

Yvette Gillespie

From: Hannah Barker
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2024 11:58 AM
To: Commissioner Correspondence
Subject: Docket Correspondence
Attachments: Request for Wastewater services; Palm Island - Request for Wastewater Service; New Docket #20240032-SU ; Docket #20240032-SU; Septic - Palm Island; Request For Wastewater Service : Docket #20240032-SU; Docket #20240032-SU; Docket #20240032-SU; Docket #20240032-SU; DOCKET #@)@40032-SU; Fwd: For Centralized Sewer

Good afternoon,

Please place the attached emails in Docket No. 20240032. Thank you!

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



Yvette Gillespie

From: jack murray <jkmurrayiii@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 16, 2024 5:45 PM
To: Office of Commissioner Clark
Subject: Request for Wastewater services

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello- I own Lot 28 on Palm Island and would appreciate it if you would support the extension of wastewater services to the Island. I am in the process of building a home there and based on the amount of money I am investing there, as well as the amount of taxes I pay there, I feel this is an appropriate request. These services will greatly enhance the community in a number of ways. Thanks for your consideration in this matter.

Jack Murray

Jack Murray III
Partner, Murray – Bertron, LLC

1700 South MacDill Ave., Suite 220
Tampa, FL 33629

813-223-2424 (Main)
813-229-3702 (Fax)

This transmission is intended to be delivered only to the named addressee(s) and may contain information that is confidential, proprietary, attorney work-product or attorney-client privileged. If this information is received by anyone other than the named addressee(s), the recipient should immediately notify the sender by E-MAIL and by telephone (813) 223-2424 and obtain instructions as to the disposal of the transmitted material. In no event shall this material be read, used, copied, reproduced, stored or retained by anyone other than the named addressee(s), except with the express consent of the sender or the named addressee(s). Thank you.

Yvette Gillespie

From: Chad Durrance <chad@durranceappraisals.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 16, 2024 5:52 PM
To: Office of Commissioner Clark
Subject: Palm Island - Request for Wastewater Service

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Commisioner Clark-

I have been a property owner on Palm Island for over 20 years, first having lived in Palm Island resort and I am currently building a home at 461 North Gulf Boulevard. I would very respectfully request that you vote in favor of centralized wastewater service for the entirety of the island for a number of reasons.

1. I am in the process of building a home and in probably about 12 months will be spending a little over \$20,000 for a septic tank and drainfield system that most government agencies and scientific bodies would tell you is not as beneficial to the environment as a centralized waste water system. So not only is it better financially for my particular situation, but as with everybody else it is overall better for the water quality surrounding the island. I realize there are some folks that have recently built a house and therefore recently spent money to install a new septic and drain field and they are against centralized sewer simply because of the cost. I understand their position and am I sympathetic, but I will let them write their own letter to the council and plead their case.
2. A raised drainfield and septic system takes up about a third or more of my lot area outside of my home footprint. With centralized sewer I could be using that area for a lot more productive uses by freeing up the space.

As with most communities, persons on the island see issues through different sets of lenses and from different perspectives. I respect everyone's opinion and position that writes to this commission but wanted to let you know there are long time property and homeowners on the island that would like to see a centralized wastewater system. Thank you for your consideration.

Chad Durrance, MAI | Cert Gen RZ987

Durrance & Associates
300 S. Hyde Park Avenue, Suite 201
Tampa, Florida 33606
(D) 813.258.8464 | (C) 813.477.3388

Yvette Gillespie

From: shannon ridings <sridings10@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 16, 2024 6:00 PM
To: Office of Chairman La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo; Office of Commissioner Graham; Office of Commissioner Fay
Subject: New Docket #20240032-SU

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Clerk/Commissioners,

I am writing to request that you AGAIN deny the request by Environmental Utilities to provide wastewater services to Little Gasparilla Island. There has been no demand for this type of service, nor any indication such service is warranted. There have been no health concerns identified, nor any water quality issues. If this were an issue, then why does the County still issue permits for new septic systems on the island? So it makes me wonder what has changed since the first denial?

Concerns:

1. Our properly maintained septic system is still more appropriate than the proposed system, which requires EU to remove or abandon our septic tank to install their septic tank. How is that a better solution? Several homeowners have just put in new septic systems and others have spent thousands on improvements. In addition, EU's system needs to be connected to each homeowner's electrical service, on a separate electric panel at the cost of homeowners. The system will also require the installation of a pump at each homeowner's expense. During power outages, which occurs frequently, each homeowner would also need to have a backup generator installed in order to prevent a sewage backup. Again, this responsibility and expense would fall upon the homeowner, not Jack Boyer. Being on a "bridge-less" island it takes several hours and sometimes even days for the electricity to be restored to the island. Several of the homeowners do not live on the island full time to monitor this, therefore, this system is a horrible idea and would be a disaster. In addition, this type of system costs considerably more to maintain and operate. Not to mention the initial "estimated" cost to homeowners of \$12,000-\$15,000 is astronomical. Then there's a base facility charge, and a monthly charge, and a connection charge and so many unknown charges. A true cost has not been provided by EU, all is speculation. What recourse does the homeowners have in case of failure? These "estimated" fees don't even include the water bill that EU currently charges, which is radically much higher than the water costs on the mainland. Very apparent it's now all about making money.

2. Also of concern is the question of possible easements to our personal property for EU's proposed system. In Mr. Boyer's presentation he requests that our private property be given to him at "no cost". There has been no discussion of access, or how much property is required or negotiations with homeowners to obtain any reasonable compensation, or how future easements would be granted. The majority of the island is not occupied by full time residents or renters. There are no bridges to the island, nor any real roads. The island is transversed mainly by golf carts, or on foot via sand paths. Basically the entire island is land locked and not suitable for high density development.

3. EU is a private, "for profit" company with no financial history or technical expertise needed to operate a wastewater system on a barrier island, nor have they provided any documentation of any qualified professionals. EU should be required to provide a history of all sewer projects of this magnitude, especially since it involves environmentally sensitive areas, but they cannot. Isn't that a red flag? How will the system be

serviced in the event of a disaster or an emergency? If the County has changed its mind and now desires the barrier islands to implement a wastewater system then why doesn't the County do it themselves?

4. The environmental impact of this proposal is extremely high not only due to the septic issues that will surely arise due to electrical issues but to the environmental disruption of habitat and endangered species on the island itself.

This is my formal objection to the wastewater proposal by EU. I request that PSC again deny EU's certificate for wastewater services and also deny any future requests without us all being required to address this over and over.

Shannon Ridings
sridings10@gmail.com
LGI Dock 21

Yvette Gillespie

From: Randy Blalock <randyrblalock@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2024 10:53 AM
To: Records Clerk; Office of Chairman La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo; Office of Commissioner Fay; Office of Commissioner Graham
Cc: Paul Blalock; Randy Blalock
Subject: Docket #20240032-SU

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Public Service Commission

RE: Docket #20240032-SU

To: Whom it May Concern,

We are writing to you today to ask the Public Service Commission (PSC) to please deny the recent Application for certificate to provide wastewater services in Charlotte County by Environmental Utilities, LLC. (Docket # 20240032-SU). My husband and I purchased our home on Don Pedro Island last June because we loved the old Florida lifestyle that this island offers. When looking at homes on the island we were pleased to know that it had a septic tank vs sewer system. To be proactive, we chose to have our septic system replaced so we would not question the condition of an existing tank, knowing we will properly maintain our new septic tank. Having lived in Florida for our entire lives, we have seen how sewer system pollution has become a problem throughout the state, especially in coastal areas where flooding occurs after major rains, storms, and hurricanes. We are opposed to the new proposal for a central sewer system. Our concerns for our island are the following:

1-We have not heard of or had a conversation with any of our neighbors on the island that requested the change from septic to sewer. Who is requesting this change? Is there a large group of property owners that are in favor of the change?

2-We have not been given or found any factual evidence that a central sewer system is more environmentally friendly, has more advantages, or is better than a septic system.

3-What experience does Environmental Utilities have in wastewater systems? Do they have the financial backing to support emergency situations and constantly maintain their systems over the years to prevent leakage and harm to our beautiful island and surrounding waterways?

4-The costs associated with the new system (Hook-up, increased electric bills, generators, tree removal) will be a hardship on many and without proven evidence of the advantages. This change should be our choice and not one of someone who does not live on the island.

5-The infrastructure of our island will be disrupted with the placement of a new system that will affect property owners, wildlife (some endangered), property rights, and traffic.

6-Potential leaks in future if not maintained or damaged.

We personally would not choose to have a central sewer system installed on Don Pedro Island and hope you will consider denying the recent application for certificate to provide wastewater services in Charlotte County by Environmental Utilities, LLC. (Docket # 20240032-SU). We have stated our concerns and our desires as property owners at 391 Kettle Harbor Dr., Placida FL and strongly feel that it should be the island property owners that make this decision because we are the ones that live and care for our special island.

Please feel free to reach out to us if you have any questions and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mr. and Mrs. Paul and Randy Blalock

391 Kettle Harbor Dr

Placida FL 33946

(863) 698-0767

randyrbalock@gmail.com

paulblalock505@gmail.com

Yvette Gillespie

From: Sharon_saad <sharon_saad@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2024 10:45 AM
To: Office of Commissioner Clark
Subject: Septic - Palm Island

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Stewart & Sharon Saad
29 N Gulf Blvd
561 N Gulf Blvd
571 N Gulf Blvd

We have personally and professionally known Jack, Diane, and all the Boyer children in our 20+ years on Palm Island, we support treated wastewater and commend their continued efforts to improve the island like they always have.

Environmental Considerations

In our opinion, there is nothing more disgustingly irresponsible than to continually flush millions of gallons of human sewer waste into poorly maintained, uncertified, and decades old septic drain fields. Simply put, there is nothing more environmentally destructive island residents, renters, and owners can do to the water quality of our bays, canals, and subsoils of our lots and beaches.

Increasing Volumes

Time is of the essence for island sewer, the number of full-time residents and visitors to our island(s) has greatly increased over the last 5+ years, probably doubled; meaning the human waste volumes have doubled over historic levels. The environmental impacts of the dramatic increase in sewer volumes should be addressed, the impacts of raw sewer being dumped into islands groundwater system should not be ignored any longer.

Sent from my iPhone

Yvette Gillespie

From: G.S. Buhler <gsbuhler@aol.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2024 10:15 AM
To: Records Clerk
Cc: Office of Chairman La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Passidomo; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Fay
Subject: Request For Wastewater Service : Docket #20240032-SU

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Commissioners:

I have been a property owner on the island for over 20 years and I am 100 percent in favor of adding a central sewer system. The local PIE group has been sending out many emails and posts that are focused on the cost of this project - this group is very uneducated on the environmental impacts. It would be very beneficial to send someone to the island to host an educational meeting. Whether we add wastewater service today or not - it will happen sometime in the next few years - every year the cost will increase.

As commissioners, you are tasked with making the good decision for the people, county, and environment. It is our responsibility to protect our environment - and sometimes it will cost. Electric cars cost more than gas, but that is our future. There have been many case studies on septic tanks and the communities around them - they all agree they are very bad for the environment. They are all leaking into our waters. There has never been one single example that was not negative on septic tanks.

One more point - lets keep in mind that this program has been in place for several years on the North end of Palm Island - specifically in the resort and the street to the South. All run by a private company. I lived in this section for several years and it was great!!

Thank you,
Gary Buhler
gsbuhler@aol.com
53 Bayshore Circle

Yvette Gillespie

From: Holly Parrish <hollyparrish@me.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2024 9:39 AM
To: Records Clerk; Office of Chairman La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo; Office of Commissioner Fay; Office of Commissioner Graham
Subject: Docket #20240032-SU

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

My name is Holly Parrish, my Husband Steve Parrish and I are property owners at 540 N. Gulf Blvd. on Don Pedro Island/Palm Island.

We would like it recorded that I strongly oppose the proposed central sewer.

We do not wish to have a central sewer. I prefer to keep my septic

I am formally requesting that the PSC deny EU's application for wastewater service.

Thank you!
Steve and Holly Parrish
540 N. Gulf Blvd
33946

Yvette Gillespie

From: David Cohen <david.paul.cohen@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, April 14, 2024 7:57 AM
To: Records Clerk
Cc: Office of Commissioner Fay; Office of Commissioner Graham; Office of Commissioner Passidomo; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Chairman La Rosa
Subject: Docket #20240032-SU

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

To: Clerk of the Commission, Commissioner LaRosa, Commissioner Clark, Commissioner Passidomo, Commissioner Graham, Commissioner Fay

My name is David Cohen and I live, full time, at 8 Pointe Way, Don Pedro Island. This location is within the area proposed for service by this application. My phone number is 201-600-1450 and I would be happy to have a polite conversation about this matter if you so desire. My email address is davidpaulcohen@gmail.com if you wish to contact me that way. I have had a residence on the island since 1990.

I am writing to respectfully ask that you deny EU's application for wastewater service.

I am further asking that EU be prohibited from ever applying for providing wastewater service in the future.

Only a few things have changed since I last wrote the commission with the same request.

What changed?

- o The county has now changed their mind about sewer on the islands attempting a legal workaround to their own Comprehensive plan.
- o The claim is that while the Comprehensive Plan prohibits the County from installing central sewer, but not a privately owned utility. This so obviously defeats the purpose of the existing comprehensive plan designation

and is an example of politics at its worst, encouraging development in increasingly shrinking protected areas with a nod and a wink.

- o If the county truly wants sewers on these barrier islands, they must attempt to change the land use designation and do the work themselves, not hide behind an obvious backdoor move.
- o Surprise! There are now developers who desire the sewer system to be installed. What could possibly be the reason behind this? By convincing the county to skirt the comprehensive land use plan allowing for increased AND ALREADY PLANNED higher density development. This privately owned, for-profit limited liability company will maximize their profits on the backs of island residents (as they have previously declared they will apply for the maximum rates and increase legally allowed).

What has not changed:

- There is no need for this service.
 - o There has been no evidence provided that supports a need for service in the proposed service area. Expert witnesses at the last Administrative Hearing held by the county commission refuted the arguments that EU put forward supporting the need for service
 - o There is zero scientifically proven need for this service. No water quality testing has been done in our area to prove any water quality impact coming from the barrier islands.
 - o The community at large does not desire such a service.
- Highly dangerous environmental impact.
 - o During the implementation of this project:
 - There would be immense environmental disruption of the many endangered species that inhabit these islands as well as migratory species.
 - o After implementation of this project:
 - Based on the specific type of implementation being considered, an event that causes a lack of electricity, fuel and prevents or severely restricts island access such as another hurricane lan would spell an environmental disaster for the entire group of islands. Please note that the large existing gravity operated tanks currently in use would be replaced by very small tanks (yes, there would still be holding tanks with the

new service) that rely on continuous access to end-user supplied power to operate. IMAGINE THE ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTER OF THE ENTIRE ISLAND COMPLEX WITH ZERO SEPTIC MANAGEMENT CAPABILITIES FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME SUCH AS THE PERIOD FOLLOWING HURRICANE IAN.

- Quality of life impact for residents.
 - The combination of post-storm rebuilds, new home construction, and tourist traffic during season has made wait lines at the ferry both unpredictable and outrageous. Now, consider the heavy equipment and materials transport needed to construct an island-wide central sewer system. And how long it will take to build.
 - The sand roads (not dirt roads) do not lend themselves to manholes as the paved roads on the mainland do. The impact to the sand roads, both public and private, have not been explored or mitigated.
- The cost to homeowners. Do standard mainland sewers incur such cost? No.
 - Enormously more expensive, initially and on an on-going basis, than sewer systems on the mainland to the citizens impacted.
 - Grossly underestimated monthly costs based on erroneous average estimated household water usage.
 - No access to gray water systems to offset landscaping water usage.
 - Based on my personal water usage, the total for water and sewer service would often exceed \$500 / month.
 - There is a whole host of related costs unique to this application that place an undue burden on island residents including by not limited to:
 - Cost of pump-out and maintenance of the new system tank. Isn't the purpose of a sewer system to prevent tanks filling up and needing pump outs?
 - Cost of removal of existing materials involving very high barge fees.
 - Cost of rehoming protected wildlife.
 - Cost of electric installation for the system, potentially requiring new or added panels.

- Cost of replacing anything more than the “basic landscaping” that the hook-up agreement states will be replaced.
- In the event of another bad storm or lengthy power outage, residents will need to have a generator continually running to prevent sewage backup on their property.
- EU’s existing troubled track record as a company as well as a lack of experience owning a wastewater utility is a significant red flag. Any claim by EU to the contrary should be investigated thoroughly. Combined with the lack of county or state oversight of initial installation, ongoing operations as well as the potential for a true environmental disaster with no plan for mitigation being submitted and agreed upon should disqualify this application. This would not be a public service, it would be a public disaster.
- There are unexplored alternatives to a sewer system on the barrier island, including but not limited to:
 - Different types of septic systems that act as treatment plants.
 - County required inspections and maintenance of existing systems along with associated fees for non-compliance.
- There is also the ‘elephant in the room’ requirement for the Palm Island Resort to fix issues with their own privately operated sewage system. While the resort would not directly use the septic systems being contemplated, the costs of hooking up their system to the county via this private central line would be completely passed on to the citizens targeted on Don Pedro Island.

There are many more reasons, but I am confident that my fellow islanders will write in and, if needed, speak before the commission as they did the last time EU made essentially the identical application.

Once again, I ask that you deny the EU's application for wastewater service.

I am further asking that EU be prohibited from ever applying for providing wastewater service in the future.

Respectfully submitted,

David Cohen
201-600-1450

Yvette Gillespie

From: Kevin Pottmeyer <kpottmeyer@gmavt.net>
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2024 8:35 AM
To: Office of Commissioner Clark
Subject: Docket #20240032-SU

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

As the owners of 31 Kettle Harbor Drive on Knight Island, Placida, FL we are writing to formally request that the PSC **deny Environmental Utilities LLC's application for wastewater service.**

We object to the project as we currently understand it on multiple grounds, with the primary one being the lack of a demonstrated need. We are unaware of any material issues with the current septic system approach for handling household wastewater and believe that the construction, operation and maintenance of a public wastewater system will do more to harm the fragile environment on the island than any benefits it may provide. This includes destruction of vegetation, gopher tortoise habitat and overall disruption of our right to quiet enjoyment of the island.

On the whole, the residents of the islands are not asking for this service and in the absence of a compelling demonstrated need we should not have it forced upon us.

Respectfully,

Kevin and Jane Pottmeyer

(m) (631) 836-2000

kpottmeyer@icloud.com

Yvette Gillespie

From: laurie gaines <gaines555@earthlink.net>
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2024 10:56 AM
To: Office of Commissioner Clark
Subject: DOCKET #20240032-SU

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

TO: Commissioner Clark

FROM: Laurie and Buddy Gaines
8814 Grand Avenue
Little Gasparilla Island, (Placida) FL. 33946
815-440-0001

SUBJECT: DOCKET #20240032-SU

It has been brought to our attention that once again, a small local company is attempting to force LGI residents to connect to a proposed sewer system on our remote barrier island.

We have several objections to this proposal and would request that you deny the application.

First and foremost, we do not need central sewer and have never asked that this service be provided. We have been successfully using septic systems for the over 40 years that we have owned on the island. We maintain the system dutifully, have had it pumped when necessary and have never experienced any leakage or overflow. In addition, the island now has access to “city” water (also forced upon us recently at significant expense) so there is little to no concern about septic contamination of ground water for drinking, since we no longer have shallow wells to provide drinking water.

Secondly, being forced to hook up to this utility will cause undue financial hardship for many island residents. Most of us are still recovering from the devastating effects of Hurricane Ian and still fighting with insurance companies in order to complete needed repairs. Adding the financial burden of a forced hookup to septic services when many of us have paid thousands and thousands of dollars already — and in some cases hundreds of thousands — in unreimbursed hurricane repairs puts an unnecessary strain on the finances of most of our island neighbors. Many of us are senior citizens/retirees on fixed incomes and simply cannot afford the hookup fee (rumored to be in excess of \$20,000.) Many of our neighbors have also just replaced their aging septic systems with brand new, extremely expensive systems. This is simply an unfair expense for them.

Third, however — and perhaps most important — is the fact that many of us are not actually opposed to sewer service as long as it is affordable (monthly payments or property tax assessments possibly) and well-managed by a reputable entity. However, we **prefer that the services be provided by Charlotte County** which at least has a regulatory structure in place and offers financial stability. **Environmental Utilities is an unknown company with absolutely NO EXPERIENCE WHATSOEVER in managing a wastewater utility.** We believe something as critical as wastewater treatment needs to be handled by a professional entity, not a local individual merely looking to profit. I am not privy to all details, but whether the option is to pump waste off the island under Placida Bay OR treat it on the island, handling of this waste is of paramount importance to

maintain the quality of the water in the Bay and to maintain the quality of life on the island. We do not believe that Environmental Utilities has the knowledge or experience to properly deal with any unforeseen circumstances, much less effectively manage it on an ongoing basis.

We respectfully request that you deny this application.

PS: I originally sent this email on April 8 but did not receive confirmation that it was received. So I am sending it again. Can you acknowledge receipt of this communication?

Respectfully,
Laurie and Buddy Gaines

Yvette Gillespie

From: Trudy Lombard <trudy414@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2024 11:21 AM
To: Office of Commissioner Clark
Subject: Fwd: For Centralized Sewer

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

>

>

> Dear Commissioner,

>

> I am very not usually one to take the time to send out emails to government officials, however, this matter has me completely baffled and quite upset. The health and safety of those living on Little Gasparilla Island is at a terrible risk. Seventeen people died after Hurricane Ian due to wastewater related issues. ONE person dying is too many, let alone SEVENTEEN. Environmental experts have been to the island and confirmed that the situation there is a health hazard, therefore it should be MANDATORY that septic is removed and centralized sewer is put in. Why should homes located on our most fragile environment NOT have centralized wastewater when the rest of the county does? Why is it a choice? It makes zero sense. As a taxpaying citizen of Charlotte County and a frequent boater and beach-goer, I am asking that you correct this matter of urgency before the seventeen lives lost turns into eighteen. I certainly couldn't live with that on my conscience, can you?

>

>

>

>