

MINUTES OF THE MARK PROTECTION COMMITTEE
July 28, 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT

Members of the Mark Protection Committee (“MPC”) present at the meeting in Wellington, New Zealand, and held via Zoom on July 28, 2020, at 11 a.m. (NZST), were Judy Bemis (elected until 2021), Linda Deneroff (elected until 2020), Paul Dormer (appointed by Dublin 2019 an Irish Worldcon until 2021), Cliff Dunn (appointed by Discon III until 2023), Donald E. Eastlake III (elected until 2021), Ron Oakes (appointed by NASFiC 2020 until 2022), Daniel Spector (appointed by CoNZealand until 2023), Kevin Standlee (elected until 2022), and Ben Yalow (elected until 2022), and Bruce Farr as WIP Director and Treasurer. Jo Van Ekeren (elected until 2022), joined shortly after the meeting adjourned, but her report on the status of marks in NZ is noted herein.

The meeting was called to order at 11:05 a.m. The first order of business was to approve the December 2019 minutes from the meeting at the December 2019 SMOFCon, which were accepted by unanimous consent.

The WSFS.us and Worldcon.info domains have been renewed.

We discussed still-open items (based on our report to the WSFS Business Meeting)

- We still need to sign a contract with Richard Man giving him a license to reproduce the photographs of Hugo Award statuettes he took.
- The Archive of Our Own controversy seems to be dying down.
- We need to find out if our European attorneys (who wrote to the Danish group promoting its own “Hugo Awards”) if they ever got a response. If they did not, we need to ping them to send something that will produce a written proof of receipt.
- At some point we need to pay our attorney, Esther Horwich, to transfer from WSFS/MPC to WIP any remaining service marks/trademarks that have not yet been so transferred. Don will ask Esther how much it will cost.
- Until Jo Van joined this meeting (technically after it adjourned) we had no further word about a second New Zealand group trying to give out a Hugo Award. However, Jo Van reported that she is still researching the various trademark classifications and still has about 150 additional searches to conduct. She is trying to emulate as closely as possible our EU registrations. Hugo Boss also has registered marks in New Zealand, so we may have to deal with that. She would like to get the research done while CoNZealand is still in existence to give us a stronger case. WSFS is like Schrödinger’s cat: we are almighty and powerful, yet broke and powerless.
- We also need to ask our European attorneys where we stand regarding the company Strideline, which is creating custom Worldcon masks.

The terms of John Coxon, Dave McCarty and Linda Deneroff expire at the end of this meeting. Linda is willing to serve an interim term and will contact John and Dave regarding their intentions prior to the next meeting.

We also need to take action regarding the Guardian’s 2020 Hugo Young and Young Hugo Awards.

Bruce noted that Dublin paid \$565 (500 Euros) to our Euro solicitors as a possible donation to the MPC and will follow up to find out if this will become a definite donation.

Kevin reported that the money we're paying for anti-spam protection is well worth it. We're not under sustained attack, but there are ongoing attempts to get into our site.

By unanimous consent, the meeting adjourned at 11:41 a.m.