

Lisa Smith

From: Hannah Barker
Sent: Monday, January 24, 2022 3:18 PM
To: Commissioner Correspondence
Subject: Docket Correspondence
Attachments: Docket #20200226-SU; RE Docket #20200226-SU; Fwd RE. Docket #20200226-SU; Docket#20200226-su; Docket #20200226-SU; Docket #20200226-SU; Docket No. 20200226-SU; Docket #20200226-SU; RE. Docket #20200226-SU

Good afternoon,

Please place the attached emails in Docket No. 20200226.

Hannah E. Barker
Executive Assistant to Commissioner Clark
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Blvd.
Tallahassee, FL 32399
(850) 413-6004

Lisa Smith

From: Jeff Bashore <jeffreybashore@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 24, 2022 3:11 PM
To: Records Clerk; Office of Commissioner La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo
Cc: Mel
Subject: Docket #20200226-SU

Jeffrey & Melissa Bashore
8738 Marsh Street
Placida, FL 33946
Jeffreybashore@gmail.com

January 21, 2022

Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Blvd
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0850

Re: Docket #20200226-SU

Commissioners of the Public Service Commission:

I am a property owner at 8738 Marsh Street on Little Gasparilla Island, which is a property within the service area of the proposed central sewer system, Docket #20200226-SU.

I formally object and request that PSC deny Environment Utilities (EU) application for Original Certificate of Authorization for this proposed central sewer system.

While I feel strongly that the barrier islands and low lying inland areas of the state should be swiftly migrated to a sewer system to protect our fragile ecosystem, I am concerned that the current proposal is deeply flawed.

Turning a project of this magnitude over to an LLC that has zero experience with installing or operating a sewer system is unacceptable. Environmental Utilities lacks both the experience as well as the capital to take responsibility for the proposed massive undertaking that will impact some of the most delicate, unspoiled areas of the SW Florida coast. The proposed solution leaves many critical questions unanswered about right-of-way access and how the many points of failure involved with a 'low pressure' sewer system would be effectively managed in the harsh climate presented on the barrier islands.

Charlotte County should be held responsible to implement and manage the project directly. It is clear that they are trying to find any bidder to insulate them from the obligations of managing this important work. Turning this over to an inexperienced, under-capitalized, for-profit LLC with the county maintaining no accountability for the outcome is not the right move for the environment, property owners in the affected areas or the citizens and visitors of Florida at large.

Regards,
Jeff and Melissa Bashore

Lisa Smith

From: Joanne Dillon <jbd2691@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, January 24, 2022 3:09 PM
To: Office of Commissioner Clark
Subject: RE: Docket #20200226-SU

Dear Commissioner Clark,

This email is to voice my opposition against EU's private sewer proposal. My husband and I just recently moved to Don Pedro Island and have attempted to find info on the qualifications of this company to partake in such a project, as well as the impact it will have on our Island and the financial costs to be imposed on homeowners. At this time we cannot get any accurate information regarding these concerns and therefore feel more studies and technical expertise need to be done before considering a permit for this project, which could have a devastating financial impact on homeowners and our quaint community. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Joanne Dillon
5 Pointe Way
P. O. Box 567
Placida FL 33946

Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPad

Lisa Smith

From: Matthew Weston <mattwestoncontact@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, January 24, 2022 2:53 PM
To: Office of Commissioner Clark
Subject: Fwd: RE. Docket #20200226-SU

To whom it may concern,

As a homeowner on Palm Island/Don Pedro Island. I Object to the proposal and ask the PSC to deny the Application for Original Certificate of Authorization. To be straightforward I'm a common sense person and I do not understand all of the reasons why this particular company would like to take on this project but it seems to me that it is not in the best interest of me personally. There are a lot of red flags that gives me caution. In my personal life when there are red flags I take a step back and research more until I'm comfortable with the decision. I sincerely request that you deny EU's request of their application.

I appreciate your service to our community no matter your decision!

Thank you,

Matthew Weston

Mattwestoncontact@yahoo.com

Lisa Smith

From: lillyonufрак (null) <lillyonufрак@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, January 24, 2022 2:52 PM
To: Records Clerk; Office of Commissioner La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Clark;
commisioner.passidomo@psc.state.fl.us
Subject: Docket#20200226-su

To whom it concerns,

We are the homeowners at 17 Palm dr., Placida. We would like to voice our concerns over the proposed central sewer. We are asking that you reject Environmental Utilities application for wastewater service.

Some areas of concern:

Fluctuating hook up costs

Inflated monthly costs , twice the amount residents pay on the mainland
Costly electrical hook up
Questionable sewer function in the event of a power outage
Costly tree removal, disturbance to existing landscape and turtle/wildlife habitats
Concerns over being able to afford the cost of connecting
Mandatory hook up (my septic system is a year old)
Most importantly no oversight and no recourse in the event of cost overruns or project failure and no responsibility for sewer spills, environmental destruction, system maintenance and emergencies

On a personal note. We have only lived on Palm Island for a year. We have spoken to many of our neighbors and there is an overwhelming agreement based on their years of experience that Environmental Utilities is not a company to be trusted.

Sincerely,
Jim and Lilly Onufрак

Sent from my iPhone

Lisa Smith

From: David W Adams <dadams@bj-law.com>
Sent: Monday, January 24, 2022 2:25 PM
To: Office of Commissioner La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo
Cc: Records Clerk
Subject: Docket #20200226-SU
Attachments: EU PSC Sewer system application.docx; Ackerman Study.pdf

Dear Commissioners:

My name is David Adams, and with my partners, I own property at 8356 Little Gasparilla Island (LGI) in Placida, Florida. We have owned our property for approximately 11 years and have purchased water through Little Gasparilla Water Utility which I understand is related to Environmental Utilities (EU).

Lack of Proven Need for Service

I have reviewed the PSC docket and spent some time reviewing the documentation associated with the EU application. I am unable to locate sufficient background facts and documentation to show there is a proven need for the service. The vast majority of LGI houses are vacation properties for which the residents occupy occasionally on the weekends. It is not like there is a heavy nitrogen load coming from the south end of the island. While Charlotte County made reference to nitrogen load studies in their correspondence to the PSC, none of those were conducted at or around the proposed service area. Additionally, the Ackerman study is not comparable for LGI because the Ackerman subdivision contained a plethora of canals near the studied septic systems, which canals increased the plume of nitrogen entering the bay, prior to the StoS conversion. Therefore, additional study and facts demonstrating a proven need for service should be in the record before the commission approves the application.

Sewer Service

I am not aware of anyone requesting sewer service on LGI. However, if there was a proven need, then I would expect Charlotte County to provide the utility. Providing water and sewer is a core governmental function. It is not fair for Charlotte County to shirk its obligation to provide core government services to the ratepayers. It is also unfair to the ratepayers to force them to use a private utility which has an unproven track record for a project of this magnitude. If construction or operation of the sewer system is compromised (such as a hurricane or flooding), then the ratepayers will be left without any means to dispose of raw sewage because the plan requires all homeowners to remove properly functioning septic tank systems. EU does not have the same resources as Charlotte County to mitigate climate change and flooding. Additionally, if Charlotte County undertook the project, then it would be done with governmental bonding and financing which results in a significantly lower cost of capital. For example, EU requires a large lump sum payment for construction of the system, as compared to Charlotte County which allows ratepayers to spread the hookup fee over a long period of time (I believe 10 years). The operating costs would also be spread among the entire Charlotte County population as opposed to the LGI residents. This would result in lower rates and operating costs. Some of the homeowners are on fixed incomes and the abnormal hookup cost and operating fees will force them to sell their properties on the island. As proposed, EU will receive a guaranteed profit for constructing and operating the

Sewer System. As a governmental entity, Charlotte County does not need to make money operating the sewer system, which is better for the ratepayers. Moreover, Charlotte County has the expertise and experience to install and operate complex sewer system such as the one proposed by EU. It seems insincere for Charlotte County to claim that this project is a priority in its long term septic to sewer plan, but is unwilling to schedule and complete the project consistent with its claims that LGI is a priority project to reduce nitrogen load in Charlotte Harbor.

Technical Expertise/Customer Service

The application does not demonstrate any experience or expertise in constructing or operating a sewer system. The ratepayers are at risk if EU is unable to properly construct or operate the system. Charlotte County is in a much better position to design construct and operate the sewer system proposed by the applicant. While I have not had much interaction with the affiliated party to the applicant, Little Gasparilla Water Utility, when we did have billing problems, there was no one who answered the telephone and our billing correspondence was not answered on a timely basis. If ratepayers are required to use EU, they deserve prompt and professional customer service.

Costs and Rates

The documentation attached to Charlotte County's letter to the PSC includes plans and estimates that were based on 2017 dollars. Accordingly, the estimates for construction and operation of the system are grossly understated (considering inflation, labor and cost of materials). Additional information and estimates are necessary in order to make a thoughtful decision of this magnitude. There is a lack of information available for analysis at this time.

Conclusion

For the above reasons, I ask that the Commission deny EU's application to provide Sewer Service at Little Gasparilla Island at this time.

Thank you,

David Adams
813 452 2882

Lisa Smith

From: robinmadden@islanderproperties.com
Sent: Monday, January 24, 2022 2:23 PM
To: Records Clerk; Office of Commissioner La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo
Cc: Nickolas Zakov
Subject: Docket #20200226-SU
Attachments: Dr Zakov Letter to PSC.docx

Letter from an island resident, Nicolas Zakov, 380 N Gulf Blvd.

Lisa Smith

From: Lindsay Yates <lyates@springsips.com>
Sent: Monday, January 24, 2022 2:10 PM
To: Records Clerk; Office of Commissioner La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo
Subject: Docket No. 20200226-SU

Commissioners:

My name is Lindsay Yates and I live at 2 Pointe Way on Don Pedro Island. I write to you to state my **opposition** to the application of Environmental Utilities for your approval of a Certificate of Authorization.

I have been a property owner on Don Pedro Island since 2001 and a fulltime resident since 2008. During that time I have replaced a septic system in an older home and installed two septic systems in homes which my husband and I built. The more recent home was completed in 2019. I am not necessarily opposed to central sewer, but I am vehemently opposed to this proposal. There is absolutely nothing about the EU proposal that would inspire any sort of confidence in this operator to build, operate and maintain a system. Many of the letters that have been sent to you were written by people with more expertise than I in the areas of environmental impacts (not just the arguments for septic vs. sewer, but also the environmental impacts of construction of the project on this fragile barrier island), the disadvantages (including additional costs to the homeowner) of a grinder system as proposed by EU vs. a vacuum system, the financial ability and technical ability of the applicant, and the outlandish rates and charges proposed by EU.

I think that previous correspondence on file and the testimony of expert witnesses has proven beyond a doubt that EU does not have the ability to satisfactorily meet the needs of the residents on these islands. Additionally, I personally find it offensive that during his deposition Mr. Boyer when describing his personal observations of seeing human waste on the ground, waste floating around after storms, septic tanks under water, and waste contained in 55 gallon drums did not make it clear that these observations were confined to Little Gasparilla Island, not Don Pedro, Knight or Palm Islands. I guarantee you that those are not the conditions under which I live. It's rather hard to believe that the tourists who continue to pay to rent homes on Little Gasparilla Island are not complaining about the awful odors that Mr. Boyer describes.

On July 14th, 2020, the Charlotte County Board of Commissioners approved a Bulk Sewer Treatment Agreement with EU. This Agreement was entered into with no fanfare, no advance notice to island residents and no (as far as I know) request for proposals from other companies. As far as I know, the County did not even put out a request for competitive proposals. To the best of my knowledge, the County did not consider the financial ability of the applicant, the technical expertise of the applicant nor did they care what the applicant might charge its customers. This was not a civic-minded offer to improve a problem that no one is sure really exists – no water studies have been done; no numbers generated on the number and age of the existing septics – this was a simply a way for EU to profit at the expense of its friends and neighbors.

Central sewer installation?? Maybe. But not by this particular for-profit company. The island residents deserve honesty and professionalism. I have been told by acquaintances of Mr. Boyer that he has indicated that this is "a done deal." I certainly hope that is not true.

I hereby formally request that the PSC deny the application of Environmental Utilities LLC.

Thank you for your consideration.

Lindsay C. Yates
lyates@springsips.com

970-879-1879

Lisa Smith

From: robinmadden@islanderproperties.com
Sent: Monday, January 24, 2022 1:51 PM
To: Records Clerk; Office of Commissioner La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo
Subject: Docket #20200226-SU

Commissioners: I own two properties, a residence located at 64 Tarpon Way and a business, Islander Properties, Inc . located at 330 S Gulf Blvd Unit 40 on Don Pedro-Knight-Palm Island. I am formally requesting that you deny Environmental Utilities, LLC. application to provide a central sewer system. My concerns are as follows:

- the applicant's financial ability to take on this project
- the applicant's technical expertise
- the uncertainty of future rates and charges
- the need for additional costs, such as electrical panels, tree/landscape removal/replacement, installation of a generator
- the applicant's inability to provide a pay over time plan
- the lack of statistic analysis that proves we are polluting the waters

As a business owner and real estate Broker who sells and help buyers purchase property on our island, this entails additional costs, when in fact a new septic tank and/or septic field has been paid for recently. I personally have to replace my septic field in the next month for \$9000 and certainly do not want to incur another \$25,000 plus for a sewer replacement, when this new field will have a life span of 15 years.

Again, please deny the application.

Robin Madden
Owner/Broker
Islander Properties, Inc.
7025-A Placida Rd
Englewood, Fl 34224
941-276-6902 direct
941-697-2000 office
www.islanderproperties.com

Charlotte County Tourist Development Council Member
2018-2020 President Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association Gulf Island Coast Chapter
2015 President Englewood Area Board of Realtors
Certified Luxury Home Marketing Specialist

Lisa Smith

From: S Crymes <s_crymes@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 24, 2022 1:32 PM
To: Records Clerk; Office of Commissioner La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo
Cc: Rhonda Freeman
Subject: RE. Docket #20200226-SU

EMAIL TO:

Clerk of the Commission clerk@psc.state.fl.us
Commissioner LaRosa: Commissioner.LaRosa@psc.state.fl.us
Commissioner Clark: Commissioner.Clark@psc.state.fl.us
Commissioner Passidomo: Commissioner.Passidomo@psc.state.fl.us
RE. Docket #20200226-SU

We object to the proposal and ask the PSC to deny the Application for Original Certificate of Authorization. We are asking the PSC to deny EU's application for wastewater service.

1. FINANCIAL ABILITY of the applicant

We have had a reasonably good service experience with the applicant related to the water service. However, we have seen no evidence that convinces us that the applicant has the financial ability to build, maintain and service this type of sewage system. Also, the applicant has not addressed how the system will be serviced in the event of failure during a storm or conditions.

There is no performance bond required and we have no single point of recourse in the event of cost overruns or project failure.

This project is too important to sub out to an unqualified applicant

2. TECHNICAL EXPERTISE of the applicant

We have had a reasonably good service experience with the applicant related to the water service. However, we have seen no evidence that convinces us that the applicant has the technical expertise to build, maintain and service this type of sewage system.

Also, a failure will concentrate sewage into the failure point, potentially resulting in significant impacts to the environment and all the creatures living near a concentrated spill. Manatees are already dying at high rates due to loss of seagrass due in part to red tide. If there was a failure that dumped a concentrated and high amount into the bay where the manatees feed, for example, they could be even more negatively impacted than they are today.

I'm also concerned about how the project will impact the gopher tortoise and other species that are native to Little Gasparilla Island.

3. FAIR & EQUITABLE RATES & CHARGES

We are extremely concerned that the mandatory costs of sewage in addition to the mandatory water hook up is going to drive our retired neighbors that are full time islanders off island. Many live on fixed incomes. Also, increased costs will

make ownership out of reach for many more in the future. We do not want to island to become financially accessible only to the most wealthy. Already, the market prices are pushing us in this direction and this project has the potential to drive off existing full time and retired neighbors. Historically, LGI has had some economic diversity given to its lower cost basis to own a home. Our concern is related to one time fees as well as the ongoing cost including:

- Average monthly cost. Our water bill is already extremely high. Total cost for water, sewage and trash removal should be higher than the mainland due to cost of providing service, but not many multiples of what it costs on the mainland. Common sense would suggest that while providing this service is more difficult, the multiplier should be within a reasonable range. **Our water bill is already much too high in our opinion and some of the most expensive in the State of Florida**
- Uncertain Hook-up Cost: We have no realistic idea of what it will cost
- Electric: the system pump requires a separate electric panel, installed by a licensed electrician at the expense of the owner. We don't have specifications to get bids and estimate what this will cost
- No grandfathering of septic systems: regardless of age or **condition**. We installed a new septic at 8394 Little Gasparilla Island before we sold the house to our neighbors recently. The cost of this new system was included in the price set to sell the house. The new buyers just paid for this system recently and are retired. As long as the system is serviced and operating per requirements, don't see a need to replace immediately unless mandated by Federal, State or County law or regulation. We do not see evidence that this is the case.
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Our names are Sarah Crymes and Rhonda Freeman. We own a home on Little Gasparilla Island at 8342 Grand Ave., Placida, FL 33946. We also own land on Little Gasparilla Island at 8336, 8338, 8346, 8400 Grand Ave and 8392, 8396 Little Gasparilla Island.

Our mailing address is 1255 Jackson St. N, St. Petersburg, FL 33705. Our emails are s_crymes@hotmail.com and rfreeman123@yahoo.com

Thank you

Sincerely,

Sarah and Rhonda