

Nickalus Holmes

From: Nickalus Holmes on behalf of Records Clerk
Sent: Monday, September 8, 2025 8:25 AM
To: 'Bill Jhll'
Cc: Consumer Contact
Subject: RE: Reject Rate Hike at Grenelefe Development

Good Morning

We will be placing your comments below in consumer correspondence in Docket No. 20250023, and forwarding them to the Office of Consumer Assistance.

Thank you,
Nick Holmes
Commission Deputy Clerk II
Office of Commission Clerk
Florida Public Service Commission
850-413-6770

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From: Bill Jhll <jhllski@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 7, 2025 7:07 PM
To: Records Clerk <CLERK@PSC.STATE.FL.US>
Cc: Bill Jhll <jhllski@hotmail.com>
Subject: Reject Rate Hike at Grenelefe Development

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Opposition to Water/Waste Rate Hikes by NC Real Estate Projects

Dear Public Service Commission,

I am writing as a concerned current homeowner of the Grenelefe community in Polk County, Florida to express deep concern regarding the proposal to impose the cost of a new water system on existing residents. **I respectfully request that the commission reject this rate hike since we would be asked to pay 5 times our current rate, in addition to a significant special assessment.**

While we recognize the importance of reliable and modern infrastructure, we firmly believe that the financial responsibility for such improvements should be borne by those who will directly benefit from the new development—namely, future homeowners purchasing properties in the expanded area. Polk County and developer Scott House agreed that House would pay the \$20million in necessary costs and repairs to cover the new development.

Equity and Fairness for Existing Residents

Preserving the Rights of Current Homeowners

The Grenelefe community has long prided itself on its stability, sense of belonging, and mutual respect among its residents. Many current homeowners have invested significant resources in their properties, including ongoing maintenance for infrastructure upkeep. Imposing additional costs for a water system designed to serve new development unfairly burdens these homeowners with expenses that do not correspond to their direct benefit.

Our residents have paid their share for the services and systems that were in place when they purchased their homes. Many have made financial decisions based on existing infrastructure, trusting that their investment would not entail future obligations unrelated to their property or needs. To shift the financial responsibility for a new water system—one intended to support increased capacity and future residents—does not honor the agreements and expectations upon which current homeowners based their purchase.

Infrastructure Expansion Should Align With Growth

Responsibility for New Development

The need for a modernized water system arises from plans to expand Grenelefe's housing inventory and attract new families to our community. This growth is a positive development, but the infrastructure required to support it should be financed through

mechanisms that equitably reflect who benefits from the improvements. It is a foundational principle in community planning that new developments cover the cost of additional infrastructure, as these enhancements directly serve the incoming residents. It was also built into plans and approved by Scott House and Polk County.

If the cost of the new water system is instead imposed on current homeowners, it creates a disincentive for existing residents to remain and undermines the trust that forms the backbone of our community. Furthermore, such an approach could discourage participation in future community initiatives, knowing that residents might be asked to subsidize developments from which they derive little or no benefit.

Long-Term Community Stability

Protecting Property Values and Financial Wellbeing

Homeowners in Grenelefe have worked diligently to maintain and enhance the value of their properties. Introducing a new financial obligation in the form of infrastructure costs risks destabilizing household budgets and could negatively affect property values, especially if the expense is significant.

In contrast, if the cost of a new water system is allocated to those purchasing homes in the new development, existing property values are protected, and the financial health of the current community is maintained. This approach also ensures that new residents contribute fairly to the services and amenities that support their needs, rather than relying on the efforts and resources of those who came before them.

Precedent and Best Practices

Learning From Other Communities

Across Florida and the nation, the standard practice for new developments is to fund infrastructure improvements through assessments, fees, or bonds levied on the new properties. This method acknowledges that new construction increases demand on community systems and that those who benefit should be responsible for the associated costs.

Many communities have successfully implemented policies requiring developers—or new homeowners—to cover their share of infrastructure enhancements, including water, sewer, and roadway expansions. These models not only ensure a fair allocation of costs but also foster goodwill between long-term residents and newcomers.

Recommendations for a Fair Solution

Funding Through New Homeowner Assessments

As Scott House requested, we also request that the cost of the new water system be incorporated into the purchase price or association fees for the new development. By doing so, the community ensures that those who benefit from the expansion pay their fair share, while current homeowners remain responsible only for the maintenance and upkeep of systems that serve their properties.

Conclusion

Preserving Community Unity

The Grenelefe community is built on a foundation of trust, fairness, and shared responsibility. We urge decision-makers to honor these values by ensuring that the cost of the new water system is not imposed on current homeowners but is instead allocated to those who will directly benefit from its implementation. By following best practices and prioritizing equity, Grenelefe can continue to grow—without compromising the wellbeing of its existing residents.

Thank you for your consideration in rejecting the rate hike on existing Grenelefe residents. We appreciate your help in protecting our public interest.

Sincerely,

Bill Johll

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