

REPORT OF MARK PROTECTION COMMITTEE **October 2023 – July 2024**

Membership and Structure

Members of the WSFS Mark Protection Committee (“MPC”) from October 2023 through July 2024 were as follows, with the expiration of membership listed in parentheses after their name: Judy Bemis (elected until 2026); Alan Bond (appointed by Seattle 2025 until 2027); Joni Dashoff (elected until 2026); Linda Deneroff (Secretary, elected until 2024); Donald E. Eastlake III (Chair, elected until 2024); David Ennis (appointed by Buffalo NASFiC 2024 until 2026); Bruce Farr (Treasurer, appointed by the MPC to fill the remainder of the term of Dave McCarty, who resigned his MPC membership, until 2024); Chris Rose (appointed by Chicon 8 until 2024); Linda Ross-Mansfield (appointed by Pemmi-Con until 2025); Chen Shi (appointed by Chengdu 2023 until 2025); Kevin Standlee (elected until 2025); Alissa Wales (appointed by Glasgow until 2026); Mike Willmoth (elected until 2026); Nicholas Whyte (elected until 2025); and Ben Yalow (elected until 2025).

In January 2024, Dave McCarty resigned from MPC/WIP, and Bruce Farr was appointed in his place to serve until the end of that term in 2024). Mr. Farr remains Treasurer. Also in January, Kevin Standlee stepped down as MPC Chair and WIP President, and Donald E. Eastlake III was elected to those offices. Mr. Standlee remains a member of both the MPC and WIP.

Unless re-elected or appointed, the terms of Linda Deneroff, Donald E. Eastlake III, Bruce Farr, and Chris Rose will conclude at the end of the Business Meeting at Glasgow.

Worldcon Intellectual Property (“WIP”) is a California public benefit/non-profit corporation (also recognized as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charity by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service) controlled by the MPC that holds the MPC’s bank account and WSFS’s service marks. The MPC Financial Report is appended at the end of this document. A report from the WSFS Marketing Committee (“WSFSMC”) is included as an appendix to this report. The WSFSMC is an advisory board of the MPC and is responsible for managing the WSFS websites (TheHugoAwards.org, Worldcon.org, NASFiC.org, and WSFS.org) and social media accounts on Facebook and other social media.

REPORT

This was a busy year. At our first meeting (at Chengdu and via Zoom) after the Chengdu WSFS Business Meeting) in October 2023, we agreed to again start looking into registering our marks in Canada and Australia. (If the constitutional amendment to create an Asian Science Fiction Convention (“ASFIC”) is ratified at Glasgow, we will also consider what we do about protecting our intellectual property in Asia.)

Our U.S. attorney formally completed the transfer of the IP marks formerly held by the MPC to WIP to the satisfaction of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (“USPTO”) and started work on those of our marks that were up for renewal. This means that all Worldcons can now use the same service mark notice.

In December we were notified by our attorney that the changes to Hugo Award Website requested by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (“USPTO”) were approved. For background: items were needed on our website to make it easier for the USPTO to understand that we are using our mark. We redesigned the header of the page to add the Hugo Award logo. In addition, we needed to submit a picture of the rocket without a base as a clean way for the USPTO to see the design of the rocket (the base seemed to confuse the examiners). Cheryl Morgan unmounted one of her trophies, took a clean picture, and that was forwarded to the USPTO.

At our December meeting, we discussed the MPC budget. Our expenses continue to climb. We have more marks, and they will need to be renewed over time, which also means more legal fees and USPTO, EUIPO, and other agency fees. Mr. Farr proposed we ask for a contribution of \$.75 per WSFS member. By unanimous consent, the MPC passed the following resolution:

That the Mark Protection Committee requests that future Worldcons donate US\$0.75 per WSFS member, and non-Worldcon conventions sanctioned by WSFS contribute US\$0.25 per attending or supporting member, to the MPC for the purpose of funding the committee’s ongoing operations.

Also in December, the USPTO granted trademark registration status to Lodestar Award®.

In January 2024, the MPC and WIP held special meetings at which they:

- censured Dave McCarty for his public comments that have harmed the good will and value of our marks;
- censured Dave McCarty, Ben Yalow, and Chen Shi for actions taken by the Hugo Administration Committee of the Chengdu Worldcon that they presided over; and
- reprimanded Kevin Standlee for comments that mistakenly led people to believe that WIP is not servicing its marks.

After being censured, Mr. McCarty resigned as a member of the MPC and a director of WIP, and Mr. Standlee resigned as chair of the MPC and President of WIP. Mr. Eastlake was elected to those offices, and Mr. Farr was appointed in Mr. McCarty’s place.

Also during January, the MPC Hugo Award Marketing Committee (“HAMC”) was dissolved and its duties transferred to the WIP WSFS Marketing Committee, which made an advisory board to WIP. Linda Deneroff was appointed chair of the WSFSMC.

The above actions were documented in two press releases currently available at <https://www.wsfs.org/news/>.

The MPC/WIP voted to engage a lawyer to produce a License Agreement compliant with the laws of the jurisdictions in which we hold service marks, per California Corporate Code Section 5212, and directed this committee to present a proposal to the Board regarding their investigation. Mr. Eastlake appointed himself a member and Mr. Bond to chair this committee. Unfortunately, as of June 2024, this committee has not been able to engage a pro bono attorney. There is the possibility of engaging a referral service to find such an attorney.

The MPC/WIP voted to create a Licensing Committee as an advisory board of WIP to be made up of 3 Directors, the Chairs of all currently seated or confirmed conventions (or their designees) that have been granted use of our marks, and the Chair of the 2024 WSFS Business Meeting (or their designee) for the purpose of consulting with experts, including but not limited to any lawyer engaged to craft a license agreement to create enforcement mechanisms to ensure the standards of any adopted License Agreement. The Directors appointed to this committee were Mr. Eastlake, Mr. Bond, and Ms. Bemis.

MPC/WIP member Chris Rose is also the developer of the Hugo Award nomination and ballot system for Glasgow 2024. He asked permission to use the Hugo Awards logo and name as part of the non-convention-customized part of the software in order to clearly identify what the software is for and to add art assets to it to indicate its purpose. Glasgow is using this open source software for its Worldcon, but it would not be affiliated directly with any particular Worldcon. Specifically, the rocket logo would be displayed prominently in the default templates for the system, using the term “The Hugo Awards” correspondingly, and the README for the project would reference both as well. There was no objection.

In February the MPC/WIP approved spending up to \$1,400 for initial mark registrations of Hugo Award and Worldcon in Australia.

Also in February, the MPC/WIP obtained a \$2 million Directors and Officers (“D&O”) insurance policy. D&O insurance offers protection from some claims that might arise from decisions and actions taken as part of a corporate officer’s duties.

WIP also discussed several changes to the WIP bylaws, mostly to fix holdovers from the original corporation that do not conform to WSFS tradition and rules. By unanimous consent, all the amendments will be reviewed by an attorney before a final decision by WIP.

In April, Mike Benveniste asked the opinion of the MPC regarding a rocket design for the funerary urn for Deb Geisler, a former Worldcon chair. MPC members unanimously found no problem with using the design he shared with the MPC. In addition, the MPC thanks Mr. Benveniste for his offer to transfer the domains formerly owned by

Ms. Geisler to the WIP; including, but not limited to, thehugoaward.net, thehugoaward.org, thehugoaward.com, thehugoaward.info. This will occur when Mr. Benveniste and Mr. Standlee have mutual free time to handle the transactions.

We should also note that even though rct.doj.ca.gov continues to show “Worldcon Intellectual Property” as delinquent at the time this report was prepared, this is due to a delay by the State of California to update the cover page. Clicking on the links show that WIP is all paid up and even received a refund for a duplicate payment.

The MPC/WIP is also considering registering the “shooting star logo” for WSFS, which up to now has been used unofficially. In June, our attorney has advised us that it must be used in commerce, and in June we added it to the www.wsfs.org website. The cost to register it would be slightly under \$900 if there isn't any substantial opposition at the USPTO. A decision on this has been deferred.

Also in June, our Australian attorney advised us that while our application for a Hugo Award trademark has been initially declined due to a very minor perceived overlap with other “Hugo” registered marks in Australia, our application for the Worldcon trademark has been provisionally accepted.

In the meantime, Ms. Deneroff discovered that we had been paying for Worldcon.fr for the past few years, even though it was not on our list of domains. It was obtained by Albert Aribaud when France was bidding for a Worldcon, and it is currently due to renew on December 31, 2027. Mr. Aribaud doesn't plan to renew the domain in future, and Mr. Farr cannot own it because one has to be an EU resident to own an .fr domain, so we will let it lapse at the end of 2027.

Lastly, based on further consideration of our governmental fees, domain name, computer services, legal, and insurance costs, the MPC decided to submit a funding request resolution to the WSFS Business meeting similar to the resolution that it passed above but suggesting \$1 per WSFS member and \$0.30 per attending or supporting member of non-Worldcon WSFS sanctioned conventions. It should be noted that the MPC does not normally ask a convention for any funds until after that convention when the status of that convention's income and expenses is known.

The MPC is submitting one resolution and three amendments to the 2024 WSFS Business Meeting, as follows:

Short Title: MPC Funding Request

Resolved, That the WSFS Business Meeting requests that Worldcons donate US \$1.00 per WSFS member, and non-Worldcon conventions sanctioned by WSFS donate US \$0.30 per attending or supporting member, to the MPC to fund the committee's operations.

Proposed by: The Mark Protection Committee

Commentary: The MPC is and always has been dependent on voluntary donations from conventions for its funding. Other sources of income are insignificant. Decades ago, a donation of \$0.50 per site selection voter was suggested based on what the continuing expenses of the MPC were then. But continuing expenses have increased for the growing number of mark registrations in a growing number of jurisdictions, legal expenses, computer services, domain names, insurance, and inflation. Furthermore, the number of site selection voters is more volatile than the number of WSFS members or attendees. For example, there are usually fewer voters when site selection is uncontested. So this resolution suggests a donation based on membership.

Note that the MPC does not normally ask conventions for money until after the convention has concluded and it is reasonably clear they can afford it.

The guideline amounts in this resolution are based on the continuing expenses of the MPC projecting a few years into the future. Such payments to the MPC, when made, would continue to be voluntary contributions.

Short Title: Required License Agreement

Moved, to amend the WSFS Constitution by [adding](#) a new point in subsection **4.6.1**, which lists the documents required to be eligible for site selection, and [adding](#) text to subsection **4.5.6**, as follows:

[\(x\) an executed copy, binding the bidding and prospective convention operating committee, of the most recent WSFS Mark Licensing Agreement that has been approved by a two-thirds vote of the Mark Protection Committee.](#)

4.5.6: Where a site and Committee are chosen by a Business Meeting or Worldcon Committee following a win by “None of the Above,” they are not restricted by exclusion zone or other qualifications [except that the selected committee must execute the required WSFS Mark Licensing Agreement.](#)

Proposed by: The Mark Protection Committee

Commentary: Selected conventions have been informally licensed to use the WSFS marks by the WSFS Constitution and traditions. This would replace that arrangement with a written license agreement. Such an agreement would provide a firmer basis for legal action against a convention committee that damaged any of the WSFS marks. If this amendment is passed in Glasgow and ratified in Seattle, the first site selection that would be subject to this licensing requirement would be that administered by the 2026 Worldcon.

Short Title: Hugo Administration and Site Selection Monitoring

Moved, to amend the WSFS Constitution adding and ~~deleting~~ text in **Section 3.13** and by adding a new Section to **Article 5** as follows:

Section 3.13: Subcommittee and Exclusions. ~~No member of the current Worldcon Committee or any publications closely connected with a member of the Committee shall be eligible for an Award. However, should the~~ Each Worldcon Committee shall delegate all authority under this Article to a Subcommittee whose decisions are irrevocable by the Worldcon Committee, ~~then this exclusion shall apply to members of the Subcommittee only.~~ No member of this Subcommittee, including the members elected by the Business Meeting, or any publications or works closely connected with them, shall be eligible for an Award.

Section 5.x: Hugo Administration and Site Selection Monitoring. The Business Meeting shall elect, as follows, four (4) different persons, two (2) each year, who have submitted their written consent to such election and a statement that they are not affiliated with either of the next two Worldcons committees and will not become so affiliated during their term of office:

(1) two (2) persons, one (1) each year, to two-year staggered terms who shall serve as special members of each required Worldcon Committee Hugo Award Subcommittee; and

(2) two (2) persons, one (1) each year, to two-year staggered terms who shall serve as special site selection tellers on the same basis as the site selection tellers provided by convention bid committees.

These persons shall report to the Business Meeting and to the Mark Protection Committee as to the propriety of the procedures followed by the Hugo Award administrations and site selection that they monitor and describing any circumstances that made such monitoring difficult or impractical. Should a vacancy occur in this set of four persons, the remainder of their term may be filled by the Business Meeting and until Business Meeting so acts, temporarily filled by the Mark Protection Committee.

Provided that, at the first election of the special site selection tellers and special Hugo Award Subcommittee members, four persons shall be elected with the first elected of each pair elected to a two-year term while the second shall be elected to an initial one-year term to establish the staggering of the terms in office.

Proposed by: The Mark Protection Committee

Commentary: This change provides for independent monitoring of site election and Hugo Award administration. If this amendment is passed in Glasgow and ratified in

Seattle, the first Business Meeting that would hold the described election of monitors would be the Business Meeting at the 2026 Worldcon. Except for unusual circumstances, such as briefly after the resignation of a monitor, there would always be two special members on each Hugo Award Subcommittee and two special site selection tellers for each site selection to provide a high probability of coverage even if a monitor were to be temporarily unavailable due to illness or a family emergency. If this amendment is passed in Glasgow and ratified in Seattle, the first Business Meeting that would hold the described election of monitors would be the Business Meeting at the 2026 Worldcon.

Short Title: MPC Procedures

Moved, to amend the WSFS Constitution by [adding](#) the following material and new subsections:

Section 1.7: The Mark Protection Committee

1.7.4: The Mark Protection Committee shall determine and elect its own officers, [which shall include a Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. Officers need not be elected or appointed members of the Mark Protection Committee, which may provide that the holder of an Office who was not so elected or appointed be a non-voting *ex officio* member of the Committee.](#)

1.7.x: [Meetings of the Mark Protection Committee shall be held with at least 3 days' notice either on the initiative of the Chair or within 7 days of a request by five members. The meeting shall be called by the Chair or, in their absence, the Secretary or, in the absence of both the Chair and the Secretary, any member may call a meeting.](#)

1.7.y: [A quorum of the Mark Protection Committee shall be a majority of its members. Members may attend through the use of any means of communication by which all members participating may simultaneously hear each other during the meeting, including in person, internet video meeting or by telephonic conference call.](#)

Section 1.8: Membership of the Mark Protection Committee

1.8.x: [Elected members of the Mark Protection Committee may be removed only by a two-thirds vote of that committee.](#)

Moved by: The Mark Protection Committee

Commentary: Although the Constitution currently only requires one annual meeting of the Mark Protection Committee (MPC), which is held at the Worldcon after and announced at the Business Meeting (BM), there can be other meetings of the MPC

between Worldcons. A meeting of the MPC is almost always held at the Worldcon before the BM and on occasion additional meetings are held at the call of the Chair. The 2023/2024 year has been particularly active with multiple MPC meetings between the Chengdu and Glasgow Worldcons. But there should be an assured method by which members of the MPC can cause a meeting to be held, which is provided by this amendment. This amendment also documents the long standard practice of the MPC with regard to Officers, quorum, and remote attendance.

There should be a means of removing a member of any group, when appropriate. We feel that no additional mechanism is needed for appointed members who can be removed by their appointing convention at any time, but a process is needed to remove elected members. The stability and strength of the MPC comes from having representatives from three different BMs held in different years in widely separated locations. It is inappropriate for a BM to remove an elected representative of a different BM; furthermore, on rare occasions, there may be confidential matters handled by the MPC which only MPC members would be aware of. Thus, this amendment vests the removal authority in the MPC.

Domain Names

Domain	Domain Agent	Handle to Renew	Renewal Date
WSFS.org	Worldcon Intellectual Property	GANDI.net – 8 years	2028-06-14
Worldcon.org	Worldcon Intellectual Property	GANDI.net – 8 years	2028-08-02
Hugo.org	Worldcon Intellectual Property	GANDI.net – 9 years	2028-08-31
HugoAward.org	Worldcon Intellectual Property	GANDI.net – 9 years	2033-05-03
Worldcon.com	Worldcon Intellectual Property	GANDI.net – 9 years	2028-10-09
Worldcon.co.uk	Worldcon Intellectual Property	GANDI.net – 9 years	2028-10-17
Worldcon.org.uk	Worldcon Intellectual Property	GANDI.net – 9 years	2028-10-17
Worldcon.uk	Worldcon Intellectual Property	GANDI.net – 9 years	2031-06-17
NASFiC.org	Worldcon Intellectual Property	GANDI.net – 9 years	2029-05-09
wsfs.us	Donald Eastlake	godaddy.com	2025-06-19
wsfs.info	Donald Eastlake	godaddy.com	2025-07-25
worldcon.us	Donald Eastlake	godaddy.com	2025-08-11
worldcon.info	Donald Eastlake	godaddy.com	2027-07-05
Worldcon.fr	Albert Aribaud	GANDI.net	2027-12-31

U.S. Marks

Mark	Action	Renewal Dates
World Science Fiction Convention Reg. No 1283681	Section 8, Section 9	6/26/33-6/26/34
Worldcon Reg. No. 1283680	Section 8, Section 9	6/26/33-6/26/34
World Science Fiction Society Reg. No. 1284719	Section 8, Section 9	7/3/33-7/3/34
WSFS Reg. No. 1286562	Section 8, Section 9	7/17/33-7/17/34
The Hugo Award Reg. No. 1287322	Section 8, Section 9	7/24/33-7/24/34
3D Rocket Mark Reg. No. 4620505	Section 8, Section 9	10/14/33-10/16/33
Rocket Mark Reg. No. 4320959	Section 8, Section 9	4/16/32-4/18/33
NASFiC Reg. No. 3647140	Section 8, Section 9	6/30/28-6/29/29
Lodestar Award Reg. No. 7246730	Section 8, Section 9	12/19/28-12/19/29

EU Marks

Mark	Class	Expiry Dates	Trademark No.
Worldcon	Class 16, 35, 41	2025/06/18	014277016
Hugo Award	Class 9, 16, 41	2025/06/18	014278519
The Hugo Award Logo	Class 16, 35, 41	2025/06/22	014270748

Australian Marks

Mark	Class	Acceptance After	Trademark No.
Worldcon	Class 41	2025/09/15	014277016

Mark Protection Committee/WIP Financial Report
All U.S. Dollars
Period Ending June 30, 2024

	Date	Deposits	Payments	Check No.	Account Balance
Book Balance end of 2023 fiscal					\$18,791.99
Vistaprint debit, new checks	07/17/2023		\$31.66		\$18,760.33
USPO Filing Mail	09/28/2023		\$9.49	1127	\$18,750.84
Kevin Standlee, Reimb Website Hosting	10/10/2023		\$87.77	1129	\$18,663.07
Esther Horwich Atty, Trademarks	10/24/2023		\$255.00	1128	\$18,408.07
Esther Horwich Atty, Trademarks	11/27/2023		\$1,680.00	1131	\$16,728.07
Deposit Chengdu	12/04/2023	\$2,916.00			\$19,644.07
Bruce Farr, Gandi Renewal	12/19/2023		\$79.00	1132	\$19,565.07
California Sec of State SI-100 Filing	02/16/2024		\$20.00	1134	\$19,545.07
Esther Horwich, Lodestar USPTO Filing	02/20/2024		\$1,410.00	1133	\$18,135.07
Electronic Withdrawal, D&O Insurance, California Meridian			\$1,216.00		\$16,919.07
Wire, Australia Trademarks	02/29/2024		\$240.00		\$16,679.07
Wire, Australia Trademarks	04/09/2024		\$240.00		\$16,439.07
Wire Fees (3 wires)	04/10/2024		\$104.00		\$16,335.07
Kevin Standlee, Pair Domain Hosting	05/14/2024		\$90.60	1155	\$16,244.47
Wire, Australia Trademarks	06/10/2024				\$15,759.47
Book Balance June 30, 2024					\$15,759.47

—Bruce Farr

WSFS Hugo Awards Marketing Committee October 2023-July 2024

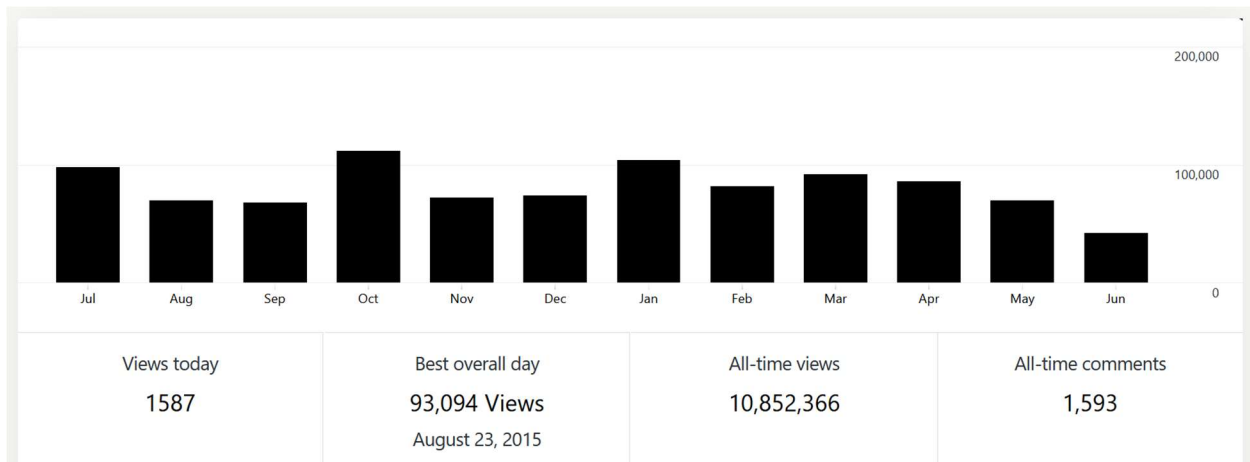
Until January 2024, the Hugo Awards Marketing Committee (“HAMC”) members consisted of Dave McCarty (Chair), Linda Deneroff, Craig Miller, Cheryl Morgan, Mark Olson, Kevin Standlee, and Jo Van Ekeren. The HAMC was established by the WSFS Mark Protection Committee, and its chair and members were appointed by the MPC annually.

In January 2024, the HAMC was dissolved and its duties transferred to the World Science Fiction Convention Marketing Committee (“WSFSMC”), which currently consists of Linda Deneroff (Chair), Jerry Kaufman, Craig Miller, Chris Rose, Kevin Standlee, and Jo Van Ekeren.

The WSFSMC continues to work with Worldcon committees to support the marketing of the Hugo Awards, to handle inquiries from the press regarding the Awards as needed, to maintain TheHugoAwards.org, including the list of past finalists and winners, and archiving the “Section 3.11.4” reports of nomination and voting information issued by Hugo Award administrators, and to maintain the WSFS.org, Worldcon.org, and NASFiC.org websites and answer general queries submitted through those sites.

The WSFSMC will continue to cooperate with Worldcon committees so that we can update the Hugo Awards web site at the first opportunity after the awards are announced as well as to use the @TheHugoAwards BlueSky feed and other social media to publicize the announcements of the winners in each category.

thehugoawards.org
Views per Month, July 1, 2023-June 20, 2024



We continue to attempt to gather all the recordings of past Hugo Awards ceremonies (including any made before online posting of such recordings was possible or common) and to put copies of them in the Worldcon Events YouTube channel. We are still looking for a copy of the 2017 Hugo Awards ceremony recording that was deleted when the 2017

Worldcon's YouTube channel was deleted. If anyone has a copy of the 2017 ceremony video that they can provide us, we will upload it to the Worldcon Events channel.

We maintain the list of seated, future, and recent Worldcons and the lists of bids for future conventions to the best of our knowledge. Multiple members of the committee have the credentials for the web sites. Bandwidth and disk space usage for the web sites we manage were within the allowances for our account. We may see peak loads around the time of the winner announcements, and will work with our hosting provider to minimize extra charges, which are borne by the Mark Protection Committee.

We continue to field inquiries directed to Worldcon.org and TheHugoAwards.org, forwarding them to the current Worldcon or Mark Protection Committee, as necessary.