

Lisa Smith

From: Office of Commissioner Passidomo
Sent: Monday, January 24, 2022 8:07 AM
To: Commissioner Correspondence
Subject: Docket No. 20200226
Attachments: Docket #20200226-SU; Docket# 20200226; FW Docket #20200226-SU; Docket #20200226-SU; Docket #20200226-SU

Please place the attached in Docket No. 20200226.

Thank you!

Lisa Smith

From: rhapsodyballroom@aol.com
Sent: Friday, January 21, 2022 10:03 PM
To: Office of Commissioner Passidomo
Subject: Docket #20200226-SU
Attachments: don pedro sewer letter.rtf

Follow Up Flag: Flag for follow up
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Lisa Smith

From: nina stokes <ninadv3399@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 21, 2022 8:21 PM
To: Records Clerk; Office of Commissioner La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo; Kit Kat; Office of Commissioner Graham; Office of Chairman Fay
Subject: Docket# 20200226

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January, 21, 2022

Clerk of the Commission
Commissioner LaRosa
Commissioner Clark
Commissioner Passidomo
Commissioner Graham
Commissioner Fay

Dear Commissioners,

We have owned our home on Little Gasparilla Island at 8892 Gulf St. since 1999. We love and cherish our beautiful piece of paradise, and our grandchildren love fishing off our dock in the beautiful bay waters. We are writing to express our concern about Environmental Utilities, the private, start up inexperienced company that is seeking a wastewater certificate from the Commission. We are very thankful for your time reading and your close attention to all the ongoing concerns of hundreds of homeowners about EU's application. We are formally requesting that you deny this application for so many reasons as follows.

First, let me say that it is my understanding that Charlotte County was not going to address sewer issues on our barrier island until 2029 if then. There were financial reasons including having to take over other private companies that had failed to complete projects. If sewers are needed, Charlotte County should be the one in charge.

We have so many questions about EU's ability to undertake a project of this magnitude, of their financial ability, their management ability, their maintenance ability, their educational and technical ability and their ETHICS!

To begin, As far as need for service, there has not been water quality testing done by EU to show a need for sewer service. Bay waters in the Charlotte County watershed are tested from private docks at sunrise every month for the DEP (52 volunteers at 52 sites) and calibrated and transported to the mainland to be analyzed. if there were any significant problems they would have been published and made known to the public. As the Distinguished Professor from the University of South Florida, Dr. Robert Weisberg, testified in written material submitted to the Commission on 11/23/21, there is no evidence that red tide is caused by septic tanks as Mr. Boyer claims. He says, I'm after a detailed explanation of the causes of Redtide, "Environmental Utilities cites no scientific support for the proposition that the on site septic tanks exacerbate red tide and algae outbreaks on the barrier island region of concern". He further notes " It is noted that EU's application for sewer lines and delivery is to a Charlotte County connection versus a complete sewer system. Thus a failure of the county system could be exacerbated by the flow from EU further burdening the county system prior to upgrading which may be counter productive with respect to the Sewer Master

Plan. "

Looking at environmental concerns involved with EU's project, all the large equipment, and digging which will be involved in the installation are cause for concern for our endangered gopher tortoises , burrowing owls plus the ospreys and our magnificent eagles which nest in our pines. We've seen no mention of needed permits for dealing with these.

A large number of homeowners on LGI are just becoming aware of EU's request and the implications of it being granted. There has been soo much secrecy on finances (EU submitted Scores of documents asking for confidentiality) and misinformation on need for service. EU has never installed a sewer system. The principals , own Little Gasparilla water company and there has been so much controversy about that company, as I'll note later.

EU has two employees, Mr. and Mrs. Boyer and reportedly their son who is said to be taking "sewer classes". Questions are where is EU's place of business other than their home? Where would all necessary equipment to do the project be stored? What are the true facts about finances? There is no contract and no single point of general oversight. Of Great importance is Why is there no performance bond? EU Is an LLC and in case of an environmental spill there is no available public help? Homeowners will have no recourse if there are cost overruns (which is Very possible considering everything has to be barged to the island and the barge moves when the operator feels like it). All cost overruns will be passed on the homeowners.,

We were at first told the cost could be \$20,000 per homeowner, with maybe some grants possible , and that if we protested, we'd pay even more! Now it appears the estimated cost is \$11,928 hook up fee, \$55.32 per 10000 gallons, \$1,299.85 installation fee, \$30 installation connection fee and a Whopping cost of \$ 201.04 PER MONTH! In addition it says "initial deposit should be equal to average charge for wastewater for two months based on approved final rates". Is that \$ 402.08? No mention of grants to help pay costs now and no provision to pay over time. Many homeowners will have to secure loans to pay these costs.

Homeowners may have to have a new electric panel to handle the new equipment needed. In the event of power outages, which happens Very often, (the last one was 19 hours a couple weeks ago but some have been a few days) generators will be needed to keep the system running to avoid sewage back ups. Can you imagine the smell, noise, pollution in addition to the fuel needed to run them? If a hurricane came and there was no power for days, it would be a disaster! EU offers no plans for this kind of emergency or for possible sewage spills in the intercostal waterway.

Finally, in addressing technical ability, and questioning if it is in the best interest of the public for EU to be granted this certificate, ethics and honesty need to be looked at. I'm sure you have read and are aware of the documented dishonesty of the owner of EU. He illegally took, stole, water from Palm Island State Park and ran it to his water company on Little Gasparilla Island, a felony for which he was fined. Then more controversy for the water company when he was caught for performing plumbing work without a license or permit and for then connecting homes to his water without a permit. Some work had to be redone due to use of wrong equipment. He was fined for three homes but admitted to a group of homeowners (myself included) and two Charlotte County water employees that he had hooked up 100 ! In addition, he didn't pay all required "tap in" fees in a timely manner until called out by Charlotte County. There were times when the water system broke down for various reasons and customers were not informed of the necessity to boil water, a health and safety hazard. Property taxes on his water facility were in arrears several years and certificates bought. With all Mr. Boyer's history, It is shocking that Charlotte County Commissioners gave the right to him to apply for the wastewater certificate. The only difference is that he now works under a different company name.

Thank you again for reading our input and concerns. We trust you will see the need to deny Environmental Utilities' application as there are so many questions about the company.

Sincerely,

Kathleen and Roy Stokes

Sent from Mail for Windows

Lisa Smith

From: Tyler Erickson <Tyler@midlandinfosys.com>
Sent: Friday, January 21, 2022 4:44 PM
To: Office of Commissioner Passidomo
Subject: FW: Docket #20200226-SU

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As a homeowner on the island please deny EU's application for wastewater service

The main reason is because EU is not a contractor that has ever won a bid to install sewer anywhere. Palm Island also called Don Pedro-Knight Island is a barrier Island with no bridge access, That would make it even more complicated for a company who has no experience.

There are also concerns about EU's owner. Has anyone done a background check?

Thanks!

Tyler Erickson
Cell: 612-719-6678
111 N Gulf Blvd and 251 Bocilla Drive

Lisa Smith

From: Bryan D & Debra S Fredrick <bdfredrick@embarqmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 21, 2022 4:08 PM
To: Records Clerk; Office of Commissioner La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo
Subject: Docket # 20200226-SU

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I, Bryan D Fredrick own the home at 111 S Gulf Blvd, Placida, FL, on Don Pedro Island. I understand that you will be making a decision regarding possible approval for a private sewer system on our Island, by "Environmental Utility". I STRONGLY advise you to DENY the Application.

We all have our septic systems inspected and approved periodically, and have repairs/improvements done as needed - If it ain't broke, don't fix it.

There is no evidence that our properly functioning septic systems are detrimental to our surrounding waters. We live here - we swim. fish and boat in our surrounding waters. I do believe that any degradation of our waters is primarily caused by high-nutrient discharges from Lake Okeechobee.

It is my understanding that "Environmental Utility" is trying to convince you that we have an environmental emergency due to our polluting septic systems, so cannot wait to have Charlotte County install any central sewer system. This reasoning is fallacious.

"Environmental Utility" has no prior experience in installing or operating a central sewer system.

I understand that "Environmental Utility" is a private, FOR PROFIT business. I do not want to let inexperienced people to become multi-millionaires at my expense. I know that we are in the queue for Charlotte County to install a central sewer system here on Don Pedro Island. Why can't we wait for an experienced, non-profit entity handle our sewage ?? We would pay their fees as part of our property taxes, like most Floridians.

In conclusion, PLEASE DENY "Environmental Utility's" application for our wastewater service.

Thank you - Bryan D Fredrick bdfredrick@embarqmail.com 111 S Gulf Blvd, Don Pedro Island

Lisa Smith

From: Laurie Barclay <it000016@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 21, 2022 3:56 PM
To: Office of Commissioner Passidomo
Subject: Docket #20200226-SU

Follow Up Flag: Flag for follow up
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From Laurie Barclay, MD, property owner on Don Pedro Island (Colony Don Pedro unit #8; 50 S Gulf Blvd.)

I hereby formally request that the PSC deny EU's application for wastewater service, based on the arguments in opposition to the proposed central sewer as listed below.

As a property owner on Don Pedro Island for more than 30 years, I firmly believe that it is a unique treasure, reflecting unspoiled Florida at its finest. It is a pristine environment and beautiful, idyllic location bringing much needed peace and restoration to our hectic, troubled world.

In these 30 years, I have never had issues with my current septic system, nor has any water quality testing indicated a need for sewer. The proposed central sewer would be extremely disruptive to our environment and way of life. The noise and disturbance of sand and soil by installing the proposed system would be devastating to wildlife, human residents and visitors, and the natural beauty of our beloved island. Installing and maintaining a sewer system may destroy the natural habitat and interfere with the gopher tortoise and other endangered native species.

Sewage spill in the Intracoastal could be devastating to fish and sea turtles, as well as to human life by encouraging red tide and potential infection from contact with coliform bacteria in the water: The risk of a central sewer leak with a subaqueous crossing exceeds the risk of one or more septic systems developing leaks.

I am also extremely concerned regarding the proposed costs of wastewater service. I rent out my property when possible and enjoy it myself the rest of the time. As a retired senior, the costs of island living are substantial already, and the proposed system would inflict an unnecessary financial burden of upfront and ongoing costs.

The extent of this burden is uncertain, with estimated connection fees ranging from \$13K to \$20K; the requirement of installing an electrical panel at my expense; the need to buy and maintain a generator to avoid sewage back-up during power outages; removal of trees, landscaping and hardscaping around the septic area at my expense; and monthly fees in the range of \$200, or approximately twice the amount paid on the nearby mainland for water and wastewater combined, and far exceeding my current sewage-related expenses.

As the grinder pump has a limited capacity of 60 gallons, and will be unable to function for long if there is a power outage, each property would need a generator to keep the system running and avoid sewage back-up. Again, more unnecessary expense, inconvenience, noise, storage, and potential fire and environmental hazard of storing gas.

To gain access to crush and fill the septic tank, landscaping, trees and structures around the septic area would have to be cleared at my expense, which would disrupt the environment and wildlife, disfigure my property, and take away useable outdoor recreational and parking space.

In any event, these are additional expenses I cannot afford, at no benefit whatsoever to me, my renters, or my neighbors. In fact, the only beneficiary of the proposed sewer system is EU itself. Even worse, there is no pay-over-time plan, so that a loan (and associated interest and negative impact on credit rating) could be needed to cover connection cost.

The pandemic has created enough economic and other disruption to our way of life, and imposing the expenses of a sewer system could put me over the edge of having to give up island living that I so dearly love.

No renters want to have their time away spoiled by sewer system installation, with the associated noise, inconvenience, and increased local and barge traffic, nor do I. Increased traffic, and delays waiting to get on the barge to access or leave the island could continue for years and would further detract from the joys and peace of island living. The proposed system would therefore negatively impact Florida tourism and hospitality industries on the island and nearby mainland.

In addition, I view the EU's proposal for a sewer system as offensive, as it is an infringement of my personal rights and my rights as a property owner. The septic system in current use works perfectly well, and I cannot understand why I should be forced to change it, as said change would be harmful to me for reasons expressed herein.

Unfortunately, however, should the sewer system proposal be approved, connection would be mandatory. Charlotte County regulations require all homes to connect to central water and wastewater within 1 year of availability, with no grandfathering of septic systems, regardless of age or condition.

As EU has claimed ownership of a utility easement going from the sewer equipment near the house to the connection in the road, without compensation to homeowners, their proposed system would lower property values at no benefit to us.

The proposed sewer system has no accountability, as EU is not a contractor that has won a bid to install the sewer, and there is no "contract," no single point of general oversight, no performance bond required, and no single point of recourse for homeowners should there be cost overruns or project failure. Furthermore, EU has not addressed how the sewer would be serviced if it fails during storms, which are frequent on tropical islands.

Another concern of island living is the corrosive effect of salt air on mechanical and electrical equipment, resulting in the need for frequent replacement of sewer components, again at the expense of the homeowner.

Based on the arguments above, I hereby formally request that the PSC deny EU's application for wastewater service. These arguments include, but are not limited to, negative impacts on the environment, island living, Florida tourism and hospitality industries, property rights, and homeowner expenses. Please do not destroy our beautiful island and the oasis of tranquility it provides.

Sincerely,

Laurie Barclay, MD

lt000016@hotmail.com