COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Virtual Committee Meeting

Friday, October 25, 2024
12:00 PM – 1:30 PM EDT

MINUTES

Members Present	**Members Absent**	**Guests**	**Staff**
Daniel Bourque, Chair	Sandeep Mendiratta	Tom Pollard	Joslyn Ratcliff
Thursten Simonsen, Vice Chair	Franco D'Atri	Marie VanderVliet	
Brad White	Bill McQuade, CO		
Niss Feiner			
Kinga Hydras			
Jeanette Hay			
Jim Arnold, BOD Ex-O			

1. Mr. Bourque called the meeting to order at 12:04 PM and read the ASHRAE Value Statement.
2. Attendance was taken and quorum was met.
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 moved to approve the August 30 minutes, Mr. Bourque seconded. 6-0-0, CV. Mr. Bourque moved to approve the September 27th, Mr. White seconded, minutes with no changes. 4-0-1, CV (Mr. Feiner abstained from voting due to not being present at the meeting.)
5. Mr. Arnold did not have anything to report as BOD EX-O.
6. Mr. Pollard, Region II RCC, did not have a report.
7. Chair's Report – Mr. Bourque will attend the first Members Council meeting of 2024-25 Monday, Oct. 28 and will bring back anything pertinent to the committee. He called attention to the motion to make Communications Committee grassroots that will be discussed later in the meeting and mentioned that DEI is also being suggested to become grassroots.
8. Vice Chair's Report – Mr. Simonsen reported that PAOE work is continuing and great input was received during the October 4th meeting. The subcommittee meeting took place the following Monday, October 8th. The subcommittee sent out the reports with the percentages and Mr. Simonsen will upload these to Basecamp. Mr. Simonsen asked for a meeting to be set up Friday, November 8th 12 – 1:30 PM specific to discuss PAOE and Ms. Ratcliff will set that up. Mr. Bourque suggested interim meetings like this may be needed

for MBO work.

Action Item CC_1_1025: Ms. Ratcliff to set up Meeting #2 for the PAOE working group November 8, 2024 from 12 – 1:30 PM EST.

9. Staff liaison report: Ms. Ratcliff thanked the members on the call for their work for ASHRAE and offered assistance with any ASHRAE needs they may have. Ms. Ratcliff shared that the Committee's suggested revisions to the MCO have been sent to Members Council.

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. Bourque noted the goal is for everyone to have one idea. Those ideas can then be put into a list and submitted in the Communications Committee report to Members Council.

Mr. Feiner suggested 30-second videos featuring members' stories. He offered he'd be happy to put together questions that could be asked as a basis for these videos and suggested they could be available in English and other languages. He noted the value of recording the videos in the members' native languages. Ms. Ratcliff shared the initiative related to the 2024-25 Society theme of the short Career Stories videos and the new member feature in *Insights* that staff has discussed potentially sharing to the Society's main social channels. Mr. Bourque mentioned Presidential member Mick Schedler's Member to Member Connections as well as Past Communications Committee Chair Anuj Gupta's Office Hour on Using Video for Communications. Ms. Hay suggested membership support at the chapter level in terms of employer support for membership. Mr. Bourque mentioned an exit interview at Leadership U and Mr. Feiner shared the logistics of Leadership U could lend itself to getting member stories and filming and noted they are only part of the story. Mr. White shared an example from the Milwaukee Brewers who are interviewing players whose native language is Spanish in Spanish and including their family in the interviews if their families are visiting and they will live translate the interviews to English. Mr. Feiner asked about Society guidelines for video and Ms. Ratcliff stated it depends on the intent, but in general if videos are to be professionally marked and made available on behalf of Society, professional filming is generally preferred.

Mr. Bourque asked Mr. Feiner to speak to PAOE points for Leadership Voices. Mr. Feiner shared that PAOE points are awarded, and they are meant to be much more in-depth than the short interviews proposed for this MBO.

Action Item CC_2_1025: Mr. Bourque asked Mr. Feiner formulate the idea discussed into a paragraph summarizing the idea by the next meeting.

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 suggested identifying different platforms used by the membership for communication, such as WhatsApp, Slack, and Discord. He referenced the 2016 Communications Committee document, *[Electronic Tools Used by ASHRAE Chapters for Websites, Event Planning, and Electronic Communication](#)* and suggested perhaps ASHRAE may need to consider a new social channel to push out to reach audience there.

    Mr. Feiner suggested it's important as part of this to understand what other regions and countries use for social and communications tools and cautioned against following fads.

    Action Item CC_3_1025: Mr. Bourque will formalize this idea and include comments from MBO B as another application within [the specific folder for MBO C](#) before the next Communications Committee meeting.

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

    - **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 shared progress towards this MBO. She and Mr. White discussed a checklist for chapter sponsorships based what is outlined as permissible within ASHRAE's Rules of the Board and creating guidance based on the Rules of the Board. Ms. Hay asked Ms. Ratcliff if staff would be able to provide design support for the final product and Ms. Ratcliff let the group know that yes, this is absolutely something staff can do. Ms. Hay offered that providing guidance regarding CRC sponsorships part seems huge, and asked if we want to include guidelines for chapters who are supporting CRCs. Mr. White will look in the [CRC Guidelines](#) for information that already exists.

      Action Item CC_4_1025: Mr. White to review the ASHRAE [CRC Guidelines](#) to see what information is already provided within that document regarding sponsorships at CRCs.

      Mr. Bourque shared an idea of suggesting the chapters have a "call list". The list would clearly and simply details what was done last year and by whom and the list could be passed on each year from chapter to chapter. He stated the list would need to apply regionally – for example, what works in Region II may not work in Region-at-Large. Mr. Bourque also offered the inclusion of CRC information, including this call list, may be a Part 2 of the completed MBO #1, or may be something for the 2025-26 committee year.

Ms. Hay asked about the scope and Mr. Bourque suggested a boilerplate of sponsorship options available at the chapter level with highlights chapters could fill in based on what is needed and makes sense for each chapter. The boilerplate could be a list of ideas the chapter could draw from; they would not need to try to do each idea on the list.

Ms. Hay shared briefly what was done for RP and held up the RP manual she received at training.

The question of how much to reach out was also discussed, highlighting that it would be advisable not to reach out to the same sponsor multiple times in different ways, etc.

Ms. Hay asked about the group that gave Mr. Bourque the idea for this MBO during the Members Council Orientation in May. Mr. Bourque didn't recall offhand, as it was something stated during the meeting, not an ask to the committee. Ms. Ratcliff offered to review her notes and connect Jeanette with the appropriate group.

- Further MBOs were not discussed in detail due to time. Mr. Bourque asked that those working on MBOs have interim meetings if need and be prepared to report on progress at the next meeting and stated he'll reach out to individuals regarding MBOs prior to the next committee meeting.

13. Marie VanderVliet, chair of the YEA Personal Development subcommittee, shared with the committee an idea to create a live calendar for ASHRAE events and provided the background that generated the idea. YEA hosted a recent webinar and experienced difficulties with attendance, in addition they've experienced problems sharing due dates to their RVCs due to lack of centralization. Currently the dates for various events, due dates, trainings, etc. are published online, but in no central place. The idea from the YEA subcommittee was initially to create a live calendar of all YEA-related events and deadlines, but then grew to include Society-level events and at that point the group decided to involve Communications Committee. The ultimate goal would be to have something centrally pulling in all the dates on one screen where everyone can see and refer to for planning purposes.

Mr. Bourque previously shared the [Dynamic Planning Calendar for Chapters](#) with Ms. VanderVliet and she shard YEA is looking for something different. The calendar would be something individuals could refer to for an idea of Society, Regional and other events, but would not take and update for their own purposes like the Chapter Planning Calendar, which serves the purpose of chapter planning.

Ms. Ratcliff shared [what could be done with limited programming on the existing ashrae.org website using the events module](#) within the ashrae.org content management

system. She suggested if implemented, staff could enter the events into this central calendar when they posted them on the pages they already appear on, so it would not be a significant amount of additional work for staff to do it this way. The initial drawback would be that the calendar in its current form can't be subscribed to like an Outlook or Google calendar, rather it's a static collected events listing online.

Mr. Bourque likes the idea and asked some clarifying questions: Would there be an option to have it on each committee's page? Would it be like an Outlook calendar to subscribe to? How does that show up on the website? He likes the idea, but is less sure about the nuts and bolts of it at this time and offered that an Outlook calendar comes to mind, or an events module.

Mr. Simonsen shared incorporating into the website we could get up and going quicker. Additionally, he shared another organization he's involved with has a complex calendar that incorporates many units and multiple user interfaces that can be subscribed to from which users can select which ones to get notices about and subscribe to. It's not related to Outlook or Google and took years to develop.

Mr. White suggested looking into the underlying technologies and how those might be able to be used, for example, placing events in basecamp and exporting the iCal link which can be placed in users' calendars. He shared this subscription portion is straightforward because they all work in a similar way, but the larger question would be how the events get into the database. He suggested perhaps looking into doing an integration with Basecamp where the functionality of Basecamp is used to keep track of separate calendars and create one main calendar containing events entered into the other calendars. Ms. VanderVliet stated this is exactly what she was thinking about. Mr. White shared that currently the calendars in Basecamp are limited to those with access and way would need to be found to make them public. Ms. VanderVliet is happy with YEA being the test group for this project. The comment was made that the Basecamp calendar is great because it shows stacked and how things fall next to each other, which is important for what YEA is wanting to do.

Mr. Simonsen agreed, it would make sense to start with YEA first and stated if it goes beyond grassroots, it would be a pretty big deal to discuss.

Action Item CC_5_1025: Mr. Bourque asked Mr. Simonsen to take the lead on researching and suggesting options (to report back to YEA) for the YEA request for a live calendar and to meet with Mr. Bourque, Mr. White and Ms. Ratcliff prior to discuss further.

Action Item CC_6_1025: Ms. Ratcliff to set up meeting with Mr. Bourque, Mr. Simonsen and Mr. White to discuss the YEA request for the live calendar.

Action Item CC_7_1025: Ms. Ratcliff to report back to YEA Communications Committees findings and suggestions for their request for a live calendar.

14. Two motions were referred to Communications Committee the evening prior to the meeting and were added to the agenda, uploaded to Basecamp, and briefly discussed here:

- Region VII, Bluegrass Chapter (Motion #24-7-1): Communication Committee to provide virtual training to Chapter Communication Committee Chairs.

- Fall 2024 CRC Motion, Region-at-Large ASHRAE Falcon Chapter – Motion 24-RAL-1 (October 7, 2024): Designate the Communications as a Grassroots Committee and grant the same standing, privileges, and responsibilities as other Grassroots Committees

15. Mr. Bourque asked individually around the virtual room for any additional thoughts. Thoughts were shared as follows:

- Mr. Feiner asked if, when considering the motions, the committee should think from Communications Committee / Chapter/Regional Communications perspective or Society's?
- Mr. White shared he will soon be inviting everyone to collaborate on thoughts for the website template and asked everyone to be on the lookout (and not put into SPAM) an invitation for a Bluebeam session.
- Mr. Pollard stated he didn't have anything additional and thanked everyone on the call.

16. Mr. Bourque moved to adjourn the meeting and with no objections, adjourned the meeting at 1:35 PM