

Antonia Hover

From: Antonia Hover on behalf of Records Clerk
Sent: Wednesday, January 13, 2021 4:38 PM
To: 'DeAnn Rauth'
Cc: Consumer Contact
Subject: RE: Docket 20200226

Good Afternoon, Ms. Rauth.

We will be placing your comments below in consumer correspondence in Docket No. 20200226, and forwarding them to the Office of Consumer Assistance and Outreach.

Thank you!

Toni Hover

*Commission Deputy Clerk I
Florida Public Service Commission
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Phone: (850) 413-6467*

From: DeAnn Rauth <deannrauth@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 13, 2021 4:34 PM
To: Records Clerk <CLERK@PSC.STATE.FL.US>
Subject: Docket 20200226

To Whom it May Concern,

On Tuesday, January 5th the Florida Public Service Commission (PSC) denied Environmental Utilities (EU) request for bifurcation and temporary waiver. As an interested party in property located on Little Gasparilla Island, I object to the Application of Certificate based on the following:

1. Financial Stability/Experience of EU. Environmental Utilities (EU) is a "for profit" private company with no financial history and unknown sewer utility management experience regarding environmentally sensitive endeavors such as tying a sewer line from the mainland to a private barrier island. EU should be required to provide a history of all sewer projects of this magnitude, especially since it involves the intracoastal waterway. In addition, there is no proof that EU has secured any commitments for financing or been awarded any grants to successfully complete this project. What happens if EU runs out of money or goes bankrupt prior to the completed project?
2. Unknown Cost to Homeowners. An estimated upfront fee of \$20,000-\$25,000 per homeowner has been rumored regarding connection and septic removal but no breakdown for this cost has been provided, nor a basis for the amount. In addition, no estimated costs of monthly rates, maintenance or operational costs have been provided. A total system cost should be broken down by all components and provided to all homeowners. Also, there should be other options available for homeowners instead of an "upfront" fee, such as payments spread over time.
3. 2017 Sewer Master Plan. If this sewer project is state mandated, why is this environmentally sensitive project being handled by an unknown inexperienced company and not handled by the County? Also, the Master Plan indicates the proposed system to be a vacuum system and EU has been neutral on a low pressure system versus the vacuum system. The low pressure system will cost homeowners more over the long run, and is not as environmentally sound. Power outages occur frequently on the Island and a low pressure system will leave the island without service. Will homeowners even be given a choice of what system will be proposed for installation?

4. Failing Waste System on the Mainland. The waste management system in Florida is already overtaxed. How will the system handle additional households from the barrier islands, along with new development on the mainland? How will a pipe leak in the middle of the intracoastal waterway be detected and who is responsible for cleanup and maintenance? With millions of gallons of raw sewage being spilled into waterways throughout the state of Florida, is a pipeline across the waterway the correct solution?

5. Location of Lift Station(s)and Sewer Lines. No map has been provided indicating the location of any lift stations, lines, etc. The island is private; therefore, no easements. Homeowners should be provided with a map(s) of the proposed location of all lift stations, lines, etc. and given ample time to review such plans prior to any commencement.

6. Official Notice to Respond. The 30-day notice does not appear to have been delivered to all homeowners on the island; therefore, not every homeowner has been given the appropriate chance to respond.

Possible Alternatives:

1. Property owners commit to have current septic systems inspected, and upgraded/improved (if necessary).
2. County to complete and maintain the project vs. a "for profit" private company with no financial history or sewer utility management experience.

As a stakeholder in the proposed service area, it is important to have all of the relevant information regarding the proposed central sewer, including the proposed rates, connection fees, maintenance, and the type of system intended for installation. I therefore request that EU's request be denied.

Sincerely,

DeAnn Rauth
Little Gasparilla Island