



COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Virtual Committee Meeting

Friday, August 30, 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM EDT

MINUTES

Members Present

Daniel Bourque, Chair
Thursten Simonsen, Vice Chair
Brad White
Niss Feiner
Franco D’Atri
Jeanette Hay
Jim Arnold, BOD Ex-O (at beginning)

Members Absent

Sandeep Mendiratta
Kinga Hydras

Guests

None

Staff

Joslyn Ratcliff

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1. Mr. Bourque called the meeting to order at 12:03 PM and read the ASHRAE Value Statement.
 2. Attendance was taken and quorum was met with six out of eight members present.
 3. The agenda was reviewed and a motion was called for to approve the agenda. Mr. White moved, Mr. Bourque seconded and the motion to approve the agenda was approved.
 4. Mr. Bourque provided a Chair’s Report and shared with the committee that he will be attending the upcoming Members Council meetings. He also shared that at the recent Region II CRC in Toronto there were a few motions circulated regarding communications-type items, good interest in updating chapter websites and/or using the template and theme provided from Communications Committee was noted, and that the need for the Dynamic Planning Calendar launched by the Committee in Spring 2024 came up. Mr. Bourque also gave a shout out to Mr. D’Atri, who received praise at the CRC for his assistance with their website.

Also at the Region II CRC, the question about a Communications award came up and is

being discussed by the Region. Mr. Bourque noted that if such an award is established, it would be perfect to recognize Ben Reed for his excellent work on Communications within the Region and noted the video he filmed with 2023-24 ASHRAE President Ginger Scoggins.

5. Mr. Simonsen provided a report to the group and shared that the first PAOE subcommittee meeting took place in July and another meeting will be coming up in September. His goal is to finalize any feedback from the committee on PAOE suggestions for 25-26 before the Winter Conference, with the recommendations being included in the Communications Committee report to Members Council at the Winter Conference. He has created [a folder on Basecamp](#) containing information and has asked everyone to go over the information and provide thoughts prior to October. Additionally, he's asked for assistance from any interested committee members. Mr. Bourque offered assistance noting he sat on the Members Council PAOE Subcommittee last year.
6. Ms. Ratcliff provided a staff report noting registration is open for the 2025 ASHRAE Winter Conference and that information on booking hotel and travel would soon be forthcoming.
7. Ms. Ratcliff shared the ask from Members Council to review and provide suggestions for changes/edits to the Manual of Chapter Operations prior to the October Members Council Meeting. [A PDF](#) has been posted to Basecamp with suggestions and the committee is invited to submit feedback prior to the October deadline. Also within Basecamp, [a folder containing history](#) of prior Communications Committee feedback for the Manual of Chapter Operations has been created.
8. The committee discussed next meeting dates and set the schedule for committee meetings through December 2024.

September 27, 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM Eastern Time

October 25, 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM Eastern Time

November 22, 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM Eastern Time

December 17, 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM Eastern Time

All are the fourth Fridays of the month except the December meeting, which is on a Tuesday. Ms. Ratcliff will send invitations to committee members for these meetings and ensure they are listed on the schedule in Basecamp.

9. 2024-2025 MBOs were discussed and are [updated in Basecamp](#).

a. MBO #1 - Create a Template/Guideline for Chapter and Regional use when soliciting sponsorships to include a menu of available options as well as details Regions/Chapters will need for delivery.

Ms. Hay and Mr. White are assigned to this MBO. Ms. Hay thinks this is a great MBO, although she originally thought it was a marketing kit for various initiatives, and Mr. Bourque clarified that it is sponsorship-focused. The goal is to allow members to reach out to potential sponsors one time with all the pertinent and same information. It will also help members make good on deliverables promised. Mr. Bourque mentioned the Hamilton chapter already has something similar. Mr. White's responsibility with this MBO is to ensure it is in line with the ROB 1.201.010 and ASHRAE Commercialism policies referenced in that ROB.

Ms. Hay and Mr. White plan to meet for an hour to discuss prior to the next Committee meeting.

Ms. Hay will reach out to other RCC to see if their Regions are already doing anything like this. Mr. Bourque suggested checking with CTTC RVCs too and Mr. White suggested checking with RP RVCs.

Mr. Bourque noted that the document will need to keep the special international considerations in mind such as incorporating RP into a global sponsorship initiative and exchange rates/conversion.

b. MBO #2 - Update WordPress theme and Wix Template. Survey RCC to see if an additional platform would be helpful.

Mr. Bourque suggested the committee can also ask the chapters what tools they need and noted the idea was to do this during the Fall CRCs but there was not enough time. Mr. White concurred and noted that Region V plans to increase their workshop time for future CRCs.

Mr. D'Atri offered to contact RCC to see what chapters are using and if they need anything additional. Mr. Feiner asked if it would be possible to see what chapters are using currently using Python. Mr. White noted that as an interesting possibility. The committee reviewed the list of ASHRAE Chapter homepages on the ashrae.org website.

The question came up if the idea was to survey the contacts or to reach out individually noting better information would likely be obtained through direct contact, but it would be much more difficult.

Prior the next meeting Mr. D'Atri will come up with a list of questions for RCC such as what they like and don't like about the current solutions and what, if any, changes they'd like to see.

Ms. Ratcliff can help provide contact information and with distribution as well as with creating the survey.

Mr. Bourque asked if there was interest from anyone in the meeting to take on updating the Wix template. There were no takers.

Mr. Bourque mentioned an RFP would be needed for ShiftWeb (for the WordPress theme) and also for updating the Wix template. Mr. Bourque will work with Mr. D'Atri and Mr. White on this language.

- c. MBO #3 - Complete annual review and update of guidance documents provided by the committee. Create a new document; an excel sheet showing communications tools used by chapters. Create survey for RCCs to fill out during fall CRCs that can be used in Communications Training.**

Mr. Bourque mentioned the survey for the fall CRCs was not complete so did not happen.

Ms. Ratcliff will send the tracking document used in 2023-24 to the committee. The goal is to review the documents and also add what's actually used from the documents. Mr. Simonsen will give consideration to the best way to obtain information on what's used and what's needed prior to the next meeting with an eye towards collection methods that could be used for this information.

Mr. Bourque stated he will put additional thoughts in the Basecamp folder for this MBO.

- d. MBO #4 – Engage with Communications Committee stakeholders, hold 2 check-ins with ASHRAE RCCs and continue Office Hours every two months**

Liaisons for committees were assigned as follows and [noted in Basecamp](#):

Membership Promotion: Mr. White

Technical Activities Committee: Mr. D'Atri

Chapter Technology Transfer Committee: Mr. Simonsen

Publications Committee: Ms. Hay

Historical Committee: Mr. Feiner

Ideas for Office Hours topics were shared and discussed as follows:

- New Website Templates
- Woo Commerce (especially as related to collecting tax in Canada)
- StarChapter
- WebEx, GoToMeeting, Teams Meetings

A schedule will be created at the next Communications Committee meeting.

Liaisons for each RCC will be assigned from among the committee members.

- e. **MBO #5 - Create at least 3 actionable recommendations based on Member survey resultant from 2022-23 MBO #1**

Mr. Bourque will champion this and will reach out to Ms. Hydras and Mr. Mendiratta to see if they would like to assist.

- f. **MBO #6 - Review and Update ROB 1.201.010 as needed.**

Mr. White will have something to share by the next meeting.

10. The suggested MBOs from Members Council were discussed as follows.

- a. ***Suggestion:* In support of the Members Council Planning Subcommittee's MBO to prepare a 2-year fiscal plan, all reporting committees should include their own MBO to review their programs, budget and expenses and make recommendations to the Planning Subcommittee by the Winter Meeting.**

Mr. Bourque shared the Communications Committee budget is small and does not have much of an impact. Mr. Simonsen does not know of anything specific on the radar for 2025-2026 that would require spending from Communications Committee, but noted things may come up.

Ms. Ratcliff to ask staff if there is a template for these recommendations.

- b. ***Suggestion:* All Standing committees should have an action to provide input to the Membership Promotion Committee on alternative methods for promoting the value and benefits of employee participation in ASHRAE and to encourage sponsorship and support for their employees by end of Q2.**

Mr. Bourque would like the committee to discuss ideas under Old Business at the next committee meeting. He also shared some initial ideas including showcasing award winners, providing an Office Hour on the Membership Promotion Canva templates, and noted that MBO #1 could also be related to this, sharing that the Technology Awards offered by ASHRAE land award winners on the front page of *ASHRAE Journal*, and member benefits such as selecting a course or standard each year. Mr. White noted that the selection of a free course or standard was helpful to him. Suggestions are welcome before the next meeting.

- c. ***Suggestion: All Standing Committees of Member Council should include an MBO that identifies and recommends additional ways of promoting inclusion and fostering community and networking within ASHRAE in general, and within their function specifically, by the end of Q4.***

Mr. Bourque offered that Communications Committee is great at this and that something that could be considered by the committee could be cultural differences in terms of tools used in various regions providing the example of the heavy use of WhatsApp in Region XV. Suggestions are welcome before the next meeting.

- d. ***Suggestion: Communications Committee to evaluate and recommend a transition plan to continue and own the Leadership Voices video series (formerly a responsibility of the Historical Committee) and to provide guidance to Chapter and Regional Historians on an annual basis related to digital file storage platforms and creating/maintaining a “History” page on chapter/region websites by the end of Q1 and to present a plan by the winter meeting 2025.***

Mr. Bourque mentioned the planned enhancements for the History page of the Wix template and WordPress theme would be related to this. Mr. Feiner will be happy to liaise with Historical Committee as needed. Mr. Bourque and Mr. Feiner will discuss Leadership Voices and Mr. Feiner will speak at the next meeting regarding digital file storage platforms. Ms. Ratcliff noted all the suggestions may not all be relevant based on decisions and conversation at the Board meeting in Indianapolis and explained at the time this suggestion was made, changes to Historical Committee were being considered that did not move ahead and as there are no changes to Historical Committee at this time, Communications Committee may not need to take on all of these suggestions as written.

Mr. White expressed concerns with Communications Committee being able to assume the work of another committee.

11. The motion to be referred to Communications Committee: *Region VII, Bluegrass Chapter (Motion #24-7-1): Communication Committee to provide virtual training to Chapter Communication Committee Chairs* was noted and will be listed under new business for the next meeting. This motion has not yet been officially referred to the committee for comment, but will be forthcoming.
12. Mr. Bourque asked individually for any additional comments from all on the call. NO additional comments were provided. Mr. Bourque noted next meeting should be more of a status report on the items covered during this meeting.
13. Mr. Bourque called for a motion to adjourn the meeting, Mr. White moved and Mr. Bourque adjourned the meeting at 1:35 PM EDT.