



COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Virtual Committee Meeting

Friday, September 11, 2026 | 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM EDT

MINUTES

Members Present	Members Absent	Guest	Staff
Thursten Simonsen, Chair	Sandeep Mendiratta, V. Chair	Les Pereira, Region XI RCC	Joslyn Ratcliff
David Roberts	Franco D'Atri		
Maggie Moninski, BOD Ex-O	Ana Perez-Bustamante Garcia		
	Mohammed Murtaza		
	Anmol Prabhu		
	Kelly Williams		
	Ashish Rakheja, CO		

1. Mr. Simonsen called the meeting to order at 11:06 AM EDT.
2. Roll call was taken and quorum was not met, with only two voting members present instead of the required five.
3. Due to the lack of quorum, the committee could not vote on official business, including approval of the minutes from the previous meeting.
4. Mr. Simonsen introduced Mr. Lester J. Pereira, Region XI Communications Chair, and a member of the development committee.
5. Chair's Report - Mr. Simonsen discussed goals for the upcoming year, including potential for a proposal to restructure the committee into a grassroots committee in which RCCs (regional communications chairs) would serve as the primary members. This change would be intended to expand the leadership pool and better represent regional voices across ASHRAE. A previous version of this motion was rejected by the Members Council due to insufficient budget detail, but this year, Mr. Simonsen would like to present a stronger case in January, giving Members Council more time for consideration. The restructuring is expected to have minimal budget impact, as RCCs already exist and the proposal would elevate their roles to the Society level.
6. Vice Chair's Report - Mr. Mendiratta was absent and did not provide a report.
7. Staff Report - Ms. Ratcliff reported that registration is open for the upcoming Chicago conference and encouraged members to book flights. She also let the committee know that due to the bylaws changes / membership models changes that were recently approved to take effect in July of next year, Society Rules Committee (SRC) has

requested committee review of the Reference Manual, Manual of Operations, and Rules of the Board (ROB). Ms. Ratcliff will post redlined versions of these documents to Basecamp for committee review, with all comments and revisions due to staff before the Members Council meeting on October 27. Ms. Ratcliff also reported that ASHRAE is testing an AI-assisted chatbot, scheduled to launch later this fall and noted several committee and board members are participating in testing, and Ms. Ratcliff is a lead staff contact for the project.

8. Ms. Ratcliff reported on registration for the upcoming virtual training sessions: Session One (February 15) has 156 registrants and Session Two (February 23) has 125 registrants. Both sessions will be recorded and uploaded to the Society website.
9. Mr. Roberts mentioned there may be a duplicate slide in the cross-chapter communications training deck prior to the sessions.
10. The committee discussed refreshing support and training for Technical Committee (TC) websites, which have not been updated in several years. Existing training documentation was considered adequate, but Mr. Roberts reported the current interface is basic and could benefit from modernization.
11. The committee reviewed the 2026-27 MBOs, including the following updates:
 - Recommendation to Members Council regarding restructuring committee to become grassroots. (Mr. Roberts will assist Mr. Simonsen.)
 - Virtual centralized training is being led by Mr. D'Atri with support from several committee members.
 - An objective to develop guidance for AI use in communication materials and update the ASHRAE brand guide includes evaluation of real-time AI translation tools for meetings, a need originally identified by Region 12. The committee will investigate whether the Society can provide centralized licensing for such tools, similar to current arrangements for Webex, to assist chapters and regions.
 - A comprehensive review of Basecamp 5 is planned to improve document management, searchability, and member invitation policies. (Mr. Roberts volunteered to assist.)
 - A formal review of all committee guidance documents on the website will proceed under the standard three-year review cycle.
12. Liaisons to Other Committees and Regional Communications Chairs - Ms. Ratcliff will distribute a follow-up communication listing open regional and standing committee liaison assignments to solicit volunteers. Mr. Roberts will maintain his current liaison roles for Region IX, Region X, and the Research Promotion (RP) committee and Mr. Simonsen will serve as liaison for Region V and Region VIII.
13. Ms. Ratcliff will distribute a poll to schedule the next committee meeting for the first, second, or third week of October, ensuring no conflicts with upcoming Chapters Regional Conferences (CRCs).
14. Mr. Simonsen adjourned the meeting at 11:42 AM EDT.