



COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Virtual Committee Meeting

Friday, September 27, 2024

12:00 PM – 1:30 PM EDT

MINUTES

Members Present

Daniel Bourque, Chair
Thursten Simonsen, Vice Chair
Brad White
Niss Feiner
Kinga Hydras
Jim Arnold, BOD Ex-O

Members Absent

Jeanette Hay
Sandeep Mendiratta
Franco D'Atri
Bill McQuade, CO

Guests

Tom Pollard

Staff

Joslyn Ratcliff

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 not met with four out of eight members present. Discussion would take place, but no voting or official business would take place. A fifth member later joined the call, but was not present at the time of roll call.
3. The agenda was reviewed and Mr. Bourque asked if there were any changes. There were none and the agenda was adopted for the meeting.
4. Mr. White reviewed the minutes and stated there were no issues. Minutes will be approved at the next meeting due to lack of quorum at the time of discussion.
5. Mr. Arnold did not have anything to report as BOD EX-O.
6. Regional Communications Chair Report- Mr. Pollard did not have anything to report as Region II RCC, but asked about template guideline for Chapter and Regional in soliciting and fulfilling sponsorships described in MBO #1. It was noted this would be discussed later in the meeting.
7. Chair's Report - Mr. Bourque attended the first quarterly MBO check-in with Members Council and reported that the committee's MBOs are accepted by Members Council and that the committee has accepted all but one of the MBO recommendations from Members Council. The MBOs suggested by Members Council are identified by letters (as opposed to numbers) in the committee's list of MBOs. Mr. Bourque and Ms. Ratcliff participated in an introductory meeting with TRADOS, a vendor that provides machine translation services and could perhaps be used for translating ASHRAE materials / multiple standards, as it may align with CC's responsibilities although the responsibility

for publications translations lie within ASHRAE publications staff.

8. Vice Chair's Report - Mr. Simonsen informed the committee he has uploaded PAOE information to Basecamp and suggested an alternate working session to discuss Communications Committee's recommendations for 2025-26 PAOE to take place Friday, Oct. 4 from 12 PM EDT – 1:30 PM EDT for any committee members who wish to join and work on PAOE for about an hour and a half. There is interest to revise and combine PAOE and questions on which ones are used and the group will look at that during the working session. Mr Bourque mentioned his questions regarding questions about “average PAOE points” and “Percentage” are calculated. Mr. Simonsen will ask about this at the next PAOE subcommittee meeting on October 8.

Action Item CC_1_0927: Ms. Ratcliff to confirm it is still the best process to submit recommendations as an attachment to the report sent to Members Council at the Winter Conference.

Action Item CC_2_0927: Ms. Ratcliff to set up Webex Working Group meeting for Friday, Oct. 4 from 12:00 – 1:30 PM EDT.

9. Staff liaison report: Ms. Ratcliff reminded the group of the ask from Members Council to review specific sections of the MCO related to communications and provide feedback prior to the next Members Council meeting. Ms. Ratcliff reviewed the document posted with initial feedback and asked for any additional comments by for feedback by Oct. 8.
10. The committee discussed and come up with ideas regarding the suggested MBO B from Member Council: ***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. Simonsen suggested monitoring what individual chapters are posting on their social and resharing appropriate posts to the main Society channels. Ms. Ratcliff provided an overview of what is done now from Society, that staff has a list of chapter social media and reviews annually to ensure Society accounts are following chapter accounts and that Society will share appropriate posts when brought to staff's attention. Ms. Ratcliff shared chapters can bring posts to staff's attention via the hashtag #MyASHRAE or communicating with staff.

Action Item CC_3_0927: All committee members to come up with one idea for suggested MBO B from Members Council before the October 25th meeting. Ideas shared ahead of the meeting can be posted to Basecamp within [the specific folder for MBO B](#).

11. The committee discussed the suggested MBO C from Member Council: ***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 assigned action item for Action item for all to each person to come up with one item for this.

Action Item CC_4_0927: All committee members to come up with one idea for suggested MBO B from Members Council before the October 25th meeting. Ideas shared ahead of the meeting can be posted to Basecamp within [the specific folder for MBO C](#).

12. The Committee Discussed a Communications Award at various levels because of a previous inquiry from Region XIV where the committee said there was not an official communications award, but the committee would be open to ideas.

Mr. Bourque shared the example of former Communications Committee member Rod Potter's award for his excellent work showcasing the Ottawa Valley Chapter history on their website. Instead of receiving a Communications award, perhaps because one did not exist, Mr. Potter received the Lou Flagg award. It was mentioned that there is also a Gold Ribbon for updating history every 5 years and it was noted that Region II is promoting these awards through Historical Committee this year.

Mr. Bourque asked for the group's thoughts on creating an award at the Society Level. Mr. Feiner offered he thinks there is merit for this to encourage good communication and marketing, but suggested the scope would need to be narrowed down. Mr. Bourque noted reference to the [Dan Mills award](#) for best chair. Mr. Feiner mentioned the Meatball Award for travelling the farthest distance and asked if any other regions have this award. Mr. White shared that Region V has a similar one.

Mr. Feiner asked if Communications Committee would want to take a position on awards not in alignment with the Society's mission, i.e. awarding behavior that is not supporting decarbonization due to carbon produced as a result of travel and suggest awards related to communications. Ms. Ratcliff suggested avenues the committee could bring this up should they want to. Mr. White suggested the committee consider best practice as discussions about a communications award continue we're thinking of our award – i.e. don't award for number of emails or clicks on emails because that could award spamming and clickbait. Mr. White suggested an idea could be where someone nominates the RCC with something they've done very well during the year.

Mr. Bourque asked if anyone from the committee would be interested in participating in a working group to further discuss as well as for thoughts on if the group would like to continue looking into this next year. Mr. White suggested a conversation during the Winter Conference Meeting to decide if the committee may want to further address during the second half of this year, or discuss taking it on during the 25-26 year. The committee could also discuss if they want to provide guidance for awards at the Regional Level.

13. The committee discussed progress towards 2024-25 MBOs as follows:

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 met and Ms. Hay is working on a Canva template. Mr. White envisions this will be a sort of marketing guide with different pieces in terms of sources, marketing materials and will contain guidance on meeting sponsorship. For example, how sponsor banners can be used at meetings (i.e. can someone have a pop-up by them when they are presenting, vs. having it available as people come in) as well as things that can and should not be positioned next to a presentation. Mr. White referenced a newsletter sponsor page and shared many chapters have this, but Mr. White's home chapter, the Northern Indiana chapter. In addition, they are envisioning local guidance for things such as sponsorship of golf outings, fishing trips, clay shoot, etc. containing information on how to reach out, what perks to give, how to thank sponsors and more. Guidance on logo requests will also be included, specifically what to ask sponsors for when requesting a logo to ensure appropriate resolution for use as well as how often a chapter is recommended to reach out to sponsors (once per year). This MBO is also looking at tracking and coordinating reaching out at various levels (i.e. local company receives asks when vs. parent company is already a supporter) so that the companies aren't getting asks at different levels from different individuals without knowledge of the other asks. In conjunction with MBO #6, Mr. White will ensure sponsorships are in line with ASHRAE's commercialism policy and guidance in the ROB. Mr. White noted this MBO is great to establish these specific parts of the packet/template and perhaps could be added onto next year.

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

Mr. Bourque posted screenshots of website pages from the WordPress template, the Hamilton Chapter's Implementation of the template, and the history page into Basecamp for comment. Mr. Bourque welcomed Mr. Feiner to comment on the History page examples as past Historical Committee Chair to ensure the template works for the History needs of chapters and matches best practices for websites. Mr. White suggested linking to the Best Practices document from the template. Mr. White suggested he and Ms. Ratcliff meet the week after the meeting and work on a PDF that everyone could then edit to then get information to vendors for the needed changes.

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. Simonsen reviewed the document and noted the Best Practices for Chapter and Regions websites document may need to be updated based on how the theme and template are updated per MBO 2.

The committee discussed replacing the social media planning calendar with the chapter planning calendar because of Ms. Hay's comments during the Annual Conference. Mr. Bourque explained these files are for two different things, one is to plan communications and social media, and the other is to plan a chapter calendar around other known events. He suggested if there was a way to integrate that would be great but would likely be an MBO all in itself.

It was noted that the document entitled ASHRAE Content on YouTube is reviewed by staff and Mr. Simonsen asked Ms. Ratcliff to review from staff/Marketing perspective.

Mr. Simonsen will review the Chapter Operations PPT and CRC Workshop PPT to see if they can be merged. Mr. White offered assistance with ensuring these are consistent and offered an improved PPT template.

Mr. Simonsen suggested the committee think about the Electronic Tools Used by ASHRAE Chapters document as to not over-survey individuals. Mr. Bourque suggested collecting information at CRC Communications workshops to add to the document instead of surveying. Mr. White shared he cataloged every website in his Region (Region V) and would like to keep his own records and mentioned if each RCC was to do something similar, then share that information with Communications Committee, it could make the data collection much easier. Mr. Pollard, Region II, RCC, put together extensive information for Region II chapters for the CRC and shared information with the group on what he had done.

The committee discussed the line items pertaining to Basecamp information and questioned if there was still a need and desire to have separate documentation for items where they are covered by Basecamp documentation and if in those instances it would be advisable to link Basecamp instead of creating documents that need to be maintained and continually updated. Mr. White offered to look for links on Basecamp where opportunities like this may exist.

- d. MBO #4 - Engage with Communications Stakeholders :**
Review and assign Liaisons for MP, TC, CTTC, Publications, Historical; Have 2 check-ins with each RCC this year; Continue Office Hours – every 2 months.

Liaisons for committees have been assigned as follows:

Membership Promotion: Brad White

Technical Activities Committee: Franco D'Atri

Chapter Technology Transfer Committee: Thursten Simonsen
Publications Committee: Jeanette Hay
Historical Committee: Niss Feiner

Ms. Ratcliff will provide liaisons with meeting dates and information when it becomes available. Normally liaisons meet with their assigned committee during the Annual and Winter meetings. The Committee will focus Office Hours on areas identified as needing additional training as evidenced through low PAOE participation.

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

This MBO was not discussed during this meeting.

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

Mr. White is reviewing the language in this ROB in terms of how it relates to the sponsorship items covered in 2024-25 Communications Committee MBO #1. He would like to suggest adding some definitions to the Commercialism Policy, for example defining what is a “business card advertisement” and updating advertising language to be congruent with standard web advertising sizes.

g. Suggested MBO D - 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 explained Communications Committee can’t commit to this MBO on top of the other existing MBOs that the committee is already doing.

Mr. Pollard suggested an idea for Communications Committee to assist could be to recommend a a standard format for information collected including amounts being paid. And a question to ask would be whether chapters have funds for moving things over. He also noted that in Canada exchange rates can be an issue.

Mr. Pollard also asked if Communications Committee has any planned Office Hours between now and Christmas. In general, the Region II chapters start in September and he sends communications out to them, so would like to promote the Office Hours if there was anything to promote. Mr. Bourque advised at this time there is nothing set up because the Office Hours will be tied to areas where low PAOE participation has been identified.

14. Mr. Bourque asked individually around the virtual room for any additional thoughts and no one had anything additional. Mr. Bourque invited Mr. Feiner to provide consider any MBOs he may specifically like to be assigned to.
15. Mr. Bourque moved to adjourn the meeting and with no objections, adjourned the meeting at 1:29 PM