

BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In re: Application for limited proceeding rate increase by Sunshine Water Services Company d/b/a Sunshine Water Services.

DOCKET NO.: 20250137-SU

FILED: March 25, 2026

PREHEARING STATEMENT OF THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC COUNSEL

The Citizens of the State of Florida, through the Office of Public Counsel (“OPC”), pursuant to Florida Public Service Commission (“Commission”) Order Establishing Procedure (“OEP”), Order No. PSC-2025-0460-PCO-SU, issued December 19, 2025, and Order No. PSC-2026-0026-PCO-SU, issued January 27, 2026, hereby submit this prehearing statement.

APPEARANCES:

Walt Trierweiler
Public Counsel

Octavio Simoes-Ponce
Associate Public Counsel

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Attorneys for the Citizens of the State of Florida

1. **WITNESSES:** None.

2. **EXHIBITS:** None.

3. STATEMENT OF BASIC POSITION:

The need for improvements to Sunshine Water Service Company’s (“Sunshine”) Mid-County Wastewater Treatment Facility (“WWTP”) has been evident for years. The Commission found that WWTP provided marginal service as far back as 2007.¹ More recently, the Commission found WWTP’s quality of service to be unsatisfactory in Sunshine’s last two rate cases.² However, since Sunshine’s last rate case Sunshine has complied with prior Florida Department of Environmental Protection (“DEP”) Consent Orders concerning WWTP. WWTP also does not have any open Administrative or Consent Orders at this time. Sunshine’s DEP compliance concerning a long-troubled system is to its credit and the instant WWTP project further suggests Sunshine’s commitment to resolving long-standing customer complaints. Sunshine’s requested increases can therefore be approved with consideration being given to identified and potential future adjustments described below.

4. STATEMENT OF FACTUAL ISSUES AND POSITIONS:

ISSUE 1: Should the Utility’s requested increases be approved as filed? If not, what adjustments should be made?

OPC Position: No. At a minimum, the following adjustments are necessary: Sunshine’s revenue request should be reduced by the 4% discount available to pro forma property taxes. Second, to the extent that the Commission finds that Sunshine did not appropriately suspend AFUDC accruals related to any delays with WWTP Project, Sunshine’s requested revenue increase should be reduced accordingly. Th. Third, the Commission should give full effect to the customer provided funds in the capital structure when reconciling rate base and capital structure. The OPC reserves the right to fully pursue additional issues currently under consideration at hearing through discovery and cross-examination.

ISSUE 2: What are the appropriate rates for the Utility’s wastewater system?

¹ Order No. PSC-2007-0134-PAA-SU, issued February 16, 2007, in Docket No. 060254-SU, In re: Application for increase in wastewater rates in Pinellas County by Mid-County Services, Inc.

² Order No. PSC-2025-0196-FOF-WS, issued June 6, 2026, in Docket No. 20240068-WS, pp. 13-14, In re: Application for increase in water and wastewater rates in Charlotte, Highlands, Lake, Lee, Marion, Orange, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, and Seminole Counties, by Sunshine Water Services Company.

OPC Position: The appropriate rates are dependent on the resolution of Issue 1.

ISSUE 3: Should the Commission grant the Utility's request to defer recovery of rate case expense to its next base rate case proceeding?

OPC Position: Any rate case expense deemed unreasonable or imprudent should be disallowed. Section 367.081(9), Florida Statutes, states that a utility may not earn a return on the unamortized balance of the rate case expense; any unamortized balance of rate case expense shall be excluded in calculating the utility's rate base. As such, there should be no return allowed on any rate case expense approved in the instant docket or any approved deferral of rate case expense in that next rate proceeding.

ISSUE 4: Should this docket be closed?

OPC Position: No position at this time.

5. **STIPULATED ISSUES**

The OPC is not aware of any issues that can be stipulated at this time.

6. **PENDING MOTIONS OR OTHER MATTERS**

The OPC is not aware of any formal motions to be disposed of at this time.

7. **STATEMENT OF PARTY'S PENDING REQUESTS OR CLAIMS FOR CONFIDENTIALITY**

There are no pending requests or claims for confidentiality filed by OPC.

8. **OBJECTIONS TO QUALIFICATION OF WITNESSES AS AN EXPERT**

OPC has no objections to the qualification of any witnesses as an expert in the field in which they pre-filed testimony as of the present date.

9. **SEQUESTRATION OF WITNESSES**

OPC does not request the sequestration of any witnesses at this time.

10. **STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH ORDER ESTABLISHING PROCEDURE**

OPC is unaware of any aspect of the Order Establishing Procedure in this docket with which it cannot comply.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE
DOCKET NO. 20250137-SU

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a true and correct copy of the foregoing has been furnished by electronic mail on this 25th day of March, 2026, to the following:

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