



## COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

2024 ASHRAE Winter Conference Meeting | Chicago, IL, USA  
Marriott Marquis Chicago, Music Board Room (2)

**Saturday, January 20, 2024**

### MINUTES

#### **Members Present**

Anuj Gupta, Chair  
Daniel Bourque, Vice Chair  
Kinga Hydras  
\*Thursten Simonsen  
Jeanette Hay  
Sandeep Mendiratta  
Brad White  
Jim Arnold, BOD Ex-Officio

#### **Member Absent**

Niss Feiner

#### **Guests**

Anoop Peediayaakkan  
Ashish Mathur  
Athena Zamiri  
Buzz Wright  
Franco D'Atri  
Iliana Georgia Georgakakou  
Katlyn Stoker  
Lucas Roy  
Mark Miller  
Nick Armstrong  
Pedro Garza  
Richard Gunpat  
Tom Pollard  
Neha Goyal  
Ashu Gupta  
Ziyu Chen  
Ashish Mathur  
Tim Cannon  
David Roberts

#### **Staff**

Joslyn Ratcliff

*\*virtual attendee*

1. Mr. Gupta called the meeting to order at 11:09 CST.
2. Mr. Gupta read the ASHRAE Code of Ethics Commitment.
3. Roll call was taken and visitors in the room were introduced.
4. Quorum was met with seven out of eight voting members in attendance. Mr. Feiner, who could not be present during the meeting, proxied his vote to Mr. Bourque prior to the meeting.
5. Mr. Gupta facilitated an ice breaker for those attending the meeting asking what the best ASHRAE thing was that happened to them in the past six months.
6. Mr. Bourque moved to approve the October meeting minutes, Mr. Mendiratta seconded and

the minutes were approved with no discussion. 7-0-0, CV.

7. Mr. White moved to approve the December virtual meeting minutes, Mr. Bourque seconded and the minutes were approved with no discussion. 7-0-0, CV.
8. The agenda was reviewed and no changes were made.
9. Mr. Arnold presented the BOD Ex-O report to the committee.
10. Mr. Gupta provided a chair's report in which he updated the committee about the Brand Ambassador ad hoc, sharing that the intent of this group is to put forth a motion in Chicago for a Brand Ambassador volunteer position to be created.
11. No vice chair's report was given.
12. Ms. Ratcliff provided a staff report letting those in the room know to take the Chicago Sustainability Pledge, visit ASHRAE in AHR Expo Booth S6810, and that later in the meeting she would be discussing information regarding Basecamp, specifically in terms of storage, guidance documents and user accounts.
13. Reports from liaisons to other committees were given:
  - a. Mr. Gupta attended Membership Promotion and is in touch with them. He did not provide a formal report in their meeting, but MP does not have anything to bring to Communications Committee at this time.
    - i. Tim Cannon visited the meeting on behalf Membership Promotion and shared their work on DEI, participation and recruiting and shared the group is open to help from this committee on communications of these items.
  - b. Mr. Bourque will try to connect with Technical Activities Committee during or following the conference due to their meeting time overlapping with Communications Committee's.
  - c. Ms. Ratcliff attended Publications Committee and they do not have anything to bring to Communications Committee at this time.

14. 2024-2024 MBOs were reviewed and status and actions were discussed as follows:

a. **MBO #1 - Update Guidelines for Social Media Usage (85% complete)**

Mr. Gupta shared the updated presentation on Basecamp and asked for feedback from the committee (specifically from Jeanette, Sandeep and Thursten) before the Feb. 20 committee meeting. Mr. Bourque will share updates on the social media planning calendar by the next meeting.

- Student social presences may need additional guidance in terms of naming conventions. It was mentioned during the meeting individuals are identifying themselves as "President" when the accurate description would be "Specific Student Branch President".
- Mr. Bourque suggested ASHRAE Society change its LinkedIn category to Industry Associations. This was completed during the meeting. ASHRAE groups may need similar guidance to check and update the categories under which they are classified.
- The policy on advertising, specifically highlighting sponsors, was discussed within the room. Guidance currently exists in the ROB and Mr. White, who is working on MBO #6 pertaining up updating the ROB suggested addressing policy on advertising as it relates to social media under MBO #6.

- Mr. Gupta brought up Instagram Reels and Instagram broadcast as additional channels for outreach as well as a WhatsApp Channel. Currently ASHRAE Society does not use these. The suggestion was made that perhaps ASHRAE Society could look into Instagram broadcast when the channel reaches 10k followers. Communications Committee could begin using a WhatsApp Channel with the launch of the redesigned webpage via a link of the new channel at the top of the page.
- Ms. Neha Goyal suggested looking into using YouTube shorts.
- Mr. Ashu Gupta suggested add more to ASHRAE Society's YouTube channel.
- With the mention of these additional channels, Mr. White cautioned against platform dilution, where too many platforms can dilute messaging and become too much to manage.

*Assigned to this MBO: Anuj Gupta, Sandeep Mendiratta, Thursten Simonsen, Jeanette Hay, Franco D'Atri (as correspondent).*

**b. MBO #2 – Activation of Committee Members and RVCs on social media (65% complete)**

Mr. Gupta suggested holding a meeting for RVCs the same day as the next Communications Committee virtual meeting. (The Communications Committee virtual meeting date was set later in the meeting as Feb. 20.)

- The question was raised whether RCCs were receiving emails sent from the ASHRAE Email Alias system. Mr. D'Atri offered that they were getting through for his region. Mr. White offered he was aware of a bounce back for the alias assigned to him and noted he'd look into it, specifically the address used as it could be an old one with "e" from when the communications positions were referred to as "electronic" communications.

*Secretary's note: Also, see updating the tracking sheet for reaching out to RVCs.*

**c. MBO #3 - Regular Office Hours on New AI and Communication Tools (50% Complete)**

The following schedule was set for Office Hours through Society Year 2023-24:

- February 22 – Tips and Information on How-to Record Videos for Communication, presented by Anuj Gupta
- March 14 (tentative) – Pointers for Creative Effective Chapter Newsletters, presented by Brad White
- April – Topic is to be determined; presenter will be Jeanette Hay from the Monterrey Chapter
- May 9 – Comprehensive Planning Calendar for Chapters Overview, presented by Daniel Bourque

**d. MBO #4 - Meet with Regional Communications Chairs (RCC) – is linked to MBO#2. (77% Complete)**

Those assigned to the MBO, per the tracking sheet, will continue to communicate with the RCC. Ms. Hay will take the lead on creating a set of questions themed on how Communications Committee / RVCs help chapters communicate with their members for the RVC to ask Chapter Communications Chairs. Mr. Mendiratta and Mr. Bourque

have offered to assist. Mr. Gupta asked Ms. Hay to have a set of questions ready prior to the next Communications Committee meeting.

e. **MBO #5 - Increase Adoption of ASHRAE's Website Template (10% Complete)**

Mr. Mendiratta suggested surveying the RCC to ask how much time and money they and the chapters in their regions are spending on their websites and if they plan to change their website in the future? And if they are considering a change, direct them to reach out to Communications Committee. The goal is to have this sent in February.

The suggestion was made to add typical costs and suggested hosts to the Best Practices for Chapter Websites Guidance document.

Mr. White suggested RVCs discuss these questions with their chapter leaders. Mr. D'Atri offered he already does this within Region XII.

Mr. Gupta suggested sharing successful implementations of the template, such as the East India chapter, as examples to allow chapters to see what could be done. A list should be created with active chapter websites that use the template and/or theme that could be shared with chapters.

Mr. Mendiratta suggested creating a social post to promote the template and/or theme.

Mr. White commented on the suggestion from previous discussions about adding templated copy to the theme and template, stating that, if added, it should be done so in a way that chapters know it needs to be changed and supported Mr. Bourque's idea of using lead-in questions instead of templated copy. Mr. Bourque agreed and added that the copy helps to standardize voice across the sites and shared an example of a site he had worked on previously where different sections had very different tones due to being authored by different individuals.

f. **MBO #6 - Review and Update ROB 1.201.010 as needed (5% Complete)**

Mr. White has reviewed the ROB and will bring discussion points to the next Communications Committee meeting. He also raised the question of whether the ASHRAE Privacy Policy should be updated to provide information allowing chapter officers to know how to be compliant.

g. **7. MBO #7 - Review and Update Guidance and Best Practices Documentation, Templates, and Guidance (including Basecamp Guidance) Available from Communications Committee (5% Complete)**

Mr. Bourque will review the list of documents and make assignments by the next meeting.

*Secretary's note: See [tracking sheet](#) for list of documents to be reviewed and who is assigned to each.*

h. **MBO #8 - Update Communications Committee Webpage (75% Complete)**

The committee will share feedback on [the updated webpage](#) by the next committee

meeting.

- i. **MBO #9 - Improve communication strategies to better engage with members and the public about ASHRAE activities and achievements (5% Complete)**

Mr. Gupta asked all committee members to provide recommendations on how the ASHRAE Brand Ambassador and/or Brand Ambassador ad hoc could help with greater awareness of the ASHRAE brand.

[MBOs and current status can be found in Basecamp.](#)

15. The Committee discussed the referred CRC Motion 30 and moved to approve a recommendation to Members Council as follows:

Communications Committee suggests Members Council moves to defeat Fall 2023 CRC Motion, Region XII Central Florida Chapter - Motion 30 (August 10, 2023): The Central Florida Chapter recommends to Communication Committee that Chapter Communications Chairs be reimbursed for transportation to CRC to participate in CRC Communication training workshops, effective July 1, 2024 due to transportation being a regional consideration and suggests Chapter Communication Chairs seeking reimbursement for transportation to CRCs consult with their Chapter President and/or Director and Regional chair in cases where funding for transportation reimbursement would be beneficial to the Chapter.

Mr. Mendiratta moved to accept the response and Mr. Simonsen seconded.

Vote: 8-0-0, CV (Mr. Bourque as proxy for Mr. Feiner)

16. Ms. Ratcliff made the committee aware of and discussed new storage limits in Basecamp 4. Previously there were no storage limits, but now ASHRAE's account has a 2 TB storage limit. It is possible to purchase additional storage and the Ms. Ratcliff will be looking into the various options to be prepared to make recommendations for future needs. At this time ASHRAE is using approximately half of the allotted storage space.

17. Next meetings were decided as follows:

February 20 – 11 AM EST

March 19 – 11 AM EST

April 16 – 11 AM EST

May 21 – 11 AM EST

June 22- 11 AM EST (In-person at ASHRAE Annual Conference in Indianapolis, Indiana)

Ms. Ratcliff will post in Basecamp and send calendar invitations to members of the committee.

18. The committee was asked for any feedback it might have on the ASHRAE Strategic Plan. No one had any feedback to share with the group, and Mr. Gupta encouraged members to submit any individual feedback prior to Jan. 31 via the form available on the ASHRAE website.
19. Ms. Ratcliff brought to the committee's attention questions she'd received from the Falcon Chapter Communications Committee co-chair regarding the responsibilities of the position and

it was discussed whether or not it would make sense to define the role within the Manual for Chapter Operations (MCO). The group decided the current definition of Chapter Communications Chair within the MCO is sufficient because the co-chair serves to support the chair. Semantic differences in the use of vice chair and co-chair within the MCO were noted and discussed. The Committee discussed whether it would be advisable to recommend adding a description to the MCO for the Chapter Communications Co-Chair position and agreed no addition is needed at this time. Currently 52 chapters have Communications Co-Chair positions filled.

20. Mr. Gupta adjourned the meeting to an open floor discussion at 2:36 PM CST.