

2022 WASFF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Minutes

At Not-A-Con in the smaller programming room at 4pm Saturday 30th April 2022.

0A. Last call for nominations for the Board of WASFF

0B. Last call for bids for the WARSFC (i.e. Swancon) for 2024

Meeting opens.

1. Apologies
2. Consideration of Minutes of the previous AGM
3. Matters arising from the previous AGM
4. Reports
 - Chair
 - Treasurer
 - Administrator
 - Convention Steering Committee Co-ordinator
 - Swancon 2021
 - Swancon Not-A-Con
5. Appointment of Auditor
6. Appointment of a Returning Officer
7. Election of Organising Committee of the Western Australian Science Fiction Convention (Swancon 48 2024)
8. Election of Members of the board of WASFF (3 elected positions)
9. Motions on Notice: none.
10. WASFF Hall of Fame proposal

The death of Jeremy Byrne brought to the notice of the fannish community that there is a gap in how WASFF acknowledges contributions to SFF in WA. There are a wide range of important contributions being made--including, but not limited to PhD supervision and other academic work, online fannish projects, gaming related creative projects, and long term creative careers--which are not well recognised within the current awards processes. Rather than propose another award, it was suggested to the board that we should consider a Hall of Fame.

We would like to acknowledge that this is not a new idea; Russell Farr raised it in 2009, but withdrew the proposal. On revisiting the concept the current WASFF board concluded that this was a topic best brought to the wider community, and thus are bringing it to the AGM.

11. General Business

--- Below is the skeleton that we'll put minutes into as we go. Anticipated text is included, but of course may be subject to change as we go. ---

1. Meeting Opened

It was determined that a quorum (13) was present.

Meeting opened with acknowledgement of country from Jack Bridges.

I acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we are meeting, the Whadjuk Noongar people, and pay my respects to Elders, past and present. I extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people attending this meeting.

Meeting declared open at : 16:10 AWST.
Peter Lyons was asked to chair the meeting.

Attending

1. Jack Bridges (online)
2. Peter Lyons
3. Anna Hepworth
4. Doug Burbidge
5. Jess Bridges (online)
6. Rohan Wallace
7. Laura Hodge
8. Sam Morgan
9. Michael Cogan [Curzon]
10. Elaine Walker
11. Ruth Turner
12. Rachel Turner
13. Margaret Watts
14. Alicia Manolas
15. Adam Ward
16. Bryn Hepworth
17. Shay Telfer
18. Bec Handcock
19. Amanda Rainey
20. David Cake
21. David Webb
22. Sue Ackermann
23. Daryl Colgan
24. Deb Costello (online)
25. Sandy Norman (online)
26. Aidan Lee (arrived late)
27. Frames White (arrived late)

Apologies

- none

1.5. Procedural motions

- That the meeting endorse the use of Zoom for some participants.
Moved: Anna Hepworth. Seconded: Rachel Turner . Motion carried without dissent

2. Consideration of Previous Minutes

Changes to previous minutes:

- treasurer's report - removed note to add information, because it was included later; now reads "Lost about\$1384"
- for swancon 2021 removing note to add in information up to 3rd June as numbers had been added; removed duplicated text; added in approximate spend on Claire Coleman's return flights.

Motion: That the minutes as amended be accepted.

Moved: Laura Hodges . Seconded: Sam Morgan. Motion carried without dissent.

3. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

- None.

4. Reports

Chair

Jack reported, and Anna read Jack's report aloud:

I'd like to say "nothing to report" and to move on with the meeting, but here we are again. I've done the usual chair tasks of chairing meetings and dealing with organizational and admin things, but these tasks have been entirely drama-free because of the cooperative and collaborative work my fellow board members have put in. Thank you, Board. You're the nicest and most manageable cats I've ever had to herd, and you make being Chair a dream.

I've also attended all the CSC meetings as an observer to stay up to date with the excellent work of the CSC, and to lend institutional memory. I've also been part of the treasury sub-committee, so have been hands-on with WASFF treasury.

At the most recent board meeting, I let the Board know that while I would be re-nominating for the Board, I would like to move away from chairing in the near future. We've started discussing a succession plan. It may be that I co-chair or vice-chair with a new chair, or that we develop some other way for me to mentor a new chair through the transition phase.

Thank you to the Board, the CSC, and the Concom, for your excellent work over the past year.

Treasurer

Doug reported:

In previous years I've shown you reports for the previous calendar year. For the conventions, these are so worthless that I'm not going to this year.

- For WASFF we have no more sensible basis to report, so here's WASFF's previous 12 months (Commentary is in the rightmost column.)

Statement of Receipts and Payments

WA Science Fiction Foundation Inc

For the year ended 31 December 2021

Account	2021
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Trading Receipts	
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WASFF Interest Income	19.39
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WASFF Pronoun Ribbons Income	21.00
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WASFF Seed Return	165.00
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Total Trading Receipts	205.39
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Return from City of Belmont of a hall hire bond from December 2008.

Gross Surplus	205.39
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Operating Payments	
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Third-party donations disburse	590.00
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WASFF Bookkeeper	1,420.77
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WASFF Insurance	1,589.04
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WASFF Misc Expenses	487.00
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WASFF Web Presence	99.85
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Total Operating Payments	4,186.66
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In 2020 we collected money on behalf of some fans helping a friend, who wanted to use WASFF's books for transparency. This is that same money disbursed again. \$424.29 for Xero; \$996.48 for Carbon Bookkeeping.

\$400 to renew Swancon™ for 10 years; \$87 to renew Swancon business name for 3 years.

Domain names.

Net Surplus	(3,981.27)
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- Swancon 2021's books are of course now wrapped, so here's the cradle-to-grave report for that (Again, commentary is in the rightmost column.)

Statement of Receipts and Payments

WA Science Fiction Foundation Inc
For the 2 years ended 31 December 2021

Swancon 2021

<u>Account</u>	<u>2020-2021</u>	<u>Budget</u>	
Trading Receipts			
SC Donations Received	1,307.25	\$0	Gofundme
SC Fundraising Misc Income		\$200	
SC Merchandise Income	215.01	\$70	
SC Tickets Income	18,441.82	\$15,789	Budget was 50% of SC2019's income.
Total Trading Receipts	19,964.08	\$16,059	
Gross Profit	19,964.08	\$16,059	
Operating Payments			
SC Con Equip Hire-Maint	1,343.86	\$1,710	We purchased 2 projectors, 2 mixers, 1 pair of wireless mics.
SC Con FrontDesk	117.39	\$500	
SC Con Welcome to Country	300.00	\$550	
SC Guest Flights and Accommodation	5,309.37	\$3,000	Blew past this by suddenly flying guests home to avoid pandemic lockdown.
SC Marketing	1,269.81	\$1,500	
SC Merchandise Expenses	65.00	\$0	
SC Venue Expenses	16,150.00	\$15,600	
Other lines, not spent		\$1,900	Awards, Consoles, Family, Guest Gifts, Guest Per Diem, Masquerade, Panels, Prizes, Fundraising Misc Expenses
WASFF Insurance		\$1,625	
Total Operating Payments	24,555.43	\$26,385	
Net Surplus	(4,591.35)	-\$10,327	

- Here's Not-A-Con 2022 from commencement to a few days ago; there is at least \$1000 not included in here (the \$500.72 listed in the comments, plus further monies since), so

this convention will run at a surplus -- this table has a loss of ~\$14, so the surplus will be on the order of \$1000.

Statement of Receipts and Payments

WA Science Fiction Foundation Inc
For the 16 months ended 30 April 2022

Con is SW2022.

Account	Jan 2021-Apr 2022
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Trading Receipts	
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SC Fundraising Misc Income	59.10
SC Merchandise Income	56.87
SC Tickets Income	2,600.28
Total Trading Receipts	2,716.25

Stripe Estimated future payouts \$500.72

Gross Profit	2,716.25
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Operating Payments	
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SC Admin Services	1,844.82
SC Venue Expenses	886.00
Total Operating Payments	2,730.82

Domain names, Insurance, Xero

Net Surplus	(14.57)
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- Swancon 47 2023 has not yet carried out any transactions, so no report.
- Question - should the convention show a surplus, is some of that to be returned to WASFF to pay for the bookkeeping not previously charged for?
- Doug: We had been paying a monthly fee to the bookkeeper, so that they don't have to bill us individually for work done. Over the past few years we have taken many of the tasks on, so the monthly payments to the bookkeeper have been more than was necessary. We have moved to pay as we go, and at this point we haven't made use of the bookkeeper this calendar year, so how we might account for the bookkeeping costs would need to be considered; the surplus will be going to WASFF, it is just how we account for it that will change.

Administrator

Anna reported

Minutes, administrative duties as necessary, support for the rest of the board as requested. The board have made this very easy, and kept the minutes under control in real time - special mention to Jess for catching all my grammar errors.

Motion: That these three reports be accepted.

Moved: Bryn Hepworth. Seconded: Michael Cogan. Motion carried without dissent

Convention Steering Committee Coordinator & SC 2021 report

Laura reported: (Laura will email notes later)

[text re CSC overall]

Not-A-Con 2022

Michael reported:

[text] (Michael will email notes later)

Special thanks to Adam McCaw for stepping in at the last minute to help with AV set up when Doug was unable to be in two places at once.

Swancon 47 2023

Doug reported:

As you may know, our budget approval process is roughly that the concom submits a budget to CSC. CSC and concom engage in detailed work, and then, all being well, the CSC recommends the budget to the board for approval.

We often make two budgets: a conservative one, where membership numbers are taken from the lowest numbers in the previous few years; and an optimistic one, with higher membership estimates.

The feeling of the AGM last year seemed to be that the conservative budget should not forecast a deficit.

As you know, our funds are somewhat depleted in recent years. And the lowest membership count in the previous few years was 2021, where turnout was low due to the pandemic, and membership was only about 106 full plus 34 days, or about 118 full-time-equivalent membership sales.

This means that a conservative budget only shows about \$18,700 in income. But the lowest-cost venue we've found, [Pan Pacific's level 5](#) (which you may recall we used for a few days at 2018's convention for the art show and some panels) is \$12,000 for three days.

This leaves a deficit in the conservative budget of about \$3800. We could nickel and dime \$1000 or so off that, but this still left a deficit that, in light of the 2021 AGM's feelings, and in light of pandemic uncertainty, CSC was unwilling to approve.

(Aside: A few years ago we replaced the convention treasurer role with the WASFF treasurer (me). We feel that's largely been a good innovation. But it does mean that in this budget approval process, I'm wearing all the hats: con treasurer, CSC voter, board treasurer. But wearing my CSC hat, I agreed with the CSC.)

So we have an outside-the-box idea, and we're presenting it here to get the AGM's feeling for it: crowdfunding.

The bind is that we don't want to commit to a big venue unless we have proven membership income to support it, but in a typical year we don't know if we'll get enough membership income for the convention to return a surplus until the convention is already running.

This is the exact bind that crowdfunding solves: offer the product, get pledges, if the pledges are sufficient to fund the project it goes ahead; if not, the pledges are simply never withdrawn from the pledger's credit cards.

So we're talking about a Kickstarter-style crowdfunder. We're not necessarily talking about using Kickstarter; indeed we're more likely to use Pozible: an Australian alternative, already known to at least some local fans, with slightly lower fees.

This will involve a different membership sales curve compared to usual: usually we sell roughly one third of a convention's memberships in the first month after launch, and the vast bulk of the remainder in the month before, or at, the convention.

If the crowdfunder did not succeed, we would aim to run a smaller-than-a-Swancon convention, perhaps like Not-A-Con, perhaps larger, perhaps multi-day, but likely not at a hotel venue.

Typical crowdfunder strategy seems to be to run the crowdfunder for about 30 days. So we might spend May doing our premarketing, June doing the crowdfunder, and allow July as time for delays to occur, and therefore aim to know whether the crowdfunder had succeeded or failed by end of July.

We would continue to sell memberships after the crowdfunder. Price structure would likely be similar to 2020/2021: \$200 full, 20% less for earlybird memberships (which here means memberships purchased via the crowdfunder), 25% less for concession. Higher tiers would be available during the crowdfunder: "I want to pay the full price not the earlybird price just 'cos I

like you", "I want to pay even more, just 'cos I like you a lot", etc. Those higher tiers might attract a shinier name badge, an only-available-to-crowdfunders T-shirt, etc. A variable is the venue capacity under a 2 square metre rule: we'd want to be confident that the venue could hold enough people to break even under such a restriction (even though such a restriction is not in force today). The crowdfunder would need to raise about \$21,000 to \$22,000 to cover the convention.

We might make kickstarter memberships transferable but not refundable to reduce liability to large numbers of refunds.

Some years we have included a cheap price for first-timers. One downside of this is that it makes our overall income less certain, but since a crowdfunder gives us certainty as to whether we have enough money for a full-sized Swancon, that would be less of a problem. So we're likely to do a cheap introductory price as part of the crowdfunder.

A crowdfunder is a way for members to demonstrate their personal risk assessment in terms of attending a full Swancon-type function, and are using the crowdfunder both to fund 2023 and to assess the community's desire to attend giving the current COVID situation. If the situation changed and we were directed by government, we'd cancel, but we're selling tickets on the basis that the COVID situation will remain as is.

Stretch goals are a possibility.

Q&A.

- Rachel - As I understand it, if the crowdfunding was not successful then we would still run a small event? Doug - yes. Curzon added - yes, we can still call it a SwanCon, regardless of the form, if it is a full event, or 'larger than a Not-a-Con but smaller than a normal SwanCon' we can still have it as a convention.
- Bryn - how do we determine if the crowdfunding is successful? Doug: when we set it up as a Kickstarter style crowdfunder, we set a fundraising goal. If that goal is met, everyone gets charged at the end of the crowdfunder, if we don't, then no-one gets charged.
- Adam W - the feature we are chasing is a pledge? Doug - yes. Adam - don't we already have an event booking system that provides this feature? Doug - no. We use Grenadine, but it doesn't have that feature. We would have to pay Grenadine to use that feature (if they added it) and whether the costs would be different from Pozible. Also, we have had numerous bugs with Grenadine in the lead up to this event, none of which have been fixed over recent months, and at least one of which might have been a show stopper for us. Dave Cake for example, we couldn't move the locations of any items for two days -- some of our items were not yet allocated to a space, so we had to create copies of events.
- Amanda - Are you asking for us to approve it, or getting the general feel? Doug - getting the feel. Amanda -- there are a number of potential problems, and I'm willing to help, but

I think that going ahead quickly is a bad idea because if we don't get those problems correctly dealt with we can't do this again.

- Sue - I think this is a great idea. Builds on people's enthusiasm, given that we have just had an event that builds on current sentiment.
- Shay - Is that 122 memberships at given price, in 30 days? Doug - what the average price is would depend on the type of memberships sold, so vaguely, we need to sell 100 to 200 memberships to succeed.
- Aidan - do the potential discounts (eg early bird and low income) combine - Doug: yes.
- Elaine - Wouldn't this methodology give us certainty about being able to run the larger con option?
- Rohan - not against the idea, trying to understand. Two aspects - getting people to attend, which is a perpetual problem. The other is getting the money up front, which has been handled with early sales.
- Bryn - could the crowd funder be run for a smaller, cheaper convention, as a specific methodology for trying to target students and other similar groups to get more new people? Doug - the question for me is 'do we have enough money to pay for the expensive hotel venue, given the difference between this place being \$1K/day and the cheapest hotel being \$12K for 3 days'. So backing the kickstarter says 'these higher membership prices are what the backers want to keep paying'. Implicitly, if we don't get the memberships, then people are voting that they want the cheaper option. Rohan - this is just for next year.
- Adrian - If we don't run the crowdfunder, are we aiming low for a cheaper convention? Doug - given that we don't have approval to run a con with a deficit, then we would have to run a smaller convention, so from the dollar perspective this is the same as having a crowdfunder fail.
- Dave Cake - has to be considered that this is in the perspective that WASFF is getting very risk averse, because we have been in difficult times. If the crowdfunder fails, we run a small con. If we run a bigger con without it and it fails, then WASFF might go under.
- Alicia - there is a middle ground - St George's college; Esplanade Hotel; Technology Park. Doug - St George's have said no. We have a query with Tech Park, which is a non-hotel venue, so sits in the lower category. Esplanade worth a query.
- Curzon - do you know what the Esplanade price was in 2019? Doug - more than Alicia has said, which may mean that their prices have come down. Laura - they were not good to work with.
- Doug asked for a show of hands - none opposed, slightly more in favour than on the fence.

Motion: That these three reports be accepted.

Moved: Rachel Turner. Seconded: Frames White. Motion carried without dissent.

5. Appointment of Auditor

- Doug - we have looked into this, talked to the bookkeeper. They have a bunch of reports that can be run; at the end of the calendar / WASFF financial year we looked at those reports; they were mostly like the statements we already have. We have approached a couple of friends of the convention about providing auditing service; they are not interested. We have not yet looked in to a market rate auditor, we expect this to be very expensive. Do not recommend spending on the market rate auditor at this point
- Rachel - are there legal requirements for us to run an audit? Doug - no.

6. Appointment of a Returning Officer

- As there is no convention nomination and three board nominations, no returning officer was appointed.

7. Motion to form Election of Organising Committee of the Western Australian Science Fiction Convention (Swancon 48 2024)

- No nominations received to run SwanCon 2024

8. Election of Members of the Board

Nominations received from these Candidates:

1. Jack Bridges
2. Fern Clarke
3. Laura Hodge

Motion: That we accept these three candidates unopposed.

Moved: Rachel Turner. Seconded: Bryn Hepworth . Motion carried without dissent.

9. Motions on Notice

- None.

10. General Business

WASFF Hall of Fame proposal

- [text of emailed proposal to be added here]
- Anna spoke in favour.
- [reference for where Russell's proposal is available]: [WASFF board meeting minutes 2009-08-02](#).
- Bryn - how do we ensure equity?
- Margaret while we have a need to recognise these people, do they have a need to be recognised by WASFF?
- Silver Swan -- very different idea, because we only give one out roughly every decade, and it is very unstructured in what is recognised.
- Do we already sufficiently recognise people with FGoH, invited guests, MumFan, etc?
- Is there an Australian equivalent? There is the Peter McNamara and the A Bertram Chandler awards. Both of those have strict criteria
- Rachel asked about the Silver Swan process. Anna responded.
- This would be better if it were open, and separate from WASFF.
- if we form a working group, one of the questions should be 'is this something we need'?
- General conclusion - a working group should be formed, if there is sufficient interest. If the working group decides that there is community desire and support, and a need for a Hall of Fame, then they should bring a formal proposal to the 2023 AGM.

Meeting closed at 17:56