

January 14, 2025, Membership Division Meeting Notes

Attendees



1. **Bobby Sadler (Chair, LCRA)**
2. **Denise Weathers (VP of Membership and Meetings, UTC)**
3. **Tony Supa (Public Service Electric and Gas)**
4. **Marie Asbury (Tri-State Generation and Transmission)**
5. **Doug Barton (Southern Company)**
6. **Daniel Maeller (SMUD)**
7. **David Parkhurst (Grant County PUD)**
8. **Bryan Rask (Avista Corporation)**
9. **Steve Liegl (WEC Energy Group)**

1. **Welcome and opening Remarks – Bobby Saddler, Chair**

Bobby initiated the meeting by welcoming members and acknowledging Cornell and Rusty's absence due to travel commitments. He noted it was the first meeting of the new year, expressing excitement about the updates and contributions anticipated from the group.

2. **Approval of the Minutes:** Minutes were approved – Tony motioned, Bobby seconded.

3. **Safety Moment – Bobby Saddler**

Bobby shared a personal story that highlighted the importance of safety. He shared his father's "best safety advice": "Don't be stupid." He encouraged members to always consider whether actions taken (especially in home maintenance and work tasks) are safe or require extra precautions.

- a. He illustrated this advice through a recent experience of changing oil on cars, emphasizing the importance of using proper equipment like jack stands to prevent accidents.
- b. Tony contributed by noting that she regularly texts her sons, "No stupidity today," as a reminder for safe decision-making.

4. **UTC Leadership Update: Anthony Suppa**

Tony provided insight from the first executive committee call of the year, noting that the committee resumed work after the holidays and is gearing up for regional meetings starting next month. He highlighted upcoming events, specifically mentioning:

- a. Gas and Water Summit to be organized in Minneapolis.
- b. Plans for another D.C. Summit led by Rusty.

Tony emphasized the importance of member engagement and initiatives for the year ahead, projecting a busy and productive year for UTC.

5. **Membership Update: Denise** reported Denise detailed the membership status at the start of 2026. Key points discussed included: a collection of 74% of the projected 2026 budget, amounting to approximately \$1.6 million against their \$2.1 million target. Outstanding payments totaling \$287,000 anticipated from CORE and associates, as well as \$43,000 from exhibitors.
6. Marketing strategies in place to reach out to entities that have yet to renew their memberships, with a clear warning that the exhibitor fees would increase by \$1,500 for

late renewals. She mentioned WAPA (Washington Area Power Association) and NW Natural, both of which committed for 5 years, with dues deferred.

7. Denise reported a \$135,000 increase in new member revenue, signaling growth in participation compared to previous years.
8. **Plans for New Member Reception: Bobby** initiated a discussion regarding the idea of hosting a new member reception at the upcoming conference in Minneapolis. Marie proposed that the reception be casual, a meet-and-greet session allowing new members to mingle before the main sessions. The group discussed the logistics of identifying and inviting new members ahead of the conference to ensure adequate participation, with Denise suggesting a targeted invitation process. Members also discussed potential sponsorship for the event.
9. **Welcome Kits for New Members:** Members shared ideas for the contents of welcome kits to be provided to new attendees.
 - a. Suggestions included UTC-branded items such as pins, coffee mugs, and conference guides.
 - b. Marie emphasized creating a Convention Guide specifically designed for first-time attendees, adding tips on networking and appropriate dress codes. Marie suggested that the planned new-member reception could be an excellent opportunity for newcomers to meet and connect with their assigned mentors. This informal setting would allow for relaxed interactions, where first-time attendees can ask questions about the conference, the organization, and the industry. She also mentioned that the planned new-member reception could be an excellent opportunity for newcomers to meet and connect with their assigned mentors. This informal setting would allow for relaxed interactions, where first-time attendees can ask questions about the conference, the organization, and the industry as a whole.
 - c. The reception would function as an icebreaker, enabling new members to engage with their mentors in a supportive environment, reducing any initial anxiety about networking at the conference.
 - d. Denise mentioned the possibility of including a personal touch with handwritten notes from board members to enhance the welcome experience.
10. **Mentorship/Buddy System for New Attendees:** The concept of establishing a mentorship or buddy system for new members was discussed extensively during the meeting, with the aim of helping newcomers feel more welcome and integrated into the UTC community. This initiative seeks to facilitate connections between seasoned members and first-time attendees, ensuring that new members have a supportive network as they navigate their first conference experience.

Key Discussion Points:

- a. **Effective Pairing Strategy:** The group discussed the importance of pairing new attendees with seasoned members who share common interests or work within relevant industry sectors. This approach ensures that relationships formed are beneficial and meaningful, enhancing the new member's experience.
- b. Bobby and Denise proposed reaching out to board members, Regional Officers, and long-standing attendees to encourage their participation as mentors or buddies during the upcoming conference. A simple sign-up form could be created for volunteers to indicate their areas of expertise and availability, helping establish a pool of mentors ready to support newcomers.
- c. Denise emphasized that understanding the specific interests and professional backgrounds of new attendees could guide better and more effective pairings. This information would allow

each mentor to provide tailored advice and insights, making the experience more relevant to the newcomer.

- d. During the discussion, it was noted that meetings at the conference would be organized by region. Bobby emphasized the importance of regional meetings, which would allow local members to connect more easily and discuss specific challenges or opportunities pertinent to their areas.
- e. Bobby suggested that officers from the Membership Division attend these regional gatherings to actively engage with members and offer insights. It was decided that having officers present would create a more personalized experience, allowing them to mentor regional attendees directly.
- f. Officers would have the opportunity to share valuable information about membership benefits and resources, answer questions, and encourage participation in UTC activities. Bobby expressed enthusiasm for this direct engagement, believing it would reinforce the sense of community and support among members.

Next Steps:

- a. It was agreed that Denise would oversee the gathering of the new attendee list through conference registration data and that the information should be collected as early as possible to allow sufficient time for successful mentor pairings.
- b. Bobby and Denise would also collaborate on drafting outreach communication to board members and seasoned attendees, outlining the benefits of participation and encouraging their involvement in the mentorship program.
- c. Bobby also expressed attending the January 20 Regional Division Meeting to discuss the suggested membership program by region
- d. The committee planned to revisit this topic during upcoming meetings to fine-tune the logistics of the program and review feedback from both mentors and new members after the conference.