

Antonia Hover

From: Antonia Hover on behalf of Records Clerk
Sent: Monday, April 22, 2024 9:04 AM
To: 'bobhoerr@comcast.net'
Cc: Consumer Contact
Subject: FW: Objection to Docket #20240032-SU
Attachments: LG Water Utility Boil Water Notice 10_6_22.pdf; LG Water Utility Precautionary Boil Water Notice 11_7_22.pdf; LG Water Utility Precautionary Boil Water Notice 09-2023.pdf

Good Morning, Robert Hoerr.

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*

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From: Robert Hoerr <bobhoerr@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, April 20, 2024 5:41 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>; Office of Commissioner Fay <Commissioner.Fay@psc.state.fl.us>; Office of Commissioner Graham <Commissioner.Graham@PSC.STATE.FL.US>
Subject: Objection to Docket #20240032-SU

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Objection to Docket #20240032-SU

I am a property owner on Little Gasparilla Island, at 8676 King Street. I am writing to object to the proposed sewer service outlined in Docket #20240032-SU and to ask you to deny EU's application for wastewater service. My reasons are as follows:

1. **Unanticipated and grossly excessive cost burden during vulnerable, post-hurricane recovery.** My home at 8676 King Street on Little Gasparilla Island was extensively damaged in

Hurricane Ian, had to be completely gutted, and only now is being repaired. I have not been able to use my home since Hurricane Ian and anticipate that this will continue at least through the remainder of the year. My insurance claims resulted in a settlement covering only part of the over \$300K cost of repairing my home. I am paying for the remainder of hurricane damage costs out of my retirement savings. **I am outraged that a private entity with no prior experience in sewage management can now use a public process, facilitated by elected but silent public office holders, who are not representing and did not solicit our views, to inflict an additional and perpetual cost, during this vulnerable rebuilding period.**

2. **No demonstrated need for service.** Expert witnesses at the last Administrative Hearing refuted arguments that EU put forward supporting the need for service. Our home is occupied less than 3 cumulative months per year (prior to Hurricane damage). We have a very functional septic system with a large mound drain field. Our location on the island occupies high ground. Our septic tank has not flooded in 25 years, including during the recent hurricane, which it survived without damage. I objected to the last proposal by EU, which was unsuccessful and I am grateful that the Commission saw fit to reject it as unnecessary and unwanted by residents. The present proposal is even more objectionable. **Charlotte County has not seen the need for a public sewer system on Little Gasparilla Island and has invested none of our property taxes to provide county infrastructure on the island. Why is this private for-profit utility allowed to assert a need that is inconsistent with County's plan, will disrupt the land for months with a messy installation, and impose considerable and perpetual costs on potential and unwilling customers?**
3. **No request for sewer service.** For the stated reasons in the prior paragraph, we are very satisfied with our present septic system, which was installed in the 1990s according to modern code, setbacks and permitting requirements. **We do not need a 12-month, private sewer system service with hook-up and ongoing service fees that are exorbitant, compared with public system costs elsewhere in Florida, for a home that generates effluent easily handled by a modern septic system.**
4. **Environmental Utilities is a for-profit entity. This utility has no experience operating a sewer system.** Their experience is limited to operating a small-scale potable water facility. As mentioned above, **EU's installed water system has experienced periodic and recurring line breaks and urgent notices to customers that they need to boil water** (see attached email notices from the Utility). Periodic and recurring line breaks in a sewer system owned by the same private utility could be an environmental and public health disaster. We pay considerable property taxes to Charlotte County with little to no infrastructure assistance. **In the event of a failure of EU's proposed sewer, will Charlotte County commit to back up EU with taxpayer-funded infrastructure repair resources? EU has unproven emergency response funding or capabilities.**
5. **Environmental damage, creating new risks for sewage contamination.**
 - - **No septic-generated water contamination issue to address.** I am unaware of any water quality testing in the bay or gulf waters adjacent to LGI that has demonstrated the presence of coliform bacteria from residential septic system contamination. **If this is an ongoing problem, show me the data.**
 - - **In contrast, the EU-provided water service has had to issue boil water notices on several occasions due to line breaks. What is to prevent sewer overflow during**

the frequent power outages we experience on the island? Sewer system line breaks would be just as likely, or even more likely to result in contamination. Furthermore, given that there is an electrically powered pump element in each residential hook-up, there is no electrical generator back-up system for individual customers proposed in EU's sewer application. As I understand the system's design, this would be the only way to ensure that the household hook-up powered elements would not overflow. **Island power outages will result in sewer overflow, while this does not occur with existing septic systems.**

- - **Disruption of landscaping and habitat of our property's protected gopher tortoise.** The need for tunneling and digging to install the proposed sewer hook-up to my home will destroy the habitat of the endangered gopher tortoise that resides in my yard, which is completely landscaped with native shrubs and grasses.
- 6. **High, ongoing monthly cost burden to Island residents.** This latest attempt by Environmental Utilities to provide an unwanted, unneeded service, if successful, will **more than double my monthly utility costs.**
 - - **Private utility charges far exceed public utility charges.** I already pay a premium for the Utility's private water service, with high minimum monthly charges that exceed my water usage, for no additional benefit. The proposed monthly fees will more than double my monthly expenses and these expenses will continue even during the months when I do not reside in my house and would not be using water or generating sewage effluent.
 - **Non-disclosed fees and expenses.** EU has not guaranteed that they will not pass on costs, above the hook-up fees, for additional electrical work or plumbing that they will claim is "unanticipated."

This unwanted, unneeded service will represent a burdensome new tax that we will have no recourse but to pay. For the reasons I have outlined, and other compelling reasons that you will read in my neighbors' comments, I urge you to respect our rights as citizens and taxpayers and reject the application by Environmental Utilities to provide wastewater service on Little Gasparilla Island.

Sincerely,
Robert A. Hoerr
bobhoerr@comcast.net

Boil Water Notice 10/6/22

To Little Gasparilla Water Utility <lgwuoffice@gmail.com> • ashton boyer <ashtondboyer@gmail.com> • Jack Boyer <lwjd777@yahoo.com> Blind copy bobhoerr@comcast.net

BOIL WATER NOTICE **10/6/2022**

A Boil Water Notice is in effect until Charlotte County Utilities gives the all clear and our water samples on the island come back clear. Also, LGWU will be disinfecting the water lines over the next few days so please expect an increase in Chlorine smell.

For precautionary measures a lot of homes are shut off at the meter, so please check there first and call/text Ashton if there is an issue.

Our office is not usable at this time and our phone lines are down, but we are trying to proceed as normal. We will also try to respond to any calls, texts, or emails as soon as we possibly can.

Please watch for our notices via email, this website and Facebook. For any emergencies you can call or text Ashton at 941-626-8295 or Jack at 941-626-8294.

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Joyce
Little Gasparilla Water Utility
941-681-2778
<http://www.littlegasparillawater.com>

Little Gasparilla Water Utility <lgwuoffice@gmail.com>

11/7/2022 12:16 PM

Precautionary Boil Water Notice 11/7/22

To Little Gasparilla Water Utility <lgwuoffice@gmail.com> • Jack Boyer <lwjd777@yahoo.com> • ashton boyer <ashtondboyer@gmail.com> Blind copy bobhoerr@comcast.net

Little Gasparilla Water had a feed line break due to an uprooted tree. We had to shut the water down beginning at the Placida Condos and going South. Water is back on now, but we are under a Precautionary Boil Water Notice until samples are clear.

This email is being sent out to those with email addresses on file. Please spread the word to those in the mentioned area.

Thank you

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Joyce Luke

Little Gasparilla Water Utility

941-681-2778

<http://www.littlegasparillawater.com>

Precautionary Boil Water Notice

To Little Gasparilla Water Utility <lgwuoffice@gmail.com> Blind copy bobhoerr@comcast.net

A Precautionary Boil Water Notice is in effect for the homes along the North Canal and all homes to the South (addresses between 9694 & 9912) due to an incident with equipment hitting a fire hydrant. We will update you as soon as our lab results come back clear, which should be Monday or Tuesday.

Please spread the word to those in the mentioned area that may not go to our website or have their email on file.

Please watch for our notices via email, this website and Facebook. For any emergencies you can call or text Ashton at 941-626-8295.

To receive timely notifications, please send your email information to lgwuoffice@gmail.com if you haven't done so already.

Thank you

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Joyce Luke

Little Gasparilla Water Utility

941-681-2778

<http://www.littlegasparillawater.com>