

MEETING OF THE MARK PROTECTION COMMITTEE
September 5, 2022

The first meeting of the Mark Protection Committee (“MPC”) for 2022-2023 was called to order at 1:06 p.m. in the Dusable Room of the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Chicago, Illinois. The MPC is the only permanent body of the World Science Fiction Society (“WSFS”), created by authority of the WSFS Constitution. Membership in the MPC also constitutes membership in the Worldcon Intellectual Property (“WIP”), a California nonprofit corporation.

Members in attendance were Kevin Standlee (elected until 2025), Linda Deneroff (elected until 2024), Don Eastlake (elected until 2024), Linda Ross-Mansfield (appointed by Pemmi-Con until 2025), Judy Bemis (elected until 2023), Donald E. Eastlake III (elected until 2024), Joni Dashoff (elected until 2023), Nicholas Whyte (elected until 2025), Mike Willmoth (elected until 2023), Chris Rose (appointed by Chicon 8 until 2024), Dave McCarty (elected until 2024), Ben Yalow (elected until 2025), as well as Bruce Farr, a nonvoting member.

Also attending were Jason Spitzer and Alan Tipper.

Elections were held for officers. By acclamation, Kevin Standee was elected as Chair of the MPC. For Vice Chair, Don Eastlake was elected over Nicholas Whyte 7 to 4. Again by acclamation, Linda Deneroff was elected as Secretary, and Bruce Farr was appointed as a nonvoting member from California and elected as Treasurer.

Old Business:

After the conclusion of the MPC’s final 2021-2022 session on September 1, 2022, Yasser Bahjatt signed on behalf of Yatakhayaloon Co. Ltd. the agreement to license the Hugo Award name and logo for the sum of \$10 a year (\$100 total, dated from 9/1/2022) to the Mark Protection Committee for use with a proposed series of collections of Hugo Award finalists and winners translated into Arabic. The agreement was modified to include Hugo Award finalists as well as winners. Kevin Standlee signed the agreement as Vice Chair. He will scan it and send electronic copies to the MPC members, and Linda will retain the original. The MPC commended Kevin for his diligence in this matter.

New Business:

We will ask our attorney, Esther Horwich, to file a service mark in the U.S. for the Lodestar Award. Once that process is completed, we will do the same in the countries where we hold other licenses. We should find out if it is easier to do it one at a time or all together. The risk of damage to our brand increases if we delay. We can go through the EU Intellectual Property Organization (EUIPO) to register our marks, but we don’t know if we will need to register the mark separately in the UK. We have a recommendation of European Attorneys from our British attorney. Registration for the Lodestar Award mark will be narrow since lodestar is a common term. Linda will ask a paralegal friend of hers who specializes in trademarks and patents to do a quick search.

We based our prioritization of mark registrations on the number of places that have held a WSFS convention. Canada is at the head of the list, followed by the UK (if we have to do anything separate from the EU), and then Australia. Kevin has the name of an Australian attorney he can contact. We will ask Ms. Horwich if she can recommend a Canadian attorney.

We currently have \$18,402.41 in the bank. We will need to be strategic in our expenses over the next year or two. Chengdu will not have a large number of WSFS memberships (except for the approximately 4,000 people who purchased advance supporting memberships to vote in 2021). Chengdu is selling 5 one-day memberships as a package that do not include WSFS rights (because the price is below what it cost to vote in that site selection election), but they hope to start selling memberships again in the next couple of weeks.

There was no objection either to Dave McCarty continuing to chair the Hugo Award Marketing Committee ("HAMC") or for the committee to continue as currently constituted. This committee responds to questions regarding the Hugo Awards and maintains the WSFS webpages.

Don will follow up regarding the Hugo Awards website in Denmark and will bring Nicholas up to date on this. They are a minor nuisance.

An Indian medical group holds an annual conference which incorporates the term Worldcon is another nuisance. Their convention is never held anywhere else but India, and unless they try to hold a convention elsewhere (or we want to hold a convention in India), we can let this lie.

Before adjourning, the MPC discussed future meeting opportunities. We are unlikely to have enough members in Chengdu for a quorum, but this coming winter SMOFcon will be in Montreal. Additionally, if needed, we can hold a Zoom call between the NASFiC held the first week in August and Worldcon held the last week in August. The NASFiC conflicts with San Diego Comic Con, and while there will be technology in Chengdu for such a call, if needed, Kevin would like to schedule a meeting in advance to avoid being inquorate.

The meeting adjourned at 1:42 p.m.

Linda Denroff
Secretary