

Strategic Planning

Nebraska Rural Electric Association

June 2-3, 2026

Session Summary:

Dates: June 2-3, 2026

Location: Younes Conference Center North – Kearney, NE

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Action Steps:

- The CEO will review these goals and objectives with staff and adjust for relevance and clarity. CEO will also collaborate with staff on specific tactics for success and present the goals/objectives/tactics at the August 2026 board meeting for review. Pending any adjustments, the board will approve the strategic plan at the following board meeting in December 2026.
- Board reporting expectation is for full plan reporting on a quarterly basis, with specific objective milestone reporting on a periodic basis or as needed to keep the board apprised of progress and/or delays as they might arise.
- Based on board direction from this strategic planning session, the CEO will bring to the board mission statement change options, keeping in mind content and conciseness of the overall statement.

Preliminary Strategic Objectives:

JOB TRAINING AND SAFETY	
#	<i>Objectives</i>
1	Implement a progressive in-house JT&S Program with ongoing review and measurable accountability.

LEGISLATIVE AND GRASSROOTS	
#	<i>Objectives</i>
1	Enhance legislative and regulatory advocacy messaging and visibility with member-systems.
2	Lead on legislation and grassroots advocacy.

COMMUNICATION	
#	<i>Objectives</i>
1	Strengthen member-system engagement.
2	Improve channels of communication (i.e., magazine readership survey, video series).
3	Support member-system community education programs.
4	Promote “why” public power.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING	
#	<i>Objectives</i>
1	Present additional professional development opportunities at existing meetings.

FINANCIAL	
#	<i>Objectives</i>
1	Continue to provide education and transparency on the NREA dues structure.

Organizational Statement(s) Review

Mission Statement:

- Providing value and support through essential services.
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Conclusions:

- After a brief discussion, the group decided that NREA staff should review some options for the board to review for possible changes/adjustments to make sure that brevity and conciseness do not overshadow intent and direction of the mission statement.
- Timeline
 - August 2026 – Discuss mission statement options.
 - December 2026 – Approve mission statement.

Organizational Statements Discussion Highlights:

The following are highlights of the group's discussion of the Association's organizational statements.

- Nice and short, but does not necessarily represent everything that we are about.
- NREA staff for review and bring back to membership.
- Add a reference to "members" or "membership" providing essential services?
- Maybe a little too short.
- Add something to the effect of "Public Power."

The following as a starting point:

The Nebraska Rural Electric Association supports its public power district and electric cooperative members by providing essential services at a statewide level.

SWOT Analysis Priorities and Discussion:



The prioritized list of SWOT elements, as identified in a small group exercise.

SWOT Discussion Highlights:

Following are highlights of the group's prioritization of the SWOT elements identified in the pre-session survey.

Strengths

- Leadership excellence.
- Strong culture and reputation.
- Advocacy and legislative.
- Industry strength/strategic positioning.
- Public power collaboration and partnerships.

Weaknesses

- JT&S - new structure.
- Legislative. Legislative voice compared to others in the state.
- Member services – dues; communication; magazine; legal; regulatory in promoting affordability.
- Succession planning/staffing.
- Load growth in the state-NREA ability to support.
- Ability to adjust for the unknown. Not necessarily specific to NREA but to all statewide.
- Timeliness of communication and information on important issues.

Opportunities

- New JT&S Program.
- Legislative.
- Onboarding and succession planning for NREA Board.
- Grassroots - outreach with individual systems to make the connections better at the retail level.
- Staying relevant in a rapidly changing industry.

Threats

- Political landscape.
- Affordability.
- Maintaining the public power model.
- Is retail choice next as new things come about?
- What is Public Power anymore?

- Bring your own generation.
- Preaching economic development—where is the generation to serve?
- Service territory protection.
- Cybersecurity/AI.
- Public perception of public power.
- Succession planning for NREA board.
- Employee-based competition.
- Do we need to figure out how to coexist with self-generators? Are we going to fight them or have a seat at the table?

Strategic Issues Discussion Highlights:

The following are highlights of the group's discussion of the strategic issues identified in the pre-session survey:

Financial:

- Have to be cognizant of spending. More transparent today than in the past.
 - Dues are not a real big line item in individual member-system budgets.
 - Understanding the dues structure.
 - Family Fund safety net for injured workers - funding opportunities to keep it going. Seed money to improve.
 - Labor is the largest component of dues. Must cover fixed costs. Regular review and education of dues structure.
 - Review of the dues structure/education.
 - Dues and rate stability - expect inflationary escalation.
 - Investigate collaboration with neighboring statewide.
 - What is socialized and what is "pay for play?"
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Delivering Value to Member Systems/Member Engagement:

- Advocating for member-systems for economic development opportunities. Defining NREA's role and presence. Coordinate activities.
- Communicate and inform what public power really means.
- Co-branding with the NREA logo and who we are, i.e., recent magazine change.
- What is NREA's role in economic development?
- More training courses offered at the statewide level for directors and employees.
- NREA as the hub for training and shared resources. Take advantage of larger events when most are present.
- Power cost/driver messaging.
- Increased communication channels/advanced timing. Give pros and cons of situation.

Legislative, Regulatory & Public Advocacy:

- Preserving the public power model. Talking points for the districts-focused and regular information.
- Strengthen NREA's influence on regulatory policy.
- Create a rapid response system for talking points.
- Develop additional proactive grassroots activities. Emphasis on off-session times.
- Communication solutions for the younger generation.
- Shotgun approach seems ineffective.
- Be more proactive on legislation.
- Encourage better participation from members and increase the communication aspect of statewide. Takes both to be successful. Promote involvement.
- What role does NREA have? What role is with the individual systems? Lead or supporting role?
- Coordinated grassroots outreach.
- Staffing.
- Make NREA the trusted source at the legislative level.

Communications Services for Member Systems:

- What is the future of the magazine? What is the cost vs. benefit? Is available electronically.
- Modernize communication platforms.
- Speakers at board meetings or a trainer to make meetings more effective.

Technology:

- AI education possibilities. Expert training at the statewide level.
- AI policy sharing and development.
- What is the role of NREA with AI—owner of the “fence?”

- NREA as the communication hub as well as legal impacts/concerns for AI. What is NREA's role in this and how do we communicate it to other members?

Human Resources:

- Succession planning.
- JT&S Program – retention.
- What is our role as directors? Should we have a role or is that a CEO role that we should stay out of?

Safety:

- Public education emphasize. Statewide goal.
- Future of JT&S Program long-term.
- Update content that is antiquated and repetitive.
- How is success measured with JT&S Program?
- Quality trainers that have all the skills needed and not just a past lineman.
- Feedback after trainings.
- Evaluate offerings.
- Develop robust trainings and experiences.
- This is ours now, so we must be nimble on adjustments.
- Develop more hands-on training opportunities.
- Incorporate Real-life examples.
- Shared “near miss” reporting.

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