

Minutes of Westercon 76 Business Meeting

July 6, 2024

The Westercon 76 Business Meeting was called to order at the Salt Lake City Airport DoubleTree Hotel in the Arches Meeting Room at 11:08 a.m. on July 6, 2024, with Kevin Standlee presiding. Martin Pyne was Deputy Presiding Officer, Linda Deneroff was Secretary, Lisa Hayes was Videographer, and Scott Sanford was Sergeant-at-Arms (Doorwarden). A quorum was present.

A. Call to Order

The first order of business was site selection results. Linda Deneroff, the head of site selection for Westercon 78 announced the results of the election. Eighteen ballots were cast. There were no mail-in ballots; all were in-person.

For the election for the 2026 Westercon, eighteen ballots were cast, all in person with seventeen expressing a preference. Nine votes were needed to win. The results are below.

First Round	Thursday	Friday	Total	
Baycon 2026	8	5	13	Winner
None of the Above		1	1	
Both		1	1	
None of the Above	2		2	
Total With Preference	10	7	17	
Needed to Elect (Majority)			9	
No Preference/Blank ¹	1		1	
Total Ballots Cast	11	7	18	

Baycon’s parent organization filed qualified bidding papers with Westercon 78 before the close of site selection voting. The meeting thanked the tellers for their efforts and instructed them to destroy the ballots. No one was from Baycon to address the meeting since that convention was running the same weekend as Westercon.

B. Committee Reports

Kevin Standlee and Lisa Hayes were appointed as a Caretaker Committee at Westercon 75 to either find someone to run Westercon 77 in 2025 or run it themselves. After speaking with those people who expressed an interest in running Westercon 77, Kevin Standlee and Lisa Hayes have awarded the right to hold Westercon 77 to Baycon and its

¹ Blank ballots or votes for No Preference are abstentions and do not count toward the number of ballots cast for the purpose of determining a majority.

parent organization. This means there will be two consecutive Westercons at Baycon. Mr. Standlee noted that the cost of converting a supporting Westercon membership would be \$40. The convention will be held at the Santa Clara Marriott Hotel in Santa Clara, California.

C. Pending Bylaw Amendments

C.1 Remove Date Restriction

Moved, to remove the reference to the traditional dates of Westercon:

~~1.1 Name and Date~~

~~It is traditional, but not obligatory, that the West Coast Science Fantasy Conference (Westercon) shall take place over the July 4th weekend.~~

Commentary: This rule, which has only been advisory and could always have been ignored, can be removed if the purpose of future changes is to give Westercon a larger scope, including the possibility of being “attached” to other conventions.

Discussion: Linda Robinett felt that this would explicitly permit the date to change and remove any confusion. John Hertz felt that deleting the phrase was unnecessary and would only cause confusion. Jordan Brown noted that this amendment would remove the only clause in the bylaws where the name of the convention appears. The Chair noted that West Coast Science Fantasy Conference has not been a registered service mark for several years now. Jacqueline Elderkin said that removing this clause will provide greater flexibility and, considering the current status of Westercon, this is greatly to be desired.

Ben Yalow agreed with Jordan Brown’s point that if this clause is removed, then the name of the convention would no longer be in the bylaws. He added that rather than rewrite a bylaw on the fly, we should not pass this bylaw since, among other things, it provides no restrictions on when we can hold Westercon. He recommended not deleting this section and coming back next year someone should come back next year with a new amendment. Aaron Canton said that if something is only a suggestion, not a rule, we should not keep it as part of the bylaws, and thus he was a favor of striking the article. He believed bylaws should be only for things that are obligatory.

Joni Brill Dashoff asked how to introduce a restriction to any given dates if this amendment passed. The Chair responded it would require a new amendment².

By a counted vote 10 members were in favor of the amendment and 6 opposed. The motion was ratified and will take effect at the end of Westercon 75.

C.2: No Zone

Moved, to remove the zone restrictions from Westercon Site Selection:

~~3.2 Site Selection Zones~~

~~The following Site Selection Zones are defined within the area defined in section 3.1:~~

~~**3.2.1: North:** Sites in North America north of the 42nd north parallel.~~

~~**3.2.2: Central:** Sites in North America between the North and South zones.~~

~~**3.2.3: South:** Hawaii; California south of and including San Luis Obispo, Kern, and San Bernardino Counties; Nevada south of and including Clark County; Arizona; New Mexico; and all countries, states, provinces, territories, or other political subdivisions southward within North America.~~

~~**3.2.4: Other:** Any location otherwise eligible under section 3.1 not part of the above Zones.~~

~~3.3 Regional Exclusion Zone~~

~~No site within the Site Selection Zone containing the site of the Westercon administering the site selection election shall be eligible to bid, except as provided in this section. If no eligible bids are filed by the January 1st of the year of the site selection balloting, then all sites defined in section 3.1 shall be eligible.~~

Commentary: It does not appear that Westercon has so many sites clamoring to host the convention that the zonal restrictions that seemed worthwhile a generation ago are still needed. Should a revived Westercon site be perceived to be monopolizing the convention, the members could in the future adopt some sort of new rotation

² The Chair later observed that, per Westercon Bylaws Section 4.2, amendments to the proposed Bylaw change that do not increase the scope of the change could have been permitted; however, nobody raised a point of order about this at the time.

system or zonal exclusion such as the distance-based system currently used by Worldcon. (Currently, Worldcon sites must be at least 500 mi / 800 km from the site hosting the election.)

Discussion: The Chair noted that this amendment only removes the restriction of the zone from which a bid could file by January 1 of a given year. April 15 is still the deadline for all bids to file in order to be on the ballot. (And, yes, a convention could vote to succeed itself.) The deadline for filing a bid to win the election is the close of site selection. Only the first deadline would be removed by this amendment. This amendment also does not change the eastern border of Westercon.

Linda Robinett spoke in favor of this amendment. She said this rule has not been exercised for quite a few years. It was originally intended to spread the convention around western North America but it is now irrelevant.

John Hertz felt this amendment is needless; we have all the flexibility we want, and we don't need to ratify this amendment.

Jordan Brown noted that this is a real change since currently no one can file a bid from the same zone as the hosting convention until January 1.

By an uncounted show of hands, item C.2 was ratified.

C.3: Relative Filing Deadline

Moved, to set the filing deadline for bids to appear on the ballot to a relative number of days, rather than as a specific filing date, and to provide for situations where a convention is postponed:

3.4 Filing Deadline for Ballot

Only those eligible bids whose filing paperwork required by section 3.5 is in the possession of the administering Westercon ~~by the April 15th preceding the balloting~~ at least sixty (60) days before the first day of the administering Westercon shall be listed on the Ballot. Should the administering Westercon be postponed for any reason, the filing deadline shall be accordingly extended, even if this happens after the original deadline has passed.

Commentary: Currently, the deadline for appearing on the ballot, April 15, is 77 days before July 1. This proposal would not only set the filing deadline relative to the

actual date of the convention, but it would also give bids slightly longer to get their bids filed with the administering Westercon.

In addition, this proposal explicitly provides for the case where a Westercon is postponed for any reason with less than sixty days before the convention, requiring the administering Westercon to accept bids relatively to the revised date, even if that means allowing bids after the original deadline relative to the original date. This is not an academic consideration. The 2021 Worldcon postponed its dates after the initial filing deadlines for bids had passed. A new bid filed based on the revised dates, and the 2021 Worldcon initially refused to consider the bid, claiming that the original deadline based on the original dates was the only date that applied. They did eventually change their decision and permit the new bid onto the ballot. This provision makes the interpretation clearer and explicit.

Discussion: The rules were suspended for purposes of discussing these three amendments since they are all related, and opened an informal discussion.

Jordan Brown was concerned about the way the dates ripple. He asked if there was a way to discuss C.3, C.4 and C.5 as a single entity. Hearing no objection, the rules were suspended in order to informally discuss the three items as one.

Mr. Brown noted that C.4 says ballots must be sent out 30 days before the start of the convention, and C.5 says ballots must be received back 10 days before the convention. That leaves 20 days between mailing out the ballots and getting them back. He felt that while that's probably enough, if the post office cooperates, and it's not a lot of spare time. If there were a problem, it could ripple over into the 60 days deadline for filing a bid. This makes the schedule tighter, and it might be too tight.

Aaron Canton noted that electronic balloting is available. Email is instantaneous, and the verbiage says "at least" to allow for delays. This means a convention could choose to allow ballots until the close of site selection at the convention, if they wished.

Lisa Hayes said we should go forward with what we have. If we discover we've made a mistake we can fix it later.

Linda Robinett believed shifting deadlines might be very confusing.

Ben Yalow said once we allow Westercon to move off July 4, if the dates are locked in, there is real trouble. We absolutely have to tie in the dates relative to when Westercon occurs. Otherwise, for example, if Westercon were moved to Presidents

Day weekend, the site selection ballots would not be ready. We have to be able to move all related dates if we're going to allow Westercon to take place off July 4.

Aaron Canton noted that Article 3.4 is the only section that specifically authorizes email. He suggested making a new amendment to guarantee email everywhere. The Chair noted that that would be an item of new business and suggested that if these current amendments were ratified this year, it would do little harm to consider any changes at next year's business meeting.

With that, the informal discussion ended.

While it was originally intended that the three items be voted upon separately, the Chair thought that logically these three amendments should be considered together and asked if there was any objection to considering Amendments C.3, C.4, and C.5 as a single item to be voted on. There was no objection, so the rules were suspended, and the three amendments would be on as a single item.

No one wished to debate this combined item. However, a question was raised regarding whether the phrase "[sent by postal or electronic mail](#)" meant a convention committee was authorized to use only one of those methods. The Chair believed that either method would work and "and" is not an unreasonable interpretation of the phrase, particularly since Westercons have a responsibility to contact their members, even if they do not have electronic mail addresses.

With a majority vote required to ratify C.3, C.4 and C.5, without objection (by a show of hands) the three items were ratified and will take effect at the end of the Westercon 76.

C.4: Distribution of Ballot

Moved, to make the date when the administering Westercon is required to distribute the site selection ballot relative to the date of the convention:

3.10 Distribution of Ballot

The site-selection ballot and full rules for site-selection voting, including the deadlines for voting by mail, shall be [sent by postal or electronic mail at least 30 days before the first day of the administering Westercon](#) ~~mailed on or before the May 10th preceding the voting~~ to all members of the administering Westercon as of one week before the mailing. The ballot and full rules for site-selection, including the hours during which site-selection will take place and the location of

the site-selection, shall be given to all attending members upon registration at the Westercon, or such information shall be prominently displayed at the registration area throughout the Westercon.

Commentary: The current May 10th deadline is 52 days before July 1. This changes the mailing date to 30 days before the start of the Westercon, and explicitly authorizes electronic mail as a valid method of distribution. However, this change does not contemplate *requiring* members to have email addresses.

Discussion: See Item C.4.

C.5: Deadline for Voting by Mail

Moved, to make the minimum deadline for accepting mailed ballots relative to the date of the convention:

3.11 Deadline for Voting by Mail

All ballots received by the administering Westercon ~~prior to June 20~~ at least ten (10) days before the first day of the administering Westercon shall be counted. The administering Westercon may count ballots received less than ten (10) days before the first day of the administering Westercon at their discretion.

3.14 Verification of Ballots

Properly completed ballots shall contain: the member's printed name; the member's membership number as assigned by the administering Westercon; the member's dated signature; the member's address of record with the current Westercon; the member's current address if different; and the member's vote(s) as defined elsewhere in this article. Verification of the ballots shall consist of matching the name and number of the member with the records of the administering Westercon. Ballots received by the committee prior to ~~June 20~~ the deadline in section 3.11, and any others received by mail which may be counted, shall be held by the administering Westercon until the opening of the Westercon, at which time they shall be verified by the administering Westercon and the bidders.

Commentary: The current deadline requiring the administering Westercon to count mail-in ballots is June 20. This change requires that the administering Westercon must

count any ballots received at least ten days before the convention, but also explicitly states that the convention may count ballots received by mail after that. In other words, the convention is not *required* to reject ballots received less than ten days before the convention, but they do not have to count them if it is impractical for them to do so.

The change to section 3.14 is to make the deadline referred to in this section parallel to Section 3.11. As noted earlier, this will almost certainly need to be renumbered by the Secretary should other changes in this document be adopted.

Discussion: See Item C.4.

D. New Business

John Hertz moved that all the people who could not manage the word “obligatory” should be inflicted with thousands of tiny paper cuts covered with lemon juice and rock salt. The Chair ruled the motion was dilatory.

Joni Dashoff proposed an amendment to create a new Item in 1.1 and was seconded:

[Article 1.1 Name and Date. It is traditional, but not obligatory, that Westercon \(“the West Coast Science Fantasy Conference”\) shall take place in the months of May, June, and/or July.](#)

In addition to suggesting specific months, this amendment would use the convention’s registered name (Westercon), rather than the longer name (West Coast Science Fantasy Conference) that has no legal significance.

Todd Dashoff then made a motion to replace “traditional” with “suggested” and to add the month of August to the list of dates. He felt “traditional” was no longer correct because Westercon has never been in any month but July. In addition, adding “August” would balance out the middle months of the year. The Chair suggested these two items be handled separately.

The first-order amendment to wordsmith Ms. Dashoff’s amendment to strike “traditional” and replace it with “suggested” passed by a show of hands and now read:

Article 1.1 Name and Date. It is ~~traditional~~suggested, but not obligatory, that Westercon (“the West Coast Science Fantasy Conference”) shall take place in the months of May, June and/or July.

Subsequently, Mr. Dashoff proposed adding “August” to the list of months in which a Westercon might occur because amendment leaned toward the front of the calendar, and he wanted to keep the range as equitable as possible before and after July.

Article 1.1 Name and Date. It is suggested, but not obligatory, that Westercon (“the West Coast Science Fantasy Conference”) shall take place in the months of May, June, ~~and/or~~ July and/or August.

Lisa Hayes noted that since this the range of months is only a suggestion, holding Westercon during other months was not restricted. Therefore she was opposed to adding another month to the suggested list.

Mr. Dashoff asked what month would the convention be considered in if it were to begin or end in a month outside the range. The Chair noted that the motion says suggested, not obligatory, so that would not be an issue.

Ms. Robinett felt that adding August might add conflicts with Bubonicon as well as, possibly, Worldcon.

The motion to close debate made by Ben Yalow passed by a show of hands.

The motion to add August to the date range failed by a show of hands.

The agreed-upon wording thus remained:

Article 1.1 Name and Date. It is suggested, but not obligatory, that Westercon (“the West Coast Science Fantasy Conference”) shall take place in the months of May, June and/or July.

The Chair ruled that it is implicit that Westercon take place in the calendar year for which it is bid. It was noted that Westercons 73 and 74 were held a year after the years for which they were originally selected after the owner of the Westercon service mark override the bylaws to authorize the shift of dates. The Chair suggested that such an action should only be taken in extraordinary circumstances, such as the pandemic that triggered the shift of Westercon 73 and 74.

Joni Dashoff, as maker of the motion, felt that listing the suggested months would discourage potential bidders from bidding against other conventions held at other times in the year.

Jerry Lohr felt this motion was not a rule and therefore it was unnecessary, inappropriate, and didn’t belong in the bylaws.

Jordan Brown noted that a May Westercon would be a problem for those people with children since schools were still in session.

Ms. Dashoff also noted that if Article 1 does not exist in the bylaws, the convention is without a name.

Linda Deneroff then made a motion to divide Section 1.1 into two sentences because two different thoughts were being expressed in a single sentence. She suggested:

Article 1.1.1 Name. The name of this convention is Westercon (the West Coast Science Fantasy Conference).

Article 1.1.2 Date. It is suggested, but not obligatory, that Westercon take place during the months of May, June, and/or July.

Ms. Deneroff noted that regardless of when the convention takes place, we need to know the name of the convention. They are two separate thoughts, two separate actions, and should be two separate sentences.

Mr. Lohr felt the first sentence was fine, but that the second sentence did not belong in the bylaws.

The Chair directed the Secretary that if this motion passed, the article should be renumbered in such a way as to not have to renumber the entirety of the bylaws.

Without objection, the motion to break Article 1.1 into two sentences passed.

The Chair ruled that because the two sentences are two separate issues, the request of only a single person was necessary to divide them in order to take them up one at a time.

Without objection, the motion to add Article 1.1(a) was given first passage and will be sent on to Westercon 77 for ratification.

The second motion was more divisive. Ben Yalow realized that this subsection is not binding and merely guidance, but it encapsulates the knowledge that we have for guidance.

Jerry Lohr still felt that suggestions are not rules and do not belong in bylaws, and that there are other ways to encapsulate nonobligatory knowledge.

Todd Dashoff did not see any problem with putting the language back into the bylaws since similar language had been there for many, many years. He did not see any harm in modifying the language and putting it back.

By a show of hands, the motion was given first passage and will be sent on to Westercon 77 for ratification.

E. Announcements

There were no announcements.

F. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:36 p.m.

Kevin Standlee, Chair

Linda Deneroff, Secretary

Westercon 76 Business Meeting