



JAM Business Development Committee Meeting

October 16, 2025 | Atlanta, GA

Committee Members Present:

Chair – Lea Hoover, Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative, OR
Jay Buchholz, Sioux Valley Energy, SD
Brad Ebersole, Consolidated Cooperative, OH
Annie Erbert, Sunflower Electric Power Corporation, KS
Brooke Guthman, Egyptian Electric Cooperative, IL
Tanner Hayes, Poudre Valley REA, CO
Katie LaBree, Butler County Electric Cooperative, IA
Tom Lambrecht, Great River Energy, MN
Andie Massa, LCEC, FL
Ryan Nance, NC's Electric Cooperatives, NC
Matt Porth, Mid-Carolina Electric Cooperative, SC
Devin Sonnenfelt, White River Valley Electric Cooperative, MO
Matt Walters, Boone Power, IN
Jeremy Woeste, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, ND

Committee Members Not Present:

Michael Jansen, Trico Electric Cooperative, AZ
Christine Owens, Mohave Electric Cooperative, AZ
Christina Perkins, Owen Electric Cooperative, KY
Heather Verrett, DEMCO, LA
Chris Walker, Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative, TX

Touchstone Energy Staff:

Jana Adams
Scott Bialick
Josh McGhee

Meeting Opening

Lea Hoover called the meeting to order, took roll call, and called for a motion to approve the July 2025 meeting minutes from JAM. The motion was approved. We welcomed Tom Lambrecht and Jay Buchholz to their first meeting. We reviewed committee terms and were at 19 members with the departure from the co-op of Nick Bowers. Hoover announced this will be her last meeting as committee chair. Devin Sonnenfelt was nominated to be the next committee chair, pending approval of the Touchstone Energy Board President.

Business Member Summit Recap

The committee discussed the Summit that wrapped up just prior to our meeting. We hosted 50 registered guests, with 15 of the attendees representing business members. The general consensus was that there were interactive conversations, many compelling speakers with a few that struggled, strong networking opportunities, and well executed roundtable exercises. Several energy managers said they liked the smaller group setting for the event and would like to know more about the cooperative business model and advantage, as well as how to navigate the distribution co-op/G&T relationships. There was desire to keep doing the event every two years, as we have been.

NEXT Conference Preview and Committee Involvement Ideas

Josh McGhee previewed the NEXT 2026 program for February 2-4 in Tucson, AZ. One committee suggestion for increased business guest interaction was to have a Co-op 101/Cooperative Advantage pre-con before the joint lunch. We would bring back the first-time attendee welcome outreach with committee involvement. Additionally, we'll have committee members function as moderators, alongside vendor sponsors, for the energy session discussions. Several good speaker recommendations were captured as well.

Cooperative Advantage Report (CAR)

Bialick highlighted that the survey response collection was wrapping up and had some key metrics:

- 54 distribution co-ops in 26 states participated
- There were more than 11,500 residential member responses
- Co-ops can pay \$4,500 for their local report with highly detailed responses; Statewides/G&Ts can obtain a report for \$9,500. This provides the results for any of their systems that participated in the CAR to get a more regional perspective.
- We saw the importance of things like MSR/call center interactions, website usability, proactive communications and more.
- We'll hold a webinar and share a summary of results in Q4 with all Touchstone Energy members.

The new research approach produces prescriptive next steps based on the results and how heavily certain areas impact overall satisfaction. We'll start collecting sign ups for the 2026 CAR in Q4, with a March 15 deadline for co-ops to opt in.

2026 Initiatives

The committee discussed revising and promoting the "Building a Key Accounts Culture" course for all staff, to be given at the distribution co-op level. There should be a train-the-trainer component as well, so that statewides and G&Ts can help with delivering the training. There was also suggestion of a two hour "Economic Development for Co-ops" session as well for the non-ED practitioners. A Co-op 101 course like we'll be delivering at NEXT could be packaged for business members/Energy Manager contacts. Webinars featuring co-op served businesses and energy managers were also a request.

Co-op Connections Update

We are examining bringing the Connections.coop site in house to save \$75k per year. We will need to preserve local discount functionality since there is still a sizeable group of co-ops still recruiting local offers. But we hope to make this program revenue neutral at the very least.

2026 Budget Review

McGhee reviewed the proposed 2026 balanced budget going in front of the TE Board in November. Special focus was placed on the continued growth in non-dues revenue, with research income and SHINE & content support on the rise. For this committee, two things to note is the reduction in budget for 2026 due to being an off year for the Business Member Summit and the efforts to move Connecitons.coop away from the third-party vendor.

Other Business / Adjourn

The next advisory committee meeting will be held on Teams a week to 10 days after NEXT. The meeting focuses on recapping the conference and looking at 2026 initiatives.

Our summer meeting will be held as part of the Joint Advisory Meeting (JAM) and is scheduled for the morning of Tuesday, July 21 in Chicago at the Inter-Continental Hotel. There will be content for committees the morning of July 22 as well.

There was a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:00 p.m. and it was approved.