosa, California, at a date and time to be announced to discuss budget. Our next regularly scheduled meeting will be in Dublin Ireland, on the first day of their Worldcon. Kevin reminded everyone that elected members are elected and may not specify proxies. However, convention appointees serve at the pleasure of the convention that appointed them, and the convention may reappoint someone else, even if only temporarily.

Daniel Spector pointed out that New Zealand has different intellectual property laws, but is a part of the Madrid Protocol agreement. We have a traditional policy of registering marks in regions or countries that have held two Worldcons, with "Worldcon" and "Hugo Award" having the highest registration priority.

The meeting adjourned at 12:21 p.m.