

Charlie Smith

From: Office of Commissioner Passidomo Smith
Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 10:18 AM
To: Commissioner Correspondence
Subject: Docket No. 20240032
Attachments: Environmental Utilities, LLC. DOCKET NO. 20240032--SU

Please place the attached in Docket No. 20240032.

Thank you!

Charlie Smith

From: Lisa Simmons <lisabsimmons@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 24, 2025 8:24 AM
To: Office of Commissioner Passidomo Smith
Subject: Environmental Utilities, LLC. DOCKET NO. 20240032–SU

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Sear Commissioner Smith,

Here we are again! This is the second attempt by Jack Boyer, Environmental Utilities (EU), to force a sewer system on Little Gasparilla Island and again I am writing this email to formally request that the Public Service Commissioners deny the EU's application for wastewater service on Little Gasparilla Island. The first time Mr. Boyer applied, the property owners on the island were not even aware of the application until it reached the Public Service Commission. We wrote letters, presented witnesses, and spoke against this project, your board voted to deny it. Now, here we are just a short time later fighting the same battle. Only this time, we are trying to recover from two brutal hurricanes that affected us all on the island. I have pictures of water lines totally exposed by the tidal surge. There were also many broken water lines. It is obvious that if these had been sewer lines, we would have had a major sewer spill on the island. I am aware that some of the lids came off of the septic tanks during the storm, (not mine). However, the amount of sewage that overflowed as those tanks filled with water is nothing compared to a sewer pipe leaking or maybe multiple sewer pipes leaking. I have taken the following data from the Charlotte County Records data. "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 waterways. These massive spills affect our soil, water quality, wildlife, plants and overall ecosystem. **"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.**

This does not sound like a good idea for Little Gasparilla Island. I'm not opposed to a sewer system, I just don't think this type of sewer is appropriate for a barrier island if its use has been stopped on the mainland. I have owned a vacation home on the island since 1996. My children and family have enjoyed the tranquility of this island for many years. My intention is to leave this little piece of paradise to my children when I die. After reviewing the expected costs to install a low-pressure wastewater system on the island, I realize that I will not be able to maintain the home I love so much. The costs are prohibitive for me as I am sure it will force many others to sell their places too. The proposed costs far exceed any other wastewater service in the state, and I find that totally unacceptable and unfair. The costs are not equitable to what other people are paying for the same services across the county and state. In addition, the need for a generator as a backup and installation of an additional electrical panel is ridiculous. The standing water caused by multiple hurricanes last Fall and the electrical outages we often experience would not bode well with the system Mr. Boyer is proposing. Most homes on LGI are vacation homes and are unoccupied most of the time. There would be no one there to turn on a generator to run a sump pump for the sewer system. I suggest that the septic tanks be inspected, and ones found to be deficient be repaired or replaced. There is no reason to force this sewer system on us. I also have concerns about the environmental impact this project would have. We have gopher tortoises that have already been affected by the floods we have had in the past year and now would be disturbed by a project of this

magnitude. We also have a pair of nesting bald eagles on the north end of LGI. If they are disturbed too much, they will leave the nest and find another home. If there were eaglets in the nest at that time, they would die. Please, I ask you to put yourself in my place and make the right decision for the residents of Palm Island and Little Gasparilla Island. It is truly heartbreaking for me to think about being forced to sell my place because of the exorbitant and unrealistic expense that would be imposed on me. Please vote no!!!

I would like to come to speak at the hearing, but I teach Nursing at Hillsborough Community College and am not able to take two days off to come to the hearings. Especially, not knowing when the public will be allowed to speak. Thank you for considering my objections when voting on this project. We've been through enough out there.

Sincerely,

Lisa Simmons MSN/Ed, CHSE, RN

813-323-4814