

MINUTES OF THE MARK PROTECTION COMMITTEE
August 19, 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT

The first meeting of the 2019-2020 Mark Protection Committee (“MPC”) and annual general meeting of the Worldcon Intellectual Property (“WIP”) was called to order on August 19, 2019, at 11:05 a.m. in the Stratocaster room of the Gibson Hotel in Dublin, Ireland.

Members present were Judy Bemis (elected until 2021), Stephen Boucher (elected until 2021), 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), Dave McCarty (elected until 2020), Kevin Standlee (elected until 2022), Jo Van Ekeren (elected until 2022), Mike Willmoth (appointed by NASFiC 2019 until 2021), and Ben Yalow (elected until 2022). Bob McIntosh attended as acting appointee for Discon III (the permanent appointee will serve until 2023). Bruce Farr also attended. He is a non-voting member appointed to the board of Worldcon Intellectual Property to meet a corporate requirement, and he is also Treasurer. The Board thanked outgoing member Tim Illingworth for his service and welcomed Jo Van Ekeren as a new member.

The first item of business was the election of Officers. Kevin Standlee stepped down as Chair, and Don Eastlake was elected to that position by acclamation.

Linda Deneroff was re-elected by acclamation as secretary. Bruce Farr, as a non-voting member from California, was appointed Treasurer by acclamation. Hugo Awards Marketing Committee (“HAMC”) Chair Dave McCarty was also reappointed to that position by acclamation.

Since the MPC has stopped working on Canadian marks, it was decided to drop Adrienne Seal as its Canadian agent. The MPC has made at least two attempts to register its marks in Canada through two different paths and has spent a lot of money, but those efforts came to no avail since the MPC did not have a corporate entity. The suggestion was made to wait and see what happens with Brexit. There are no Canadian bidders at the moment and there are two European bidders on the horizon. Jo Van volunteered to do the research should the MPC wish to pursue Canadian research at some point.

We should know our potential expenses and income over the coming year.

Don has recommended in the past that we reduce the MPC’s guidelines to writing, such as striving to register our marks in all countries that have had at least two Worldcons. He will research his last recommendation along these lines and may revive them for adoption by the MPC.

We have three debit cards with U S Bank, and Kevin asked if he may retain his WIP debit card in order to pay various expenses.

Kevin said we had about 540 people watching the text-only on line coverage of the Hugo Awards. The new software isn’t as good as CoverItLive’s, but it did what was needed. The coverage is archived until the number of clicks run out. We lost all our broadcasts with CoverItLive, and we should figure out how to archive the coverage from Arena.im, the successor to CoverItLive. Arena is the best of a bad lot.

NASFiC 2020 has not yet appointed its representative to the MPC.

The Hugo Award Marketing Committee has been mostly reactive, not proactive at this point.

The MPC discussed holding another meeting before the next Worldcon. We will probably have a quorum at SMOFCon if one is needed and will meet there if such a meeting is called by the Chair.

We still need to figure out how to fund the MPC as well as what to spend money on. If China wins its Worldcon bid, we may not get very much money from them.

Billy Van Ark volunteered to help us get a GSuite account. That would be helpful for our Internet needs.

Future plans for the MPC include budgeting for future Worldcons. We need to present the Business Meeting with a list of we plan to do with the money. The purpose of the HAMC is to market the Hugos, and the purpose of the MPC is to investigate infringement on our marks.

The meeting adjourned at 11:35 p.m.