



COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

2026 ASHRAE Winter Conference Meeting | Las Vegas, NV USA

11:00 AM–3:00 PM PT

MINUTES

Members Present

Thursten Simonsen, Chair
Sandeep Mendiratta, Vice Chair
Franco D'Atri
Brad White
Ana Perez-Bustamante Garcia
David Roberts
Carrie Brown, BOD-Ex-O

Members Absent

Jeanette Hay
Waqar Shah
Sarah Maston, CO

Guests

Francis Mills
Mohammed Murtaza
Chrysostomos Bouras
Tom Pollard
Steven Gerazounis
Tejeshkumar Bagul
Nileshkumar Mayani
Buzz Wright
Charlie Reifenberger
Elnaz Norouzi
Herlin Herlianika
Caroline Kelty
Nicolas Estefanell
Money Khanna

Staff

Joslyn Ratcliff

1. Mr. Simonsen called the meeting to order at 11:04 PST and read the ASHRAE Value Statement.
2. Roll call was taken and visitors in the room were introduced.
3. Quorum was met with five out of eight voting members in attendance.
4. Mr. Simonsen facilitated an ice breaker for those online and in-person and everyone shared their favorite food.
5. Mr. Simonsen called for a motion to approve the October 10 and December 12 draft minutes. Mr. Roberts moved to approve the minutes with no changes, Franco D'Atri seconded, and the minutes were approved with no discussion. 5-0-0, CV.
6. The agenda was reviewed and accepted.
7. Mr. Simonsen provided a chair's report, thanking the committee for its work and noted progress being made with the MBOs.
8. Mr. Mendiratta provided a vice chair's report. The PAOE suggestions for 2026-27 were reviewed

and will be shared with Members Council via the Communications Committee report. In addition, he shared information from his liaison visit to CTTC:

- Mr. Mendiratta suggested a single slide template be created for liaisons to convey the work and purpose of Communications Committee.
- CTTC may request assistance with a template for Distinguished Lecturers which would contain a QR code. They may also request Communications Committee assistance with CTTC training.
- CTTC will launch two new Tech Hours in February and March.

9. Ms. Ratcliff thanked the committee for its work and offered assistance to anyone who needs anything regarding their ASHRAE work.

10. Reports were given by liaisons who attended other committees:

- Membership Promotion (MP) – Mr. Gerazounis reported a 67% participation in MP's centralized training, and shared that an ASHRAE-branded credit card will soon be released.
- Chapter Technology Transfer (CTTC) – Mr. Mendiratta shared items from CTTC as part of his vice chair's report.
- Research Promotion (RP) – Mr. Roberts stated RP did not have a lot of asks for Communications Committee, however, he shared that a request would be forthcoming from the committee to provide boiler plate text for the committee's focus at the chapter level, which was well-received.
- Publications – Ms. Pérez-Bustamante discussed items being promoted in the Chapter Notes newsletter, and Ms. Ratcliff will ensure Communications Committee members receive this newsletter. It is designed to be sent to Chapter and Region leaders, as well as anyone who signs up.

The following meetings take place after Communications Committee and will be reported on afterwards:

- Historical - D'Atri
- Technical Activities Committee (TAC) - D'Atri
- MTG. GAI - Brad White

11. Ms. Brown presented the Leadership Presentation.

12. MBOs were discussed and updated 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.
Next step: Ms. Ratcliff will work with Marketing on final design, then the document will be posted online after Committee approval.
- **MBO #2** - Complete annual review and update of guidance documents provided by the committee, with emphasis on Basecamp and focus on creation of a 3-year rotation plan where every document is reviewed and updated as needed every 3 years.
Next step: Mr. White to review Basecamp information sent to him by Ms. Ratcliff to proceed with document update. MBO notes that the committee aims to complete

YouTube and App Guidance by Winter Conference.

- **MBO #3** - Explore establishing a Society-level Communications Award – with work from Mr. D’Atri and Ms. Pérez-Bustamante Garcia. The motion has been sent to Honors & Awards Committee for their consideration. If H&A passes, it will move forward for approval by Members Council.

Next step: MBO 100% Complete

- **MBO #4** - Create curriculum for virtual training.
Next step: Mr. White has uploaded PPT templates. Each member assigned a module, including Mr. Simonsen, Mr. Mendiratta, Ms. Ratcliff, Mr. D’Atri, Mr. Roberts and Mr. White to begin work on their modules using the template provided by Mr. White. This MBO will be a heavy focus this spring. Ms. Ratcliff will reach out to Ms. Hay regarding the Cross-Chapter Communications Tools Module and Mr. White will reach out to Mr. Bourque regarding the Dynamic Planning Calendar. Mr. Mohammed Murtaza, RAL RCC, has volunteered for Module 3: Social Media Tips & Guidelines and Email Marketing.

- i. [List of modules and to whom they are assigned is on Basecamp.](#)
- ii. [PPT templates to use are also on Basecamp.](#)

- **MBO #5** - Update WordPress theme and create plan for updating Wix Template. Mr. Roberts has updated the Wix template to reflect ASHRAE branding and more closely resemble the Wordpress theme. The revisions were shared with the committee and changes to the committee names, Government Affairs Grassroots Committee will change to Government Affairs Committee, and Women in ASHRAE will change to Diversity and Equity (DEI), were discussed so the template will match the current names. Mr. Roberts will make these changes and will also add the committee descriptions once those are available. Next steps regarding the WordPress template were discussed and Ms. Ratcliff shared the vendor has been ready to make the changes and funding was previously approved for the changes to be made. The last step before the vendor can begin work is to submit the committee descriptions. Mr. Bourque previously shared he had thoughts regarding revisions to the format of the descriptions and the project is awaiting these thoughts. Given the timeline and funds, Mr. Simonsen suggested it may be necessary to move ahead with the committee descriptions using the suggested [format previously posted in Basecamp](#).

Next step: Ms. Ratcliff to reach out to staff liaisons for content to use for boilerplate descriptions. Once committee descriptions are obtained, Ms. Ratcliff will send to the vendor to begin work on the changes regarding the WordPress theme and Mr. Roberts will input them into the Wix template.

- **MBO #6** - Explore and report on needs/wants and potential capabilities of AI could be used for ASHRAE Communications needs.
 - i. Mr. Mendiratta asked if AI will replace the committee’s Office Hours or reduce the need if information can be more readily found in digestible format.
 - ii. Dr. Brown shared that there is a role in how AI is used for communications, and

looking into AI from the communications perspective would be how the committee could best serve at this time. Additionally she shared there is a member resource being considered that would use ASHRAE's IP.

- iii. Mr. Simonsen discussed if Basecamp has AI in its roadmap. Ms. Ratcliff reported that it does not, but they would be open to considering suggestions in the same way they consider feature upgrades.

Next step: Ms. Ratcliff to start an area for the committee to chat regarding the role in how AI is/may be used for communications needs within ASHRAE groups.

13. Mr. Simonsen invited anyone in the meeting to bring up any additional business. No one had anything additional to bring up.
14. 2026-2027 PAOE suggestions were reviewed in addition to having been posted to Basecamp for committee review and comment prior to the meeting. No one had additional suggestions and Mr. Simonsen called for a motion to approve the suggestions as submitted. Mr. White moved to approve and Mr. Mendiratta seconded and the 2026-27 PAOE suggestions were approved with no changes, 5-0-0, CNVⁱ.
15. The next meeting was set for Friday, March 6th from 11:00-12:30 PM EST.
16. Mr. Simonsen called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. White moved to adjourn, Mr. Mendiratta seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 12:58 PM PST.

ⁱ An additional member joined the meeting since the other votes were taken earlier in the meeting.