

Antonia Hover

From: Office of Commissioner Clark
Sent: Friday, January 28, 2022 3:30 PM
To: Commissioner Correspondence
Subject: FW: Docket #20200226-SU

Good afternoon,

Please place the attached email 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

From: jbluscombe@gmail.com <jbluscombe@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 28, 2022 3:29 PM
To: Office of Commissioner Passidomo <Commissioner.Passidomo@psc.state.fl.us>; Office of Commissioner Clark <Commissioner.Clark@psc.state.fl.us>; Office of Commissioner La Rosa <Commissioner.LaRosa@psc.state.fl.us>; Records Clerk <CLERK@PSC.STATE.FL.US>
Cc: Palm Island Estates <pie@palmislandestates.org>
Subject: Docket #20200226-SU

Dear Commissioners

My name is Jim Luscombe and I own and reside full time at 420 Bocilla Drive on Don Pedro Island with **Kris Doubles**. Our family home was built in the late 70's and we have been full time residents for 8 years We live within the service district for the central sewer system being proposed by Environmental Utilities (EU). I request that you DENY EU's Application for Original Certificate or Authorization for the following reasons.

1: **Need:** The applicant is citing a study that indicates we are experiencing high nitrogen levels. This problem is typically a result of fertilizer utilization and over the past few years, this has been the center of many studies. Manicured lawns and golf courses and the main problem in this regard. Neither of which we have on Palm Island. For over a decade, our home owners association have been testing the waters surrounding our island . Hundreds of tests later, we have never been able to find any contaminated waters. E coli counts obtained over the past decade would indicate we do not have a problem. Spending 10's of millions of dollars to correct our water quality with a sewer system seems almost ridiculous. Charlotte county, Lee county and Sarasota county have all been in the news over the past year (as recently as last week) BECAUSE OF SEWAGE SYSTEM FAILURES. Pumps fail, lift stations fail. Various reports ranging from 10,000 gallons to will over 100,000 gallons of raw sewage going into our waterways because of the same system being proposed. If the County truly believed the logic of the applicants need assessment, the county would not be granting new permits on our islands for septic systems. This is not the case.
*The only way you can justify moving ahead with this project based on **NEED** is for financial gain. Period.*

2: **Technical Expertise:** I know and respect the applicant, HOWEVER, he has no experience in waste water management and has never completed a project of this magnitude. I spoke with him last week and he made it clear that he feels strongly that the best option for all involved is for the COUNTY to take it over. Another island resident had a meeting with the applicant and at that meeting the applicant advised that he had no intention of actually doing the project. *The only way you can justify moving ahead with this project based on **Technical Expertise** is for financial gain. Period.*

3: **Fair and Equitable Rates & Charges:** We , the residents have yet to be informed of the total actual costs. Hook up fees have been quoted from 10K to 20K. Unfortunately, this is just the tip of the iceberg. Our existing septic's have to be decommissioned. Many homes will require an electric upgrade to power the pumps: No estimate
Our lots will be torn up from the street to the house to lay the line and tankage. Cost of replacing landscaping: No estimate.
What will each resident be paid for the easement needed for them to do this: No estimate.
The best one is the ongoing cost. We will now have to pay \$150 to \$200 monthly to have our waste transported to the mainland where Charlotte county will treat it. The applicant has stated that he will apply for the maximum increase allowed each year. *The only way you can justify moving ahead with this project based on **Fair an Equitable Rates & Charges** is for financial gain. Period.*

Another area of HUGE CONCERN , is the damage to our fragile environment. We are home to a challenged gopher tortoise population. Has a study been done to determine the risk to this protected population?

After all is said and done under the proposed program, our waste will be transported to Rotonda where it is treated. The gray water containing high levels of nutrients and Nitrogen will then be diverted to "Fertilizer Water" used by local golf courses, to ultimately end up in the water table and back into our rivers and coastal waters. This solves nothing.

Sarasota have recently indicated that they should STOP hooking up septic's to sewers UNTIL that have advanced waste water treatment systems in place. Advanced systems are designed to eliminate the nutrient waters that get recycled. This is a much more logical place for the County to start. Make Rotonda and advanced waste water treatment plant.

This entire process seems absolutely ridiculous! As a non engineer but a concerned resident, this fees like a total sham and does not at any level pass the smell test. To use a simple analogy. I go to the hospital with a sore throat. After No testing or analysis, I am told I need open heart surgery. The chiropractor will be performing the surgery and we have no idea of what this will cost you. Oh , and by the way, we will not be responsible for any collateral damage done. As silly as this sounds, its exactly what we are facing.

Please make the right decision that is not based on a high profit permit to one individual, but on the best long term solution to our island that meets our needs now and in the future, has minimum environmental impact and is affordable to all.

Regards

Jim Luscombe and Kris Doubles



Jim Luscombe

Email: Jim@palmislandstays.com

Cell: 727-515-0274

www.palmislandstays.com