

Antonia Hover

From: Antonia Hover on behalf of Records Clerk
Sent: Wednesday, May 25, 2022 2:41 PM
To: 'OAKLEY.EMILY@leg.state.fl.us'
Cc: Consumer Contact
Subject: FW: 20210184 - Customer Correspondence
Attachments: 20210184 - Customer Communication - Connie Charles - 05.25.2022.pdf

Good Afternoon, Ms. Oakley.

We will be placing Ms. Charles' comments below in consumer correspondence in Docket No. 20210184, 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*

From: Oakley, Emily <OAKLEY.EMILY@leg.state.fl.us>
Sent: Wednesday, May 25, 2022 2:28 PM
To: Records Clerk <CLERK@PSC.STATE.FL.US>
Subject: 20210184 - Customer Correspondence

Afternoon,

A customer requested for us to have the attached added to docket #20210184 on their behalf. Please let me know if you need anything further.

Emily Oakley
Senior Administrative Assistant
Office of Public Counsel
Work: 850-717-0325

Docket # 20210184

From: Connie Charles <conniecharles54@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 25, 2022 8:52 AM
To: Morse, Stephanie
Subject: Fwd: PSC Case# 1394406W

Please see my letter in response to letter from HC Watterworks dated 04/21/22.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Connie Charles** <conniecharles54@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, May 25, 2022 at 8:39 AM
Subject: PSC Case# 1394406W
To: <trendell@uswatercorp.net>

Dear Troy Rendell,

In response to your letter dated 04/21/22 regarding the Waste water treatment plant and water treatment plants of the community of Covered Bridge in Lake Placid, Florida. I am responding to several issues in your letter.

We understand that the waste water plant has been in existence for numerous years. Communities grow in time and we understand that this facility would need updates to accommodate the increased number of residents.

According to (the builder of these new homes) Ken Leblanc #(863)610-2202 X-Urban Construction, he is charged per home built \$6,240 to have the homes tied into the water and sewage with a meter to monitor the homeowners usage. He has completed over the past several years 75 homes. Do the math this totals \$468,750. He is in the process of building about 25 homes in the future. Approximately another \$15,600 coming your way. According to our HOA President Tom Taylor #(517)-745-6625 these monies have been dispersed between our plants and 2 other plants owned by HC Waterworks. Our residents already pay very high water/sewage bills. They range from \$44.00 for no usage to over \$100.00 per month. Our community has between 340-380 home owners. Do the math.

The monies generated in our community should stay in OUR community and used to update our water sewage/ water treatment plants only!

Ms. Perviance checked the noise if the water sewage plant from across the street from the FRONT entrance of the property. However, the plant is located in the South/ East corner of the property directly behind our homes. The sound emitted from the plant is much louder in the back of our houses.

As for the vegetation trees are located on the West, North and East sides. The trees on the south side nearest the plant are non existent. There is only short shrubs there. Nothing blocks the noise or smell.

According to home owners (who attended meetings about 2 years ago) Covered Bridge Water Sewage Treatment Plant was supposed to have an enclosed building constructed around it with an exhaust system to emit the fear higher into the atmosphere. NEVER completed as promised.

It was also promised that an extended pipe would be constructed at the Water Treatment plant to help emit those fumes higher into the atmosphere. Again, NOT completed.

We are looking for justification of where all the money goes and why it has not been used to update these 2 facilities. We cannot accept another increase in our rates when we have not had these promises fulfilled.

A concerned resident of Covered Bridge Community.

Concetta Charles

HC WATERWORKS, INC.

April 21, 2022

Concetta Charles
10464 High Grove Ave.
Lake Placid, FL 33852

RE: PSC Case # 1394406W

Dear Ms. Charles,

I'm writing you in response to your complaint filed in PSC Case#: 1394406W with the Florida Public Service Commission, as well as your subsequent letter to the utility. You voiced concerns over both the noise and odor emitting from the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP). I understand that Ms. Sharon Purviance gave both you and your husband a guided tour of the wastewater treatment and explained the treatment process. In your recent letter you also voiced concerns about the odor at the water treatment plant.

The wastewater treatment plant in the Covered Bridge community has been in existence for numerous decades (estimated to be over 40 years) and was constructed in the early stages of the community. HC Waterworks, Inc. purchased the facility in 2013 from the previous owner. Since that time HC Waterworks has spent an extensive amount of capital to make improvements to the WWTP. Most recently, we replaced the blowers with larger more efficient ones and moved them to the other side of the plant. We also recently and built a concrete enclosure around the blower motors to help with noise reductions.

The blowers are a necessary component of the treatment process to properly treat the wastewater to required standards. The wastewater utility is regulated by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). The FDEP routinely conducts compliance inspections at the plant. HC Waterworks is in compliance with all of the FDEP requirements. These rules can be found in Section 62-600, Florida Administrative Code.

Ms. Purviance has been to the WWTP numerous times with a Decibel detection device. Each time the noise levels were well below the standards of Highlands County requirements. The noise levels have declined and are still below the county's limits. The blowers run on timers in order to properly treat the wastewater to FDEP requirements. In moving the blowers and building the enclosure, the levels have been reduced further. Again, these blowers are required components in the treatment process. As pursuant to her explanation and your complaints regarding noise at nighttime hours, the blowers are set to run for 15 minutes every few hours to mix the plant as necessary. However, during the daylight hours, the blowers have to be run as needed to meet the FDEP requirements for treatment and to stay in compliance with the state regulations as has been previously explained.

4939 Cross Bayou Boulevard ~ New Port Richey, FL 34652
Tel: (866) 753-8292 Fax: (727) 848-7701

Keep in mind that when the WWTP was first constructed, there were no homes in close proximity to the plant. Recently the builder has built numerous homes around the WWTP. This also caused an increase in wastewater flows being sent to the WWTP. As a result the increase in flows causes an increase in both odors and run time of the blowers.

The vegetation around the WWTP assists in the odor control. Odors may increase slightly during the times the homeowners are using the bathrooms and the flow is increased at the plant. However, odors are typical of wastewater treatment plants. This is a smaller treatment plant in comparison to larger municipal plants. Odors may be carried by the winds depending on which direction it may be blowing. The odors at this plant are significantly less than larger facilities throughout the state.

I have also visited the WWTP numerous times and do not find the odor overly obnoxious. HC Waterworks has taken all necessary actions to address the customers' concerns. However, as explained below HC Waterworks is committed to working with the residents on possible solutions to their concerns.

Additional Considerations

I spoke with the President of HC Waterworks yesterday (4/20/22) about you and your neighbors' concerns. As a result, HC Waterworks has commissioned an engineering study from U.S. Water Services Corporation. The engineering analysis will evaluate possible solutions to: (a) odor control at the wastewater treatment plant; (b) an appropriate building around the WWTP blowers; and (c) odor control at the water treatment plant.

WWTP – the utility is considering further odor control at the WWTP. This includes a cover on the plant and carbon filtration on the released air. We believe this will cost approximately \$180,000 to \$225,000 in upfront capital cost as well as an increase in annual operating costs. This is due to the carbon costs, as well as additional chemical costs to treat the odor. We have not determined the annual increase in operational costs. This will be addressed in the engineering analysis.

Blower enclosure – the utility is considering a building around the blowers. This will require a larger structure with air conditioning for the blower motors. These motors release a significant amount of heat when they are operations. We believe this will cost approximately \$80,000 to \$90,000 and an increase in operational costs of \$2,400 - \$3,200 due to the electrical costs.

WTP – the utility is also considering the addition of an air scrubber for the force draft aeration at the water treatment plant. This cost has not been determined but it is believed to be around \$200,000.

After the completion of the engineering study and the determination of both the up front capital costs and the increased operating costs, I will perform an analysis to determine the potential impact on the customers' rates. HC Waterworks believes the capital costs may be approximately \$400,000 to \$600,000 and the increase in operating costs may be approximately \$35,000 - \$40,000 annually.

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Mrs. Charles
PSC – April 21, 2022

At that time, we request an in person meeting with the Homeowners Association and the residents of Covered Bridge. At the meeting we can explain the potential solutions and the potential impact on the water and wastewater rates. We will also need a "buy in" and approval of the residents to move forward.

Since these items are not currently being required by any governmental regulatory agency, the customers need to approve HC Waterworks, Inc. moving forward with these items. These potential capital projects and resulting increase in operating costs will be required to be passed onto the customers through an approved rate increase in both water and wastewater rates. This will be explained further at the future customer meeting.

We request your assistance in providing the appropriate contact person or persons to schedule this meeting once the engineering and rate impact studies are complete.

The utility president, Sharon and myself have attended numerous HOA meetings in Covered Bridge in the past and have explained what has been and what is being done. This was successful when we installed the new force draft aeration project for sulfur removal at the water treatment plant. In that project we met with the HOA numerous times to explain what would be required and what the potential impact would be on the customers' water rates. Ultimately, the HOA and customers agreed that the utility should move forward.

The same is needed here, we would need the customers to agree that the utility should move forward and agree that an increase in rates is appropriate. These capital expenditures can not be placed at risk without the approval of the customers. HC Waterworks is committed to working with its customers and the residents of Covered Bridge on implementing the appropriate solutions to the residents concerns.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact me at (727) 848-8292 ext. 245. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Troy Rendell
Vice President
Investor Owned Utilities
/// For HC Waterworks, Inc.