

# City of Seattle



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COUNCIL CLERK

## **General Manager and Chief Executive Officer Seattle City Light**

**Confirmation Packet  
August 31, 2018**

**Debra Smith**



**City of Seattle**  
Mayor Jenny A. Durkan

August 31, 2018

The Honorable Bruce A. Harrell  
President, Seattle City Council  
Seattle City Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Council President Harrell:

I am pleased to transmit to the City Council the following confirmation packet for my appointment of Debra Smith as General Manager and Chief Executive Officer of Seattle City Light.

The materials in this packet are divided into two sections:

**A. Debra Smith**

This section contains Ms. Smith's appointment and oath of office forms, her resume, and the press release announcing her appointment.

**B. Background Check**

This section contains the report on Ms. Smith's background check.

Debra Smith has 22 years of public utility experience in the Pacific Northwest. Since 2013, she has served as the General Manager of Central Lincoln Public Utility District, which provides electricity to residents of Oregon's Central Coast. Under her leadership, Central Lincoln PUD achieved its highest ever customer satisfaction ratings and transformed into a paperless utility. Prior to taking on the leadership role at Central Lincoln PUD, from 1996 to 2013 Smith served in a number of roles, including Assistant General Manager at Eugene Water & Electric Board, a publicly-owned water and electricity utility.

In addition to her work in the utility industry, Debra also serves on a number of community and non-profit organizations, including the Northwest Requirements Utilities Board, the Public Power Council, and the Pacific Northwest Utilities Conference Committee.

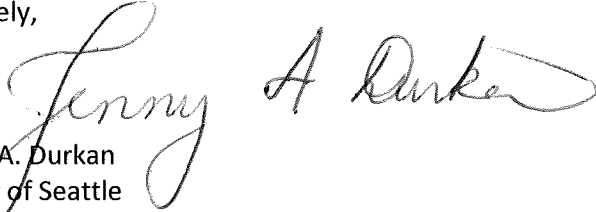
Thanks to the 22 community leaders who volunteered their time to serve on a search committee that led to this nomination. At my charge, they sought a leader that could continue to reliably deliver service, improve workplace culture and customer service, revamp the business model to create an affordable rate path, and position the utility to lead on climate change and in the new energy era.

Debra has demonstrated that she can deliver on Seattle City Light's goal to exceed customers' expectations in producing and delivering environmentally responsible, safe, affordable, and reliable

power at the nation's greenest utility. I urge you to confirm her as General Manager and Chief Executive Officer of Seattle City Light.

If you have any questions about the attached materials or need additional information, please contact Deputy Mayor David Moseley at 206-684-3790, or via e-mail, at [david.moseley@seattle.gov](mailto:david.moseley@seattle.gov).

Sincerely,



Jenny A. Durkan  
Mayor of Seattle

**SECTION**

**A**



# City of Seattle Department Head Notice of Appointment

<b>Appointee Name:</b> <i>Debra Smith</i>		
<b>City Department Name:</b> <i>Seattle City Light</i>		<b>Position Title:</b> <i>General Manager and Chief Executive Officer</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Appointment</b> <i>OR</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Reappointment</b>		<b>Council Confirmation required?</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Appointing Authority:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Council <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mayor <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <i>Specify appointing authority</i>		<b>Term of Office:</b> <i>City Council Confirmation to December 31, 2021</i>
<b>Legislated Authority:</b> <i>SMC 3.08.010</i>		
<b>Background:</b> <p>Debra Smith has 22 years of public utility experience in the Pacific Northwest. Since 2013, she has served as the General Manager of Central Lincoln Public Utility District, which provides electricity to residents of Oregon's Central Coast. Under her leadership, Central Lincoln PUD achieved its highest ever customer satisfaction ratings and transformed into a paperless utility. Prior to taking on the leadership role at Central Lincoln PUD, from 1996 to 2013 Smith served in a number of roles, including Assistant General Manager at Eugene Water &amp; Electric Board, a publicly-owned water and electricity utility.</p> <p>In addition to her work in the utility industry, Debra also serves on a number of community and non-profit organizations, including the Northwest Requirements Utilities Board, the Public Power Council, and the Pacific Northwest Utilities Conference Committee.</p> <p>Debra has demonstrated that she can deliver on Seattle City Light's goal to exceed customers' expectations in producing and delivering environmentally responsible, safe, affordable, and reliable power at the nation's greenest utility.</p>		
<b>Date of Appointment:</b> <i>8/31/2018</i>	<b>Authorizing Signature (original signature):</b> 	<b>Appointing Signatory:</b> <i>Jenny A. Durkan</i> <i>Mayor</i>



**CITY OF SEATTLE - STATE OF WASHINGTON  
OATH OF OFFICE**

**STATE OF WASHINGTON**

**COUNTY OF KING**

**I, Debra Smith, swear or affirm that I possess all the qualifications prescribed in the Seattle City Charter and the Seattle Municipal Code for the position of General Manager/Chief Executive Officer of Seattle City Light; that I will support the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the State of Washington, and the Charter and Ordinances of the City of Seattle; and that I will faithfully conduct myself as *General Manager/Chief Executive Officer of Seattle City Light*.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Debra Smith**

**Subscribed and sworn to before me  
this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2018**

(affix seal)

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk**



**City of Seattle**  
Mayor Jenny A. Durkan

August 28, 2018

Debra Smith  
South Beach, OR  
Transmitted via e-mail

Dear Debra,

It gives me great pleasure to appoint you to the position of General Manager and Chief Executive Officer of Seattle City Light, effective October 15, 2018, at an annual salary of \$340,000.

Your appointment as General Manager and Chief Executive Officer is subject to City Council confirmation; therefore, you will need to attend the Council's confirmation hearings. Once confirmed by the City Council, your term will be through December 31, 2021.

Your contingent offer letter provided employment information related to the terms of your employment, benefits, vacation, holiday and sick leave. If you have questions about your employment with the City of Seattle please contact Susan McNab, Human Resources Director, at 206-615-1622.

I look forward to working with you in your role as General Manager and Chief Executive Officer and wish you success. We have much work ahead of us, and I am confident Seattle City Light will thrive under your leadership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jenny A. Durkan".

Jenny A. Durkan  
Mayor of Seattle

cc: Seattle Department of Human Resources file

## DEBRA SMITH

### EDUCATION

1981	Arizona State University College of Business, Tempe, AZ B.Sc., Finance, <i>cum laude</i>
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### PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS/CERTIFICATIONS

#### Professional Development

- Certificate of Completion 100, 200, 300, 700; FEMA; 2010 to 2012
  - Incident Command System

#### Professional and Community Affiliations

- Eugene Chamber of Commerce; 2004 to 2012
- Lane Workforce Partnership Board of Directors; 2009 to 2013
- Northwest Oregon Works Board - Vice Chair; 2013 to Present
- Northwest Requirements Utilities Board; 2013 to Present
- Northwest River Partners - Board of Directors; 2016 to Present
- Oregon Business Leaders GHG Task Force; 2016 to Present
- Public Generating Pool Executive Committee; 2012 to 2013
- Public Power Council:
  - Alternate (EWEB); 2012 to 2013
  - Executive Committee (Central Lincoln); 2015 to Present
  - Vice-Chair - Fish & Wildlife Committee; 2015 to Present
- Pacific Northwest Utilities Conference Committee; 2018 to Present
  - Board of Directors Alternate
- Rotary:
  - Eugene, Oregon; 2002 to 2009
  - Newport, Oregon; 2013 to Present
- School District 4J (Eugene) Budget Committee; 2007 to 2013
- Western Energy Institute Board of Directors; 2008 to Present



## **CAREER HISTORY**

**2013 to Present**

**Central Lincoln PUD**

**Newport, OR**

Central Lincoln PUD provides the people of Oregon's Central Coast with electricity in the tradition of public power.

### **General Manager**

Successfully initiated major changes in the culture and focus following a full AMI implementation. Leveraged investment in AMI and spearheaded system-wide implementation of Conservation Voltage Regulation to maximize distribution system efficiency and provide passive conservation, lowering customer bills without requiring individual investment or action.

- Reshaped union relationship, implemented Interest-Based Bargaining, re-prioritized worker safety and implemented training programs to manage employment risk.
- Revamped transactional customer service to provide contemporary and cost-effective delivery options.
- Closed three customer service offices and reduced the number of Customer Service Representatives by 38% through attrition, while also increasing hours open-to-meet customer needs.
- Achieved highest ever customer satisfaction ratings despite rate pressures by ramping up external communication, participating in local community events and engaging customers in open dialogue.
- Implemented NISC's iVue AppSuite for accounting, operations and customer service functions. By the end of this calendar year, Central Lincoln will be a "paperless" utility.
- Dramatically increased organizational readiness for large and small-scale emergency events. Built a new operations center outside of the Tsunami Inundation Zone that went into service in August 2017. With the Oregon Department of Energy, participated in an 18-months long "Policy Academy" funded by the National Governor's Association on utility resiliency.
- Improved budget and financial planning processes to increase their value in predicting retail rates. Implemented cost control strategies including right-sized staffing levels and a reduction in senior management positions.
- Implemented a performance management system that includes strategic planning, employee goal setting, and utility-wide results management. Received APPA's RP3 (Reliable Public Power Provider) designation at the Platinum level with the first application.

**1996 to 2013**  
**Eugene Water & Electric Board (EWEB)**  
**Eugene, OR**

Eugene Water & Electric Board operates as an independent government agency. It specializes in public utilities and acts as a communications network and regulatory body.

**2012 to 2013**  
**Assistant General Manager**

Developed a diverse set of skills and a solid understanding of electric and water utility operations. Managed an operations and maintenance budget of \$68 million (net of purchased power and wheeling), a capital improvement plan totaling \$41 million and a staff of approximately 400.

- Co-led 2012 organizational restructure and reduction in force due to rate pressures. Reduced employee count by 9% net and initiated budget cuts of \$2.0 million.
- Reduced the need for a forecasted 2013 rate action of 21%+ for the electric utility to 8%, including a 4% Bonneville power cost pass through.
- Implemented priority-based budgeting across the organization, resulting in a clearer understanding of resource allocation trade-offs and better alignment with the elected Board's strategic priorities. The process was used to develop a 2013 budget, which included non-labor budget reductions of \$4.0 million in O&M and \$60 million in deferred and delayed capital.

**2007 to 2012**  
**Director-level Positions**

- Created new framework for delivering energy management and conservation services, in response to decreased funding levels driven by lower wholesale power prices and EWEB's "long" position. Annual acquisition goals and investment targets were re-established to optimize delivered value for customer-owners, while meeting the objectives of EWEB's IERP.
- Developed the Community Care Program in response to the 2009 recession. Provided bill payment assistance to over 3,400 households per year who might have otherwise experienced a service disruption due to economic hardship.
- Implemented, through strategic redirection, the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) to enable EWEB to meet global sustainability standards, including a reduction of carbon emissions. Created community transparency of EWEB sustainability performance.
- Collaborated with the EWEB Board of Commissioners, to develop a governance process and Board Policy Manual that substantially improved the effectiveness of the elected board.

**2004 to 2007**  
**Assistant to the General Manager**

**1996 to 2004**  
**Mid-Career Positions**

**1990-1995**

**Alpha HealthCare**

Chief Financial Officer

**1984-1990**

**The Oregon Bank**

Commercial Loan Officer

**1981-1984**

**Conoco**

Entry level finance positions



**City of Seattle**

Mayor Jenny A. Durkan

**NEWS RELEASE**

**FROM THE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR**

**Contact:** Kamaria Hightower, [Kamaria.hightower@seattle.gov](mailto:Kamaria.hightower@seattle.gov)

**Mayor Jenny Durkan Nominates Public Utility Industry Veteran Debra Smith to be Next General Manager and CEO of Seattle City Light**

*Smith Has More Than Two Decades of Experience in the Pacific Northwest's Public Utility Industry, Would Be Only the Second Woman to Lead Seattle City Light in its 108-Year History*

Seattle (August 28) – At Seattle City Light's South Service Center in SoDo, Mayor Jenny A. Durkan and leaders from the search committee announced she is nominating public utility industry veteran Debra Smith to be the next General Manager and Chief Executive Officer of Seattle City Light. If confirmed by the City Council, Smith would be only the second woman to lead Seattle City Light in its 108-year history.

"Debra is the right person at the right time to take the helm at Seattle City Light and to lead one of the nation's largest public utilities that is critical to the day-to-day operations of this city, ensuring the delivery of affordable and reliable power to hundreds of thousands of businesses and residents. Just as importantly, Debra will help ensure City Light is a leading customer service provider and oversees a healthy workplace culture," said Mayor Durkan. "With an administration in the other Washington that is trying to undo our climate and clean energy progress, it will be up to cities – and major public energy utilities like Seattle City Light – to lead the way and be an example for the rest of the world."

Mayor Durkan sought a leader that could continue to reliably deliver reliable service, improve workplace culture and customer service, revamp the business model to create an affordable rate path, and position the utility to lead on climate change and in the new energy era. If confirmed, Smith will assume her duties on October 15th and be responsible for continuing to deliver on Seattle City Light's goal to exceed customers' expectations in producing and delivering environmentally responsible, safe, affordable, and reliable power at the nation's greenest utility.

"I'm honored to be nominated as the next GM and CEO for Seattle City Light. I look forward to getting to know Seattle City Light from the inside, building relationships with my team members, listening to feedback from our community, and working collaboratively with City Council," said Debra Smith. "I strongly believe in the power of people working together to improve the experience of our employees, customers, and community partners."

Smith's nomination comes after an extensive national search process that included candidates from across the United States. In February, Mayor Durkan announced a search committee that included 22 business, labor, non-profit, and community leaders, many with experience in clean energy and environmental justice. The search for a new General Manager and CEO also included an extensive

community outreach process. After conducting interviews with applicants, the Search Committee submitted their recommendations for finalists to Mayor Durkan, who interviewed each finalist in mid-August.

“The Mayor asked us to find a transformational leader ready to move Seattle City Light into the future, so we are thrilled that Mayor Durkan is nominating Debra Smith to be the next General Manager and CEO of Seattle City Light. Debra will bring the financial expertise and leadership know-how to navigate the affordability and customer service challenges facing Seattle City Light. With over 22 years of experience in the Pacific Northwest power industry, we know Debra will be ready to lead City Light on day one,” said Search Committee Co-chairs Eileen V. Quigley, Cal Shirley, and Sharon L. Nelson.

“Now is the time we must rebuild trust with the public, with consumers, and with front line workers. We need an active General Manager who can improve safety in the work environment, from safety on the lines to work environments free from harassment and intimidation,” said Councilmember Teresa Mosqueda (Position 8, Citywide). “I look forward to hearing Debra Smith’s plan to address these continued concerns and her strategy to manage cost overruns, fix billing issues, and ensure Seattle City Light is a leader in the green energy economy. My colleagues and I will engage in a deliberative process to ensure the public and SCL workers have confidence in this new leader, and that we are set up for a productive and collaborative working relationship moving forward.”

Smith has 22 years of public utility experience in the Pacific Northwest. Since 2013, she has served as the General Manager of Central Lincoln Public Utility District, which provides electricity to residents of Oregon’s Central Coast. Under her leadership, Central Lincoln PUD achieved its highest ever customer satisfaction ratings and transformed into a paperless utility. Prior to taking on the leadership role at Central Lincoln PUD, from 1996 to 2013 Smith served in a number of roles, including Assistant General Manager, at Eugene Water & Electric Board, a publicly-owned water and electricity utility.

In addition to her work in the utility industry, Smith also serves on a number of community and non-profit organizations, including the Northwest Requirements Utilities Board, the Public Power Council, and the Pacific Northwest Utilities Conference Committee.

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**SECTION**

**B**



# City of Seattle

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## Seattle Department of Human Resources

Susan McNab, Acting Director

DATE: August 27, 2018  
TO: Adam Schaefer, City Budget Office  
FROM: Sue McNab, Acting Director, Seattle Department of Human Resources  
SUBJECT: **BACKGROUND CHECK for Debra J. Smith**

The Seattle Department of Human Resources has received a copy of Debra J. Smith's background check run by A-Check Global. There were no finds that would impact her employment eligibility.

cc: Personnel file

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Seattle Department of Human Resources

Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Suite 5500, PO Box 34028, Seattle, WA 98124-4028  
(206) 684-7999 • TTY:7-1-1 Fax: (206) 684-4157 • Employment Website: [www.seattle.gov/jobs](http://www.seattle.gov/jobs)

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