

Lisa Smith

From: Office of Commissioner Passidomo
Sent: Wednesday, January 19, 2022 8:07 AM
To: Commissioner Correspondence
Subject: Docket No. 20200226
Attachments: Docket #20200226-SU ; Docket #20200226-SU, 390 Kettle Harbor Drive, Placida FL owner Joe Savoldi; Docket #20200226-SU - Knight - Don Pedro Island EU Application for Original Certificate of Authorization; Docket #20200226-SU; Docket # 20200266-SU

Please place the attached in Docket No. 20200226.

Thank you!

Lisa Smith

From: John Day <johnday1000@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 18, 2022 5:15 PM
To: Office of Commissioner La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo
Subject: Docket #20200226-SU

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Hello,

This is John Day at 9552 and 9564 Buccaneer trail on Little Gasparilla Island.

I am formally requesting that the PSC

DENY EU's application for wastewater service. The current septic systems are functioning correctly and safely and the additional cost is ridiculous.

THANK YOU!

John Day
9413205256

Sent from my iPhone

Lisa Smith

From: idlovas@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, January 18, 2022 6:26 PM
To: Office of Commissioner Passidomo
Subject: Docket #20200226-SU, 390 Kettle Harbor Drive, Placida FL owner Joe Savoldi

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Commissioner Passidomo,

I am formally requesting that the PSC deny the Application for Original Certificate of Authorization for the proposed central sewer system by Environmental Utilities LLC (EU). As a property owner and permanent resident, it is clear to me that there are many issues with EU's proposal to take on this project.

I spent my career in the process control instrumentation industry primarily representing Emerson Process Management and have spent a considerable amount of time working on major municipal projects in the San Francisco Bay Area. In my opinion, this proposal is lacking in detailed true maintenance cost and poor estimated construction costs. EU's lacks the experience to undertake a sewer project of this magnitude. Where's the experience, financing, bonding, insurance? How about a qualified professional engineering firm providing plans and specifications for a public bidding process to include qualified, experienced and licensed contractors?

Environmental Utilities is using an outdated general study done for the county years ago. Have any recent water quality studies been performed that would substantiate water quality issues? Please show some proof that this project is necessary. As Islanders, we love and respect our environment. If our septic tanks are contributing to water quality issue's impacting our local waters, we will be behind proper resolution. Including going on a properly constructed, maintained sewer collection system, properly financed, and maintained by a proven provider.

We are asking that the commission not permit a company that cannot demonstrate any experience in the construction and maintenance of a complex wastewater system be permitted to follow through on this application. Please do not allow this proposal to be considered.

Joe Savoldi
Retired EVP Caltrol, Inc.
WWW.caltrol.com

Lisa Smith

From: John Baird <jbaird@highlandag.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 18, 2022 7:50 PM
To: Records Clerk; Office of Commissioner La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo
Cc: John Baird
Subject: Docket #20200226-SU - Knight - Don Pedro Island / EU Application for Original Certificate of Authorization
Attachments: Docket #20200226-SU.pdf

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Dear Clerk and Public Service Commissioners,

I write to you today to formally request that the **PSC and County Commissioners deny the pending EU application** request for wastewater service (Docket 20200226-SU effecting Knight / Don Pedro Island.

Below, I am reiterating facts that have already been submitted to you by many other affected homeowners and homeowner associations. You will most certainly recognize many of the exact same facts being described here. That is because these are **empirical facts**. Again, this is in an effort by the homeowners to implore the decision makers to arrive at the only logical conclusion which is EU does not met minimum qualifications required.

A. No Validation of Need (Need for Service)

This is by far the most important fact in this case. There is only a fabricated “need” for this application for certification, being submitted by EU. There is no **empirical data** at all to support any of the hear-say and conjecture being used by them to “justify” this application /submission, if any at all was used.

The County adopted the 2017 Sewer Master Plan which includes these Islands for sewer executed by CCUD (Charlotte County Utilities Dept.). In fact, Knight and Don Pedro Islands have been identified as priority areas for the extension of central sewer by CCUD. Furthermore, there was no study of the source of the nitrites alleged to be spilling into inland and shore waters. Specifically, there was no study data to determine whether these were coming from leaky sewage tanks or from fertilizers. Therefore, the assumption that the alleged pollution is emanating from sewer tanks is not a substantiated fact based on any real, applicable testing and or data and therefore must be considered suspect.

B. Legal Ethics and Integrity

Little effort on a background search on Mr. Jack Boyer, reveals the facts appear that Mr. Boyer was charged with and indicted for larceny as it relates to a utility as well as criminal mischief for stealing water from Don Pedro Island State Park to serve his own water utility on Little Gasparilla Island (Copies of these reports have already been submitted to the PSC).

In short, Mr. Boyer waited until rangers were absent from the park over a weekend and installed a water main from the Don Pedro State Park fresh water supply pipe and trenched it to LGI and hooked it up to his water company's facility. He admitted to this and moreover refused to remove the pipe after which he was indicted. How, in any legal proceeding or application to any government agency, can a man with this history of blatant disregard and disdain for the law even remotely be considered as a viable applicant for anything, especially if it is in the same business / industry that he was convicted for crimes in?

The answer to this question from any ethically bound person or entity reviewing this application (having done any internet search or background check), would immediately be a No/Denied! How this application got past the initial screening process(es) raises serious questions regarding integrity and or negligence. There must be some ethical / moral scale used for evaluating anyone (person or business) applying for anything with the county to insure they meet a minimum threshold of integrity. If there is not, then there are even more serious issues at hand.

B. Financial Capacity of the Applicant (Financial Ability)

EU has no demonstrable experience and no guaranteed funding (including bond issues) that could even marginally show its solvency, ability to obtain funding, complete the project and/or provide ongoing maintenance. Specifically, none of the publicly facing filed documents guarantee any funding and state specifically that there is no commitment to lend. No projected costs are given. Certainly a proposed project of this size must have been cost-estimated; No CIAC was provided which would identify cash and property contributions; EU appears to have no experience with projections, certainly not sufficient enough to project annual expenses; there is no comprehensive plan in the application that describes how this project will be financed.

EU is a start-up company, as such, the company and its principals are inextricably linked. A completed bond issue by a reputable financial institution should be a mandatory condition precedent for any approval. Again, a letter of interest from a local bank is meaningless. Since the reliability of the financial strength of the principals is paramount, their request to treat all of their financial information as confidential is improper and should be denied.

There have been no studies or valid estimates of the cost of this project, both globally and as it applies to Knight Island-Don Pedro Island. The verbal estimate given by Jack Boyer to community groups of approximately \$20,000 per homeowner is not based on any actual cost estimates related to this project. Given the project location and necessary involvement of multiple state (and potentially federal) agencies, the number is likely to be much higher. This places an undue burden on the members of our community. No permits should be issued without disclosure and verification of all of the necessary costs, e.g. profits margins, ongoing operating costs, construction costs, construction slow-downs or complications; distribution and allocation of cost-recovery, and the ceasing of homeowners land by grant of a right of way to install the sewer.

No provision has been made to allow for payment over time should the project go forward. In addressing this question to residents, the applicant has stated that grants might be available without any factual basis for these statements and without any data in support relative to this project. Grants seem far-fetched at best since the State of Florida is facing a significant budget shortfall exacerbated by the COVID-19 crisis. This application should be rejected until the applicant provides a firm cost per ERU along with appropriate financing options and payment vehicles for those affected owners along with the demonstrated financial ability to provide for payments over time.

EU has failed to address its ongoing operating costs. In an applicant with limited operating experience and financial resources, how will ongoing operating costs be addressed?

Mr. Jack Boyer has appeared to threaten community groups that if they fight him the costs will be passed on to the community. While cryptic, the intent seems clear and also indicates the tenuousness of EU's financial position going into this project. EU is a private, for-profit utility company. The owners' financial history and the financial health of the company is not known and not available.

C. Applicant's experience, knowledge and resource deficiencies (Technical Expertise)

The owner has little or no demonstrated experience with sewer systems and the owner's present water company has a long list of non-compliance and violations registered with the DEP. The Charlotte County Clerk's office website lists several foreclosures and lien actions involving Mr. Boyer. Should EU's stewardship of the project become untenable, another future utility will then have to compensate EU for the service area, resulting in further cost to the future ratepayers.

Again, here is more testimony to the lack of integrity and insolvency. Once again Mr. Boyer has shown a conscious disregard for the citizen stakeholders. None more so than its threats to pass on its legal fees to customers should they challenge its permit application.

Given the lack of demonstrated need, the absence of financial and operational data to support this project, and the absence of any discernible expertise, EU's application should be denied.

D. Gateway to commercial building

Additionally, the approval of this application and execution of this project to install a make-shift sewage system, will only pave the way for the approval of the building of commercial structures on Knight /Don Pedro Island (condos / high rises). Anyone with any knowledge of barrier island living and its fragile environment / eco system knows that this would wreck the natural and pristine state of the island forever. For this reason alone, this cannot be allowed to happen.

E. Real project impacts to homeowners (Fair and Equitable Rates & Charges)

Lastly, but most certainly not least, here is a list of what homeowners will be faced with should this project succeed. This list is not exhaustive. Again, if you understand anything about the landscape of the island and the size and orientation of the home lots you will know how unrealistic these requirements are. Meeting these requirements would wreck property lines and lots with easements not to mention enormous power requirements and costs placed on the homeowners.

- **Uncertain Hook-up Cost:** When EU first presented to PIE, the connection fee was estimated at approx. **\$20K per unit**. When the rates and tariffs were finally submitted by the applicant, the requested Service Availability Charge per ERC was reduced to total estimated **\$13,221**.
- **Average Residential Bill: \$178.78**, which is roughly twice the amount that a ratepayer on the mainland in Rotonda pays per month for ***water and wastewater combined***.
- **Electric:** the system pump requires a separate electric panel, installed by a licensed electrician at the expense of the owner.
- **More electric:** If the owner has maxed out their main electric grid with pool equipment or other large-draw items, the panel will need an expensive upgrade to accommodate the new panel.
- **Generator:** the grinder pump has a limited capacity (60 gal) and in the event of a power outage will be unable to function for long. Homeowners will need a generator to keep the

system running to avoid sewage back-up. We have frequent power interruptions on the island with various storms so the generator will be a mandatory purchase.

- **Tree removal:** Landscaping and hardscaping around the septic area will need to be cleared at the expense of the homeowner to gain access to crush & fill the septic tank.
- **No pay-over-time plan:** Ratepayers may need to take loans to cover the cost of connection.
- **Mandatory Hook-up:** Charlotte County regulations require all homes to connect to central water and wastewater within 1 year of availability.
- **No grandfathering of septic systems:** regardless of age or condition.
- **No “contract” and no single point of general oversight:** EU is not a contractor that has won a bid to install sewer. The PSC approves certification solely based on the 4 criteria above and regulates rates and charges. Each of the other agencies (County, DEP, Army Corps, etc.) is responsible for supervising only their specific area where regulation and/or permitting is involved. There is no performance bond required and we have no single point of recourse in the event of cost overruns or project failure.
- **Access to homes:** Some properties have physical constraints that will complicate how the applicant gains access to the property without leaving the boundaries or damaging the grounds.
- **Disruption of traffic:** Vehicles have only one point of entry/egress -- the car ferry. With normal traffic, service and construction trucks, delays at the ferry line in season can be an hour or more. This project could result in years of traffic issues.
- **New easement giveaway:** Most utility easements are placed in the road right-of-way. EU has claimed ownership of a utility easement that will go from the sewer equipment, located near the house to the connection in the road without compensating the homeowner for such easement.
- **System maintenance and emergencies:** The applicant has not addressed how the system will be serviced in the event of failure during a storm or other adverse conditions.
- **Lifespan of the equipment:** Salt air takes a heavy toll on mechanical and electrical equipment here. Equipment will need replacing when it fails, possibly at 5-year intervals. This proposal places too much responsibility on the homeowner at too great a cost.
- **Environmental concerns:** No water quality testing have been done in our area to prove a need for sewer. This project brings the potential for destruction of habitat and interference with endangered species such as the gopher tortoise.
- **Potential of sewer spill in the Intracoastal:** The risk of a central sewer leak with a subaqueous crossing is greater than the risk of one or more septic systems developing leaks

I strongly urge any commissioner and or decision maker on this vote, who is not familiar with Knight / Don Pedro Island, to go and visit the island and speak with some of the homeowners before they make a decision that could permanently affect the future of this island and the families that live there.

In closing, please be aware that the decisions made by the commission in this vote, and its final outcome, will bear the utmost weight with all homeowners involved, on how we vote for county positions in the next election cycle.

Your constituents are now asking for your help to **deny** this application using the clear facts presented. Do not provide support of an unscrupulous business application / proposition that would

wreck the environment and forever change the Knight / Don Pedro island landscape and its way of life!

Please accept this as my formal request for PSC to deny EU's application for wastewater service.

Kind Regards,

John A Baird

John A Baird
241 Kettle Harbor Dr
Placida, FL 33946
jbaird@highlandag.com

Lisa Smith

From: Conor Baird <cbaird919@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 18, 2022 8:12 PM
To: Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Passidomo; Records Clerk
Subject: Docket #20200226-SU
Attachments: Docket #20200226-SU_Conor Baird.pdf

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Lisa Smith

From: Diane Reed <kkldreed@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 19, 2022 7:49 AM
To: Office of Commissioner Passidomo
Subject: Docket # 20200266-SU

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Commissioner Passisomo,

I am a property owner on Palm Island 342 S Gulf Blvd since 1998.

I would like to that PSC deny EU's application for wastewater service.

The cost for the hook up is very uncertain along with the average residential bill. This is huge financial obligation, which is not necessary to me as a homeowner with a very functioning and maintained septic system. and the cost to close my current septic tank.

The expense of the additional electric panel, electric bill associated with the pump needed and potential a generator in the event of power outages. Is also very uncertain.

Our island serviced by the ferry will have huge traffic disruptions, damaging our roads, yards, landscaping.

Please DENY this application.

Thank you,

Kevin Reed
kkldreed@yahoo.com