

Yvette Gillespie

From: Yvette Gillespie on behalf of Records Clerk
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 9:15 AM
To: 'bgood2go@gmail.com'
Cc: Consumer Contact
Subject: FW: Docket No.20240032-SU- Knight - Don Pedro Island / EU Re-Application for Certificate of Authorization - OBJECTION TO RE-APPLICATION 04/03/2024
Attachments: EU Sewer Response - Charlotte County - 04092024.pdf

Good morning Brain and Melissa Goodhead,

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

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

PLEASE NOTE: Florida has a very broad public records law. Most written communications to or from state officials regarding state business are considered to be public records and will be made available to the public and the media upon request. Therefore, your email message may be subject to public disclosure.

From: bgood2go@gmail.com <bgood2go@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 9, 2024 8:03 PM
To: Records Clerk <CLERK@PSC.STATE.FL.US>; 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>; mfriedman@deanmead.com
Cc: mlgoodhead@gmail.com; Bill.Trutex@CharlotteCountyFL.gov; 'Linda C' <lcotherman@yahoo.com>; 'Palm Island Estates' <pie@palmislandestates.org>; 'John Baird' <jbaird@highlandag.com>
Subject: Docket No.20240032-SU- Knight - Don Pedro Island / EU Re-Application for Certificate of Authorization - OBJECTION TO RE-APPLICATION 04/03/2024

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

Dear Clerk and Public Service Commissioners,

I, as well as your other constituents are coming to you once again to ask for your help and use of common sense in this continuing matter of Environmental Utilities LLC and its repeated application for a Wastewater Certificate in Charlotte County Florida.

First of all, it must be said that the fact that this application is even being considered at all, despite all of the previous evidence given regarding the criminal background of this applicant, the lack of experience, lack of funding, lack of business planning and the lack of any empirical data at all to support and establish any such need for an application, is extremely concerning to the people you are supposed to be serving.

With all of the previous indisputable findings from the hearings from the first application submission, why would Charlotte County commissioners even be looking at this again or allowing yet another application from this applicant? When there is absolutely no evidence or rationale to support even a remote doubt about that this is needed, why else would Charlotte County be considering this? The obvious reason is a special interest in certain parties due to political and or financial recompense.

To have let this application get this far, yet once again, clearly shows that there are other agendas at work here and all of the interested parties involved in this matter can see this very clearly. If not before, then definitely now. All common sense, facts, findings and legal decisions are being clearly and deliberately ignored here! Why else would this applicant be allowed to re-apply again?

You are not doing the will of the people who elected you, which have already spoken and had a corresponding legal decision made on this matter. However, you as a committee are now going directly against the voice of your constituents, whom this directly impacts, and are trying to reverse a decision that was made at a fair and public hearing. Why?

There can only be one reason for this, and all can see it clearly. You are leaving no shadow of a doubt by doing this so blatantly and obviously.

The parties involved here are also very aware of the many troubles that Palm Island Resort is having with their sewage / septic system for some time now and we have direct knowledge that these owners are directly trying to influence this application and sewer project effort for their benefit. Please do not be misled, as we are closely monitoring all relationships, interactions and communications with these parties regarding this effort.

Below, I am also including my letter sent to this same commission on 01/17/2022, pointing out all the same facts and findings for this application that still apply in every aspect. But I will do a short recap here as well just to remind everyone.

1. The applicant has a criminal record and was charged with and indicted for larceny as it relates to a utility as well as criminal mischief for stealing water from Don Pedro Island State Park to serve his own water utility on Little Gasparilla Island. Again, how an application from an applicant with such a specific criminal conviction, which is directly related to the same type of industry he is applying for, can be considered in any universe where any reasonability exists. It cannot! What else needs to be said here to get a person with common sense to make an ethical decision about this?
2. The applicant cannot substantiate a need. In the hearings and final decision for the first application by EU resulted in a denial. The main reason cited was there was nothing that was provided that could justify a need for such a system on these islands at all. None! Again, all this effort to submit an application but not a single penny spent on collecting real data for the

areas being applied for on this application. Just like the last application, EU is trying to piggyback off of data collected by the county years ago and that were collected from Charlotte Harbor and the surrounding areas there, NOT Don Pedro Island or Little Gasparilla Island areas! Old, non-applicable data that is useless and irrelevant for consideration for this application. Let us hope that all involved parties will refrain from trying to reference this useless information / data again.

3. The applicant has zero days of wastewater systems management -period. This does not require any further explanation to a legitimate business person, bank or other financial institution. Charlotte County is looking to abdicate its responsibility to a private operator who has never owned a wastewater utility company before. How can this fact pass any sane vetting process / decision making? More clear evidence that the county really could care less about what happens out on our islands as long as they get it off their "plates". Not a good perception for the public to see.
4. This applicant has no funding plans in place. He also has no schedules for sewer user impact fees, initial capital outlays, payments, loss of property (easements) etc, etc, etc. He had nothing to show at his first application hearing either. This does not require any further explanation to a legitimate business person, bank or other financial institution.
5. This applicant has no business plan. EU has performed NO required engineering, costing, ROI, Environmental impact surveys, impact to roads and easements on islands, etc, etc, etc. EU had nothing to show at the first application hearing either. This does not require any further explanation to a legitimate business person, bank or other financial institution.

In closing I am hopeful that you all will do some soul searching about how your decisions will affect thousands of people, their homes, finances, and families because of this. Everyone will be watching this very closely and decisions that get made here will be used as our basis for making our own decisions come election time.

The justified and honorable path ahead of you here is very clear and has already been definitively established by the court and the people. Please do your duty for the people you represent and do not create a toxic environment for us to try to live our best lives in by caving in to special interests. We love the pristine condition of our properties and island and will do what we need to do to try to protect and save it! Please help us too!

Sincerely,

Brian and Melissa Goodhead

PS – I also attached / included a .PDF file of this communication

Email sent on 1/17/2022

I am writing to you today to ask for your help on behalf of myself and the other homeowners on Knight / Don Pedro Island affected by this pending EU application (Docket 2020022-SU) and proposed sewage project.

I am asking for your help because as you have been already advised by Palm Island Estates and others, there is absolutely no reasonable justification for this project to even be considered in the first place. There is no need! So anything else beyond the initial review and rejection of this application, submitted by EU, is a great waste of county time, processing and resources (and tax dollars). This should be an open and shut case. There is no demonstrated need, application is denied. Hopefully everyone will agree that just anyone cannot go around submitting applications to force people to do something where there is no need. It must be proven by facts that there is a real need for what is being proposed. Without this validation such a proposal is absurd. This is what we have here.

Below, I am reiterating facts that have already been submitted to you by many other affected homeowners and homeowner associations. You will most certainly recognize many of the exact same facts being described here. That is because these are empirical facts. Again, this is in an effort by the homeowners to implore the decision makers in this case for the use of reason and to make these overwhelming facts crystal-clear to the entire commission, so that they can arrive at the rational decision to deny this application.

A. No Validation of Need

This is by far the most important fact in this case, which is to demonstrate there is only a fabricated “need” for this application for certification, being submitted by EU. There is no empirical data at all to support any of the hear-say and conjecture being used by them to “justify” this application /submission, if any at all was used.

The County adopted the 2017 Sewer Master Plan which includes these Islands for sewer executed by CCUD (Charlotte County Utilities Dept.). In fact, Knight and Don Pedro Islands have been identified as priority areas for the extension of central sewer by CCUD. Furthermore, there was no study of the source of the nitrites alleged to be spilling into inland and shore waters. Specifically, there was no study data to determine whether these were coming from leaky sewage tanks or from fertilizers. Therefore, the assumption that the alleged pollution is emanating from sewer tanks is not a substantiated fact based on any real, applicable testing and or data and therefore must be considered false.

B. Legal Ethics and Integrity

Immediately, with little effort for a background search on Mr. Jack Boyer, the facts appear that Mr. Boyer was charged with and indicted for larceny as it relates to a utility as well as criminal mischief for stealing water from Don Pedro Island State Park to serve his own water utility on Little Gasparilla Island (Copies of these reports have already been submitted to the PSC).

In summary, Mr. Boyer waited until rangers were absent from the park over a weekend and installed a water main from the Don Pedro State Park fresh water supply pipe and trenched it to LGI and hooked it up to his water company's facility. He admitted to this and moreover refused to remove the pipe after which he was indicted. How, in any legal proceeding or application to any government agency, can a man with this history of blatant disregard and disdain for the law even remotely be

considered as a viable applicant for anything, especially if it is in the same business / industry that he was convicted for crimes in?

The answer to this question from any ethical or honor bound person or entity reviewing this application (having done any internet search or background check), would immediately be a no /denied! How this application got past the initial screening process(s) raises serious questions regarding integrity and or negligence. There must be some ethical / moral scale being used for evaluating anyone (person or business) applying for anything with the county to ensure they meet some minimum threshold of integrity. If there is not, then there are even more serious issues at hand.

B. Financial Capacity of the Applicant

Any statements made by the principals of EU to the public are baseless. Instantly, EU has no demonstrable experience and no guaranteed funding (including bond issues) that could even marginally show its solvency, ability to obtain funding, complete the project and/or provide ongoing maintenance.

Specifically, none of the publicly facing filed documents guarantee any funding and state specifically that there is no commitment to lend. No projected costs are given.

Certainly a proposed project of this size must have been cost-estimated; No CIAC was provided which would identify cash and property contributions; EU appears to have no experience with projections, certainly not sufficient enough to project annual expenses; there is no comprehensive plan in the application that describes how this project will be financed. EU is a start-up company.

As such, the company and its principals are inextricably linked. A completed bond issue by a reputable financial institution should be a mandatory condition precedent for any approval. Again, a letter of interest from a local bank is meaningless. Since the reliability of the financial strength of the principals is paramount, their request to treat all of their financial information as confidential is improper and should be denied.

There have been no studies or valid estimates of the cost of this project, both globally and as it applies to Knight Island-Don Pedro Island. The verbal estimate given by Jack Boyer to community groups of approximately \$20,000 per homeowner is not based on any actual cost estimates related to this project. Given the project location and necessary involvement of multiple state (and potentially federal) agencies, the number is likely to be much higher. This places an undue burden on the members of our community. No permits should be issued without disclosure and verification of all of the necessary costs, e.g. profits build-ins, ongoing operating costs, construction costs, construction slow-downs or complications; distribution and allocation of cost-recovery, etc.

No provision has been made to allow for payment over time should the project go forward. In addressing this question to residents, the applicant has stated that grants might be available without any factual basis for these statements and without any data in support relative to this project. Grants seem far-fetched at best since the State of Florida is facing a significant budget shortfall exacerbated by the COVID-19 crisis. This application should be rejected until the applicant provides a firm cost per ERU along with appropriate financing options and payment vehicles for those affected owners along with the demonstrated financial ability to provide for payments over time. EU has failed to address its ongoing operating costs. In an applicant with limited operating experience and financial resources, how will ongoing operating costs be addressed?

Jack Boyer has stated to community groups that if they fight him, the costs will be passed on to the community. While cryptic, the intent seems clear and also indicates the tenuousness of EU's financial position going into this project. EU is a private, for-profit utility company. The owners' financial history and the financial health of the company is not known and not available.

C. Applicant's experience, knowledge and resource deficiencies

The owner has little or no demonstrated experience with sewer systems and the owner's present water company has a long list of non-compliance and violations registered with the DEP. The Charlotte County Clerk's office website lists several foreclosures and lien actions involving Mr. Boyer. Should EU's stewardship of the project become untenable, another future utility will then have to compensate EU for the service area, resulting in further cost to the future ratepayers.

Again, here is more testimony to the lack of integrity and insolvency and once again Mr. Boyer has shown a conscious disregard for the citizen stakeholders, but none more so than its threats to pass on its legal fees to customers should they challenge its permit application.

Given the lack of demonstrated need, the absence of financial and operational data to support this project, and the absence of any discernible expertise, EU's application should be denied.

D. Gateway to commercial building

Additionally, the approval of this application and execution of this project to install a make-shift sewage system, will only pave the way for the approval of the building of commercial structures on Knight /Don Pedro Island (condos / high rises). Anyone with any knowledge of barrier island living and its fragile environment / eco system knows that this would wreck the natural and pristine state of the island forever. For this reason alone, this cannot be allowed to happen.

E. Real project impacts to homeowners

Lastly, but most certainly not least, here is a list of what homeowners will be faced with should this project succeed. This list is not exhaustive. Again, if you understand anything about the landscape of the island and the size and orientation of the home lots you will know how unrealistic these requirements are. Meeting these requirements would wreck property lines and lots with easements not to mention enormous power requirements and costs placed on the homeowners.

- **Uncertain Hook-up Cost:** When EU first presented to PIE, the connection fee was estimated at approx. **\$20K per unit**. When the rates and tariffs were finally submitted by the applicant, the requested Service Availability Charge per ERC was reduced to total estimated **\$13,221**.
- **Average Residential Bill: \$178.78**, which is roughly twice the amount that a ratepayer on the mainland in Rotonda pays per month for *water and wastewater combined*. Note that the average cost to EU per customer per month is \$97.18.
- **Electric:** the system pump requires a separate electric panel, installed by a licensed electrician at the expense of the owner.
- **More electric:** If the owner has maxed out their main electric grid with pool equipment or other large-draw items, the panel will need an expensive upgrade to accommodate the new panel.

- **Generator:** the grinder pump has a limited capacity (60 gal) and in the event of a power outage will be unable to function for long. Homeowners will need a generator to keep the system running to avoid sewage back-up.
- **Tree removal:** Landscaping and hardscaping around the septic area will need to be cleared at the expense of the homeowner to gain access to crush & fill the septic tank.
- **No pay-over-time plan:** Ratepayers may need to take loans to cover the cost of connection.
- **Mandatory Hook-up:** Charlotte County regulations require all homes to connect to central water and wastewater within 1 year of availability.
- **No grandfathering of septic systems:** regardless of age or condition.
- **No “contract” and no single point of general oversight:** EU is not a contractor that has won a bid to install sewer. The PSC approves certification solely based on the 4 criteria above and regulates rates and charges. Each of the other agencies (County, DEP, Army Corps, etc.) is responsible for supervising only their specific area where regulation and/or permitting is involved. There is no performance bond required and we have no single point of recourse in the event of cost overruns or project failure.
- **Access to homes:** Some properties have physical constraints that will complicate how the applicant gains access to the property without leaving the boundaries or damaging the grounds.
- **Disruption of traffic:** Vehicles have only one point of entry/egress -- the car ferry. With normal traffic, service and construction trucks, delays at the ferry line in season can be an hour or more. This project could result in years of traffic issues.
- **New easement giveaway:** Most utility easements are placed in the road right-of-way. EU has claimed ownership of a utility easement that will go from the sewer equipment, located near the house to the connection in the road without compensating the homeowner.
- **System maintenance and emergencies:** The applicant has not addressed how the system will be serviced in the event of failure during a storm or other adverse conditions.
- **Lifespan of the equipment:** Salt air takes a heavy toll on mechanical and electrical equipment here. Equipment will need replacing when it fails, possibly at 5-year intervals. This proposal places too much responsibility on the homeowner at too great a cost.
- **Environmental concerns:** No water quality testing has been done in our area to prove a need for sewer. This project brings the potential for destruction of habitat and interference with endangered species such as the gopher tortoise.
- **Potential of sewer spill in the Intracoastal:** The risk of a central sewer leak with a subaqueous crossing is greater than the risk of one or more septic systems developing leaks

I strongly urge any commissioner and or decision maker on this vote, who is not familiar with Knight / Don Pedro Island, to go and visit the island and speak with some of the homeowners before they make a decision that could permanently affect the future of this island and the families that live there.

In closing, please be aware that the decisions made by the commission in this vote, and its final outcome, will bear the utmost weight with all homeowners involved, on how we vote for county positions in the next election.

Your constituents are now asking for you to use common sense and to make a rational decision for us here, and not ignore the clear facts presented. Do not provide support of an unscrupulous business application / proposition that would wreck the environment and forever change the Knight / Don Pedro island landscape and its way of life!

Please accept this as my formal request for PSC to deny EU's application for wastewater service.

Sincere and Kindest Regards,

Brian and Melissa Goodhead

53 Palm Drive

Placida, Florida 33946