COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Virtual Committee Meeting

Friday, March 6, 2026
11:00 AM – 12:30 PM EST

MINUTES

Members Present	Members Absent	Guests	Staff
Thursten Simonsen, Chair	Waqar Ali Shah		Joslyn Ratcliff
Sandeep Mendiratta, V. Chair	Jeanette Hay		
Franco D'Atri	Sarah Maston, CO		
Brad White			
Ana Perez-Bustamante Garcia			
David Roberts			
Carrie Brown, BOD Ex-Officio			

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1. Mr. Simonsen called the meeting to order at 11:03 AM EST and read the ASHRAE Value Statement.

2. Roll call was taken and quorum was not met initially, but was later met with 6 voting members on the call.

3. The agenda was reviewed and the report on Emerging Technologies from ASHRAE Planning Committee was added to new business.

4. Mr. Simonsen called for a motion to approve the Las Vegas meeting minutes. Mr. White moved and Mr. Roberts seconded. The minutes were approved, 4-0-1, CV.

5. Dr. Brown has submitted the committee "progress report" and recommendations from the committee ahead of the appointments, which will take place at the end of March. She also shared the Board of Directors approved a $95 USD committee-only registration for the Annual Conference for standing committee members.

6. Mr. Simonsen thanked the committee for its work and encouraged the group to continue the forward momentum.

7. Mr. Mendiratta did not have a vice chair's report.

8. Ms. Ratcliff provided the following updates to the committee:
    i. Annual Conference registration will open March 9.
    ii. The committee discussed and decided to hold an Office Hour in conjunction with the ASHRAE Annual Conference immediately following the Communications Committee meeting. Ms. Ratcliff will request it to be placed on the schedule.
    iii. Planning Committee has requested feedback from Communications Committee regarding AI / Emerging Technologies Report. Mr. Simonsen commented that they only need one response from the committee for the 3-question survey and noted the Emerging Technologies report would be discussed later in the meeting.
    iv. Committee appointments take place at ASHRAE HQ the last week in March, so assignments will be sent soon after that, likely the first week of April.

9. Status with Excellence in Communications Award and Next Steps (first award Annual Conference 2028) were discussed:
    i. The award was approved unanimously by Members Council in Las Vegas. Honors and Awards will now work with Society Rules Committee to have the award added to the Rules of the Board. (This addition must be approved by the BOD.)
    ii. The first nominations will be due in the Summer of 2027, so at the end of the 2026-27 (next) Society year.
    iii. During the 2026-27 Society year, the committee will need to promote the award so that nominations are made. Promotion early in the Society year is preferred so the chairs are aware that the work they will be doing that year will be eligible for a Society-level award.
    iv. Mr. Simonsen suggested a judging committee be formed very early in the 2027-28 Society year to review nominations and submit them to Honors and Awards before the deadline.
    v. It was noted that there should be a mention on the centralized training the committee is developing regarding the Excellence in Communications Award.

10. Liaisons to other committees provided reports from their interactions.
    i. Mr. White provided an update from the MTG.GENAI stating the group held a collaborative and open discussion regarding AI in the HVAC industry. He shared with the committee that Communications Committee had been approached regarding how AI could be used to improve the use of volunteer time and the committee will be in touch with Mr. White.
    ii. Mr. D'Atri was unable to attend Historical Committee, but will reach out to past Communications Committee member and Historical Committee member Niss Feiner.
    iii. Mr. Simonsen encouraged the committee to continue to communicate between meetings, especially in terms of with the Regional Communications Chairs.

11. Communications Committee MBOs were discussed and [updated in Basecamp](). 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 shared final design from Marketing to Basecamp, and will have some additional thoughts from RP staff, after which the committee can review and approve the document for circulation.
    - **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: Ms. Ratcliff to move forward with the updates to the Basecamp documentation to remove outdated documents, revise the ashrae.org page as shared on Mr. White's screen during the meeting (and detailed in Basecamp), and provide suggested edits to the documents that will be retained.
    - **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. Members Council approved and the next step is for the award to be added to the ASHRAE ROB.
      Next step: MBO 100% Complete
      Although this MBO is 100% complete, the committee discussed next steps needed earlier in the meeting to ensure submissions are received and a winner is put forward by the deadline as well as the broad process for the award being added to the ROB.
    - **MBO #4** - Create curriculum for virtual training.
      Next step: Members have been assigned modules to complete. Once the first drafts are completed they can be placed in the For Review folder in Basecamp. Once Reviewed, they will move to the Final folder, signifying they are ready for presentation. The committee was invited to review the slides from Mr. Murtaza for Module 3 – Social Media and Communications. Ms. Ana Perez-Bustamante Garcia volunteered to work on a module, and Ms. Ratcliff will check her email and confirm.
        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 Wix template.
      Next step: Ms. Ratcliff will have committee descriptions from the committee staff liaisons by the end of March at which time she'll pass along to Mr. Roberts and ShiftWeb.
      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.
        Next step: The committee reviewed the Emerging Technology Ad Hoc report. Ms. Ratcliff to seek permission to post to Basecamp and post. The committee

will continue conversation regarding how AI could be used for ASHRAE Communication needs. Mr. White will stay in touch as liaison for MTG.GENAI.

12. Mr. Simonsen asked if anyone in the meeting had additional items to bring up. No one had anything.

13. The next meeting was set for Friday, April 17 from 11:00 AM EDT – 12:30 PM EDT.

14. Mr. Simonsen adjourned the meeting at 12:37 PM EST.