



BOARD & COMMITTEE ONBOARDING PACKAGE



Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperatives
The power of human connections[®]



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Touchstone Energy[®]
Cooperatives

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TOUCHSTONE ENERGY OVERVIEW

Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives is a national brand that supports its network of electric cooperatives across 46 states in achieving outstanding member satisfaction with our innovative partnerships, resources and services to help member cooperatives and their employees better engage and serve their members.

Membership gives co-ops access to a wealth of member engagement resources, advertising and communication campaigns, employee educational opportunities, business development programs and cooperative performance resources.

Touchstone Energy is governed by its Board of Directors and receives strategic insight from its regional members. In addition, five advisory committees provide co-op insight and focus on program development for member engagement. The by-laws establish their existence and governance.



Understanding our mission and vision is important to serving on a committee.



Touchstone Energy is the gold standard of excellence and helps co-ops strengthen their relationships with their member-owners.



Our Story Video shares Touchstone Energy core values and how putting members first is a priority.



Touchstone Energy staff manages the programs and resources. A complete list of the programs and the contact can be found here: **[Touchstone Energy Program and Contact List](#)**.

BOARD & COMMITTEE GUIDE



The Board, Regional Members and Advisory committees play an important role in supporting Touchstone Energy Cooperative members.

- *Acts on behalf of all members*
- *Supports Touchstone Energy initiatives*
- *Each group has specific roles and responsibilities*

BOARD OF DIRECTORS POLICY

As provided in its articles of incorporation and bylaws, the board of directors shall manage the affairs of Touchstone Energy Cooperative, Inc. (“TSE”).

All of the powers of the corporation reside in the board of directors acting as one body, excepting those appropriately delegated by the board to staff and excepting those powers that have been conferred upon or reserved for the members by statute or by the cooperative’s articles of incorporation or bylaws.

The board is ultimately responsible and accountable for the corporation’s performance. This policy lists the board’s key duties and responsibilities and establishes the standards by which its powers shall be exercised.

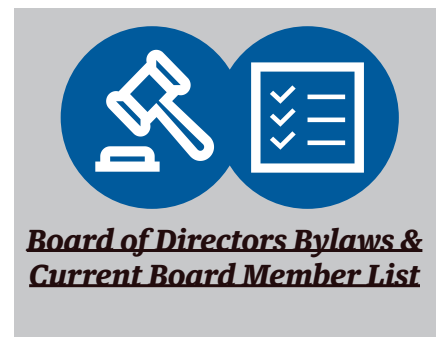
TSE expects its directors to gain and maintain the knowledge and skills necessary to function actively and effectively as members of the board of directors.

Board Ad Hoc Committee

These committees are appointed by board to accomplish specific initiatives pertaining to strengthening the brand.

Long Range Planning Committee

This committee is comprised of current board members to examine dues, fee structure, licensing agreements for three-year forecasting.



Membership Ad Hoc Committee

In March 2019, the Board appointed an Executive Committee to serve as the Membership Committee. All new membership applications must be reviewed by Touchstone Energy staff to make sure the applicant is qualified under the Bylaws and Board Policy No. 8, and voted on and approved by the Membership Committee (which is the Executive Committee). The Executive Committee is the President, VP, Sec.-Treasurer, and At-Large officer.

REGIONAL MEMBER GROUP ORGANIZING BYLAW

As listed in the Bylaws of Touchstone Energy Cooperative, Inc.,

Article II Members and Membership, Section 2.4-Regional Members. “A Regional Member must be a Full Member. The Cooperative membership shall be organized such that the Full Members may be affiliated together in groupings as Regional Memberships for purposes relating to the functions specified in these Bylaws. Each Regional Member shall be subject to (1) an initial membership equity contribution to be set by the Board, but not less than \$60,000; and (2) any ongoing dues or assessments as specified by the Board; and (3) at least annually shall report to the Cooperative the contact information for the Regional Member along with a list of the Full Members who are formally affiliated with the Regional Member. The Regional Members shall together form a Regional Member Group and each Regional Member shall designate a representative to the Regional Member Group. The Regional Member Group shall meet from time to time for purposes of establishing its own governing policies and implementing the requirements of Regional Members under these Bylaws.”



ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Advisory committees are responsible for program development and making recommendations with their member co-ops to the Touchstone Energy board of directors. Each committee serves a specific function and is led by a chair and Touchstone Energy staff member.



Brand Strategy



Business Development



Cooperative Relations



Cooperative Performance & Research



Ad Hoc

Advisory Committee Member List



Brand Strategy

Provides oversight and direction of all external communication efforts in support of Touchstone Energy member cooperatives including:

- Creative implementation
- Market analysis
- Message development
- National advertising planning/placement
- Promotional and public relations activities
- Strategic partnerships and alliances

In addition, the committee recommends guidelines for local communications spending commitment and encourages consistent local application of the brand communication strategy.

Specific programs include recommendations for externally facing programs such as national messaging and media placement, content development for advertising and TouchstoneEnergy.com. This committee also assists on the Co-op Web Builder program.



Business Development

Develop and oversee initiatives that help cooperatives demonstrate the Cooperative Advantage by strengthening their relationships with members and businesses by:

- Developing and enhancing partnerships between cooperatives and national, regional and local business
- Identifying and sharing best business practices, such as service expectations and excellence, energy management and energy industry trends
- Developing and overseeing programs that demonstrate the value of cooperative membership

Provides content guidance, training and speaker recommendations for the NEXT Conference, Co-op Connections and Key Accounts Community Resources. Additionally plays a role in the Co-op Community Initiative.



Cooperative Relations

Encourages the use of the brand to demonstrate the cooperative advantage. Motivates members to take ownership and realize the full value of the brand by:

- Communicating the value and return on investment the brand brings to Touchstone Energy co-ops
- Emphasizing how the brand is relevant to all roles, their co-op and their members
- Continually educating stakeholders about new and existing programs
- Demonstrating the value of brand resources, for both retention and recruitment of members

They provide feedback and insight on member recruitment and retention through Value Propositions and Resource Reviews/Brand Experiences. Their membership outreach includes communication, conferences, member resources and The Touchstone Energy Balloon and mascot programs. The committee also focuses on the Brand Ambassador program and Brand Champion Awards.



Cooperative Performance and Research

Provides consumer-based research to increase member engagement and develops energy resources that enhance cooperative performance and demonstrate they are the “trusted source” with their members.

- Provides consumer-based research to improve member satisfaction and engagement through performance-based programs.
- Supports cooperatives with strategic resources such as the American Customer Satisfaction Index survey efforts.
- Further advances beneficial electrification through energy solutions.
- Develops topics and provide guidance for the National Survey on the Cooperative Difference Survey and quarterly member insights.
- Reviews resources and collaborate with other committees on content development for energy efficiency and new technologies guided by consumer research.



Ad Hoc Committees

Committees may be formed to focus on specific topics and would draw from members-at-large whose expertise would be beneficial to the committee. These committees would have a specific goal and timeline to complete a project. Topic examples include cooperative culture, community development and the membership network.

COMMITTEE MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES & ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Cooperative employees who become committee members provide guidance and program oversight that benefits the entire membership. Advisory committee members serve up to two 3-year terms.

Act as liaison between membership and Touchstone Energy

- Attend in-person and virtual meetings and contribute to discussion
- Respect confidentiality of committee discussions and projects
- Gather and report back relevant information about brand usage
- Share with the committee local and regional information to inform decision-making
- Recruit and nominate candidates for assorted awards, committees, etc
- Promote the brand in their region by sharing benefits of Touchstone Energy's programs

COMMITTEE MEMBER SELECTION

Regional Member representatives review membership changes on advisory committees and make recommendations for open committee positions. This process includes consultation with the chairs of the committees. Recommendations from membership-at-large are also considered.

Members interested in joining a committee must submit a **member application** on cooperative.com.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHAIRS

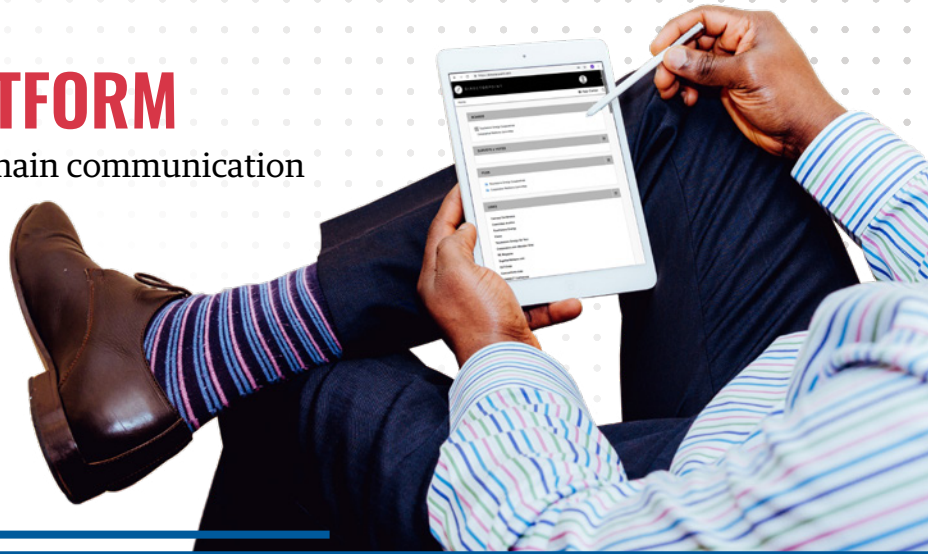
Nominations are discussed with Touchstone Energy committee liaison and Executive Director. The list is then brought to committee for a vote. Chairs serve the duration of the term.

- Works with Touchstone Energy liaison on content for meetings
- Chair leads meetings and approval of minutes by committee at next meeting date
- Oversee committee nominations, discuss with Touchstone Energy committee liaison and Executive Director. The list is then brought to committee for a vote.
- Chairs serve the duration of their term.



COMMUNICATION PLATFORM

The committees use BoardEffect as the main communication tool. This online platform allows for meeting updates, discussion and file storage. It is a complete record of all committee business.



ROLE OF THE TOUCHSTONE ENERGY LIAISON

- Plan each meeting with Chair
 - Location and logistics for meeting and meals
 - Store all files and communicate to committee about meeting on BoardEffect
 - Use Committee Agenda Template for PowerPoint presentations
 - Minutes recorded after each meeting and posted within 10 days.
 - Maintain member list
 - Use Minutes Template Options
- Liaison or chair gives committee update at each Regional Member meeting
- Update membership list in Netforum
- Maintain member list
 - Add new committee member to BoardEffect
 - Maintain committee membership file in BoardEffect and post file for each meeting date
 - Update membership list in box: Committee Member List
 - Complete a web request to update lists on Cooperative.com



TOUCHSTONE ENERGY CHAMPIONS

CO-OP CHAMPIONS

A Co-op Champion helps their co-op strengthen relationships with their members. This role actively helps their co-op save money and resources by using and having awareness of programming through Touchstone Energy.

This role gives co-op employees a deepened understanding and access to a full portfolio of professional marketing and member engagement services.



Other Co-op Champion Benefits:

Private LinkedIn Group & Profile Role

Early notice of program updates, conferences and special events

Along with CEO/GMs, receives:

North Star News

Value Report

Board Bulletin

Touchstone Energy Champion Award Eligibility

COOPERATIVE MEMBER RECOGNITION

Each year, Touchstone Energy recognizes cooperative members for their contributions to the brand and network with the Distinguished Service Award and Brand Champion Award.



Distinguished Service Award:

Touchstone Energy's highest honor, presented annually to a cooperative leader who has made outstanding contributions to the brand on the national level.

Co-op Champion Award:

Honors Co-op Champions in our network who have made exceptional contributions to building the brand locally and regionally.

