

Antonia Hover

From: Betty Leland
Sent: Tuesday, April 23, 2024 1:39 PM
To: Commissioner Correspondence
Subject: Docket #20240032
Attachments: Docket# 20240032-SU; FOR CENTRALIZED SEWER; Docket #20240032-SU

Good Afternoon:

Please place this email in Docket #20240032.

Thanks.

Betty A. Leland, Executive Assistant to
Commissioner Art Graham
Florida Public Service Commission
bleland@psc.state.fl.us
(850) 413-6024

Antonia Hover

From: Yasteio x <djdorita@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 23, 2024 1:24 PM
To: Records Clerk; Office of Chairman La Rosa; commissioner.Clar@psc.state.fl.us; commissioner.Passidomo@psc.state.fl.us; Office of Commissioner Fay; Office of Commissioner Graham; Fred Burrow
Subject: Docket# 20240032-SU

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Fred and Dorianne Burrow
Property owner at
8686 Grand Ave
Placida FL, 33946
Little Gasparilla Island

Fl state licensed plumbers
CFC1426792
CFC1427775

My name is Fred Burrow and I own 8686 Grand Ave. on Little Gasparilla Island, which is within the proposed sewer service area. I am formally objecting to the sewer proposal and request that PSC deny the application for original certificate of authorization for Environmental Utilities, LLC (EU) for a central sewer system for Little Gasparilla Island.

I am a state certified Master Plumber #CFC1426792 and I have owned Swift Plumbers for 24 years. Since the purchase of my home in 2020 I have become the plumber who does a vast majority of the work on Little Gasparilla Island.

Similar to the water service installation me and my company will likely have a great financial gain second only to Environmental Utilities, LLC, should proposed sewer application be approved.

I set aside any potential financial gain because a low pressure system will have a limited benefit to our islands environment and its homeowners with extreme financial ramifications to all of my fellow homeowners except me.

Low pressure sewer system is also called a low pressure SEPTIC system. You still have a septic tank so all that would be eliminated are the drain fields. The benefit to the LPS is for it to be used in an area where the soil or water table is not suitable for a conventional drain field.

All soil and water table issues have been already solved by raised drain fields. A majority of the homes on Little Gasparilla Island have raised drain fields with a grinder pump that sends the waste water to the raised drain field. Over the past 4 years on Little Gasparilla Island we have endured multiple hurricanes and several floods and a vast majority of the septic systems were not affected.

If it were the Florida Department of environmental protection pushing this due to proven contamination on the aquifer that would be a different story. If the owners had solid proof from an independent unbiased source that eliminating drain fields would protect our island in a substantial way, I am sure everyone would be on board despite any financial ramifications. From what I can tell that is not what is happening. What is happening is one company with major financial benefit to this system going in is pushing their agenda. No one else.

Monopolizing a solution to an issue we don't even know exists, will benefit only Environmental Utilities, LLC. Nothing comes close to a gravity fed sewer system and this system would replace issues with new issues. Over the years doing plumbing I have see the alarming number of issues Charlotte County Utilities (CCU) has with current low pressure septic systems that they maintain. If this is ran the way CCU does their LPS, Environmental Utilities will be responsible for every pump and pit on the island. The power goes out on the island frequently. Do they have the manpower to handle the workload of all the issues that arise? The LPS demanding needs to be considerably more that the water service they currently provide. So if approved what we can expect is the pump to fail when electric goes out and the pumps not to work and the septic tanks getting overwhelmed. Sewer will then be all over the island because most of the houses are on stilts and unlike the mainland where it comes up your shower or bubbles the toilet, the now pressurized sewer will be coming out the smallest compromised pipes of mostly older pipe systems. One could argue approval may lead to an environmental nightmare.

In closing I am begging you NOT to approve a money grab. We have a responsibility to be thoughtful and careful.

Fred Burrow
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Dorianne Burrow
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Antonia Hover

From: Carole Songey <songeyislandlife@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 23, 2024 12:12 PM
To: Office of Commissioner Graham
Subject: FOR CENTRALIZED SEWER

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Commissioner Graham,

Being a conscious citizen desiring a healthy environment in which to live and pass on to my family growing up in the future, IT IS IMPERATIVE to do what we as responsible citizens of this earth can do to have a clean and healthy environment.

Unfortunately there are individuals out there more worried about themselves than the environment or others, or perhaps even their own families growing up, who want to stop the proposal for removing wastewater from ALL barrier islands.

Will it cost all us money? Yes, of course. BUT what will be the cost in the future to our health and the health of all others living in a polluted land surrounded by polluted waters dues to leaking and broken septic systems. WHEN will they learn?

I have lived on Little Gasparilla island since December 1992. I have seen first hand the pollution of our once pristine waters. I have seen broken septic pipes dumping raw sewage on our land and into the waters surrounding the island. I have seen a rise in "Red Tide" with sewage being a major contributor to algae bloom. More dead fish, turtles, dolphins, manatees, to float up onto our beaches, the toxins released in the air that both people and animals have exposure to and other health problems or death in some instances from all forms of damage that septic systems release and contribute to.

For any truly concerned individual the passage for a Centralized Wastewater system needs to be approved.

A Healthy and Beautiful Environment needs your support in passing this request. Please keep me advised on your recommendations.

Carole Songey

Antonia Hover

From: jim luscombe <jbluscombe@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 23, 2024 12:04 PM
To: Records Clerk
Cc: Office of Commissioner Fay; Office of Chairman La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Graham; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo
Subject: Docket #20240032-SU

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Dear Commissioners

My name is Jim Luscombe and I own and reside full time at 420 Bocilla Drive on Don Pedro Island with Kris Doubles. Our family home was built in the late 70's and we have been full time residents for 8 years. We live within the service district for the central sewer system being proposed by Environmental Utilities (EU). I request that you DENY EU's Application for Original Certificate or Authorization for the following reasons.

1: **Need:** For over a decade, our home owners association have been testing the waters surrounding our island. Hundreds of tests later, we have never been able to find any contaminated waters. E coli counts obtained over the past decade would indicate we do not have a problem. Spending 10's of millions of dollars to correct our water quality with a sewer system seems almost ridiculous. Charlotte county, Lee county and Sarasota county have all been in the news over the past year (as recently as last week) BECAUSE OF SEWAGE SYSTEM FAILURES. Pumps fail, lift stations fail. Various reports ranging from 10,000 gallons to will over 100,000 gallons of raw sewage going into our waterways because of the same system being proposed.

If the County truly believed the logic of the applicants need assessment, the county would not be granting new permits on our islands for septic systems. This is not the case. Had the proposed system been in place post Hurricane Ian, this island would have been literally be swimming in SH+T. With no power, the proposed system fills and overflows. Septic tanks work 24/7. The only way you can justify moving ahead with this project based on NEED is for financial gain. Need has NOT been established. Studies have not been completed and the engineering lacking.
NEED.....NOT GREED

2: **Technical Expertise:** I know and respect the applicant HOWEVER, he has no experience in wastewater management and has never completed a project of this magnitude. I spoke with him last year and he made it clear that he feels strongly that the best option for all involved is for the COUNTY to take it over. Another island resident had a meeting with the applicant and at that meeting the applicant advised that he had no intention of actually doing the project. There can be NO justification for moving ahead with this project based on Technical Expertise.

3: **Fair and Equitable Rates & Charges:** We the residents, have yet to be informed of the total actual costs. Hookup fees have been quoted from 10K to 20K. Unfortunately, this is just the tip of the iceberg. Our existing septic's have to be decommissioned. Many homes will require an electric upgrade to power the pumps: No estimate

Our lots will be torn up from the street to the house to lay the line and tankage. Cost of replacing landscaping: No estimate.

What will each resident be paid for the easement needed for them to do this: No estimate.

The best one is the ongoing cost. We will now have to pay an estimated \$200 plus monthly for wastewater. The average in the state of Florida is currently published at \$61.24 for water and wastewater, excluding utility taxes.

With an average water bill of \$120 and an additional \$250 for wastewater for 4000 gallons, this easily makes our utility costs on Palm Island at **SIX TIMES THE STATE AVERAGE!** The applicant has stated that he will apply for the maximum increase allowed each year. The only way you can justify moving ahead with this project based on Fair and Equitable Rates & Charges is for financial gain. Period.

There can be NO justification for moving ahead with this project based on Fair and Equitable Rates and Charges.

Another area of HUGE CONCERN, is the damage to our fragile environment. We are home to a challenged gopher tortoise population. Has a study been done to determine the risk to this protected population?

Collateral Damage: Our island has a thriving vacation rental market. Tearing up our landscape for a few years will ultimately cost businesses and owners millions of dollars in lost revenue. After a pandemic and Hurricane Ian, this is the last thing we need as a community.

After all is said and done under the proposed program, our waste will be transported to Rotonda where it is treated. The gray water containing high levels of nutrients and Nitrogen will then be diverted to "Fertilizer Water" used by local golf courses, to ultimately end up in the water table and back into our rivers and coastal waters. This solves nothing.

Sarasota has recently indicated that they should STOP hooking up septic to sewers UNTIL that have advanced waste water treatment systems in place. Advanced systems are designed to eliminate the nutrient waters that get recycled. This is a much more logical place for the County to start. Make Rotonda and advanced waste water treatment plant.

The process we are going through seems and feels totally wrong. There is no engineering study, there is no need and there are no precise costs to the owners being presented.

As a non-engineer but a concerned resident, this feels like a total sham and does not at any level pass the smell test.

Please make the right decision that is not based on a high profit permit to one individual, but on the best long term solution to our island that meets our needs now and in the future, has minimum environmental impact and is affordable to all.

Regards

Jim Luscombe and Kris Doubles

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim", with a horizontal line above and below the name.

Jim Luscombe

Email: jim@palmislandstays.com

Cell: 727-515-0274

www.palmislandstays.com