

Yvette Gillespie

From: Yvette Gillespie on behalf of Records Clerk
Sent: Thursday, April 18, 2024 3:07 PM
To: 'Andy & Julie Nichols'
Cc: Consumer Contact
Subject: RE: Docket #20240032-SU

Good afternoon Andrew and Julie Nichols,

We will be placing your comments below in consumer correspondence in Docket No. 20240032, and forwarding them to the Office of Consumer Assistance and Outreach.

Sincerely,

Yvette Gillespie

Commission Deputy Clerk I
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Blvd.
Tallahassee, FL 32399
ygillesp@psc.state.fl.us
Phone: (850) 413-6195

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From: Andy & Julie Nichols <clweagle@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2024 12:07 PM
To: Records Clerk <CLERK@PSC.STATE.FL.US>
Cc: Commissioner.LaRosa@psc.stat; Commissioner.Clark@psc.state; Commissioner.Passidomo@psc.state; Commissioner.Graham@psc.stat; Commissioner.Fay@psc.state
Subject: Docket #20240032-SU

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Andrew & Julie Nichols
2 Adele Way, Don Pedro Island
clweagle@gmail.com, 941-698-1615

RE: Docket # 20240032-SU
Commissioners:

I am writing in response to the most recent application by Environmental Utilities to provide sewer service to Knight and Don Pedro Island.

First of all, I am in a state of Déjà vu. In 2003, it was property developers that had to have sewer to build multi story condos on North Gulf Blvd. We prevailed there. And then in 2020 it was Environmental

Utilities, the same company that is now reapplying, offering to provide a “service” to the Charlotte County Commission to take on this pesky task again, thereby alleviating the county of the burden to provide this service themselves, a role traditionally done by counties. This situation is very similar to what the county did to us with the water company servicing our islands, Bocilla Utilities. Bocilla Utilities tried for a number of years to get the county to buy the water company on our Knight and Don Pedro Island. When the county abrogated their responsibility, they “allowed” Bocilla Utilities to put in all the infrastructure, hook up to Englewood Water and continue to be the middleman and overcharge the islanders to recoup their investment resulting in exorbitant rates for water. A service our county should have provided us at fair rates.

Now, Environmental Utilities want to do the same thing to the islanders but at a much higher price. Their plan would cost homeowners thousands of dollars not just in hooking up to their system but the additional demands of generators, expensive additions to electrical panels and destruction to existing lawns and irrigation systems, not to mention forcing us to give up our private property rights for free. The cost would be upwards of \$13,000 just for the hookup, and that does not include the generator expense. Speaking of which, we investigated the addition of a generator and was told it would have to be elevated eighteen feet up to our first-floor level, five feet from any window and the propane tank buried fifteen feet away from our house. The smallest propane tank costs \$8000. And if you are a beachfront owner you have to go through the timely process for State DEP approval. Many of the islanders are still struggling to recover from Hurricane Ian and cover remodeling their insurance did not. We sure don’t need this big expense now. If the county really thinks we need sewer, why treat our islanders any different than somewhere else in the county. The fair thing to do is to run the sewer lines and charge a reasonable hookup fee to carry the sewage to the mainland and a fair monthly rate. No more tanks in our yards or generators.

Last time The Public Service Commission wisely sized up the situation out here. At the last hearing our islanders told you about the crystal-clear water, abundant with fish, where dolphins play. Many of us have had mini reefs installed under our docks to attract fish. We have many tourists fishing off our bridges and catching fish. Recently, I saw a school of fish swimming back into the lagoon behind our house. There is not a need for sewer on our islands.

The PSC wisely decided at the hearing in 2020 that there was no evidence to support a need for service. That has not changed. It is just the same outfit trying to make a buck off our islands and letting Charlotte County off the hook.

We kindly ask again that you turn down Environmental Utilities’ request and put the onus on the County that if and when the need arises, they provide the same service to us on both our water and sewage that they provide throughout the county.