

# The Cowlitz, Washington Public Utility District

Invites Qualified Candidates to Apply For

## General Manager



### ABOUT COWLITZ COUNTY

Nestled against the Cascade Mountains, Cowlitz County, Washington offers scenic beauty including the Columbia River, Lake Sacajawea, and the nearby Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument. Longview, the county's largest city was named by *Forbes* in 2012 as one of the ten prettiest American communities.

Nearly a century ago Kansas City timber baron Robert Long took a “long-view” in planning for the world’s largest lumber mill in what would become Longview. Mr. Long also was the catalyst for developing Longview as a place for his employees to live and shop. Longview which was incorporated in 1924, was the first planned U.S. city of the 20th century.

The county which has a population of 102,133, consists of 1,140 square miles. There are five incorporated cities in the county including the county seat of Kelso (12,000 population) and its largest city of Longview (36,000 population). The Portland/Vancouver metropolitan area is approximately a 40 mile-drive from Longview, while the Seattle metropolitan area is approximately a 100 mile-drive. Both areas are easily accessible from Interstate 5.

### ECONOMY

Cowlitz County has three ports on the Columbia River which are responsible for much of the commerce generated in the county. The ports are located in Kalama, Woodland, and Longview. The Port of Kalama which moves approximately \$5 billion of goods annually is the largest of the three ports with seven miles of Columbia River frontage, however the Port of Longview is the third largest port in the State as it relates to tonnage. Negotiations have recently been concluded with a Chinese company to construct a \$1.8 billion methanol facility at the Port of Kalama.



The major employers in Cowlitz County include: St. John’s Medical Center (1,900 employees); Weyerhaeuser (1,500 employees); KapStone Paper (1,100 employees); Wal-Mart (750 employees); and Foster Farms (700 employees).

## EDUCATION

There are six public school districts in Cowlitz County. For more information about these school districts please see the following web link: <http://web3.esd112.org/schooldistricts/cowlitz-county>. In addition there are several private school options including St. Rose (K-8), Columbia Adventist High School, and Columbia Heights High School.

Lower Columbia College (LCC) located in Longview offers many associate degrees. Also through a partnership with Eastern Washington University LCC currently offers six bachelor's degrees and will soon be offering an MBA degree. Other nearby post-secondary colleges and universities include Washington State University-Vancouver, Clark Community College, Portland State University, and the University of Portland.

## LEISURE AND CULTURE

Take a stroll along the banks of beautiful Lake Sacajawea, explore historic downtown Longview, brush up on your golf game at the Mint Valley Championship Golf Course, or take in a performance at the Columbia Theatre for the Performing Arts. More intimate theatre performances are available at the Stageworks NW and at local schools. Also, there is an appreciation of other cultures in Longview, and that spirit is reflected in its annual International Festival celebration in May.



The Thunder Mountain Pro Rodeo held in July each year in Longview is part of the Northwest Professional Rodeo Association. Longview has hosted many National Finals Rodeo (NFR) title holders as well as upcoming NFR qualifiers.

Cowlitz County is proud to be the home of the Cowlitz Black Bears, an amateur West Coast collegiate summer baseball league. The league comprises teams from British Columbia, Oregon and Washington. The Cowlitz Black Bears play at David Story Field on the campus of Lower Columbia College every summer.

Additional information about Cowlitz County is available at [www.co.cowlitz.wa.us](http://www.co.cowlitz.wa.us).

## ABOUT COWLITZ PUD

Public Utility District No. 1 better known as the Cowlitz PUD was established in 1936 and is a municipal corporation of the State. The PUD's offices are in Longview, Washington.

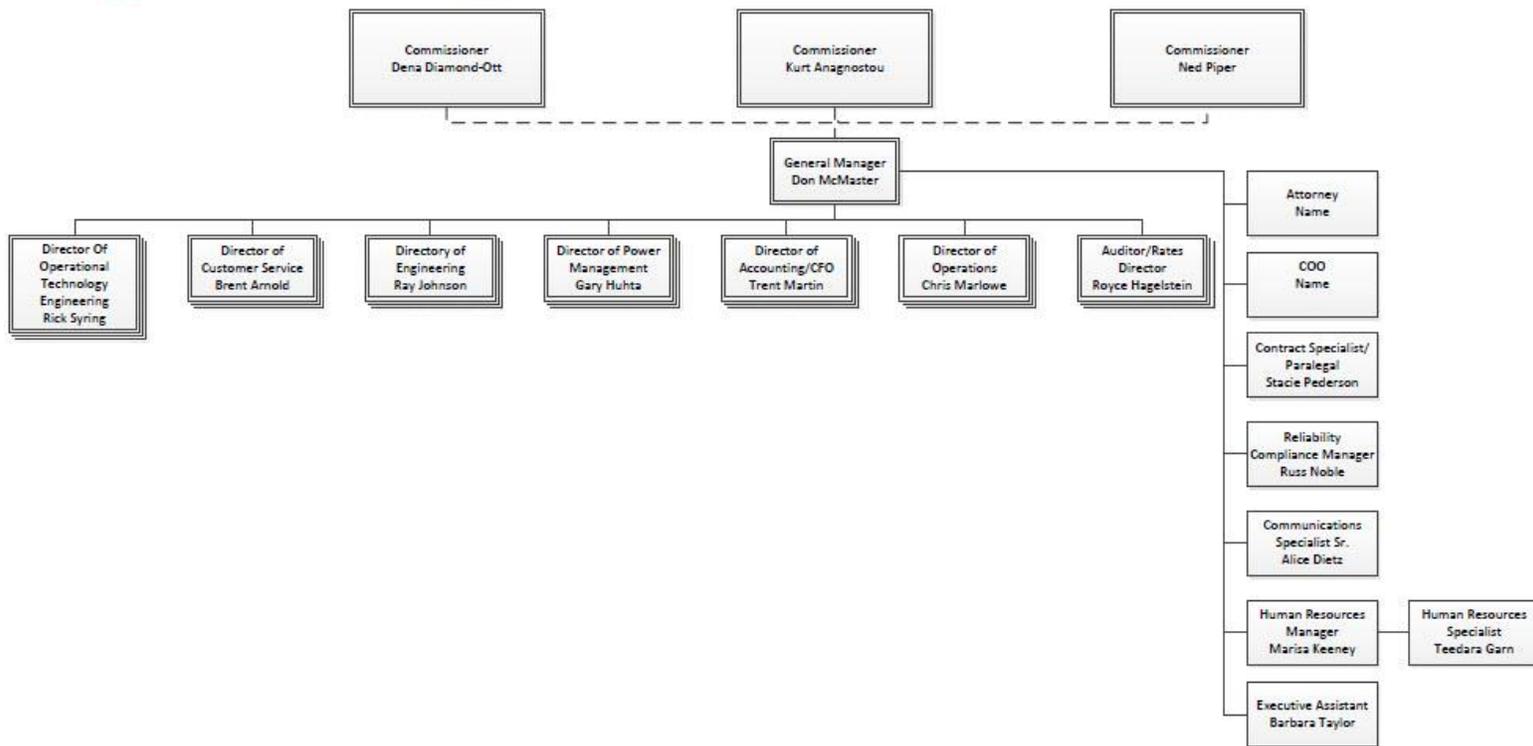
The PUD provides electric service to 48,500 residential, commercial, industrial, and street lighting customers in Cowlitz County. The PUD's power sources include hydroelectric (85 percent), nuclear (10 percent), and various other sources including coal and wind. While approximately 90 percent of the PUD's power is purchased from the Bonneville Power Administration, the PUD has also acquired interest in the White Creek and Harvest wind energy projects. Two-thirds of the District's load is from two customers--Weyerhaeuser and KapStone Paper and Packaging.

Cowlitz PUD is governed by a three-member non-partisan Board elected by the voters to six-year overlapping terms with no term limits. Board members must reside in one of three districts and primary elections are held by district with the entire county voting at the general election. The Board appoints a President, Vice-President, and a Secretary-Treasurer from among its ranks to two-year terms.

The Board appoints a General Manager (GM) who is responsible for managing PUD operations, working with the Board, and providing leadership to guide the PUD into the future. The GM recommends the appointment of the Attorney and Auditor which must be confirmed by the Board. Cowlitz PUD has had four GM's in the last 24 years with only one involuntary separation.



Cowlitz PUD which has the second largest load among Washington PUD's has an annual budget of \$287.5M and 165 FTE's. The PUD has the exclusive authority to set electric rates. Cowlitz PUD is one of only 200 out of 2,000 public power agencies in the U.S. that has the American Public Power Association (APPA) RP3 (Reliable Public Power Provider) certification. The District has an A revenue bond rating from Moody's and Fitch.



Approximately 54 percent of the PUD's workforce is in a bargaining unit represented by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 77. The PUD has a good relationship with the bargaining unit—all collective bargaining contracts have been approved voluntarily, and there have been no grievances filed for many years. A new three-year bargaining agreement was recently approved.

The PUD has approved a strategic plan as shown below

**Mission:**  
 Providing customers safe, reliable, cost-effective and sustainable electricity.

**Vision:**  
 Connecting customers and energy to power Cowlitz County's future.

**Long-term Strategic Goals:**

- Stable financial platform consistent with industry cost-based practices that is fiscally responsible to the ratepayers as evidenced by a credit rating of no less than A-, 60%+ debt to equity and competitive rates when compared to other Washington consumer-owned utilities.
- Costs and rate setting, including forecasts, adequately communicated to ratepayers.
- Power supply portfolio that adequately meets customer needs, fulfills renewable resource requirements, captures cost effective conservation, and balances risk while maintaining a reasonable portfolio cost.
- Responsibly building and maintaining a high level of reliability.
- Restore customer and employee confidence.

- Provide old-fashioned service that customers deserve and expect - friendly, fair and honest - while introducing new and developing technologies to better serve customers as we move forward together.
- Attract and retain great employees in an effort to provide the greatest value for Cowlitz PUD customers.
- Support the activities of the Cowlitz Economic Development Council (CEDC) in alignment with other CEDC executive members.

## ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The following is a summary of the issues and opportunities to be managed by the next Cowlitz PUD General Manager.

### Role Definition

The next GM will be expected to help clarify and reinforce the appropriateness of team members' (Board and staff) roles. It would be helpful if the Board focused more on policy and less on interpersonal issues. The GM will be expected to facilitate a more positive and productive communication structure among Board members and share information equally with all Board members.



### Teambuilding

The overall caliber of the District's staff is very strong. However internal teamwork could be improved. Strategies for improved teamwork include: holding staff equally accountable; telling employees what they need to hear not necessarily what they want to hear; reducing the silo mentality; and encouraging innovation.

### Strategic Plan

Cowlitz PUD has a strategic plan but many stakeholders indicated the plan needs to become a more dynamic living document that gets implemented and reported on regularly. Also, the plan needs to be more customer-focused.

### Technology

Several stakeholders reported that improvements are needed to the District's IT systems. Also the District could take fuller advantage of the technology they have to "shave the peak" through demand management programs.

### Capital Projects

Over the years the amount of funding dedicated to capital projects has been inconsistent. The District would benefit by having a long-range capital plan that is prioritized consistent with the District's financial resources. One of the major capital project priorities is to continue improving the redundancy of the electric distribution grid to provide customers with greater reliability.

## JOB REQUIREMENTS

The minimum job requirements are: 1) Bachelor's degree in public administration, business administration, engineering, or related field; and 2) ten or more years' experience in a broad spectrum of power utility operations including at least 5 years' experience as a department director or assistant general manager; equivalent combinations of experience and education will be considered.

### *DESIRED PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES*

The following are the **desired** professional and personal attributes for the Cowlitz PUD's next General Manager:

- ❖ Strong collaborative leader who develops consensus among Board, staff, and other stakeholders;
- ❖ Track record of establishing and maintaining effective working relationship with governing bodies;
- ❖ Excellent human relations skills with ability to relate to and communicate effectively with all stakeholders;
- ❖ Good financial management skills who ensures District's fiscal integrity and strives to achieve balance among customer rates, system reliability, and operational/staff needs;
- ❖ Humble with indisputable integrity;

- ❖ Builds positive organizational culture by clearly communicating expectations of staff, holding staff accountable, recognizing staff for good work, and supporting staffs' professional development needs;
- ❖ Positive, can-do attitude;
- ❖ Participatory management style with ability to be decisive when appropriate;
- ❖ Customer service focus;
- ❖ Community involvement and visibility;
- ❖ Supports county's economic development needs;
- ❖ Politically astute but apolitical;
- ❖ Technology-savvy;
- ❖ Experience working with labor unions a plus; and
- ❖ Experience working in Pacific Northwest power industry with hydroelectric power preferred.

**COMPENSATION**

The starting salary for the General Manager is dependent on the selected individual's qualifications and match with the desired attributes being sought by the PUD. The PUD will pay reasonable and customary moving expenses for the next General Manager who is expected to live in Cowlitz County. The PUD offers an employment agreement with a severance provision as well as the following benefits:

- Medical, dental, and vision insurance with 100 percent premium paid by employer for single employees and \$189 per month paid by employee for family coverage;
- Deferred compensation and 401K plans with employer match contribution to 401K;
- Participate in Washington Public Employees Retirement System;
- Car allowance;
- Health care pre-tax reimbursement plan with employer participation;
- Education assistance; and
- Cell phone stipend.

Lewis and Clark Bridge and Port of Longview

Lower Columbia College newly renovated fitness center

Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument



**To Apply:**

The position which is open until filled offers a competitive compensation package. Please send your resume and cover letter with current salary to [pwconsulting@cox.net](mailto:pwconsulting@cox.net). The first review of resumes will occur on **September 14, 2015**. For additional information about this job, please contact:

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