

## Membership-Communications Committee Meeting

January 12, 2026 1:30pm via Teams

### MINUTES

**Members Present:** Bob Ahfeld, Rob Aiken, Elisabeth Cain, Ben Dixon, Eric Virkler, Patricia Wilson

**Others Present:** Aviva Gold, Matt Siver

Annual Meeting June 17th

- Venue choice: Mirror Lake Inn in Lake Placid. Aviva will reserve it ASAP if it's available
- Topics Discussed
  - Artificial Intelligence
    - Applications of AI in manufacturing
    - Impacts and opportunities for economic development
    - Small business use cases and adoption
    - How AI can be leveraged more effectively across all the above?
    - Exploration of energy demand and infrastructure implications related to AI growth
    - Review of any real-world success stories or case examples
    - The format (single speaker vs. panel) and specific presenters are still to be determined.
  - Brew Pubs
    - Are these continuing to serve as economic development anchors?
    - Are there still policies and incentives coming from NYS?
    - How has this changed with legal marijuana?
    - This topic may work out better as a Fall Forum topic at a different venue
  - Biotech Cluster
    - This is a growing sector in the center of the region
    - What are the constraints on growth for this sector and what can be done to mitigate those?
  - Empire Mines
    - What is their potential regional impact?

AI is the most likely direction.

A list of previous topics will be made available this month.

Next meeting: Monday, February 9, 2026