

Nickalus Holmes

From: Betty Leland
Sent: Friday, March 28, 2025 4:35 PM
To: Commissioner Correspondence
Subject: FW: Please Deny EU Application Docket # Docket #20240032-SU

Good Afternoon:

Please place this email in Docket #20240032.

Thx.

Betty A. Leland, Executive Assistant to
Commissioner Art Graham
Florida Public Service Commission
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From: Rebecca Hagelin <hagelin.rebecca@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 28, 2025 3:57 PM
To: Records Clerk <CLERK@PSC.STATE.FL.US>; Office of Commissioner Clark <Commissioner.Clark@psc.state.fl.us>;
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Subject: Please Deny EU Application Docket # Docket #20240032-SU

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Dear Commissioners -

It breaks my heart to have to write this letter. Members of the Boyer family and employees of Environmental Utilities have been my friends for several years. However, their continued efforts to force island home owners to buy their unwanted and unneeded utilities, with the Boyers gaining much wealth while making their neighbors carry a huge financial burden and/or lose their homes, is just plain wrong. I wish no ill will on anyone, and am very saddened by the situation. The projected cost per home of the EU system of \$40,000 (for installation only) is an unreasonable cost for a family to bear - especially after the huge personal financial losses from the recent hurricanes.

Even if you set the consideration of the financial winner and losers aside, the facts show that EU's current application to force neighbors to buy and pay for the maintenance of an expensive and questionable sewage system should be denied by the PSC for two simple reasons:

1) EU has failed to prove a need for a sewage system.

- In fact, EU failed to perform water quality testing of the waters surrounding the island. Given that the State of Florida's own testing of Lower Lemon Bay meets Florida clean water standards, it's no surprise that EU did not perform a test: A monitored EU test would have revealed the same result, only hurting their application.

2) The vast majority of property owners are against the EU proposed system.

- This is evidenced in the number of letters sent to the commission both for and against the proposal; and also by the number of home owners who testified at the recent hearings (approximately 104 testified against the EU application, and only 9 for the EU application, three of the proponents being family members who have a conflict of interest because they would profit from the forced utility.)

Yes, some septic tanks failed in the recent hurricanes - and so did EU's entire water system.

I personally observed water gushing from broken EU water pipes after the hurricanes. I can't imagine the horror of those being central or connected sewage pipes, flooding the entire island's raw sewage onto our pristine lands and shores.

Please also keep in mind that houses failed in the floods, electricity failed, walls failed, roofs failed. Virtually everything failed in some way in the floods - except for most of the current island septic systems.

An EU island-wide sewage system with its labyrinth miles of pipes, and pumps and tanks would be highly vulnerable to future catastrophic flooding and storms, endangering the entire island and our delicate ecosystem. With individual septics, the damage from the storms is episodic, depending on the location of the individual tanks. During Helene and Milton the vast majority of individual septic tanks remained buried and in working order - while EU's extensive water system was shut down for days.

I respectfully request that the PSC deny all sewage system applications (from any entity) for our island until such time that, 1) there is a demonstrated need, and 2) the majority of the community supports such a utility.

When those two conditions are met, the next step would be to determine the correct sewage system for our vulnerable ecosystem, installed and maintained by an experienced company in the field. EU's proposed system type is responsible for 51% of Florida sewage failures. Additionally, EU has no experience in the sewage industry - our delicate barrier island ecosystem must not be gambled during an EU learning curve.

Thank you for denying EU's application at this time, thus upholding your stated mission ensuring that Floridians will receive some "essential services" - and "in a safe, reasonable, and reliable manner."

Respectfully,
Rebecca Hagelin
(Residing at 8026 Grand Avenue
Little Gasparilla Island)

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