

POLK REGIONAL WATER COOPERATIVE

Job Opportunity Executive Director

Job Title: Executive Director
Pay Rate: Based on Qualifications and Experience
Location: Remote work allowed - Office in Bartow – Lakeland
Selection Process: TBD at the Board of Directors' September 2026 Meeting

Submittal to: info@prwcwater.org

ABOUT THE COOPERATIVE

The Polk Regional Water Cooperative is an independent special district of the State of Florida, created and existing pursuant to Sections 163.01, 189.031, 189.0311 and 373.713, Florida Statutes, and the Interlocal Agreement Relating to the Establishment of the Polk Regional Water Cooperative. Its member governments are Polk County and the municipalities of Auburndale, Bartow, Davenport, Dundee, Eagle Lake, Fort Meade, Frostproof, Haines City, Lake Alfred, Lake Hamilton, Lake Wales, Lakeland, Mulberry, Polk City and Winter Haven. The Interlocal Agreement charges the Cooperative with evaluating, planning and implementing Water Projects so as to create a fully integrated and robust public water supply system comprised of diverse sources, while maximizing the use of Alternative Water Supplies to the greatest extent practicable.

The Cooperative is implementing a capital program approaching \$800 million: the Southeast Wellfield Project — a regional water production facility, production wells, transmission mains, two booster pump stations and eleven member metering stations — is in construction and is anticipated to begin delivering water to members in 2029, and the West Polk Wellfield Project is in design with deliveries anticipated in the early 2030s. A regional conservation program, funded through a separate conservation budget, supports the overall supply strategy. The Cooperative is governed by a Board of Directors composed of representatives of each member government, which also sits as separate project boards for the Combined Projects, the Southeast Wellfield Project and the West Polk Wellfield Project, each with its own budget and its own cost-share among the members that benefit from it.

The Cooperative is now in transition from a small, wholly contracted organization into a fully operating regional water utility. A Workforce Transition Plan will be considered by the Board of Directors at its September 2026 meeting. The Executive Director will lead that transition.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Executive Director is the chief executive officer of the Cooperative, appointed by and serving at the pleasure of the Board of Directors. The Executive Director is responsible for providing the leadership to develop and strengthen the Cooperative in all areas — including engineering and capital delivery, water resource science, finance, technology and administration — pursuant to Sections 163.01, 189.031, 189.0311 and 373.713, Florida Statutes, the Cooperative's governing interlocal agreements, and the direction of the Board.

The Executive Director ensures that all Board policies and programs are implemented in accordance with the Board's direction; develops, implements and supervises administrative processes relating to all Cooperative functions; keeps the Board advised on Cooperative activities and develops the information required for policy implementation; interacts and coordinates with members of the Board, the Technical Advisory Committee, the Funding Workgroup,

member utilities and other public agencies conducting business with the Cooperative; promotes the overall mission and the implementation of Cooperative goals and objectives; and anticipates and keeps apprised of key issues before federal, state, regional and local governmental bodies as they relate to the Cooperative's interests.

MAJOR FUNCTION

Provides the leadership role as chief executive officer of the Cooperative, implementing Board policy and direction. Delivers the Cooperative's capital program on schedule and within budget, builds and retains the staffing needed to meet the mission of the Cooperative, and assures a reliable, sustainable and affordable regional water supply.

MAJOR DUTIES

The following duties are illustrative and not exhaustive. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position.

Board Governance and Policy

- Provides overall guidance and leadership for all Cooperative employees, contractors, activities, programs and budgets as directed by the Board of Directors.
- Interprets, directs and enforces policies established by the Board, including the policies consolidated in the Cooperative's Policy Manual, and recommends new and revised policies as the organization matures.
- Presents to the Board and to the separate project boards, on a regular basis, statements of policy and annual and future plans for consideration and approval.
- Prepares Board and project board agendas, agenda materials and resolutions, and ensures compliance with Florida's public meeting, public records and ethics requirements.
- Coordinates with the Cooperative's General Counsel on legal matters affecting the Cooperative, including the preparation and review of resolutions, agreements, procurement documents and Board materials, and confers with General Counsel in advance on matters presenting legal risk or requiring Board action.
- Directs the development of adequate procedures and controls to accurately and timely measure progress toward attainment of Cooperative objectives.

Capital Program Delivery

- Directs the planning, design, permitting, land acquisition and construction of the Cooperative's water supply, treatment and transmission projects.
- Administers construction manager at-risk, design-professional and other major agreements; oversees the development and recommendation of guaranteed maximum price packages; and approves construction change requests within the authority delegated by the Board.
- Working with General Counsel, oversees the acquisition of land and permanent and temporary construction easements by negotiation, contract or legal proceedings, including eminent domain proceedings, and recommends settlements to the Board.
- Coordinates with member governments, property owners, regulatory agencies and the public on construction impacts, including roadway and utility coordination and community outreach.

Finance, Funding and Member Relations

- Provides direction for the financial programs necessary to fund new and continuing operations, including annual administrative, conservation, combined project and individual project budgets.
- Oversees implementation of the members' implementation agreements, including water charges, billing and the annual true-up, and the equitable allocation of costs among the members that benefit from each project.

- Pursues and administers grant and loan funding, including Southwest Florida Water Management District cooperative funding, state alternative water supply grants, appropriations under the Heartland Headwaters Protection and Sustainability Act, and federal funding opportunities.
- Directs debt issuance, investment of Cooperative funds, reserves and financial reporting consistent with Board policy; coordinates with the Cooperative's financial advisors, municipal advisors and auditors.
- Serves as the principal point of contact for member governments and their managers and utility directors and works with the Technical Advisory Committee to build consensus on technical and financial matters.

Organizational Development

- Designs, implements and evaluates the operating structure of the organization to meet the needs of the Cooperative and its members.
- Leads the Cooperative's workforce transition — converting contracted roles to Cooperative positions on the schedule adopted by the Board, standing up the Cooperative's departments, and establishing personnel policies, benefits administration and Florida Retirement System participation in advance of hiring.
- Hire, supervise, and develop PRWC staff and/or contracted program management personnel.
- Plans for the Cooperative's office and facility needs as the organization grows.
- Encourages equal treatment and opportunity, career development, and the recruitment and retention of qualified Cooperative employees.
- Directs the transition from a construction organization to an operating utility, including the procurement and oversight of contract plant operations, asset management, maintenance management systems, cybersecurity and emergency preparedness.

External Affairs

- Represents the Cooperative before the Legislature, state and federal agencies, the Southwest Florida Water Management District, the Central Florida Water Initiative, neighboring utilities and authorities, and civic and industry organizations.
- Serves as the Cooperative's principal spokesperson with the public and the news media.
- Updates the Cooperative's goals and objectives as needed in anticipation of and as a result of changes in environmental, legal, economic, regulatory and operating conditions.
- Performs other related duties as required.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Considerable experience in executive-level administration and management of comparable public organizations, preferably multi-jurisdictional or regional entities governed by a board of member governments.
- Highly developed administrative and management skills, together with knowledge of contract administration, water resource regulation and permitting, project planning, design, construction delivery and public finance.
- Demonstrated ability to deliver large, complex capital programs on schedule and within budget, including experience with alternative delivery methods and the oversight of engineering and construction contracts.
- Working knowledge of Florida water law and of the statutes governing regional water supply authorities, interlocal agreements, public procurement, eminent domain, public records and open meetings.
- Knowledge of municipal budgeting, rate setting, cost allocation among member governments, debt financing and grant administration.

- Ability to build and lead a professional staff from a small contracted organization, including recruitment, organizational design and the development of personnel policies and practices.
- Ability to interpret Board-established policies and directives and to develop, implement and enforce supporting programs.
- Ability to plan, organize and direct Cooperative activities and to work effectively with a board whose members represent governments with differing interests.
- Highly developed skills in communication, writing and public speaking, including presentation to elected officials, regulatory bodies and the public.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Graduate of an accredited four-year college or university with a bachelor's degree in public administration, engineering, environmental sciences, business, finance, or a related discipline. Must have ten (10) years of management experience directly related to water resource management and/or public water supply, including a minimum of five (5) years of experience in the administration of a utility system, department or agency. Must possess a valid driver's license and be able to secure a valid Florida driver's license at the time of employment.

Preferred

- Master's degree in a related field, or registration as a Professional Engineer in the State of Florida.
- Experience serving as a chief executive reporting to an appointed or elected governing board.
- Experience delivering a capital program of comparable scale and experience transitioning an organization from construction into utility operations.
- Familiarity with Florida water supply planning, alternative water supply development, the Central Florida Water Initiative, and Southwest Florida Water Management District programs.
- Experience securing and administering state and federal infrastructure grants and loans (SRF, WIFIA, or equivalent)

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

Physical Abilities: Tasks typically will involve a relatively low level of physically demanding work, but may include walking, stooping, kneeling, crouching and crawling, and lifting, carrying, pushing and/or pulling of moderately heavy objects. In addition, the incumbent must have the ability to sit for extended periods, stand for extended periods, and lift up to 30 pounds.

Sensory Abilities: Some tasks require the ability to perceive and discriminate sounds. Some tasks require the ability to perceive and discriminate colors or shades of colors. Some tasks require the ability to perceive and discriminate depths.

Environmental Requirements: Tasks will primarily involve work in an office environment. Regular travel within Polk County and the region is required, and work at active construction sites and in a wide range of central Florida weather and field conditions may be required. Attendance at evening and occasional weekend meetings is required.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIP

The Executive Director reports directly to, and serves at the pleasure of, the PRWC Board of Directors.