



COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Virtual Committee Meeting

Friday, November 22, 2024

12:00 PM – 1:30 PM EST

UNOFFICIAL MINUTES (QUORUM NOT MET)

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

1. Mr. Bourque called the meeting to order at 12:08 PM and read the ASHRAE Value Statement.
2. Attendance was taken and quorum was not met.
3. The agenda was reviewed and there were no changes or additions.
4. The October 25 minutes were not discussed due to the meeting not having quorum.
5. Mr. Arnold thanked the committee for their work and did not have anything additional to report as BOD EX-O.
6. Mr. McQuade shared with the committee that the new Strategic Plan, although not fully finalized, is close to being presented and noted that the feedback from committees and councils was taken into consideration during the development of the new Strategic Plan. He also shared that the registration numbers for the Orlando Winter Conference were tracking very well and appear to represent a comeback from the pandemic.
7. Mr. Bourque asked Mr. McQuade and Mr. Arnold about use of AI for MBO #5. Mr. McQuade shared background that the problem comes up when AI is used to interpret standards or author papers, which introduces ASHRAE's intellectual property into the lexicon of the AI. Ms. Ratcliff read the AI statement at the top of all pages of the ASHRAE website. Collectively, it was agreed it would be OK to use AI for categorizing data for action as described in MBO #5.
8. Vice Chair's Report – Mr. Simonsen was not on the call. In his absence, Mr. Bourque shared that PAOE planning for 2025-2026 has been going very well under Mr. Simonsen's leadership and that multiple meetings have been held to discuss PAOE recommendations ahead of the 2025 Winter Conference.

9. Staff liaison report– Ms. Ratcliff shared that she can help with questions/needs regarding the 2025 Winter Conference and that she would be sending meeting invitations, information and details to liaisons to other committees as identified under MBO #4.
10. Mr. Bourque noted that the committee has been discussing ideas for MBOs B and C from suggested by Members Council. Regarding MBO C, Mr. Bourque shared the group is exploring suggesting ways of expanding knowledge of different communication methods/platforms and communicating those to members. Mr. McQuade offered this could be an opportunity; that he’s seen many good practices in place across chapters that don’t get communicated across all of ASHRAE and suggested perhaps the committee can aggregate information on what’s working well and promote.

Mr. Bourque mentioned a previous survey administered by Communications Committee, which was used as the basis for the guidance document, [Tools Used by ASHRAE Chapters for Websites, Event Planning, and Electronic Communication](#). Discussion has taken place about sending an updated survey to update the information. For this year it was ultimately decided to gather information at the CRCs instead.

Mr. Bourque asked if other committees have provided feedback on MBO C, and Mr. McQuade said the committees will share information on MBO progress next week during the quarterly check-in.

Mr. McQuade asked if the ASHRAE email aliases were working and Ms. Ratcliff said that to her knowledge they were. Ms. Ratcliff will also check on the creation of the DEI email alias discussed at the Region II CRC.

11. Ms. Ratcliff reported she and Jeanette McCray, the staff liaison for YEA, met and discussed the living calendar request from YEA and for now, YEA will use Basecamp to start. Ms. Ratcliff / Communications Committee will provide a document on how to use the calendar function of Basecamp for this effort. If YEA/Communications Committee would like to further investigate this ask or do more, Ms. Ratcliff and Ms. McCray will be happy to support efforts. Mr. D’Atri asked if ASHRAE 365 could be used for this. Mr. Bourque mentioned that was discussed on the call and the crux comes down to how it would work and what the appropriate tool to use would be.
12. Discussion took place regarding the referred motion, *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*

Mr. Bourque asked Mr. McQuade for his thoughts. Mr. McQuade offered considerations for the group to think through—is the training lacking in some way that this would enhance and is there benefit to meeting in person (at the CRCs) and having training done in person having this done in person vs. virtually, what is the benefit to having the committee be grassroots – what would it allow to happen now that is not happening already? For example, does the committee feel current training is lacking in some way now that could be solved if communications was grassroots? Additionally, Mr. McQuade advised it’s not the responsibility of Communications Committee to decide if ASHRAE can afford the expense. What is needed from the committee is thoughtful consideration about what is being asked.

Mr. Bourque shared the committee already has virtual trainings, office hours, and many guidance documents and shared the observation that in virtual trainings and meetings individuals don't bounce ideas around as much and in-person allows greater collaboration.

Discussion took place regarding funding from Society vs. Regional funding. Mr. Arnold shared he doesn't recall anyone saying they couldn't attend a CRC due to travel costs and he'd encourage virtual participation because it makes it possible to reach a large amount of people.

Mr. Bourque shared that the committee previously authored [virtual meeting guidance](#) and in doing so paved the way for improved virtual meetings. Mr. Arnold agrees virtual isn't as good as in-person but through virtual more people may be able to be reached.

Mr. Bourque observed more meeting rooms may be necessary during CRCs for another official (grassroots) training if Communications became grassroots. And if DEI and Historical also become grassroots, that would mean even more rooms, which could become a concern.

The committee will plan to have a formal response to this motion as well as the other referred motion, *Region VII, Bluegrass Chapter (Motion #24-7-1): Communication Committee to provide virtual training to Chapter Communication Committee Chairs, for Orlando.*

13. 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 and Mr. White were not on the call, but Mr. Bourque stated progress was being made. Ms. Ratcliff mentioned Ms. Hay indicated she would send progress via email.

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

Mr. Bourque provided an overview of what this MBO was trying to achieve in terms of providing a more robust framework for chapters with real content to replace the lorem ipsum currently there now.

Specifically, the committee is hoping to fill in information for each of the committees, that chapters could change or add to, but the boilerplate content provided would be complete and correct without any changes. Mr. McQuade said he supports this and suggested the committee provide an example of what they'd like to see, with guidance on character limitations, and then he can support the effort for the committees to fill out the boilerplate.

Ms. Ratcliff can assist Mr. Bourque in creating this template.

Mr. D'Atri asked if it would be OK to use AI for this and Mr. McQuade said it would be OK for this purpose. Mr. Bourque stated Ms. Ratcliff will reach out to the developer of the WordPress template to get information on next steps to work towards what the committee aims to achieve. Mr. D'Atri stated he is available the week of December 2 to discuss.

- **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 shared that these documents were reviewed last year and are being reviewed again.

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

Ms. Ratcliff will send invitations and information to the liaisons to other committees for the Orlando Conference Meeting times/days.

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

Mr. Bourque will reach out to Ms. Hydras and Mr. Mendiratta to see if they are interested in helping with this. Previously in the meeting use of AI to compile and categorize data from the survey was discussed as OK for this purpose.

- **MBOs 6 and A were not discussed.**

14. Mr. Bourque asked individually around the virtual room for any additional thoughts. No additional thoughts were shared.

15. Mr. Bourque moved to adjourn the meeting and with no objections, adjourned the meeting at 1:07 PM EST.