

## 1. Meeting Opened

- It was determined that a quorum was present.
- Meeting declared open at approximately 17:45.
- Attending: Doug Burbidge (previous chair), Anna Hepworth (previous administrator), Lexi Hemsley (previous treasurer), Frames White (elected board member), Jack Bridges (elected board member), Laura Hodge (elected board member), Margaret Watts (elected board member), PRK (elected board member), Stephen Griffiths (elected board member).
- Observers: Brian Johnson, Cathy Cupitt, Cathy Cogan, Chris Coman, Damian Magee, Jess Bridges, Michael Cogan, Owen Godfrey.

## 2. General Business

- Doug – normally the meeting following the AGM is short and involves the appointment of WASFF chair, treasurer, administrator, CSC, and CSC members. However, we have an additional item, which is discussion of the 2017 venue. There is a small window of opportunity, in which we can change our options, as we are not locked in to the PanPac until 12 months before the actual convention – we have paid a deposit, but we still have the time to consider alternative options, including
  - hoping numbers are up
  - taking a smaller area of the Pan Pacific
  - going elsewhere
  - having fewer days
  - running at a different time of year.
- Frames – having just programmed this venue – ran a very full programme, which is nice. But we aren't filling the larger rooms, which doesn't feel good.
- Stephen Griffiths – 2015 had the same issue with rooms feeling empty for most program items.
- Brian Johnson – with a template from Jack, worked with the hotel on a negotiation with the hotel contract. There are areas of negotiation for rooms. I think that the course of action is to dissolve the current negotiation, and start renegotiation with the PanPac and start negotiation with the Great Southern (hotel formerly known as Ibis Styles, All Seasons and the Acacia), then bring both offers to the CSC. With the current financial situation, it is irresponsible to go ahead. The best option in the next two weeks is to dissolve the contract and start renegotiation.
- Damian Magee – as a panellist – I felt that some of the panels in the big room are uncomfortable. Certain panels can fill the big rooms. Previously, some of the panels have been quite full even in the large rooms.
- Chris Coman – following on from Brian, as chair of 2017 and one of the venue liaison – I have time to look at new options. So I agree.
- Margaret Watts – I think that as the Board we have a responsibility for good financial management to not book this venue unless we get a great contract. There is no reason to believe that numbers will be up next year. It is not good financial stewardship to do

something we can't prove is in the best interests – not good financial management to do something hoping for improvement.

- Stephen Griffiths – actual numbers for launch and attendance, don't suggest we are going to get bigger numbers.
- Owen Godfrey – may deter people if they see that we are moving to a new venue. Is there a way to talk to the community about this.
- PRK – I disagree with Owen Godfrey – I think we present it as a fait accompli. We should not be dropping a day, given that we are already selling memberships for a five days. There are a lot of issues that have caused numbers to be low – the NatCon, Blazing Swan, the difficulty of marketing the international guest, the lack of a marketing person, OzComicon is next weekend.
- Cathy Cogan – from the feedback from people who haven't come this year – they have complained about the high price of the membership; Some of these are people who come every year, and they can't afford it. Further, the accommodation is expensive. With respect to the Great Southern, they have been doing some renovating, so things may have changed there. This is a nice venue, but the cost is too high.
- Lexi – I think that Cathy makes a good point; this is most reflected in 2015's numbers – we were a natcon in 2015, and there were lots of members in 2014, so there weren't good reasons for launch memberships. 2015's numbers reflect the change in venue.
- PRK – disagree – membership pricing structure changes.
- Lexi – these combined mean that people aren't able to attend.
- Doug – if we have a plan, we can pause discussion...
- Damian Magee – the economic climate, people have reduced money, which might be the factor.
- Cathy Cupitt – I think that this is an important conversation, something for the board/CSC to discuss. One tactical issues – starting from scratch, now that 2018 is live/on the table, it gives us the chance to negotiate for two at once. 2018 might be the natcon, but at least we will know that, and have the bargaining power for two at once.
- Chris Coman – Jack – was the contract part of a sequence?
- Doug – who negotiated the contracts for PanPac – Jack did for 2016; Brian Johnson did for 2017 – these are stand alone contracts. When we renegotiate, these two people should both be involved.
- Chris Coman – asking those on the 2017 committee (8 of 10 are present) how they feel about it.
- Doug moves that:
- *"The WASFF board directs the 2017 SwanCon committee to dissolve the current venue contract with the Pan Pacific Hotel, if there is no penalty, and supply a revised budget."*
- Seconded:Lexi.
- Carried without dissent.
- *Note: that the lack of penalty may involve the dissolving before the 12 month time point.*
- Doug asks Brian and Jack to discuss the appropriate time frame. Jack – the venue manager is not currently around; Brian – I'm off work Tuesday, I will follow up then.
- Additional observers leave. Stephen Griffiths, Margaret Watts, Jack Bridges, Laura Hodge, PRK, Frames White, Doug Burbidge, Anna Hepworth, Lexi Hemsley remain.

### 3. Election of Office Bearers

- Doug nominates for chair; PRK nominates Doug for chair; no other nominations; carried without dissent.
- Lexi Hemsley nominates for treasurer; carried without dissent.
- Frames White was suggested for administrator; at this point he is unable at this point to determine whether he was in a position to make a decision on whether he wanted to be administrator. Anna Hepworth nominates in the lack of alternatives; carried without dissent. This to be revisited at a board meeting later in the year.
- Nominations for board members for CSC: Stephen Griffiths, Lexi Hemsley, Laura Hodge. Carried without dissent.
- PRK interested in being a non-voting member, as is Doug Burbidge, but not nominating.

### 4. Further General Business

- Doug foreshadows – Artifactory had a break in/theft where they had AV gear stolen. They have replaced it. Doug is waiting on a cost of how much they are spending. They give us a competitive rate for hiring AV gear of \$300/year. Andy Hahn estimates that commercially it would cost ~\$1500/year. Artifactory have spent ~\$4000 on the new AV gear. Doug would like to chip in, partly because it is socially responsible, and partly because they have been giving us a good rate. Can we look at a dollar cost?
  - Frames – can we view this as a grant, that recognises the contribution that they are giving to the community as a fannish organisation?
  - Margaret Watts – we shouldn't be giving a grant without an application.
  - PRK – I'd like that we give them some money pre-purchase for some number of years of hire, so that they are offsetting the big expenses at the time that they are having them, and we are locking in a good rate for the number of years.
  - Frames – this is a good idea. They could then separately apply for a grant, if they feel that they need it.
  - Lexi – the pre-pay amount – should this be equivalent to the current price per year that we are currently getting?
  - PRK – this might depend on how much this is going to be, and for how long.
  - Laura – you phrased it early as a part ownership – can we lock that in indefinitely.
  - Stephen – table this? Doug – we have had some discussion, which is difficult to do online. will liaise with Artifactory, and find out how they want to deal with.
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- Date for next meeting – we will choose a date for next meeting online.
  - Meeting closed – 18:18.



