

Christopher Cooney

From: Roy Smith <rwsyps@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 30, 2015 3:16 PM
To: Records Clerk
Cc: Darlene Koszick; Clark Gillaspie; Pat Riley; kgcm@aol.com; Office of Commissioner Brisé; Office of Commissioner Brown; Office Of Commissioner Edgar; Office of Commissioner Patronis; Office Of Commissioner Graham
Subject: Docket 150102-SU
Attachments: Docket 150102-SU.pdf

Please, find attached a response to the proposed utility rate increases proposed by Utilities Inc. of Sandalhaven. I've copied the chairman and the commissioners on this e-mail
Roy Smith

My wife and I are against the Utilities, Inc. of Sandalhaven proposed utility rate increase.

We own 8413 Placida Rd., Unit 303, Placida, FL 33946 in Cape Haze Resort.

Unfortunately, via Utilities, Inc. of Sandalhaven pro forma plant improvements, they made assumptions in regards to future development in Charlotte County. This invalid assumption was a calculated business decision that failed to materialize. A rate increase to pay for this mistake should not be placed on the backs of approximately 835 wastewater customers in this County.

Furthermore, the Florida Public Service Commission (FPSC) should never have approved the interim rate increase of 17.9%. There are no economic trends that would support this decision. This is a failure of the FPSC to protect the business and residents of Charlotte County.

According to the Bureau of Labor statistics, the annual inflation rate has not been greater than 1.7% since 2012. The current rate of inflation is ~0.2%.

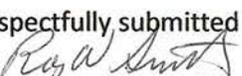
For people who are receiving Social Security income (SSI), they have had modest increases over the same period and it is anticipated - based on the current consumer price index - that they will not receive any increases in their SSI this year. It is also anticipated that Medicare premiums (currently \$104.90 each per month) may stay the same or have a modest increase. Furthermore, in our case, our Medicare Advantage Health Insurance plans will have a modest increase in premiums from \$90 to \$91 each per month.

Therefore, based on Government data and Insurance carriers projected increases, a utility rate increase is not economically justifiable. The only reason for the proposed rate increase is an "oops" in Utilities, Inc. of Sandalhaven's business plan.

The FPSC is in place to protect the consumer by controlling the rates the utility companies can charge for their services. Granting Utilities, Inc. Sandalhaven a 17.9% rate increase during an era of low inflation and slow economic and development growth is rewarding a bad business decision and does not protect the consumer. Additionally, this large of a rate increase in this area will stifle economic growth.

A reasonable rate increase would be less than 3%. The rate for a consumer using 5,000 gallons was \$62.29 the new rate should be \$64.16 and no more. More developers are starting new development projects in this area. What we don't need now is a rate increase that could stifle this growth. Utilities Inc, of Sandalhaven should concentrate their efforts on helping the area grow versus driving a stake into the heart of 835 residents.

Respectfully submitted


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