

Antonia Hover

From: Cristina Slaton
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 8:37 AM
To: Commissioner Correspondence
Subject: Docket Correspondence - 20200026
Attachments: Docket 20200226-SU; Docket #20200226-SU; RE. Docket #20200226-SU; Sewer not needed!; RE. Docket #20200226-SU; Comment on Docket Number 20200226-SU

Good morning,

Please place the attached emails in CORRESPONDENCE-Consumers & Representatives in docket 20200226.

Thank you.

Antonia Hover

From: Laurie Gaines <laurie@littlegasparilla.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 1:31 AM
To: Office of Commissioner La Rosa
Subject: Docket 20200226-SU

My name is Laurie Gaines and I am a resident at 8814 Grand Avenue, Little Gasparilla Island. My husband and I have concerns about the proposed sewer system application by EU and would like to formally request that the application be denied. We feel that more thought needs to go into the type of system to be proposed. The current proposed system seems to require electricity to work (unlike a high pressure system) and we lose power frequently on the island. It will tear up our yards and landscaping and wreak havoc on our quiet little island. And apparently the system will still need pumping every five years or so! (Due to our boat-only access, currently pumping costs about \$1500....and you can be on a waiting list for up to 6 months to get septic systems pumped. THAT should be more of a cause for concern by the County and I wish they would address that issue rather than just create a mandate that we need to install a system that is going to require even more frequent service.)

Our main concern stems from several aspects of the proposal:

1. the damage that will be caused to the ambiance of our island by the implementation of infrastructure at each and every home. Even more concerning is the potential for a major leak or spill when removing sewage from the island. The potential for a major leak, spilling thousands of gallons of raw sewage into Placida Bay, seems to be much more likely than the impact of a few leaking septic systems. (I have lived on the island for over 35 years and can count on one had the time I have actually witnessed a septic tank overflow or leak.) Most are well maintained by residents and many are brand new systems installed within the last 5-6 years.
2. I also think it is unfair to ask homeowners to foot the bill for such a system without any option for financing. If the county feels it is necessary, Charlotte County should provide the service and pay for it with increased taxes over time....to hit each homeowner on the island with an enormous bill for a system they don't want or need is simply unfair. Many older residents may lose their homes. In addition, we are already paying EU an unusually high rate for our water....now we are going to be charged another unfairly high rate for sewer service we neither need nor want.
3. Our island lifestyle is unique and rare. We do not want the type of infrastructure that will encourage high-rises and more condo developments to come in and change our way of life forever. We like the island just the way it is.
4. The company proposing the system has not provided detailed costs and has not provided any sort of bid for a system. To just award a contract to an unproven contractor who "thinks" he can provide wastewater treatment seems reckless. I would feel more confident with a firm that has done something like this in the past rather than an unknown entity who cannot even provide financial details.

All in all, it seems that this request for a permit is premature, there is much more information that needs to be provided, both about how the system is going to be maintained, what will be done in the event of a major storm, how are major sewage spills going to be prevented, what is the company's experience in this area and what are the actual costs going to be?

Thank you in advance for considering my request.

Laurie Gaines

gaines555@earthlink.net

Antonia Hover

From: Midge O'Hara <littlegasparilla@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2022 10:14 PM
To: Office of Commissioner La Rosa
Subject: Docket #20200226-SU

Commissioner LaRosa,

We have no need for EU's suggested, in my words, installation of "another septic holding tank with a pump" and all at our expense. The Island loses electricity easily; the pump will not work.

EU has no experience in installing or maintaining a sewer system.

A VACUUM system would be best with no homeowner, if any, maintenance costs.

Charlotte County is shirking its responsibility to us tax payers and should be the one getting professional bids and installing a proper system.

Little Gasparilla is NOT a "rich" island like Boca Grande, and the financial hardship of not having the ability to spread the cost on our tax bill over 20 years is impossible for many longtime homeowners.

Islander's came together 10 years ago to map out our vision for our island and that Plan was accepted by Charlotte County. Of utmost importance was our zoning "down sizing" to BBI and single family homes only. This must NOT be changed, yet a County Commissioner has voiced his opinion that "it could be changed". Sewers bring population growth with them.

Take a look at the facts and vote against giving EU the Certificate of Service.

Sincerely,

Marjorie and Charles O'Hara
9762 Little Gasparilla Island
Placida, FL 33946
PO Box 22
littlegasparilla@gmail.com

Antonia Hover

From: Tri Dang <trindang@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2022 9:26 PM
To: Office of Commissioner La Rosa
Subject: RE. Docket #20200226-SU

Dear Commissioner LaRosa:

My name is Tri Dang. my wife (Jennifer) and I own a lot on Palm Island in Placida, Florida, where we plan to build our retirement home within the next few years. For the past sixteen months, homeowners including us on the Island are very concerned about issues with the proposed centralized waste collection services put forth by Mr. Jack Boyer, owner of the Environmental Utilities (EU) LLC. While we could not be there in person to support the Palm Island Estates (PIE) community, I was able to keep up-to-date with the ongoing issues. I am formally requesting that you and other commissioners **DENY** EU's application for wastewater services for the following reasons:

1) **Unreasonable high costs:** After several revisions, EU proposed cost to connect each unit on the Island to the "centralized collection service," which is estimated to be \$13,221, plus monthly charges of \$178.78. These cost estimates are way too high for individual households and will mostly likely be higher depending on the number of occupancies. In addition to these costs, homeowners are responsible for installing and maintaining other services such as pumps.

2) **Lack of experiences in operating a project of this scope:** I reviewed Mr. Boyer's biography and I appreciate his services to the country; however, if you compare his wastewater experience on a submarine and that of running a wastewater collection business providing services on a barrier island - something must have overlooked. If anything goes awry on a submarine, you will always have the backing of the Department of the Navy, Department of Defense, and lastly that of the US Government to address issues. If anything goes awry with wastewater on Palm Island, will EU be that single point of contact to address and remediate all issues? It does not appear that way based on Mr. Boyer's deposition. I am afraid that it will be the people on Palm Island who will bear the cost to address those issues. In my opinion, this proposal does not have the support of potential customers – more specifically the homeowners on the Island.

3) **Ability to participate or opt-out:** According to Mr. Boyer, one of the benefits that EU provides is to create and maintain an environmental-friendly system, where sewage water is collected, transferred, and treated off-island. This approach will prevent wastewater spillage on the barrier island that contaminate and cause damage to sea life. EU's proposed to replace existing concrete tanks with new tanks that made of composite material. These nouveau ideas are unproven as composite materials are not known to withstand the harsh conditions of salt water. According to concrete experts, the best material for sea water is concrete with reinforced steel though even these materials require periodic inspections to address performance degradation. EU's proposal requires full participation with one- or two-year phased in. This is the United States of America and thus, I believe that we have the right to not be forced to accept a high cost, unknown quality of service solution. We, the people on the Island, can address the issue through enforcement and due diligence maintenance of our septic tanks according to the County Health Department guidelines.

Again, I respectfully request that you and other commissioners **DENY** EU's application for wastewater services to Palm Island. It is absolutely the wrong proposal, the wrong team, and the wrong approach.

Sincerely yours,

Tri Dang

Email: trindang@yahoo.com

Antonia Hover

From: John Day <johnday1000@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2022 8:28 PM
To: Office of Commissioner La Rosa
Subject: Sewer not needed!

Sent from my iPhone

Antonia Hover

From: Chuck Soderquist <sodo1@live.com>
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2022 7:58 PM
To: Office of Commissioner La Rosa
Subject: RE. Docket #20200226-SU

Commissioner LaRosa,

Please Approve the proposal to install sewers on our Barrier Islands. A centralized sewer system is overdue and will have a great positive environmental impact.

Thank You

Chuck Soderquist

Phone # 941-270-7992
E-mail Sodo1@live.com
PO Box 958
Englewood, Fl. 34295

Antonia Hover

From: Jenny Dang <jenny_n_dang@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2022 7:20 PM
To: Office of Commissioner La Rosa
Subject: Comment on Docket Number 20200226-SU

Dear Commissioner LaRosa:

My name is Jennifer Dang, and my husband (Tri) and I are property owners on Palm Island in Placida, Florida. Tri will submit his comment separately from his perspective.

I respectfully request that you **DENY EU's application for wastewater service** due to the following reasons, which in my humble opinion, are purely common sense.

1) I honestly don't believe that there is a proven need for EU's proposed wastewater service on the Island. Currently, we live in rural Virginia, and our house has not only a well but also a septic system. My parents' house in Georgia also uses a septic system for decades. **If enforced and maintained appropriately, septic systems are very efficient and safe to the environment.** I am engineer, and I do like to tinker with things. However, there are times when I have to remind myself of the old saying **"If it's not broken, don't fix it."** **This situation that the EU, you and other commissioners are dealing with now is just as that - especially when folks on the Island are opposing to the EU proposal.**

2) The majority of owners on our island do not request this proposed service from the EU.

3) Given the information (or lack of) provided by the EU, I don't believe that there are technical expertise and sufficient finances to support this project. In the end, the issues and costs overrun will be astronomical and passed on to the homeowners on the Island.

4) Since the County is not responsible for this project (so to speak), the homeowners on the Island will have no control over unknown rates after installation as well as future rate increases over the years.

5) Finally and most importantly, the proposed system and service are, in my opinion, no better than what homeowners have currently. At least, the costs of maintaining existing septic systems are manageable and known to homeowners.

Now from a personal perspective, I would like to make a few statements. My husband and I are in the process of planning for the construction of our retirement (forever) home on the lot that we purchased on the Island in 2013. We'll be living full time on the Island in a few years and cannot wait when that time comes. We both grew up in a communist regime when we were little. We have been living in the States for over 40 years now. Freedom means more to us than probably most folks because we know what it was like not to have it. Although we don't currently live on the Island, we have been following this proposal from the beginning as the outcome of this proposal will affect our daily lives when we become full time residence in a few years. **My whole issue with this proposal is that when the majority of homeowners oppose to this proposal from the EU, why force it down our throat?** While I understand that you and other commissioners have to follow the notice and comment process and do your due diligence, you have to take into consideration the needs and wants of the people on the Island. We cannot be forced to do something that we strongly oppose just because someone believes that their proposal is better and good for the environment. You have to consider the long-term financial impact to the homeowners not to mention the potential issues with the proposed systems. **Please ask yourself this question, if you were the homeowner, what would you do and do you think that it's appropriate to allow someone (like the EU) continually forcing something on people that will have significant negative, long-lasting effects on people's lives? To me, this is Un-American. Personally, this is something that people only**

see in third-world countries or what my husband and I used to experience in a communist regime -- where we didn't have a say into our daily lives.

To close, while the aforementioned statements might be considered too harsh, I hope that it is time we bring an end to this agony and again respectfully request that you and other commissioners settle this matter once for all ---- that FREEDOM to choose from the homeowners on the Island prevail. I thank you in advance for your consideration.

Respectfully yours,

Jennifer Dang

Email: jenny_n_dang@yahoo.com