

**Charlie Smith**

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**From:** Office of Commissioner Passidomo Smith  
**Sent:** Friday, January 24, 2025 8:05 AM  
**To:** Commissioner Correspondence  
**Subject:** Docket No. 20240032  
**Attachments:** RE: Docket#20240032-SU; RE Docket #202240032-SU; Fw: Why We Don't Want a Low-Pressure System 📎; RE. Docket #20240032-SU; Docket #20240032-SU

Please place the attached in Docket No. 20240032.

Thank you!

## Charlie Smith

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**From:** rebecca newman <mswconch@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2025 4:27 PM  
**To:** Records Clerk  
**Cc:** Office of Chairman La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo Smith; Office of Commissioner Graham; Office of Commissioner Fay  
**Subject:** RE: Docket#20240032-SU

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

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Hello, my name is Rebecca Newman and the address I am writing of concern is 23 Palm Dr, Placida, Florida 33946. My home is located on Palm Island, also known as Don Pedro Island. My email address is mswconch@gmail.com.

I was notified a private, for-profit, utility company was requesting to install a central sewer service system on Don Pedro Island where my home listed above is located.

As a home owner I do not understand how this could happen without due diligence.

1. To my knowledge there are no recent studies or testing completed on our island indicating a need for this central water sewer system.
2. And of more concern there has not been a bidding process to allow other businesses to submit their proposals to install. This is a very large and expensive project, how can one, for profit company, be provided the ok to proceed. And why is this a for-profit business. Shouldn't the local government be providing this service, if needed, to the local residents. Isn't water services considered a right of every person with restrictions of profit being considered?

This company EU lacks the experience of owning and installing a wastewater utility company. My understanding is EU wants to install a low-pressure system which Charlotte County won't install anymore due to needed excessive maintenance, which leads to excessive cost.

Our island has protected animals and very delicate eco-systems. Shouldn't more research and information be provided before any company is allowed to proceed?

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter,

Rebecca Newman

## Charlie Smith

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**From:** James Onufrak <jonufrak@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2025 11:42 AM  
**To:** Records Clerk  
**Cc:** Lilly Onufrak; Office of Chairman La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo Smith; Office of Commissioner Graham; Office of Commissioner Fay  
**Subject:** RE Docket #202240032-SU

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
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To Whom it may concern,

My name is Jim Onufrak, 17 Palm Drive - Palm Island resident.

I am writing to let you know we do not want the sewer system installed on Palm Island for a multitude of reasons including the individual wanting to install the system has no experience and will most likely collect our money and has no intention of even starting this project.

Hong Wang

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**From:** James Onufrak <jonufrak@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2025 5:01 PM  
**To:** Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Fay; Office of Commissioner Graham; Office of Chairman La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Passidomo Smith; Lilly Onufrak  
**Subject:** Fw: Why We Don't Want a Low-Pressure System 📧

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All,

We are at 17 Palm Drive and do not support the sewer system. Earlier today I mentioned the lack of integrity and character of the person proposing the project.

Here are additional reasons

----- Forwarded Message -----

**From:** Palm Island Estates <pie@palmislandestates.org>  
**To:** Jim & Lilly Onufrak <jonufrak@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2025 at 04:55:51 PM EST  
**Subject:** Why We Don't Want a Low-Pressure System 📧

[View this email in your browser](#)



**Why We Don't Want  
a Low-Pressure  
System**

EU is proposing a low-pressure sewer system. It is the least desirable sewer system available.

**6** DAYS UNTIL THE SEWER HEARINGS

DIG DEEPER

**What's a Low Pressure Sewer?  
Hint, It's Bad.**

While there are many reasons to oppose a low pressure system, if you only take away one thing in this email, it's this:

- Due to high maintenance costs, Charlotte County has stopped installing new low-pressure systems unless it is the last possible option.
- County data shows that low pressure sewer systems contribute disproportionately to sewer spills: Despite making up only 25% of the county's sewer systems, they are responsible for over 51% of all reported spills.

### Low Pressure Systems Leak

From 2017 through November 2024, Charlotte County data shows that their sewer systems have spilled almost 4 Million gallons of sewage. 22% of those spills, 839,748 gallons, have found their way into our water ways. These massive spills affect our soil, water quality, wildlife, plants and overall ecosystem.

Charlotte County Sanitary Sewer Overflows								
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024*
<b>Reported Spills</b>	60	35	40	46	63	151	65	113
<b>Gallons Spilled</b>	389,750	111,743	210,325	629,720	1,279,618	547,017	169,554	519,044
<b>Gallons Entering Waterways</b>	89,430	29,622	168,950	182,270	88,882	88,882	26,500	165,212
<b>Average Spill</b>	6,496	3,193	5,258	13,690	20,311	3,623	2,609	4,593
<b>Named Storms</b>	Irma				Elsa	Ian	Idalia	Helene & Milton

\* Partial year, data through 10/20/24

### High Cost for Home Owners

Low pressure sewer systems are very costly for the homeowner. Want to know how much this is all going to cost you? [Click here to learn the realistic cost >](#)

## They Break More Than Other Sewer Types

According to data from Charlotte County data, low pressure sewer systems contribute disproportionately to sewer spills. **Despite making up only 27% of the county's sewer systems, they are responsible for over 51% of all reported spills.**

Charlotte County 2024 Sanitary Sewer Overflows

Source of Sewer Overflow	Jan	April	July	Nov	Total	% of Total Overflow	% of Customers
LPS Main/Service line / tank	31	32	38	28	130	51.79%	25%
Air Release Valve	1	3	4	4	12	4.78%	
Vacuum Pod	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%	5%
Gravity Line	1	1	1	0	3	1.20%	70%
Force Main	5	7	8	13	33	13.15%	
Manhole	8	6	2	1	17	6.77%	
Lift Station	15	14	10	17	56	22.31%	
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	

- **Shortened Equipment Lifespan:** The salt air on the island significantly reduces the lifespan of low-pressure sewer system components, leading to frequent replacements and increased maintenance costs.
- **High Maintenance Requirements:** Pumps and other mechanical parts in a low-pressure system require regular servicing and repairs, which can be challenging and costly in a remote, coastal community.
- **Vulnerability During Storms:** Low-pressure sewer systems are highly susceptible to failure during storms or hurricanes, leaving the community without functional waste management when it is needed most.
- **Power Dependency:** These systems rely on electricity to function, making them prone to outages during severe weather events, requiring backup systems or emergency measures.

## Environmental Risks

- **Higher Leak Probability:** Central sewer systems carry a greater risk of leaks compared to individual septic systems, potentially impacting larger areas and more properties.
- **Greater Sewage Discharge in Leaks:** Pressurized systems can release significantly more sewage during a leak compared to gravity or vacuum systems, leading to larger-scale contamination.
- **Visible and Hidden Risks:** Leaks in pressurized systems can result in small geysers of sewage or, worse, seep undetected into the ground, contaminating soil and groundwater until noticeable odors reveal the problem.
- **Environmental Contamination:** The potential for undetected leaks in pressurized systems poses a serious threat to the island's ecosystem, affecting soil, water quality, and surrounding habitats.
- **Ecological Impact:** Our unique ecosystem, which supports diverse wildlife and plant species, could suffer irreversible damage from even minor spills and the infrastructure required for low pressure sewer systems.
- **Public Health Hazards:** Leaks from pressurized systems can introduce harmful pathogens into the environment, increasing the risk of health issues for residents and wildlife.
- **Septicity:** In seasonal communities, low-pressure sewer systems can lead to prolonged periods where sewage remains stagnant in force mains. This extended retention time can cause the sewage to become septic, resulting in unpleasant odors, corrosion of infrastructure, and potential environmental concerns.

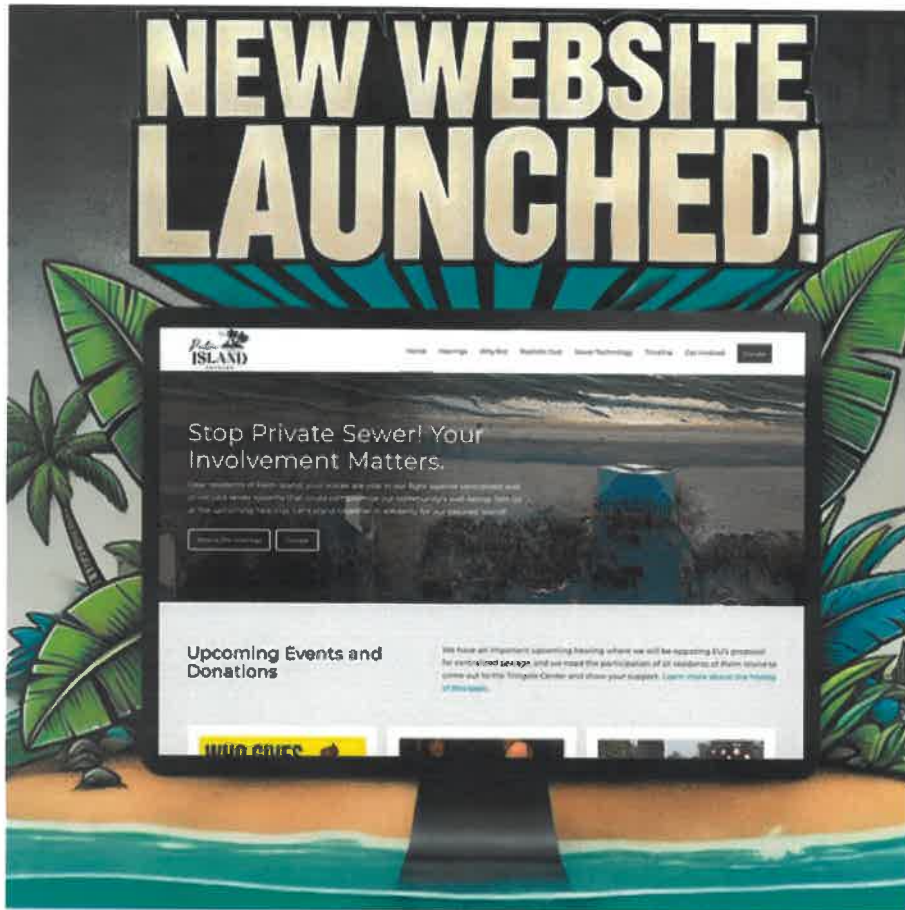
## Intrusive to Personal Property

- **Access:** For any repairs or replacements to the grinder pump, utility operators are required to go onto homeowner's property to do any maintenance which may result in sewage spilling over gardens or lawns. Access may also prove problematic if there are dogs or after dark. (All gravity and vacuum sewer infrastructure is on public land so no access is required.)
- **Easements:** Homeowners are required to simply give up a potentially 15' wide path through their property to the sewer company. This means you can never build or do anything on it. Depending on where the pump is put, this could mean the middle of your land, the space right in front of your golf cart parking or garage. If you refuse to grant this, your land can be seized by eminent domain.

## Undue Burden on the Homeowner

- **Electrical Subpanel Installation:** The utility company (EU) will provide the electric subpanel, but you will need to hire a licensed electrician to install it.
- **Permit Requirements:** Either you or your electrician must handle pulling the required permits for the installation.
- **Potential Electrical Panel Upgrade:** If your main electric panel is already at capacity due to heavy-draw equipment like a pool, hot tub, or boat lift, you may need an expensive panel upgrade, which must be arranged through Florida Power & Light (FPL).
- **Plumbing Modifications:** You'll need to hire a plumber to reroute the pipes currently connected to your septic system to connect to the new sewer tank.
- **Plumbing Permits:** You or your plumber will also be responsible for obtaining the required permits for this work.





#### Sewer Website

If you haven't visited our [new sewer website](#), please do. It's full of great information in an easy to read format. You can learn about:

- [Why Say No to Private Sewer](#)
- [What to Expect at the Hearing](#)
- [How Much this Sewer Will Cost](#)



**Info Central:**

**When:** Sat. January 25th, 10AM

**Where:** At the Firehouse

This town Hall and Q&A will tell you everything you need to know about the upcoming hearings. It is hosted by the PIE Action Committee and our water quality expert witness, Rob Robbins. Who gives a crap? WE DO!

**Sewer Hearings:**

**When:** Jan 28th, 29th and 30th

**Where:** [Trinail Park Recreation Center](#)

We **NEED** you at these hearings. It is critical that the commissions both see how strong our opposition is and hear our opinions and concerns. The more they see our opposition, the more it will help our case. [Learn More >](#)

## How You Can Help:

### Donate

Please consider donating to the PIE Action Fund help with attorney fees, expert witnesses and other related legal expenses. [Learn More >](#)

### Attend Sewer Hearings

We NEED you there. The EU called us a "vocal minority." It's imperative that we show the commission that is simply not true. [Learn More >](#)

### Write Letters to the Commission

You can write the commission as many times as you'd like. Each letter helps to show our objection and helps our case. [Learn More >](#)

### Sign Up As An "Interested Person"

You will receive emails from the Clerk at the PSC each time there is an important change to the docket. [Learn More >](#)

## Future Email Topics

We'll be sending emails over the next few days on topics such as:

- Who Are We Talking To At The Hearings? The County Vs. PSC
- Why We Don't Want A Private & For Profit Sewer
- What To Expect At Hearings
- Tips For Preparing Your 3 Minute Speech

*Help us make the site better. If you see anything that looks odd, needs to be updated, or have content you'd like included, please email notes and ideally a screenshot to [amber@palmisland.com](mailto:amber@palmisland.com)*

PIE Communications Team  
Palm Island Estates Association, Inc.  
<http://www.palmislandestates.org/>

Contact us at: [pie@palmislandestates.org](mailto:pie@palmislandestates.org)

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#### Our mailing address is:

Palm Island Estates Association, Inc.  
PO Box 3101  
Pleasant, FL 32049-3101

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## Charlie Smith

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**From:** Dale Novak <dnovak@novakcreative.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 23, 2025 10:42 AM  
**To:** Records Clerk  
**Cc:** Office of Chairman La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo Smith; Office of Commissioner Graham; Office of Commissioner Fay  
**Subject:** RE. Docket #20240032-SU

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

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Dear Commissioners:

I'm writing you today in opposition to the Private Sewer Project being proposed by Environmental Utilities (EU). Docket #20240032-SU.

While there are dozens of reasons to oppose this "for profit" system such as the massive cost (estimated to be over \$40,000 per property owner), the proven and documented rate of failure of these systems, the ridiculously unqualified "zero experience" credentials of the EU – and the main fact, that there is absolutely no reason (scientific or otherwise) that we need this in our community. One predominant one comes to mind at this time.

As a barrier island community we have been ravaged by three hurricanes, Ian, Helene and Milton. Many of the Islanders are still making repairs and battling insurance companies for desperately needed payments. We are reeling from debris and disrupted roads and doing everything we can collectively to get our lives on these precious islands back to "normal." The process has been slow and enormously costly to the homeowners. But we have been resilient, rolled up our sleeves and collectively gone to work.

Now, in the midst of that, we have another battle on our hands for a private sewer project the vast majority of Islanders don't want – and more importantly – we DON'T need.

To suggest that in the middle of all the chaos of repairs and cost associated with them, Charlotte County and the EU want to kick us some more and force-feed this project down our throats is absolutely appalling. Evidently, they must believe every homeowner on our island(s) has \$40,000 (+) to just casually write a check for on top of the massive cost of repairing our islands and homes.

What happens, I respectfully ask, when homeowners can't pay these outrageous and utterly ridiculous costs and fees for a private sewer system that seems to have no limits as to how much it will cost each homeowner? Will Charlotte County and the EU start taking each of us to court? Will the County apply a lien on our properties? Will owners be forced to sell — at any cost?

Beat us when we're down. Kick us some more. Who cares what we are dealing with with regards to repairing our islands and homes. It's more important that we force an unwanted "private for profit" project on us and destroy our finances and moral spirit – even to the point that some homeowners will be forced to sell their homes.

To put this in personal terms – I ask each of you? Do you and your family have \$40,000, and potentially much more depending on the circumstances of each installation, to casually spend on on your home’s plumbing system?

It just seems to me that not only is this massively opposed project not needed and widely opposed, but the timing of it couldn’t be worse for us and our island community.

Put yourselves in our shoes.

Respectfully,

Dale & Julie Novak  
611 Bocilla Drive  
Don Pedro Island  
[dnovak@novakcreative.net](mailto:dnovak@novakcreative.net)  
920.664.1088

## Charlie Smith

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**From:** David Stubbs II <ohiost8buckeyes@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 23, 2025 3:26 PM  
**To:** Records Clerk  
**Cc:** Office of Chairman La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo Smith; Office of Commissioner Graham; Office of Commissioner Fay  
**Subject:** Docket #20240032-SU

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To whom it may concern,

I'm so sorry that I am needed out of town on the day we were to meet again and I would make the same statements as before which is summarized by, I'm still not sure as to why I'm having to even consider the experience again.

With that said, I want to take the opportunity to again express my disapproval of this proverbial S--T Show. I'm a well known industry leading designer of systems and processes for various manufactures and if I had ever come up with this harebrained idea, even if I was paid, it would be certain retirement.... Hummers' maybe that's the plan.

There are so many things that I guess i'll never understand on items like this that are imposed on us, without financial support, especially as it relates to the character (in which we cannot mention) as it relates to the perceived quality of the individuals on the other side of this request.

Luckily for me there was a Facebook post this am, that made me smile as I ponder never hooking up to such a dismal plan. I share this post with you below in case you missed it, its worth the paper I printed it on.

A summary from concerned person

1: NO need has been demonstrated.

2: Cost is outrageous: in addition to hookup , we have to give up an easement , destroy our landscaping, provide power( larger panel and generator)

3: No county or government assistance.

4: The proposed technology is no longer being used due by our countries to the high cost of maintenance.

5: the applicant has no direct experience on a project of this magnitude and has a questionable background involving various arrests.

6: Timing could not be worse: Every owner has been saddled with huge direct costs from Helene and Milton.  
TY

7: Speak with any property owner on Lemonbay Lane where they have a low pressure system. They have all experience 2-8k in pump replacements over the past 5 years.

8: the only logical reason this can or is being considered is not being addressed, It will benefit only one person...The Applicant.... Period

I am not saying there is any wrong doing here , but it sure feels like it  
Nothing on this issue passes a simple smell test.

Jim Luscombe  
420 Bocilla Dr  
727-515-0274  
[Jbluscombe@gmail.com](mailto:Jbluscombe@gmail.com)

Be well,

I'll continue to say no in my absence.

David A Stubbs II  
352 South Gulf Blvd  
Placida, FL 33946