

**Charlie Smith**

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**From:** Office of Commissioner Passidomo  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 24, 2024 8:45 AM  
**To:** Commissioner Correspondence  
**Subject:** Docket No. 20240032  
**Attachments:** FOR CENTRALIZES SEWER; Waste Water Management for Little Gasparilla Island;  
Docket #20240032-SU; Centralized Waste-Water Charlotte County FL; RE. Docket #  
20240032-SU; Docket #20240032-SU; RE. Docket #20240032-SU-corrected subject line;  
Request for

Please place the attached in Docket No. 20240032.

Thank you!

## Charlie Smith

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**From:** Carole Songey <songeyislandlife@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 12:07 PM  
**To:** Office of Commissioner Passidomo  
**Subject:** FOR CENTRALIZES SEWER

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

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Commissioner Passidomo,

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

## Charlie Smith

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**From:** JAMIE GAGE <jsgage@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 22, 2024 4:54 PM  
**To:** Records Clerk; Office of Chairman La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo; Office of Commissioner Fay; Office of Commissioner Graham  
**Subject:** Waste Water Management for Little Gasparilla Island

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

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To all concerned,

I am a homeowner on LGI and oppose the proposal for a Central Sewer system. It's totally unnecessary and solves no issues. Our systems work well, and are already monitored annually by the county. The costs would be exorbitant to owners, initially, and forever.

Have you ever been to the island? We have just enough government infrastructure to be safe and enjoy an "old Florida culture". Leave it alone, please. We don't need a for profit company messing with something that is not broken. Thank you !

Kind Regards,

Jamie S. Gage  
8900 Gulf St.  
Placida, FL

jsgage@verion.net  
941-737-8838



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## Charlie Smith

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**From:** Jennifer McCullough <rummysway@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 3:38 PM  
**To:** Records Clerk; Office of Chairman La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo; Office of Commissioner Fay; Office of Commissioner Graham  
**Cc:** mfriedman@deanmead.com  
**Subject:** Docket #20240032-SU

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello,

I am a property owner on Little Gasparilla Island and I live here full time in order to care for my 95 year old parents. My husband, Orgain, lives in Colorado but visits often.

I'm writing to you today to formally request that the PSC deny Environmental Utilities' application for wastewater service.

I have the following concerns:

1. I am an extremely environmentally conscientious person and realize that sewer hookup is absolutely the best thing that could happen for the island environment. I do have a concern about putting EU in charge of the effort. The system that would need to be put in place would have to be absolutely perfect or there could be a catastrophe on our hands. I would be more onboard if county or state true professionals were in charge.
2. Mr. Boyer currently charges island residents one of the highest rates in the state for use of the water system he forced us all to hook up to. I have a very real and deep concern as to what my personal cost will be if forced to convert from septic to a sewer system managed by Mr. Boyer. I live on a very limited budget and my full time job is taking care of my 95 year old parents who first arrived on the island in 1968 and who still live here (Charles NeSmith - 8078 Grand Ave.). I would not only be responsible for replacing my septic system but my parents as well. That means double the initial and ongoing costs which is quite considerable.
3. Another major concern I have is if/when power on the island goes out for an extended period of time. This could be an absolute disaster for the environment! This reason alone should be enough to warrant waiting until a truly perfect solution can be put into place.
4. There is lush and beautiful landscaping all around my septic field and the thought of the destruction entailed if this effort gets approved is very upsetting.
5. I understand there is not a 'pay-over-time' option which would mean taking out loans that I cannot afford in order to pay for the new system(s).
6. The fact that there is no grandfathering of septic systems that are working perfectly and have been working perfectly is another concern.
7. The fact that there would be no one overseeing the project is yet another major concern. What options would we have in the event of significant issues arising?

8. What happens if we become completely reliant on this system and a tornado or other catastrophic event causes the system to be destroyed or incapacitated in an extended way?
9. I also have a real fear of running massive amounts of sewage across the bay. What if there is a leak or rupture? I can't even imagine how horrible the impact would be.
10. I'm also very concerned that if LGI has a sewer system, then the next step will be for large development efforts to get underway. LGI is an extremely special and fragile environment and must be protected.
11. Loss of habitat is already running rampant on the mainland. I'm asking you to please, from the most sincerest aspect of my soul, keep the island protected. Send an army out, if you want, to ensure that all of the septic systems are working perfectly but please do not let this wastewater goal of EU gain traction.

Sincerely,  
Jennifer & Orgain McCullough

8046 Grand Ave.  
Dock # 3  
Little Gasparilla Island  
Placida, FL 33946

303-809-0493  
RummysWay@gmail.com

## Charlie Smith

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**From:** Linda Soderquist <linist@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 3:39 PM  
**To:** Office of Commissioner Fay; Office of Commissioner Graham; Office of Chairman La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo; governorrn.desantis@eog.myflorida.com; ltgovernorjeanette.nunez@eog.myflorida.com  
**Subject:** Centralized Waste-Water Charlotte County FL

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

April 22, 2024

I am writing to comment on the proposed centralized waste-water treatment for the barrier islands in Charlotte County Florida.

I am not currently a homeowner, but did live full time on Little Gasparilla Island from 1992 until 2020. During most of that time I was a sea turtle primary permit holder (Imperiled species sea turtle permit TP-132 with FWC) During that time my permit included data collection, training and supervising volunteers, collecting data on sea turtle strandings, and leading educational opportunities. I was on the beach every single day from May 1<sup>st</sup> through October 31<sup>st</sup> starting in 1997 until 2019.

During my beach time as the permit holder, I was able to observe extreme tide changes and the beach during and after storms. Many times, I observed septic tanks compromised by the wind and tide, pouring raw effluent onto the sandy beach. The beachfront properties on Little Gasparilla are literally in the sea turtle nesting zone and most every septic tank has been affected to some extent multiple times. These properties have no recourse but to cover the exposed tanks and drain fields with beach sand (usually before the county could even come out to inspect the breach) and wait for the next high-water event. They have no place on their lot to relocate septic tanks. For this reason, centralized waste-water is a must for the barrier islands. Water quality is at stake.

I lived on the bay side of Little Gasparilla Island. In walking down the path to the beach every morning, I observed many similar situations with failing septic tanks and drain fields on the interior of the island. Some older properties do not even have drain fields, but merely a cesspool covered with plywood and sand. The flood tides and storm surges certainly negatively impact these properties over and over again. That polluted water drains off right back into the bay and gulf.

I am an environmentalist. I know water quality has been compromised by continuing to allow aging septic tanks on barrier islands, creekfront properties, and bayfront properties. I have been a member of the CHVWQMN (Charlotte Harbor Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Network associated with FDEP)) for over 20 years and have seen the data that supports declining water quality in many of the estuaries and creek areas. Much of this decline has to be a result of aging septic tanks on the barrier islands as well as nearby mainland waterfront and creekfront properties.

I believe there is a need NOW for centralized waste-water. The barrier islands are a place to start, but other areas need to be addressed as well. We cannot wait. I have many friends still on the island and have heard their comments. Many more are now in favor of centralized waste-water treatment. They have concerns and questions about the cost and feel they need assurances for the reliability of the systems proposed. Once these concerns are addressed, they will support a centralized waste-water system because they, too, see it as necessary to protect the beaches and island life they love.

Linda Soderquist

Watercolor Artist  
Florida Master Naturalist

Linda's Island Art LLC  
[www.Lindaislandart.com](http://www.Lindaislandart.com)

P.O.Box 958  
Englewood FL 34295

(941) 270 7994

## Charlie Smith

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**From:** Josh Jaquish <joshjaquish@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 3:45 PM  
**To:** Records Clerk  
**Cc:** Office of Chairman La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo; Office of Commissioner Graham; Office of Commissioner Fay; Josh Jaquish  
**Subject:** RE. Docket #20240032-SU

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

To Commissioner Larosa, Commissioner Clark, Commissioner Passidomo, Commissioner Graham, Commissioner Fay and Clerk of the Commission:

My name is Josh Jaquish and I own 9378 Little Gasparilla Island, which is within the proposed sewer service area for Little Gasparilla Island. **I am formally objecting to the sewer proposal and request that the PSC deny the Application for Original Certificate of Authorization for Environmental Utilities, LLC (EU) for a central sewer system for Little Gasparilla Island.**

There is little doubt in my mind that proceeding with this particular party EU for providing private central sewer is the wrong move for Little Gasparilla Island. EU does not have the technical expertise to properly construct, operate and maintain a sewer system. Allowing EU to move forward with a central sewer system will result in situations that will be more damaging to the environment. While a central sewer system has its merits for improving the environment in the future, selecting the appropriate party and technology is essential for success of the project. From the information presented, EU is proposing a low pressure sewer system, that will only remove the clear water from the tank and leave the solids behind, similar to a septic tank. There are very few letters of support compared to the long list of homeowners that do NOT support this project. The support letters provided from Little Gasparilla Island residents mention times of flooding with sewage on the island. The currently proposed sewer system will cost millions of dollars to construct and will not change the situation in times of flooding having solids from inground sewage tanks overflowing on the island. Many current septic to sewer conversions are installed across the State of Florida using small grinder pump stations at the home to transport the solids and water from the home to the treatment facility. A sewage grinder pump station would provide more effective design and provide better environmental benefits to have a central sewer system that removed all of the wastewater to be treated.

We are currently customers of Little Gasparilla Water Utility, which is owned and operated by the same parties that are applying as Environmental Utilities, LLC. The owners have minimal experience operating a water system and no experience operating a wastewater system. The water system on Little Gasparilla Island is constructed poorly and not operated responsibly by these parties. The owners of the water system do not respect owners property rights and place water lines wherever they want without proper communication with the homeowner nor obtaining proper easements for their water lines. While the project to bring sewer services to the island has merit, Environmental Utilities is not the appropriate party to complete a project of this nature. Part of EU's proposal for the central sewer system is "claiming ownership" of a utility easement on private property without compensating the homeowner. Charlotte County should continue to seek other experienced parties to provide sewer service to Little Gasparilla Island or pursue funding to extend County sewer service to our residents. Septic to Sewer conversion projects are being successfully completed across the State of Florida. Converting these barrier islands to a central sewer system would be a strong potential project for Charlotte County to propose for infrastructure grants and funding. Millions of dollars are going to be available for these types of projects in the coming years, which would reduce the financial burden for connection charges for the residents of Little Gasparilla Island.



The costs of owning a home on Little Gasparilla Island have increased dramatically over the last 4 years since EUs first petition to provide sewer. With the devastation from Ian, many homeowners have significant repairs or complete rebuilds of their homes. Construction prices have tripled in the last 2 years to get any work done on our home, no matter how small or big the project is. We continue to experience rising costs in every aspect of home ownership on Little Gasparilla Island. The insurance and property taxes alone have increased dramatically. This is NOT the time for an additional expense for the homeowners of Little Gasparilla Island, especially when the proposed project will not offer environmental benefits as currently proposed.

The proposed connection charges for the sewer system are listed from \$11,000 to \$20,000 and it does not appear the pricing provided for connection has changed since the 2020 petition to provide sewer service. Today a typical septic to sewer project is costing utilities between \$30,000 to \$40,000 per property to provide sewer service. It does not appear he has updated the construction costs for this project nor reflected that in his connection charges submitted. Many utilities performing septic-to-sewer conversions are doing so with grant funding and SRF loans to lessen the burden on the homeowner. Because EU is a private utility, they are not able to access any of the infrastructure funding being provided in the state of Florida. This area is currently designated in the Charlotte County Utility District and should stay that way to allow for funding dollars to assist with installation of a central sewer system.

On top of the significant connection charges, the proposed monthly sewer charges are VERY high compared to other utility rates. For the residents of Little Gasparilla Island, we already pay high monthly rates for the water system to the same entity. I currently pay \$83 per month as the base meter facility charge then the water usage is added on top of that fee. Adding the proposed monthly sewer charges would bring the monthly water and sewer charges to over \$250 a month which is a much higher than the monthly charge for water and sewer compared to other local utilities.

Mr. Boyer, the owner of Environmental Utilities, has been very vocal as a resident on Little Gasparilla Island that he has no intentions of completing this project, nor does he care about improving the environment on our island, he is solely making the petition to be granted the sewer service rights then sell them for his own financial gain. He has told other island residents that he is "locking in his retirement" expecting to make millions and retire. I personally want someone who cares about the future of our island to be involved in such an important public health and safety project for Charlotte County and Little Gasparilla Island. The residents and property owners in Charlotte County deserve fair and equitable rates and monthly charges for sewer service, not to be a private individual's retirement plan.

**In conclusion, due to the lack of technical expertise of the applicant, lack of respect for homeowner property rights of the applicant, and inability to provide fair and equitable rates, I formally request that Environmental Utilities, LLC Application to provide sewer service to Little Gasparilla Island be denied.**

Sincerely,

Josh Jaquish

## Charlie Smith

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**From:** Malone, Rose <Rosemary.Malone2@evernorth.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 7:30 PM  
**To:** Records Clerk; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo; Office of Commissioner Fay  
**Subject:** Docket #20240032-SU

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello,

My name is Rose Malone. I am a property owner on Knight Island. I am formally requesting that the PSC **deny EU's application for wastewater service** for these reasons.

- **Environmental concerns:** No water quality testing has been done in our area to prove a need for sewer. This project brings the potential for destruction of habitat and interference with endangered species such as the gopher tortoise.
- **Potential of sewer spill in the Intracoastal:** The risk of a central sewer leak with a subaqueous crossing is greater than the risk of one or more septic systems developing leaks.
- **Traffic Congestion:** The combination of post-storm rebuilds, new home construction, and tourist traffic during season has made wait lines at the ferry both unpredictable and outrageous. This will only add to the current ferry issues the islanders deal with on a daily basis.
- **New easement giveaway:** Most utility easements are placed in the road right-of-way. EU has claimed ownership of a utility easement that will go from the sewer equipment, located near the house to the connection in the road without compensating the homeowner. Our easements are already being taken away by new property owners planting plants and extending driveways past their property line causing no room for walkers to get out of the road. This will only add to the unsafe conditions for walkers or runners.

Thank you,

**ROSE MALONE**  
Email : rosemalone@earthlink.net

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## Charlie Smith

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**From:** makboland@twc.com  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 11:49 PM  
**To:** Records Clerk  
**Cc:** Office of Chairman La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo; Office of Commissioner Graham; Office of Commissioner Fay; jandjadler@aol.com  
**Subject:** RE. Docket #20240032-SU-corrected subject line

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April 23, 2024

Dear Clerk of Commission,

I have been a homeowner on Palm Island (250 N. Gulf Blvd, 33946) since 1980. My name is John W. Adler; my wife is JoAnn S. Adler. I am homesteaded to that lot and 271 N Gulf Blvd. I am addressing the issue (as I did in the past) to the idea of Environmental Utilities, LLC (EU) putting in a sewage system on Palm Island. My email address is [jandjadler@aol.com](mailto:jandjadler@aol.com) (copied); my daughter (Kathleen Adler Boland) is sending this from her email for my convenience.

I could appeal to you from an emotional standpoint that this is our family home for generations, which we will have to sell if you do this as it would be unsustainable for our family especially after having the expense of hurricane repairs that were not covered by insurance.

With that said, my son in law, (married to my daughter for 29 years) owns industrial engineering companies that manage the southeast (including Kentucky/Indiana/ Tennessee/Georgia/Alabama/Florida) that sell a multitude of pneumatics and pumps including those to wastewater plants. From an environmental/engineering aspect he thinks it is unnecessary for a multitude of reasons:

- i. Being at sea level will not only create a danger of a break and deterioration to a line thus creating more expense to repair/replace for the home owner but also create a larger scale of environmental issues than a broken septic would. In some cities there are insurance policies for protection but we have seen how those have played out over Hurricane Ian.
- ii. Septic systems are also environmentally friendly when properly maintained. Septic systems require far less infrastructure than city sewers. They use less energy than municipal treatment plants and very rarely rely on chemicals to remove wastewater pollutants. Septic systems are systems designed to conserve the local water supplies in an environment like Palm Island and Don Pedro Island. Moreover, septic systems create a groundwater effect that reinvigorates the soil and vegetation water supply.

There is a contingent of families that still have current descendants actively on the island that perpetuate the need for balance of nature and limitations for expansion on the island. My family saw some of the first children there who spent every summer there, swam in canals, found red snakes in their little blow-up boat, saw the beached whale, saw the overpopulation and made friends. These 50 plus year children now have their children (my grandchildren/great nieces and nephews) visiting and to take on the hard work so they too can appreciate the good life and extend the vision. We created a community where we support local businesses and contractors (despite a little more expense) because it is a community of trust. On June 12, 2024 I will turn 88. My daughters and granddaughters are entrusted with trying to restore and maintain my property such that hopefully

it will be something where my great-grand children will be able to explore and maintain the traditions. It is a small community of originals.

**If you can provide reasoning as to why the sewage installation is necessary (even though it was denied the last time) can you please provide a reply with your rationale?**

**In conclusion, my septic tank has been there for well over 40 years next to a canal and has survived hurricanes and floods with no issue. As the old adage goes “If it ain’t broke don’t fix it”. We kindly request that you deny EU’s application for wastewater service.**

Sincerely,  
John W. Adler and JoAnn S. Adler

Also BCC:

Kathleen Adler Boland (daughter of John and JoAnn Adler; spends significant time on Palm Island working on the house)

Michael A. Boland (my son in law; President/Owner Eagle Investment Partners; DBA Republic Pneumatics/Eagle Flow Solutions. He is cited in this letter who works with wastewater treatment plants)

Lisa Steinberg Lawlor (homeowners on Palm Island, niece of John and JoAnn Adler/cousin to Kathleen and Kerry)

John Lawlor (homeowner on Palm Island, “nephew in law”/husband of Lisa Steinberg Lawlor)

## Charlie Smith

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**From:** makboland@twc.com  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 7:40 PM  
**To:** Records Clerk  
**Cc:** Office of Chairman La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo; Office of Commissioner Graham; Office of Commissioner Fay; jandjadler@aol.com  
**Subject:** Request for  
**Importance:** High

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April 23, 2024

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- i. Being at sea level will not only create a danger of a break and deterioration to a line thus creating more expense to repair/replace for the home owner but also create a larger scale of environmental issues than a broken septic would. In some cities there are insurance policies for protection but we have seen how those have played out over Hurricane Ian.
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restore and maintain my property such that hopefully it will be something where my great-grand children will be able to explore and maintain the traditions. It is a small community of originals.

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Sincerely,  
John W. Adler and JoAnn S. Adler

Also BCC:

Kathleen Adler Boland (daughter of John and JoAnn Adler; spends significant time on Palm Island working on the house)

Michael A. Boland (my son in law; President/Owner Eagle Investment Partners; DBA Republic Pneumatics/Eagle Flow Solutions. He is cited in this letter who works with wastewater treatment plants)

Lisa Steinberg Lawlor (homeowners on Palm Island, niece of John and JoAnn Adler/cousin to Kathleen and Kerry)

John Lawlor (homeowner on Palm Island, “nephew in law”/husband of Lisa Steinberg Lawlor)