

Antonia Hover

From: Office of Commissioner Passidomo
Sent: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 3:45 PM
To: Commissioner Correspondence
Subject: FW: Docket No. 20200226-SU

Please place the e-mail below in Docket No. 20200226.

Thank you!

From: Lindsay Yates <lyates@springsips.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 3:31 PM
To: Records Clerk <CLERK@PSC.STATE.FL.US>; Office of Commissioner 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>
Subject: Docket No. 20200226-SU

Commissioners:

My name is Lindsay Yates and I live at 2 Pointe Way on Don Pedro Island. I have written to you previously and I spoke at the February 9th public hearing. I have several more points to make in requesting that you deny the application of Environmental Utilities.

I was surprised to learn at the February hearings that the system EU proposes to use is the “step system” rather than the “grinder system” that we had previously been told was what EU was going to use. Having undertaken a quick crash course in the step system, I am having trouble understanding how this is going to be more environmentally sound than what we are using now. We are replacing one tank in the ground that processes all waste for another tank in the ground that is going to hold all the solids and still have to be pumped out? The tank is made of fiberglass? We have seen fiberglass pools on this island pop out of the ground under certain circumstances. So, what keeps it in the ground? A full tank? As a consumer, nothing about this proposed system makes any sense to me. We’re going to tear up our yards, tear up our roads, incur additional expense for a generator to keep the system going during our frequent electric outages, and perhaps additional expense for electric upgrades – all on top of tap fees and construction costs – and then we’re still going to have to pay for a pump out??? Sounds crazy to me.

In listening to the testimony at the hearings, I understood Ms. Swain or Mr. Boyer to say that he is entering into an agreement with Palm Island Transit that will give him a rate on barge transportation of approximately \$1,000 a month. That’s a little hard to believe when we’re talking about large construction equipment making many trips. Currently the per-vehicle charge for a passenger vehicle alone is \$55.00 per trip; a truck over ¾ ton is \$220; a large dump truck \$625. This rate is a pipe dream and I think that EU’s other projected costs for all phases of the project are underestimated.

It has been said that those opposed to the application just don’t want to pay for central wastewater service. Not 100 percent true. The residents of these islands are more than willing to pay to take measures to improve the environment – be it water quality, air quality, nature conservation, eradication of invasive species – as long as they feel that they are paying for the best solution after in-depth study and consideration of ALL methods for a possibly improved method of waste disposal. At this point we do not feel that enough research has been done to prove that our septic systems are in fact contributing to the pollution of the surrounding waters; nor has enough research been done to prove that improved septic systems with an ongoing, required inspection system cannot be superior to central sewer. And, yes, those in

opposition to this application do not want to pay for central wastewater service at exorbitant rates – up to 5 times what is being paid by our mainland neighbors. We are more than willing to pay if a proposed system makes sense and is operated by a reputable and experienced company that is not out to take advantage of its customers.

This is not a case of “I don’t want to pay.” This is a case of “have all avenues been explored?” Is this really the most environmentally sound approach to a yet-to-be-proven problem? Is EU the best that Charlotte County can come up with to implement a wastewater treatment plan? We don’t think so. Property owners on these islands feel so strongly about this issue that to date the PIE Action Fund established to oppose this application has collected \$87,000 from 190 donors – 40 of whom have made contributions of \$1,000 or more. I am making this statement as the Treasurer of Palm Island Estates Association. I believe that the level of donations indicates that a solid group of residents feel that EU is not the right company to be entrusted with a project of this magnitude.

I understand that most often supporters of an issue are perhaps not as vocal as the opponents of the issue. However, I have found the very low number of letters indicating support for the EU application rather interesting. I have not counted the number of letters in favor, but there have been very few. Most curious is that quite a few of the letters submitted in the several days following the February hearings were sent from the EU email account and many did not identify how they qualified as a stakeholder. More letters were sent subsequent to that time that indicated support for the project, but also did not identify an address or what their interest might be. And then there are some letter writers that are quite obviously not in the proposed service area. I hope those letters have been segregated out by staff.

Once again, I respectfully request that you deny the application of Environmental Utilities. Thank you for your time and careful consideration.

Lindsay C. Yates
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