

Antonia Hover

From: Antonia Hover on behalf of Records Clerk
Sent: Friday, April 19, 2024 4:23 PM
To: 'oranges@embarqmail.com'
Cc: Consumer Contact
Subject: FW: Docket #20240032-SU
Attachments: EU letter 4 19 24.odt

Good Afternoon, Wendy Petteway.

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.

Thank you!

Toni Hover
Commission Deputy Clerk I
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard
Tallahassee, FL 32399
Phone: (850) 413-6467

-----Original Message-----

From: Roy & Wendy Petteway <oranges@embarqmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 19, 2024 10:48 AM
To: Records Clerk <CLERK@PSC.STATE.FL.US>
Cc: Office of Chairman La Rosa <Commissioner.LaRosa@psc.state.fl.us>; Office of Commissioner Clark <Commissioner.Clark@psc.state.fl.us>; Office of Commissioner Passidomo <Commissioner.Passidomo@psc.state.fl.us>; Office of Commissioner Fay <Commissioner.Fay@psc.state.fl.us>; Office of Commissioner Graham <Commissioner.Graham@PSC.STATE.FL.US>
Subject: Docket #20240032-SU

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

Please find attached my protest concerning the above docket.

Thank you,

Wendy Petteway

9744 Little Gasparilla Island
Placida, Florida

Commission Clerk
Office of Commission Clerk
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0850

April 7, 2024

Re: Docket No. 20240032-SU – Application for certificate to provide wastewater service in Charlotte County by Environmental Utilities, LLC

To whom it may concern:

This letter is to file a vehement objection to the application by Environmental Utilities (EU) for a permit to install a sewer/wastewater system on the barrier islands of Charlotte County, specifically, Little Gasparilla Island, Palm Island and Knight Island.

I am a property owner on Little Gasparilla Island, my address is 9744 Little Gasparilla Island, Placida, Florida.

To begin, there is no requirement for a sewer system on the barrier islands, as Charlotte County is issuing septic tank permits frequently for the said islands. As a matter of fact, I was issued a new septic tank permit in August of 2023. There is no evidence of damage or pollution in the Lemon Bay Estuary from septic tanks.

Second, the said barrier islands are still desperately trying to recover from the direct hit the island took during Hurricane Ian on September 28, 2022. Homes are still in varying states of damage, or are in the process of either repair or rebuild. My house specifically was destroyed by a tornado in the eye wall and we are just now beginning to rebuild. We also have been given a permit for a septic tank as recently as August of 2023. With the cost in the tens of thousands of dollars per household for the installation of the wastewater system, it could prove catastrophic to homeowners on the island struggling with rebuilding their homes in the wake of the storm and subsequent insurance issues that could possibly lead to some homeowners abandoning their homes due to the inability to pay for such an expense.

Third, this issue was dealt with in the spring of 2022, with the Public Service Commission (PSC) declining to issue the certificate to EU. Hundreds of objections were raised either by mail or in person at one of the public hearings. Mr. Boyer himself was found to be less than honest about issues in the previous application by the PSC. I feel the present application by EU is yet another attempt by Mr. Boyer to install a wastewater system that is not necessary, and not required by the County. If indeed Charlotte County thought it necessary to rid the island of septic tanks, it should do so, and manage it as any other municipality does. The owner and operator of the wastewater system should not be a for-profit, private entity that has absolutely no experience managing a wastewater system.

Fourth, as was brought to your attention at the previous public hearings and in the letters sent to the PSC in 2021 and 2022, the damage to the island with the installation of a wastewater system would be catastrophic. The island is a unique ecosystem, with nesting gopher tortoise, nesting bald eagles, bobcats, armadillos, osprey and the wildlife would either be permanently displaced or would be outright destroyed with the installation of a wastewater system. The trees that are recovering from

Hurricane Ian, along with native grasses would be pushed over and ground up to make way for the sewer lines that would have to be installed all over the island to facilitate the wastewater system. As was brought to your attention previously, Little Gasparilla Island especially, has no roads, save a few. Most of the dirt paths on the island are easements, and some of those end up going over private property. Some homeowners have been kind and allowed the north/south path to continue as it goes, but some do not. Getting easements all over the island for the purpose of installing the wastewater system would be time consuming and extremely difficult. And there are some homes that have very small lots, and getting the equipment in-between houses to install would be next to impossible. It could take years just to obtain easements, and those easements would be obtained at no cost to EU, causing homeowners to give up their property rights for free. Not only would the side boundary easement be on each property, but yet another easements would be on each piece of property for the tanks and equipment so they could be installed and serviced. And if anything more than "basic" landscaping were removed for installation, it would also be at the homeowners expense to remove and replace if able once the tank and equipment were installed.

Fifth, the type of wastewater system that Mr. Boyer was to attempt to install last time was a grinder tank system. This system is a low cost to install, but high cost to maintain for residents. The electric power on the island is sometimes out for whatever reason, sometimes for hours. To keep the raw sewage from filling in the tank and backing up into the yard or homes, homeowners would have to have a generator to pump the grinder tank out into the wastewater lines. The cost of generators alone for each household would be a monumental undue expense, especially in light of attempting to recover from the Hurricane in 2022. Mr. Boyer is heartless to attempt this project again, in light of the struggles of the island to recover.

It is also my understanding that Mr. Boyer plans to have this system installed at great expense to the community then sell the system to Charlotte County, and make untold amounts of money off the backs of the island property owners. You should also be advised, Mr. Boyer owns a home on Little Gasparilla Island, which is now for sale. So, after everything, Mr. Boyer would not even have to live with the system he wishes to install, nor would he have to live with the ecological and physical damage the installation of this system would inflict on Little Gasparilla Island.

I would invite any of you who have never been to Little Gasparilla Island to come for a visit and see first hand the terrible obstacles to provide the service Mr. Boyer wishes to attempt again. You will also see that septic tanks are working properly and there is absolutely no need to change the system already in place. The island is a very special place, and no homeowner on the island wishes to harm the island any more than Hurricane Ian did. I am afraid the wastewater system Mr. Boyer wants to install would do just that.

I formally request that you deny the petition of Environmental Utilities, LLC, a for-profit private company that has absolutely no experience in wastewater service, to install a wastewater system on Little Gasparilla Island, Knight Island or Palm Island.

Sincerely,

Roy Petteway
roypetteway@gmail.com