

## Merger will fail

The Nebraska Power Review Board denied the Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District's Charter Amendment to merge with the Dawson Public Power District because it failed to meet a technical requirement of Nebraska law.

The failure is fixable by the districts. Though if fixed and refiled, it doesn't mean the Power Review Board would approve the application on its merits. In effect, the decision puts us back to the drawing board and, as someone opposed to the merger, I hope Central uses this reset as an opportunity to explore ways to be progressive and impactful that do not require a change in political control of Central.

For example, Central can sell electricity to Dawson by a contract. It does not need to merge with Dawson to sell electricity to Dawson. If Central truly wants to get into the retail electrical business, Central should study the pros and cons of merging with municipal electrical systems located within the chartered territory.

On the irrigation side, Central's surface water irrigation system was designed and built before rural electrification, groundwater wells, pivot and drip irrigation systems, etc.. Central, working with its partner the Tri Basin NRD, should try to reimagine Central's surface water delivery irrigation system based on the technology of today and the future. The question is, if you were to build Central's surface water delivery system today, how would you design and operate it so that the Tri Counties can continue to be a world leader in sustainable irrigated agriculture. All of these items are exciting opportunities that Central can pursue without merging with Dawson.

Robert McCormick, Holdrege