

Antonia Hover

From: Antonia Hover on behalf of Records Clerk
Sent: Monday, January 24, 2022 8:47 AM
To: 'Andy Ball'
Cc: Consumer Contact
Subject: RE: RE. Docket #20200226-SU

Good Morning, George A. Ball.

We will be placing the comments below in consumer correspondence in Docket No. 20200226, and forwarding them to the Office of Consumer Assistance and Outreach.

Thank you!

Toni Hover

*Commission Deputy Clerk I
Florida Public Service Commission
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From: Andy Ball <gab_three@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 23, 2022 9:00 PM
To: Records Clerk <CLERK@PSC.STATE.FL.US>
Subject: RE. Docket #20200226-SU

Dear Commissioners,

I am a resident on Don Pedro Island, FL. I am writing in opposition to the approval of Environmental Utilities application for wastewater services here on the island. I have several concerns that have not been addressed and believe are grounds for denial of the application.

The first concern is that there are no proven grounds for the need of service on this island. Water sampling in and around the island has not demonstrated a need for a wastewater system. While septic tanks can leak, simply requiring a sewer system based on data collected from other areas does not justify the installation of a costly wastewater system as proposed on this island. The need for a wastewater system should be based on actual need such as sampling data and an evaluation of the risks. I understand that water sampling in the past has not shown any sewage contamination. Additionally, a sewer system has risks as well. A wastewater system leak would prove more environmentally hazardous than a leaking septic tank. A leak of a wastewater system into our waters would be catastrophic to the environment. Compared to occasional septic tanks leaking, a sewer leak would prove much worse. Such a leak in the sewer is a real possibility. Aside from that, and probably more importantly, if septic tanks are so bad and there is a critical need for sewer, the county should not be issuing permits for new homes with septic. Yet, the county continues to issue permits for new buildings with septic tanks. This is a complete contradiction. Since the county continues to issue permits, the need cannot be critical and therefore not justified.

The desire for a wastewater system appears to be purely of financial gain. I, nor any of my neighbors that I have talked with, have requested a wastewater system. Installation of the wastewater system will primarily benefit EU considering there is no demonstrated critical need.

Another concern is the lack of transparency regarding financing of the project. It is unclear that the project is well financed. Having this clarity would provide some confidence that the project will be done properly and actually get completed.

Should EU default and not complete the project due to lack of finances, I have concerns as to what that will mean to me and the condition of the island.

There is also the issue of a lack of technical expertise by EU installing and operating a wastewater system. Operating a drinking water system is much different than operating a wastewater system. The risks and complexity are far greater with a wastewater system. If EU had experience in wastewater systems, I might have some confidence in EU's ability to install and operate the system. In the event of a sewage leak, I am also concerned that EU will not have the experience or expertise to address the problem thus, creating an even larger environmental problem than a leaking septic tank.

Lastly is my concern regarding rates and charges associated with the project. At first there was a ball park estimate of \$20,000. I recently received communication from EU explaining that hook up costs could be at least roughly \$12,000. However, that amount does not appear to address other hidden charges such as costs for new electrical panel, septic tank destruction, cost of grinder, generator, etc. I do not recall seeing anything that addresses rates. However, given the high rates we pay for water, I anticipate similarly high rates for wastewater too. This will create a significant financial burden to me while a private company profits for a service that I have already paid for. The septic tank method of treating wastewater at my residence is a safe and effective system.

Please understand that most islanders are responsible about maintaining their septic tanks and, conscientious about protecting the island where we live. Until these concerns are satisfactorily addressed, I hope the application will be denied by the PSC.

Sincerely,

George A. Ball

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