

Annual General meeting of SFFANZ, the Science Fiction and Fantasy Association of New Zealand held at Quality Hotel Barrycourt, Gladstone Road on June 6, 2011.

Meeting Opened: 10.15am

Present: 31 members

As chair of the meeting, Alan Robson welcomed everyone.

Apologies were received from: Brian Howell, Stephen Litten, Alex Lindsay, Maree Pavletich.

Proxies were held for Brian Howell (Lynelle Howell), Stephen Litten (Lynelle Howell), Maree Pavletich (Jacqui Smith), Alex Lindsay (Simon Litten).

Minutes of the previous meeting, held at Au Contraire on August 29, 2010.

Lyn McConchie moved, and Ross Temple seconded "That the meeting take the minutes as read".

Carried without dissent.

Matters Arising:

It was agreed that any matters arising from last year's meeting would be covered during the General Business section of the meeting.

Treasurer's Report

Simon Litten, acting as financial adviser for the Association, presented the accounts. He noted that any donations received during the year now required a tax receipt to be issued, over and above general membership receipts, should donors wish to claim the donation against their tax.

It was noted that the Association is still in profit.

Alan Robson moved, and John Toon seconded "That the meeting accept the accounts as presented".

Carried without dissent.

Election of Officers

The following people stood for nomination:

Norman Cates
Lynelle Howell
Alan Robson
Barbara Clendon
Jan Butterworth
Jo Toon
John Toon
Kelly Buchanan
Zara Baxter

President's Report

Alan Robson presented his report as President. In particular, he thanked Simon Litten for his assistance with the reviews of Hachette books.

Alan advised the meeting to contact SFFANZ about any New Zealand works that people have knowledge of so that they may be added to the listing service on the website.

He noted that SFFANZ news was now available on RSS feed, Twitter and Facebook as well as the SFFANZ blog. He thanked Ross Temple for his work on this. It was noted that news was no longer stuck on the SFFANZ website. Ross spoke to this section of Alan's report saying that he would like people to contribute genre-related news to press@sffanz.sf.org.nz. If people have particularly large amounts of news, they could be made a contributor to the blog. It was noted that two-thirds of the readership of the blog news came through Facebook.

Ross Temple is happy to continue work on the blog and Simon Litten will continue on the book reviewing service. They were both thanked for their contribution and assistance.

General Business:

Dramatic Presentation – Long Form category of SJVs

Ross Temple spoke to his proposition (as noted in the meeting agenda) of removing the Dramatic Presentation – Long Form category from the schedule of award categories for the Sir Julius Vogel Awards. He noted that the original schedule of categories was taken from the Hugos with the proviso that SFFANZ would review appropriateness of categories in due course. He suggested now was a time to revisit this discussion. Further, he noted that the Ditmars do not have a dramatic category. It was noted that no nominations have been received from within the industry, nor do they attend the awards ceremony. It was also noted that predominantly only one person nominated in this category.

Ross moved, and Alan seconded "That the two dramatic presentation categories be removed from the SJV awards".

The motion was then discussed.

It was noted that the awards themselves had grown, and that we need to think carefully before removing categories. It was suggested that a review of the dramatic categories at this stage would be premature, but that if in future it failed to grow, then it should be removed.

It was noted that the aim of SFFANZ is to encourage knowledge of works being created in New Zealand, and that effort should be made to get in touch with fans to let them know what's been created, whether professional or amateur, and to get in touch with film-makers to let them know of SFFANZ's existence. June Young mentioned that the New Zealand Film Commission has a list of New Zealand films produced in any given year.

Simon Litten admitted that he was the nominator in the category, and added that he was happy for the dramatic presentation category to be condensed (as it had been this year) where necessary. He suggested that because many people come to fandom via media, particularly films, we need to keep the category. Having dramatic presentations also gives conventions something to show at opening ceremonies, or as a programme item. He suggested that if professional dramatic presentations were removed, then the fan category for dramatic presentations should also go. He further suggested that the nomination period for dramatic presentations should be opened earlier, to ensure that people could nominate movies as they appeared, rather than having to wait for a specific period.

The motion on the floor was then voted upon and lost.

Alan Robson proposed and Brett Tamahori seconded "That we combine the professional dramatic presentation awards into a single category." Carried without dissent.

Revision of Rule 3F of the SJV Awards, pertaining to Dramatic Presentation definition.

Alan Robson reported that the current wording of section 3F of the awards is open to interpretation – for the 2010 awards there was controversy over whether a series as a whole was eligible, or whether only an individual episode was permissible under the existing rules. He asked for the mood for the meeting and discussion followed.

The members present appeared to be in favour of the idea that a series (or continuous story) is permissible. But there were concerns about what would be eligible, and indeed what would be considered a continuous story.

Alan Robson moved, and Graham Edge seconded "That a dramatic presentation be defined as a film, episode or series as a whole". Carried without dissent.

Exact wording of the rules on dramatic presentations is to be discussed at SFFANZ board level.

Other Business

Communication

Simon Litten expressed concern that when the matters of the dramatic presentation were discussed, it was done so in an egregious manner. He asked that communication methods be addressed. He was advised that apology was made to him at the time of the emails, and that communication methods were being reviewed as a result.

Increasing the size of the final ballot nominees

Kevin MacLean expressed a desire for the SJV sub-committee, or the SFFANZ board, to have power to increase the size of final ballot categories from its present five spots (or seven if there are ties) to ensure that more professional authors are on the ballot. This comment arose out of concern that school children's work might swamp professional categories. It was agreed that this situation would be watched, but no further action would be taken at this stage.

Formal Safety and Harassment Policy

As Maree Pavletich's duly appointed proxy, Jacqui Smith read a letter to the meeting on behalf of Maree asking for the creation of a safety document governing the powers of conventions to restrict access. It was noted that SFFANZ has no jurisdiction in the running of conventions and no action will be taken. Simon Litten, who drafted the constitution which most conventions use, has offered to revisit the constitution.

SpecFicNZ memberships for SJV voting

Kelly Buchanan suggested that SpecFicNZ members should be able to have voting rights in the SJVs. It was noted that it was not an onerous fee to join SFFANZ, and by opening it up to one group, then SFFANZ might be obliged to open up the voting rights to other interested organisations, such as LIANZA, or Romance Writers. It was also noted that it would be difficult logistically for the awards sub-committee to check who were members of which organisations in order to prove voter eligibility.

It was suggested that Alan Robson approach Ripley Patton (the chair of SpecFicNZ) with a view to discussing a capitation (whereby members have an option to join SFFANZ at the time of renewing their SpecFicNZ membership at the normal rate of \$10). It was noted that no formal agreement or amendment will be made without consultation to the membership.

Meeting closed 11.40pm.

Bids for Upcoming Conventions

Alan Robson advised the meeting that an e-poll was held to confirm Unconventional, chaired by Terri Doyle, as the bid for 2012. This convention was ratified by a show of hands at the meeting.

Terri spoke to the meeting advising that registrations are \$70 until the end of June 2011, that the hotel would be in Takapuna and that the Fan Guest of Honour was Lorain Clark.

Alan then called for bids for the 2013 convention. Kelly Buchanan and Daphne Lawless proposed Au Contraire 2, another fan-first convention which would not necessarily feature large-name guests in an effort to keep costs down. It is being run as an ongoing convention and committee idea. It was expected to be a three-day event running Friday-Sunday.

The bid was accepted by a show of hands.