



## COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Conference Call

Thursday, April 23, 2020

11:00 AM–12:00 PM ET

### MINUTES

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1. Call Meeting to Order

Mr. Alfonso called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM ET.

2. Code of Ethics

Mr. Alfonso read an excerpt from the Code of Ethics:

As members of ASHRAE or participants in ASHRAE activities, we pledge to act with honesty, fairness, courtesy, competence, integrity and respect for others in our conduct. We will avoid conflicts of interest, and behavior that is discriminatory and/or harassing. See full Code of Ethics at <https://www.ashrae.org/code-of-ethics>

2. Roll call of Communications Committee members, staff & guests

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Gerardo Alfonso  
Pam Duffy  
Ken Cooper  
Karine Leblanc  
Richard Kimball  
Jessica Mangler  
Randy Reed

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mark Hydeman

GUESTS / STAFF PRESENT:

Lara Roenitz  
Joslyn Ratcliff

Marites Calad  
Billy Austin  
Kay Thrasher  
Nikos Giannitsanos  
Tom Pollard

### 3. Quorum Check

Quorum was established with seven voting members on the call.

### 4. Review of Agenda

The agenda was reviewed and no changes were made.

### 5. Approval of Orlando Meeting Minutes

Mr. Cooper move to approve the Conference Call #1 Minutes, Ms. Leblanc seconded.

Minutes were approved with no changes and no discussion.

7-0-0, CV

### 6. Overview Reports

#### a. Chair's Report

- i. Mr. Alfonso provided COVID-19 updates as they relate to the committee. The presentation is posted to Basecamp.
- ii. Mr. Alfonso provided the latest report on Chapter and Region websites and posted information to Basecamp. The information is from Metricspot.

#### b. Vice Chair's Report

- i. Ms. Duffy commented on the 2020-2021 roster and is excited to see the makeup of the committee for the coming year.
- ii. Ms. Duffy shared her work on the PAOE subcommittee as it relates to the committee. She let the committee know that President-Elect Chuck Gulledge finalized the PAOE on April 21 and invited any questions that come in to be sent to her. She also provided an update on the current 2019-2020 PAOE as it relates to COVID-19, that no changes would be made because points can be entered at each region/chapter's discretion; for example, a virtual chapr meeting counts the same as an in-person meeting in terms of points and with only two months left in the year, it did not seem to make sense to revise.

#### c. Staff Reports Ms. Ratcliff provided a report on two action items.

- i. **Action Item ORL1: Staff**—Ms. Ratcliff to ask ASHRAE IT if it is now possible to provide servers for SSL hosting that would include databases.

After speaking with ASHRAE IT, Ms. Ratcliff provided the following update: the two platforms for which the committee is developing templates, Wix and Wordpress, don't lend themselves to ASHRAE hosting. Although ASHRAE IT, would be willing to investigate further, there does not seem to be a logical need to do so. External hosting is not an option offered by Wix. Wordpress can be self-hosted at a cost as low as \$6 USD/month. The program runs on PHP and needs to be continually patched for security reasons, given the small cost verses the work involved in maintaining a secure hosting environment, it makes most sense for Wordpress to be

self-hosted.

**Action Item ORL2: Staff**—Ms. Ratcliff to investigate renewals not getting to members, specifically those with Gmail addresses.

As per this action item, staff has investigated Gmail bounce rates. The bounce rates appeared higher in July than they are now and ultimately depend on the message sent. Recently, from the messages analyzed, staff can report anywhere from a 1.5 to 3% bounce rate to Gmail addresses. With that in mind, staff can also share that the accepted benchmark for bounced emails is 2%, however, aim for that number to be as small as possible. Staff has begun to implement throttling of emails and has made modifications to our footers after consulting with our email service provider and has seen bounce rates in general go down after doing so. Staff will continue to keep an eye on the bounce rates.

- ii. Ms. Ratcliff shared that the Annual Conference previously to take place in Austin, TX, would now be virtual and that information would be forthcoming. Ms. Duffy shared that she would love to see this committee more involved with decisions about the virtual conference. Ms. Leblanc agreed and added that the committee should have been asked for input and Ms. Mangler agreed. General feelings were if the committee could go back with something at this point, such as writing a guideline and sharing it. Ms. Leblanc stated it feels very unclear. Ms. Ratcliff shared that no decisions have been made yet and work is being done to determine the details. Ms. Calad, who is on CEC and helping with virtual conference planning, shared that CEC was working on this, and she would take an action item to see what the deadlines are. Mr. Alfonso emphasized that as a committee, it is important to know, so that the committee can share the information with other members that ask. Mr. Cooper suggested that the discussion was exhausted and could move on.

## 8. Subcommittee Reports

### a. Strategic Planning:

Mr. Alfonso shared that the ECC Strategic Planning Subcommittee met prior to the full committee meeting. Discussion took place during the meeting regarding coming out with best practices for webinars / virtual meetings.

Ms. Duffy provided information regarding plans for 2020-2021 to do away with the subcommittee structure for the committee. Instead of subcommittees working on projects, projects will be identified with a team lead and small group working on them as appropriate on a per project basis.

### b. Electronic Collaboration Tools:

Mr. Cooper discussed the draft document that outlines the Rules of Engagement for Basecamp.

### c. Social Media Subcommittee:

Ms. Leblanc posted several suggestions to Basecamp, including that of a brand ambassador, regarding social media. Ms. Ratcliff stated that staff will review the suggestions and provide feedback by April 30.

d. Websites:

Ms. Mangler described progress on the templates for Chapter websites for Wix and Wordpress. The group has made much progress and will be ready to share more in June.

9. New Business – Ideas from Region VII RCC

- a. Ms. Thrasher discussed several points regarding items she had noted in her Region.
  - a. Ms. Thrasher suggested the idea of a forum (perhaps outside of Basecamp) for webmasters and communications-type positions at the chapter level where the officers could share ideas and communicate with one another across chapters.
  - b. Committee-provided training for the chapter webmasters and communications-type positions.
  - c. Committee-provided training for the Regional Communications Chairs / Webmasters – (perhaps higher level than the chapter training).

Ms. Duffy asked if this was technical-type training and Ms. Thrasher noted that it was and provided an example of the technical content covered in the Chapter and Region website reports from Metricspot. Ms. Duffy agreed that additional training would be beneficial and that TCs would benefit. She noted that she can consider this as she works on committee MBOs for 2020-2021.

10. MBOs were discussed and noted as on target for completion.

13. Ms. Duffy will take the lead on creating a Virtual Meeting Guidance document with a goal of completion by June 1, 2020. Mr. Cooper, Mr. Alfonso, Ms. Leblanc, Ms. Mangler and Mr. Khayata volunteered to assist and Ms. Duffy will post additional information to Basecamp.

14. Mr. Alfonso called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Cooper moved to adjourn the meeting, Ms. Mangler seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 12:02 PM ET.