

1 Meeting Opened

It was determined that a quorum was present.

Meeting declared open at 4:05pm on the 16th of April 2017

Attending:

- Doug Burbidge (chair),
- Frames White (administrator (taking minutes)),
- Lexi Hemsley (treasurer),
- Anna Hepworth (elected board member),
- Jack Bridges (elected board member),
- Laura Hodge (elected board member),
- Margaret Watts (elected board member).
- Andrea Johnson
- Betty Graer
- Brian Johnson
- Candice Schilde
- Catherine Jemma De Croy
- Cathy Cupitt
- Chris Coman
- Colin Sharpe
- David Chandler
- David Gunn
- Davina Watson
- Dianne Watson
- Edward Doernberg
- Elaine Walker
- Elizabeth Trump
- Fe Waters
- Grant Watson
- Isobel White
- Jay Watson
- Michael Cogan
- Owen Godfrey
- Owen Wylde
- Peter Lyons
- Rachel Turner
- Rohan Wallace
- Ruth Turner
- Sally Beasley

- Sarah Parker
- Stephen Griffiths
- Susan Ackermann
- William "Bill" Langley
- Yoli Lawrence
- Yvonne Cavil

Apologies

- PRK (elected board member),

Coman is (again) sorry. But not for failing to attend. Just in general.

Doug asks to move the Elections forward

Doug moved that standing orders be suspended, to bring the elections forward.

Seconded by Ruth.

Motion carried.

6 Appointment of a Returning Officer

Rohan Wallace is selected as the returning officer.

8 Election of Members of the Board

Doug: We have a resignation from Stephen Griffiths.

This creates a short term, 1 year, as Stephen Griffiths is 2 years into his term. The person with the least votes will have the shorter term.

We also have the normal election of 3 board positions.

Doug is the only person rerunning. Lexi and Anna are not rerunning.

4 nominations:

- Andrea Johnson
- Brian Johnson
- Doug Burbidge
- Davina Watson

Brian speaks: I am co-convenor of this convention. I work in IT, and I want to improve technology. I have been treasurer for this con. I would like to assist WASFF with treasury.

Andrea: I want improve communication with parts of our community, including nonbinary and people with disabilities.

Doug: I have been doing this role for 7 or 8 years. I intend to continue as before. And work to update the constitution (more on that latter).

Davina: I want to improve how well known the convention is in the wider community. Get our name out there. So people know this convention exists. And this will make us stronger.

Rohan distributed and collected ballots, and left the room to count them with assistance from Ruth Turner.

7 Motion to form Election of Organising Committee of the Western Australian Science Fiction Convention (Swancon 44 2019)

Two bids:

One led by Jay Watson.

Desired dates: Easter

Name: Swancon

Theme of the convention is "The future is now."

One led by Owen Godfrey

Name of the convention: Swancon 44: Facets of the Fantastic

The theme is "Facets of the fantastic"

Jay speaks:

The committee I have put together feel we can put together a real stable and good swancon. The theme, the future is now, is because films, when many of us were growing up, were set in 2019. E.g. Blade Runner, Akira.

We want to have authors, and also academics, to talk about how the present is like the future predicted.

We plan to bid for the Natcon.

Owen Speaks:

Owen delegates to Candice.

Candice:

The theme is a dystopian.

Inclusion and diversity are important.

We are looking at Easter, also considering Australia day.

We are considering becoming Natcon.

Owen wants to use his outside experience with marketing to create a professional event. We are planning on getting a young adult author to hopefully bring up the number of young people.

We are considering the hotel: cheaper rooms, but a good location.
(No hotel name is mentioned.)

We will get media partners, which may allow costs to come down.
Looking at doing a \$40 day.
Looking at a payment plan to help people pay for the convention.

Owen:

The reason Candice spoke is because I delegate to people who are better at things.
The important thing is that Swancon has to be fun.

Questions:

Stephen Griffiths: Have either of you considered moving to the Queen's Birthday Weekend? We have been having all problems with attendance and programming because people are not available.

Jay: We are planning to be a Natcon. As a Natcon, we want to be at Easter. To be otherwise causes issues for the next Natcon. But we are willing to consider it; This is a serious issue. We would be talking to WASFF and the community

Owen: We were considering 3 dates: Easter, Australia day and the Queens Birthday. But we discounted Queen Birthday. This is based on results from survey. Also that would clash with Royal Show. Queens Birthday is also not an academic holiday

Jay: even if we are at Easter, we are not set on a 5 day con.

Peter Lyons: It should be known that the Natcon bid for 2018 would happen at the next Natcon business meet due to various issues last year. Having a Natcon bid for 2019 at the same time as the 2018 bid will influence votes.

Yoli: how are you going to handle the costs with marketing and media partners.

Owen: I know people who run the Reading Cinemas. It is about showing them how it can be mutually beneficial. And I have also already drawn up the budget.

Jay: I will comment that our marketing manager is the editor of the magazine Out in Perth.

Stephen Griffiths: I would like to know how you plan to apply for grants. Do you have a grants person.

Jay: Grant has started looking at grants.

Owen: Jay is ahead of me.

Jack: Will you attend Queer Ally training?

Both: Yes. Very keen.

Frames: Have any of your committee members attended the training already?

Both: No.

Doug: It was semi-internally advertised so this is not too surprising.

Brian: How well will you work in cooperation with adjacent Swancons (previous and next)?

Both: We will work well.

Results of Board election announced

In order of elections: Doug, Davina, Brian, Andrea.

Doug: all very good candidates.

(This means Andrea will have the shorter term.)

2 Considerations of Previous Minutes

The 2016 March 27 AGM.

Rohan points that under attendance we could have taken note of the chair and the person recording it.

Frames: I would like my name to be corrected to list only Frames White.

Coman moves to accept, with those amendments. Michael Cogan seconds.

Motion carried.

The results of the Bid for Swancon is announced:

The winning bid is that of Jay Watson.

3 Matters Arising from previous minutes

Peter Lyons: Aurealis Awards.

We will discuss this under general business.

Reports

Chairman

Doug:

Lexi and Anna are not rerunning, Stephen Griffiths has resigned.

Thanks to all the board members.

We ran Ally training. The focus was really: how to not accidentally be an arsehole.

It has been a quiet year.

There are some constitutional considerations that we will discuss in general business.

Treasurer

Handouts of the financials have been provided.

Lexi:

Overall a decent year.

Net surplus for the whole organisation of about \$5000 (this was the 2016 financial year).

If compared to last year: it is significantly better. Contrasting to last years deficit of \$17,000 overall.

I believe this is in part due to the 2017 convention paying their hotel deposit in 2015.

Comparing the con: 2017 seem to be doing well, but this is before a lot of expenses. We will know better next year.

2016's convention is said to run as a surplus. However this excludes returning the seed money. When that is taken into account is is a \$11,000 deficit. Which is in line with the budget that was submitted.

The 2017 and 2016 treasurers have done a great job with their books. And have made my life very easy.

Thank you for handling money well.

Catherine Jemma: Are we overall doing well?

Lexi: the 2015 year was not a good one for our bank accounts.

I am not laying the blame on the 2016 Swancon.

In general recent conventions have run at a surplus, or only a small loss.

So we are overall doing alright.

Doug shows a graph of ticket sales since 2012.

Doug: This is thanks to Brendan's system making it possible.

It can be seen that membership, except in 2016, was not correlated with surplus or deficit. But the venue does impact hugely.

It can be seen how we can adjust these costs, should we desire to bring in more money.

Frames: And this was an action we did take last year. The board directed Swancon 42 to move to a smaller cheaper venue.

Administrator

We have been changing in technology. You have already noticed.

This began with the strategic meeting hosted by Maia shortly after the last convention.

This was accelerated by Brendan deciding to retire from maintaining LiveCon, and the core system behind the Swancon store/website.

Brendan's volunteer work is being replaced currently by Grenadine, a product maintained by a full time team.

Technology is crucial to our convention.

We can reduce load on our volunteers with technology.

Ruth asks about the cost of Grenadine;

Jack: \$100 for the base functionality – the website and the programming

For ticketing it costs a lot more.

The cost for that is per ticket: We have budgeted \$2200 per year to paying that.

That is about 4.4%.

Then there are credit card transaction fees on top.

Brian: can you comment on the cost differences (vs LiveCon/the Swancon website and store):

Jack: it cost us very little, but it cost Brendan a lot. In blood and sweat and community engagement. And these are valuable things.

Doug: The cost in credit-card fees, and eftpos rent remains the same.

Ruth: I think this is an appropriate point for us to thank Brendan.

Doug: The community thanks Brendan.

The meeting applauds.

Owen Wyldde moved that those 3 reports be accepted. Coman seconded. Motion carried.

CSC coordinator

We have a convention again and that is great.

Once again no CSC review progress. I have been too busy with getting grants and other things such things like guests.

We now have a grants sub-committee.

I am glad that WASFF is continuing to maintain institutional knowledge by adding Brian to the board.

CSC has had excellent meeting and great communication.

Doug: I have questions.

The CSC review you said had not had progress.

Dave Cake did not complete it in the two years he was assigned, and similarly in the it has now been two years of you (Stephen Griffiths) also not completing it.

Is it time to accept that we can not run this as an org and drop it?

Stephen Griffiths: I think now the original tensions are largely gone, as people have become more familiar with the role of CSC vs WASFF.

Some things could still be smoother -- I would like more activity from the programming and marketing subcommittees -- but we just don't have people.

Ruth: It seems that the people who originally pushed for it, have not attended the meeting in the last 3 years to shout about. So it seems they are now done. Do we require a motion to stop it.

Doug: In the motion last year there was a time limit, and that is now long past.

Rohan: It seems issue has always been personalities. It seems to be working.

Rohan moved that WASFF abandon CSC review for the time being. Ruth seconded. Motion carried.

Coman: It should be made clear in the minutes that review is being ceased because things are working well.

Stephen Griffiths: I will be doing a handover to the next CSC chair.

Room thanks Stephen Griffiths.

Swancon 41 2016

Isobel White:

I would like to thank everyone on my committee and my volunteers: you kept me sane. Especially Laura, who sat behind me so I could get things done.

General feedback: Our guests were good, and our programming was good.

The problems that came out have been discussed by CSC and by the community.

So progress is being made.

Swancon 42 2017

Coman: We are running a convention -- you are here.

Coman: I think the numbers are good. It seems we are on budget:

Coman: Brian do you have numbers?

Brian: I believe \$26,000 in full memberships. (\$24,800 total memberships including all types) at end of yesterday. It is about the same now. Of the sale that is 141 full members. \$3000 of day members and special event and half day members etc.

Total income is: \$61,500 and change.

And invoices are \$55,000, excluding a few pending invoices.

We are still a few memberships from breaking even.

I think we will break even.

Given that we have had issues such as guest cancellations resulting in unexpected costs.

Coman: I have seen lots of new faces from our gold coin days.

Catherine Jemma: Did we hit the number of room sales to get compensated rooms?

Brain: we believe so based on the invoices we received from the venue.

Swancon 43 2018

Jack:

We launched last night. And it worked. We are selling tickets right now using Grenadine.

Jack: I can talk about comp'ing at the PanPac.

We do not hit the room numbers to get comp'd at the PanPac because it is so expensive to have rooms for our members. So lots of people book through lastminute.com

I brought this up with the PanPac. And they comp'ed us up from the number of rooms that we would have had had everyone booked who through lastminute.com used the portal.

PanPac comp'ed us up front. So thanks PanPac.

We have switched to the other side of the floor we normally use and to the corporate suite upstairs.

The convention rooms are smaller. And much much cheaper.

But we can only use those during the day.

Lexi: What are the launch numbers.

Jack: They are really small. Almost no one has booked their tickets. Please please book. I think we are at 21.

The room in general comments is that: that is not bad.

Stephen Griffiths: everyone should be aware that the reason for Swancon 42 being directed to change venue is because of low launch numbers.

5 Appointment of Auditor

Doug: This is an optional item. If we feel the need to appoint an auditor then the meeting may so direct the board.

Rachel: Given the changes in technology and reporting, now is a good time to have it done. We have the technology it is possible now.

Doug: It is becoming easier, but is not there yet.

Catherine Jemma: I recall that Auditors are expensive. So we do not want to do this willy-nilly. Do you (Doug), as chair, think we need an audit?

Doug: if you think the board is crooked that you should ask for an audit. I do not think that is the case.

Lexi: As WASFF treasurer I trust the treasurers from the last few years. So I see no need for it from that perspective.

Motion on Notice: That Anthony Peacey Be Made a Life Member

Moved Jack Bridges, seconded Doug Burbidge.
This motion is recommended by the board.

Jack: Anthony Peacey was the first chair, the con was at his house. If we made him a life-member then he could just drop in whenever.

Davina: He does like living here as a recluse.

Jack: I did check with him; you are correct. He is in favor of this motion.

Doug: is anyone willing to speak against?

There is silence from the room.

Doug: can the motion be passed by acclaim?

Room applauds. Motion carried.

Jack: I will be presenting him with a certificate at the next convention. He will be on several panels and presentation.

General Business

Aurealis Awards

Peter Lyons: How are the Aurealis awards?

Doug: We have a contract for 3 years with option to extend for 2.

It is going well. PRK is on the board and is driving that.

It runs cost neutral, they have income from the costs to enter work and occasionally a dinner with a ticket price.

It is an issue that some recipients are unable attend due to being over east.

Brian: with regards to this year's Aurealis: We had a discussion with Terri regarding the Aurealis. That Swancon is all cost included. For this reason, amongst others, there was no dinner and no separate charge.

Constitution

Doug:

Last year was the first of three years we have to amend our constitution to be inline with the act.

We considered changing their model rules to match our needs. It was going to involve a lot of patches.

So we are looking at patching ours to match their new requirements.

They have provided a checklist.

Roughly 1/3 we have covered.

1/3 we have a bylaw which much be promoted into the constitution.

And 1/3 we need to create/adapt from the model rules.

We intend to bring this to the next AGM.

There will be plenty of discussion online prior to that point.

We will be creating a new mailing list for that purpose.

Discussion on the types of ByLaws:

We have 4 levels.

The constitution: 2/3rd of General meeting to change, and need to be reported to department of commerce,

Part 1: "Greater Bylaws": 2/3 of general meeting to change,

Part 2: "Lesser bylaws": 1/2 of general meeting to change,

And Part 3 "board bylaws": board can change.

It is complicated, so we were considering flattening to two or even one level on top of the constitution.

Ruth: How much will be left after everything is promote?

Frames: I think there will be very few left in the "Greater Bylaws"

Rohan: I disagree, there will be a lot of rules relating to the CSC and bidding for Swancon.

Getting rid of several layers will reduce our flexibility.

Owen Wylde: it seems overly complex. We need to consider what we need as an organisation.

Edward:: what is the real cost of this complexity: we will still have the same number of rules.

Frames: Actually, some of the "Greater Bylaws" correspond to extensions of part of constitution, so you do need to check two places.

Doug: I am seeing the diversity of opinion. We have talked to the community.

We will continue this through online discussion.

Motion of thanks:

Catherine moved that the committee just past and the current committee be thanked. Jay seconded. Motion carried by acclamation.

Meeting closed at 6:08pm.

