



# Mentor

The corporate newsletter of Arisia, Incorporated

Volume 10, Issue 76

October 1997

## Minutes of the Annual Meeting

**Time:** September 21, 1997 at 1:00 PM

**Location:** Building 66, MIT, Cambridge, MA

**In Attendance:** Drea Brandford, Scott Campanella, Amy Chused, Scott Cobb, Kathy Cunningham (non-member), George Flynn, Joel Herda, Jeff Jordan, Allan Kent, Ben Levy, Pat McCormack, Elka Tovah Menkes, Skip Morris, Ailsa Murphy (non-member), Brendan Quinn, Tim Roberge, Dianne Rosenburg, Paul Selkirk, Cris Shuldiner, Kim Van Auken, Pat Vandenberg

- Proxies

Kyle Hollingsworth to Scott Cobb (withdrawn when Kyle showed up halfway into the meeting), Dave Cantor to Skip Morris, Marshall Ellis to Jeff Jordan, Walter Kahn to Drea Brandford, Kevin Fallon to Kim Van Auken, Zanne Labonville to Paul Selkirk, Scott Campanella to Brendan Quinn, Joel Herda to Brendan Quinn (towards the end of the meeting).

- Corrections to the August Minutes

Dave Cantor's proxy was held by Skip Morris, not Skip Williams.

It was asserted that the motion to declare the corporate president "dead wrong" actually *PASSED*, not *FAILED*. When it became clear that there was some disagreement, the chair deferred further consideration to Old Business.

- Membership Transfers

Drea Brandford and Rachel Silverman were transferred to General Membership.

- President's Report

The proposal by Long Range Planning committee (regarding Web presence) has no impact on the bylaws, and the bylaws don't prevent it. The Eboard finds nothing wrong the proposal.

It's been a fun 2 years. I wish the next president well.

At this point, some amount of interest in holding the 1999 convention has been expressed by 3 hotels: the downtown Westin, the Park Plaza, and the Danvers Sheraton. The Westin verbally proposed a number of dates, the Sheraton sent a letter expressing interest, and the Park Plaza verbally expressed interest.

- Vice President's Report

The Vice President was not present at this point in the meeting.

Since the Grant Committee is headed by the Vice President, Ben Levy took the opportunity to inquire about the status of a grant that had supposedly been promised to NJAC. After some discussion, the chair requested that this be dealt with during the Grant Committee report.

- Grant Committee Report

MOVED to grant \$850 to Science Fiction Conventioneers of UMass (SCUM) for the purpose of holding NotJustAnotherCon (NJAC). Motion PASSED.

MOVED to take the \$850 from the general fund instead of grant fund. Motion PASSED.

- Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer was not present, but submitted two motions via email, to be introduced by his proxy holder.

- Corporate Marketing Report

Move that I be authorized to reorder Arisia Lens patches in a quantity of 500 at \$1.40 each, a total of \$700, to be sold to corporate members at a price of \$3.00 each and to others at a price of \$4.00 each.

I would be amenable to a change to a quantity of 300 at \$1.73 each, \$519 total, however the additional 200 in the above are at an effective cost of 90.5¢ each, and no matter which quantity we order, it's a fairly long term inventory item. At the \$4.00 price, 175 units represents break-even.

I believe they will sell enough faster at \$4 to make it not worth the extra markup of selling them for \$5 as we did initially on the original order. For some historical perspective, the original order also was \$1.40 each, but then the minimum quantity at that price was 300. With \$9 shipping, our unit cost was \$1.43 then. Shipping is free if the order is paid in advance. The original order we sold, near as I can determine, close to 100 at \$2 each to members and concom, about 100 at \$5 or \$4 to others, and about the last 100 were lost or stolen. That means we made roughly \$671 on them over the 3 years they were sold.

The main thing is if we're ordering, I want to do it now, whatever is decided about price and quantity. Just please let me know ASAP after the meeting.

MOVED to authorize the reorder, and to accept the quantity and pricing specified in the first paragraph. Motion PASSED.

(Reading of Marshall's second motion TABLED to New Business.)

- Clerk's Report

The Clerk was not present, but that did not stop him from reminding everyone to sign in. Also, dues are \$24 before this meeting, \$22 after.

- Arisia 1997 Report

Tim just gave the books to Pat. He's going to polish the rest, and *will* hand them in by

October.

- Arisia 1998 Report

There is a Directors meeting scheduled for the October 4th, and Concom on the 19th.

Addressed complaints about late notifications of concom meetings.

The main push of this year's concom is to recruit staff. A letter will go out in the next 2 weeks. The programming mailing and mass mailing might by out be beginning of October.

- Arisia Audit Fund

Things are in limbo, and no progress has been made.

- Long Range Planning Committee

No official report, waiting for results of Internet Access questionnaire, which is still in the hands of the Eboard.

- Corporate Inventory Control

Not present.

- Old Business

MOVED to reconsider last month's motion "to declare that the corporate president was dead wrong when stating via email that the Arisia 1998 conchair need to consult with the corporation before considering additional GOH's above the basic three." The president stated that what he is reported as saying was not what he really said. After some discussion, a poll was taken of the voting members who were present at the August meeting: 5 said the motion had passed, 2 said it failed, 4 didn't remember, and many said it was a colossal waste of time the first time around.

The LRP report and motion on Internet issues were tabled pending publication in Mentor. [The clerk notes that these materials have not been provided to him as of the printing of this issue.]

NOTED that Skip's motion on polling the convention membership is still on the table.

MOVED that Mr. Cris Shuldiner be sentenced to a term as Arisia 1999 Conchair for a term not to exceed 14 years.

FRIENDLY AMENDMENT that the general membership appoint Cris Shuldiner as the Conchair for Arisia 1999, and overrule any rules that would prevent it.

RULED that the appointment made last meeting and tabled to this meeting was valid. It comes off the table this meeting. MOVED to approve Cris Shuldiner as Arisia 1999 Conchair. Motion PASSED.

- New Business

MOVED that a bookkeeping task force of 2 or 3 people be appointed to organize the financial records of Arisia, to determine and implement a viable structure for the books and what bookkeeping system to standardize on, to take possession of all the records through August 31, 1997 until their task is complete, to construct books from the records, covering from September 1, 1993 through August 31, 1997, to present to the corporate treasurer summary information sufficient to prepare and file 990 (or 990EZ) forms for each of those fiscal years, to communicate or meet with people as needed in order to determine what exactly particular records indicate, where records are and to collect missing or incomplete information, and to investigate any apparent anomalies such as double-paid bills. The treasurer will not be part of the task force, but should be consulted for opinions on structure of books and the like, and when needed should cooperate in providing information that is applicable to the period through August 1997, but was not yet available or not practical to provide on a long term basis when the task force was begun. Conversely, the task force should cooperate with the treasurer when he or she needs historical information, such as whether a particular bill was paid and how much it was. The same applies to the budget committee and the e-board. The task force is directed to complete their work by July 1998, and the corporation will hold off on beginning an outside audit until after that time. The task force is appointed by the president with approval of the membership, and will report to the membership monthly on progress. The task force may begin

functioning as soon as two members have been appointed, without bias to whether a third may yet be appointed. The president is directed to appoint at least two members to the task force within one month of this motion's approval.

MOVED TO AMEND to restrict task force membership to not allow former Treasurers. Amendment FAILED.

MOVED TO AMEND BY SUBSTITUTION: Moved that a bookkeeping task force of 2-3 people be appointed to organize the financial records of Arisia. The task force's primary duty will be to organize the books to the point that all required government filing are made. Their second order of priority will be to collect each year's records in a chronological intelligible order. Their third priority shall be to flag and investigate any anomalies in the records. And finally the Eboard may direct them to look at other issues once these have been accomplished. They shall cover the period of time from Sep 1, 1993, through the end of the 1997 fiscal year. The treasurer and all past Eboard members are directed to cooperate fully with the task force, giving them all copies of records they ask for and making any explanations they ask for. The current corporate treasurer shall not be a member of the task force. The task force is directed to complete their work by July 1998, and the corporation will hold off on beginning an outside audit until after that time. The task force is appointed by the president with approval of the membership, and will report to the membership monthly on progress. The task force may begin functioning as soon as two members have been appointed, without bias to whether a third may yet be appointed. The president is directed to appoint at least two members to the task force within one month of this motion's approval. Amendment PASSED.

MOVED TO AMEND BY STRIKING OUT the words "and the corporation will hold off on beginning an outside audit until after that time". Amendment FAILED.

The motion, as amended, was called, and PASSED.

MOVED that the records of the motion in

question from the August meeting [to declare that the president was “dead wrong”] be expunged. Also expunged would be the record from this meeting that changed the result that changed from failed to passed. Hunter noted that this was just too weird, and we therefore had to pass it. Motion PASSED. Pat gloated that revisionist history lives! You didn’t read this.

- A Brief Return to Old Business

NOTED that the following motion, TABLED to the Eboard, remains on the table for the incoming Eboard to consider.

MOVED to amend the bylaws by adding the following text: A Shrug shall be counted as a ½ vote, for the purposes of any decision the involves a vote.

- Back to New Business

MOVED to put into corporate policy that Arisia has three Guest of Honor categories, a Writer GoH, an Artist GoH, and a Fan GoH. Any convention committee wishing to have additional GoH's must have corporate approval. Motion PASSED.

- Elections

MOVED to adjourn. Motion FAILED.

**President:**

First ballot:

Brendan Quinn, 12 votes  
 Jeff Jordan, 10 votes  
 Kyle Hollingsworth, 1 vote  
 1 abstention

Second ballot:

Brendan Quinn, 12 votes  
 Jeff Jordan, 11 votes  
 1 abstention

Third ballot:

Brendan Quinn, 12 votes  
 Jeff Jordan, 12 votes

Fourth ballot:

Brendan Quinn, 12 votes  
 Jeff Jordan, 12 votes

Fifth ballot:

Brendan Quinn, 11 votes  
 Jeff Jordan, 13 votes

**Vice-President:**

Brendan Quinn, by acclamation.

**Treasurer:**

Ben Levy, 11 votes  
 Skip Morris, 13 votes

**Clerk:**

Paul Selkirk, by acclamation.

- Announcements

The new president announced his committee appointments. [See the last page of this issue.]

Meeting Adjourned.

## Bylaw Amendments

Pat McCormack introduced the following motions to amend the bylaws at the June 1997 corporate meeting, where they were tabled without discussion pending publication. At the time, the clerk found them to meet all necessary requirements for bylaw amendments.

These motions may be discussed at the October meeting, but will then be tabled until a subsequent meeting for a vote, in accordance with the bylaws.

**DISCUSSION:**

There has been talk recently about what Arisia needs to do to straighten itself out. Personally, I think that our biggest problem has always been the way we debate the few really tough matters that come before us. Too often, we make what should be a discussion of philosophy, where we want Arisia to go and what we want it to stand for, a matter of personalities.

It's time we made some attempt to look past the personalities and really look at soul of the organization. Unfortunately, we are all rather human. We all can get caught up in the moment and ignore the dictates of reason. While we are all intelligent people, we also have our emotional sides that need to get reined in when they're getting in the way.

To that end, I am proposing the following two amendments to the by-laws. Both deal with the handling of motions on the floor of a meeting. Both are meant to help focus debate on the issues, rather than on the people around them.

- 1.0) The primary operating philosophy of Arisia, Inc., which all of its activities should try to promote, is that there is room in fandom for everyone who is willing to make room for everyone else.
- 1.1) At any point during the discussion of any motion, any member who feels that the motion violates the spirit of this philosophy, may call for a poll of the membership. The member calling for the poll will briefly explain his opinion that the motion violates this philosophy. Without further discussion by any other member, the clerk will then proceed to record by a roll call vote the opinion, yes or no, of each member present at the meeting. The call for the poll, along with the complete listing of the roll call of the membership present, will be included in the minutes of the meeting to provide a historic reference of the views of the Arisia membership on how they interpret this philosophy.

#### DISCUSSION:

We've need to state a philosophy for ourselves for some time. If we don't state a set of common beliefs somewhere, then it isn't any wonder if we develop many separate sets of beliefs about what Arisia is and should be doing among its members. Of all the various attempts to do this I've witnessed, I like the one described in section 1.0 the best. It's nice and simple. It expresses the openness which most of us believe fannish culture has, while pointing out the truism, "Do unto others as you would have done unto you." I find it hard to object to such an attitude, and it offers a broad enough guideline to cover every situation, while remaining simple enough to apply with ease.

The first notion I expect to form in people's minds about section 1.1 is that it will be a colossal waste of time. It doesn't do anything concrete, just clutter up the minutes with a list of names and yes/no votes. But, I believe that its value lies in precisely this point, oddly enough.

First, it cuts the point of philosophy out of the mix of discussion on the motion and drops it squarely in the middle of consideration. It's not going to get lost in the interweaving of various threads of response that naturally occurs as each person when they get the floor tries to respond to points raised by several different people before. It is there to be dealt with immediately. It heightens the awareness of everyone in the meeting to that point and gets them to make a decision on that very important manner

first. This is the way it should be, consider the philosophy first, then move on to the more mechanistic aspects of the motion.

Second, by making the call for this poll a kind of privileged motion, it promises to provide a quick conclusion to the consideration of that part of the issue. Much as we might wish it were not true, we're all liable to get defensive if this sort of question gets raised. Quite often the result will be an automatic digging in of our heels, followed by an impulse to strike back. These reactions, when given vent, never do anything to promote a reasoned consideration of the point being raised.

So, we have our roll call and we go back to discussing the motion itself, no matter which way the poll went. What's the sense in doing that? Especially if the poll shows most of the membership agreed with the point raised by the person who called for the poll? The point in doing a non-binding poll is to focus and clarify in the membership's minds the philosophical aspect. It is probably true that an overwhelmingly positive poll would predict the eventual defeat of the motion. However, given the chance to see that the membership views the proposal as philosophically shaky, the author may be able to clarify a point or two, make some amendments, or whatever, and come up with something that answers the concerns raised, but still accomplishes something that they thought needed to be done. It is also conceivable that there may be a few rare cases when, despite our philosophy, some outside factor might force a decision to go the other way.

The other thing I expect people to question is why the poll is specified as being a roll call vote. The reasons are two-fold. First, it gives those members who were not present at the meeting a better grasp of how the other members feel about the issue that was raised. This helps them maintain an informed judgement about the organization and where it is heading. Second, it provides a historical record. Over time, a backlog of these votes could be looked at and help us refine our views of what we think Arisia's philosophy and goals are.

- 2.0) It is not permissible during the discussion of a motion for any member to question the stated motivations of the author of the motion, nor the motivations of another member's remarks during the debate. The membership will accept the stated reasons of the author for offering the motion. It is the motion and not the author, nor

any other member, that should be the focus of debate. The chair of the meeting will caution any member the first time they speak about someone's motivations rather than the motion itself. For any further breeches by that member, the chair must strip the offending member of the floor, not recognize them any further during the debate of that motion, and refuse them the right to vote on that motion. The chair must, upon taking this final step, immediately ask if any of the other members wishes to call for a vote to overturn his decision.

#### DISCUSSION:

It is accepted practice in our debates these days to question the motivations of the author of a motion. Less often, but still occasional, it is the motivations of some other member that are assailed when he raises some point in debate about the motion. When an important issue is raised, we spend a significant part of our time asking "What's behind this?" or "Why is this being raised?" Our debates clearly show that we basically don't lend any credence to the possibility that the author of the motion is being straightforward and making the motion for exactly the reasons he mentions and to accomplish what the motion says it's about.

Face it, folks, this is blatantly impolite and a thoroughly insulting way to be carrying on. How can we expect not to have friction when any important debate is almost guaranteed to contain a dig at the author's integrity? There's a very good reason why General Roberts wrote a section into his rules on this very subject. Back before his time, there were documented cases of duels arising on the floors of legislative assemblies.

When you get right down to it, quite a lot of Roberts' Rules is about enforcing civility upon people with differing opinions. Civility is a good thing. Civility is a necessary thing, and there are no reasons why it should be abandoned. If we start accepting that people are not constantly plotting convoluted, Machiavellian end-runs to reach some hidden objective, we'll find life a lot easier the next time a sensitive or hotly disputed question is raised.

The enforcement measure might seem a bit strict, but basic politeness is not that difficult a thing to expect from anyone. If a person is so caught up in suspecting the motives of someone else in the debate that they cannot control their tongue after a first warning, then it should be considered that it is

highly unlikely that they are giving a fair hearing to all sides of the question on the floor. That being the case, they should not be allowed to vote on it.

## Calendar of Events

Tuesday, October 14, 1997 @ 7:00 pm - **Arisia Corporate Meeting** - 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Wheatley Hall, UMass Boston.

Sunday, October 19, 1997 @ 2:00 pm - **Arisia 1998 Concom Meeting** - Building 66, MIT, Cambridge.

Monday, November 3, 1997 @ 7:00 pm - **Arisia 1998 Concom Meeting** - 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Wheatley Hall, UMass Boston.

Sunday, November 23, 1997 @ 2:00 pm - **Arisia Corporate Meeting** - Building 66, MIT, Cambridge.

## Executive Board

**Arisia, Incorporated.**  
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**Vice-President:** Brendan Quinn  
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**Treasurer:** Skip Morris  
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**Clerk:** Paul Selkirk  
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**Arisia '97 Conchair:** Pat McCormack

[see below]

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**Arisia '99 Conchair:** Cris Shuldiner  
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## Committee Members & Corporate Appointed Officers

**Budget Committee:** Skip Morris, Chair  
Pat McCormack

**Long Range Planning:** *vacant*

**Awards Committee:** *vacant*

**Grant Committee:** Brendan Quinn, Chair  
Drea Brandford  
Elka Tovah Menkes

**Corporate Sales Officer**  
Marshal Ellis

**Corporate Inventory Control Officer**  
Ken Elwell

**Corporate Systems Administrator**  
Cris Shuldiner

**Arisia Audit Fund:** Ben Levy

**Records Task Force:** Ben Levy  
Ailsa Murphy  
Kyle Hollingsworth

Goodwin, Glen	Herda, Joel
Hollingsworth, Kyle	Jordan, Jeff
Kahn, Walter	Kent, Allan
Labonville, Zanne	Levy, Benjamin
McCormack, Patrick	Menkes, Elka Tovah
Morris, Skip	Quinn, Brendan
Robison, Mary	Rosenburg, Diane
Saroff, Matthew	Selkirk, Paul
Shectman, Nicholas (Red Shirt)	Shuldiner, Cris
Silverman, Rachel	Van Auken, Kimberley
Vandenberg, Pat	

## Membership/Subscription Info

Subscriptions to Mentor of Arisia are included in Corporate membership to Arisia, Incorporated. Membership runs from September 1st to August 31st and costs \$24.00. Dues are pro-rated on a monthly basis for members joining during the year.

<b>September</b>	<b>\$24</b>	March	\$12
October	\$22	April	\$10
November	\$20	May	\$08
December	\$18	June	\$06
January	\$16	July	\$04
February	\$14	August	\$02

## Membership Roster

Agassi, Aaron (Red Shirt)	Bazemore, Rob
Brandford, Drea	Campanella, Scott
Cantor, Dave A.	Chused, Amy
Cobb, Scott	Cooper, Brian
Ellis, Marshall	Fallon, Kevin
Fish, Tom	Flynn, George