



COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

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2025 ASHRAE Winter Conference Meeting | Phoenix, AZ, USA

Sheraton Phoenix Downtown, Laveen B (Level 2)

Saturday, June 21, 2025

11:00 AM–2:00 PM MT

With Open Discussion Office Hour Following from 2:00 – 3:00 PM

MINUTES

<u>Members Present</u>	<u>Members</u>	<u>Guests</u>	<u>Staff</u>
<u>Daniel Bourque, Chair*</u>	Jeanette Hay	Adelio Gaspar	Joslyn Ratcliff
<u>Thursten Simonsen, Vice</u>	Bill McQuade,	Alfredo Escarate	
<u>Sandeep Mendiratta*</u>		Anuj Gupta	
<u>Franco D'Atri</u>		Apichit Lumlertpongpana	
<u>Brad White</u>		Carrie Brown, Incoming	
<u>Kinga Hydras*</u>		Casper Briggs	
<u>Niss Feiner*</u>		David Roberts, Incoming	
<u>Jim Arnold, BOD, Ex-o*</u>		Jack Kibort	
		Jeffery Hurd	
		Jason Alphonso	
		Julia Timberman	
		Mark Miller	
		Mohammed Murtaza	
		Richard Gunpat	
		Steven Gerazounis	

1. Mr. Bourque called the meeting to order at 11:09 EST and read the ASHRAE Value Statement.
2. Roll call was taken and visitors in the room were introduced.
3. Quorum was met with seven out of eight voting members in attendance.
4. Mr. Bourque facilitated an ice breaker asking individuals to share a book they're recently read or show they've recently watched that they enjoyed.
5. Mr. Simonsen moved to approve the April 15 and May 13 draft minutes. Mr. Feiner seconded, and the minutes were approved with no discussion. 7-0-0, CV.

6. The agenda was reviewed and accepted.
7. Ms. Brown presented the Leadership Presentation on behalf of Mr. Arnold, who attended the meeting virtually.
8. Mr. Bourque provided a chair's report, thanking the committee for its work and noted other items would be covered later in the meeting.
9. Mr. Simonsen provided a vice chair's report noting he will be discussing ideas for the 2025-26 Society year later in the meeting. He also called attention to a potential role for the committee regarding AI in regard to ASHRAE's 2025-28 Strategic Plan and shared that there had been an exchange between Communications Committee and Finance Committee on this topic.
10. Ms. Ratcliff provided a staff report and thanked the committee for their work and offered assistance with anything the committee members might need. She let the committee know the two motions the committee had previously passed to change ROB 1.201.010 and to allow for AI recording of meetings are on the Members Council agenda for its Phoenix meeting.
11. Liaisons from Communications Committee to other committees provided reports as follows:
 - Membership Promotion: Mr. White attended their meeting and will be serving on MP starting in SY 2025-26. Mr. White reported the Weebly page owned by MP will likely be taken into ashrae.org or the content posted somewhere else other than the separate Weebly site. Significant discussion also took place regarding the revisions to ASHRAE membership models.
 - TAC: Mr. D'Atri will attend their meeting Wednesday.
 - CTTC: Mr. Simonsen updated the committee regarding the changes to Basecamp and discussed collaborative editing with the group. Ms. Ratcliff will send information in the next Chapter Notes newsletter regarding the changes to Basecamp, ahead of the documentation from Communications Committee being updated, which will happen later this Society year. Regarding collaborative editing, Basecamp does not have a native way to allow for collaborative editing. To provide a means of collaborative editing, one chapter pays for a Microsoft 365 license for its chapter officers and asked if there would be a way for ASHRAE to do this. Mr. Bourque mentioned Region II looked into this and found that non-profit status is defined differently in Canada than in the US and also noted an issue would be management of the accounts. The group also discussed AI, especially regarding privacy and protection of intellectual property. Mr. Simonsen asked for input from the committee through fall on this.
 - Historical: Mr. Feiner will attend the Historical Committee meeting on Sunday, where he anticipates discussing awards as well as updating the committee on the Leadership Voices recordings. The awards at the Society and Chapter level have been underutilized and Mr. Feiner thinks Historical may ask for Communications' assistance to promote.
 - YEA: Mr. Bourque was not able to attend the meeting due to time zone issues, but noted their agenda has great hybrid etiquette noted within.
 - was unable to attend their Orlando meeting but reviewed their agenda and normally liaises with them every six months. A new chapter asked if it would be possible to use

a digital feedback form for chapter programs like the one used at conferences within ASHRAE 365. It was shared that Ron Gagnon from Region II uses an internal Office 365 form for this.

12. Mr. Bourque moved, and Mr. Feiner seconded, that Communications Committee recommend to Members Council to approve the 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 and make Communications Committee a grassroots committee.

Vote: 6-1-0, (1 absent) CV

The cost and impact were largely included within the original motion and the committee discussed additional considerations, including those explored by the ad hoc created at the committee's February meeting in Orlando as follows:

STAFF IMPACT:

The staff impact is expected to include:

- Updating the Regional Manual of Operations (RMO):

ASHRAE staff will need to revise the RMO to reflect the new designation of the Communications Committee as a Grassroots Committee and remove the word "optional" from the Regional Communications Chair role.

- Communication and Dissemination:

ASHRAE staff will need to prepare and send official communications to all regions, chapters, and relevant officers to inform them of this change. This will involve creating and distributing emails, newsletters, and updating internal communication platforms.

- Support for Implementation:

Staff will need to provide ongoing support to regions and chapters to implement this change. This includes guidance on budgeting for the RCC role, organizing training on communication tools, and ensuring chapters have access to the necessary resources for effective communication. Actual staff time shall be identified.

FISCAL IMPACT:

- Cost Associated at Chapter Level: 199 Chapters x USD 400/chair = USD 79,600.

This reflects the administrative costs of establishing a mandatory Regional Communications Chair in all chapters, similar to other Grassroots Committees.

- Cost Associated at Regional Level: CRC + Society Meetings Travel Expenses = USD 2,000.

This includes estimated travel costs for Regional Communications Chairs to attend Chapter Regional Conferences (CRC) and Society-level meetings.

- 2,000 USD X 16 Regions = 3,2000 USD
- Total Estimated Expected Costs: USD 111,600.

Comments:

In addition to the detailed and careful considerations already outlined in the motion from the Falcon chapter, the committee provides the following additional considerations if the motion were to move forward. These recommendations are a result of several meetings of an ad hoc committee formed to research the motion as well as multiple committee-level discussions:

- Each region would be represented by a communications RVC.
- Membership would increase from 8 voting members to at least 16 RVCs.
 - o Suggestion that consideration be given to follow a format consistent with the other grassroots committees to include a chair, vice chair(s), RVCs and subcommittees consistent with committee's scope and purpose.
- Staff will need to arrange for a bigger room at Winter and Annual conferences.
- If the motion passes, the Communications Committee recommends the Committee Chair establish an ad hoc to determine which, if any, subcommittees, especially standing subcommittees, would need to be raised.
- It will need to be determined if Centralized Training is required.
- Benefits of Communications Committee becoming grassroots could include:
 - o Better use of members' time because there is already an RCC serving in each of ASHRAE's 16 Regions. should be an RCC in each Region.
 - o Streamlining of the ASHRAE process in cutting out a step.
 - o Elevation of the RCC position.
 - o Every Region would be given a voice and the same access to Society-level information.
- The Committee would like to recognize Mohammed Murtaza from the Falcon Chapter for attending meetings of the ad hoc formed to discuss this motion and for providing guidance and input to the Committee as they considered the motion.

13. Adelio Gaspar from Membership Promotion presented a report to the committee.

- He shared that the Member Satisfaction Survey received a 5% response rate and asked the committee if there were ideas on how the number could be increased. Mr. White offered that 5% is generally standard and good for a survey of this type.
- He also shared MP is looking into gathering data about why members don't renew and the suggestion was made to communicate the value of ASHRAE.
- The creation of additional social channels for ASHRAE Society was discussed and it was noted that Society already has an Instagram channel.

14. Enhanced Virtual Meeting Capability at Society Conferences, an item Mr. Feiner is looking into, has an anticipated estimated cost of \$410k annually. Mr. Bourque shared observations that it was hard for his chapter to get people together physically again when hybrid options were offered; people would opt for the virtual option even when physical was offered, possible and practical. As a result, now the chapter does not offer a hybrid option and Mr. Bourque stated the value of in-person presence. The point was also made that enhanced virtual options would not offset costs of physical meetings since people would still travel. Mr. Feiner

did not have a motion ready, so the committee did not put forth a motion and Mr. Bourque noted that this topic could be brought back to the committee as new business anytime.

15. MBOs were discussed and updates are included in the [MBO tracking sheet](#).

16. Mr. Simonsen, incoming chair for 2025-26 discussed plans for 2025-26 as follows:

- The 2025-26 roster was reviewed.
- A regular review cycle, suggested 3 years, for the committee's guidance documents was discussed.
- The committee was informed regarding Finance Committee's ask regarding funds Communications Committee may need regarding AI, the mention of AI in the 2025-28 Strategic Plan, and possibilities for a role Communications Committee could play regarding AI were discussed. Time will be reserved on the August 15 agenda for further discussion about AI.
- Future meetings will be held as follows: August 15, mid-October, early January, early April, and mid-May. The first meeting will be held August 15 at 11 AM EDT and Ms. Ratcliff will send an invitation.

17. Mr. Bourque adjourned the meeting at 2 PM and the Committee's open Office Hour began.