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BEFORE THE
FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In re: DOCKET NO. 20250137-WS

Application by Sunshine Water Services
Company for a Limited Proceeding to
Reflect the Mid-County Wastewater Treatment
Facility in Base Rates.

PROCEEDINGS: SERVICE HEARING

COMMISSIONERS
PARTICIPATING:

CHAIRMAN GABRIELLA PASSIDOMO SMITH
COMMISSIONER GARY F. CLARK
COMMISSIONER MIKE LA ROSA
COMMISSIONER ANA ORTEGA
COMMISSIONER BOBBY ~~PANE~~ *Payne* 3/15/26

DATE: Wednesday, March 11, 2026

TIME: Commenced: 10:00 a.m.
Concluded: 10:15 a.m.

PLACE: Betty Easley Conference Center
Room 148
4075 Esplanade Way
Tallahassee, Florida

REPORTED BY: DEBRA R. KRICK
Court Reporter and
Notary Public in and for
the State of Florida at Large
Court Reporter

PREMIER REPORTING
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA
(850) 894-0828

1 APPEARANCES:

2 VIRGINIA PONDER, ESQUIRE, Ausley McMullen Law
3 Firm, 123 S. Calhoun Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32301;
4 appearing on behalf of Sunshine Water Services Company
5 (SWSC).

6 WALT TRIERWEILER, PUBLIC COUNSEL; PATRICIA
7 CHRISTENSEN and OCTAVIO PONCE, ESQUIRE, OFFICE OF PUBLIC
8 COUNSEL, c/o The Florida Legislature, 111 West Madison
9 Street, Room 812, Tallahassee, FL 32399-1400, appearing
10 on behalf of the Citizens of the State of Florida.

11 SAAD FAROOQI and ZACHARY BLOOM, ESQUIRES, FPSC
12 General Counsel's Office, 2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard,
13 Tallahassee, FL 32399-0850, appearing on behalf of the
14 Florida Public Service Commission.

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I N D E X

WITNESS: PAGE
*JOHN DOE PUBLIC COMMENT ***

EXHIBITS

NUMBER: MARKED

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Good morning. Welcome, and
3 thank you for attending the customer service
4 hearing. This is a part of our review of Sunshine
5 Water Services Company's request for a limited rate
6 adjustment. Today's service hearing is an
7 important part of the process and is dedicated to
8 hearing from you, the customers.

9 My name is Gabriella Passidomo Smith, and it
10 is my honor to serve as Chair of the Public Service
11 Commission. With me today are my fellow
12 Commissioners, Commissioners Clark, La Rosa, Payne
13 and Ortega.

14 Staff, will you please read the notice?

15 MR. FAROOQI: Thank you, Chairman.

16 By notice issued on February 20th, 2026, this
17 time and place has been set for a customer service
18 hearing in Docket No. 20250137-SU. The purpose of
19 the service hearing is set forth more fully in the
20 notice.

21 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you.

22 At this time, we will take appearances of
23 counsel, starting with Sunshine.

24 MS. PONDER: Good morning, Commissioners.

25 Virginia Ponder with the Ausley McMullen Law Firm,

1 appearing on behalf of Sunshine Water Services
2 Company. With me this morning is Sean Twomey,
3 President of Sunshine. We are happy to be here
4 today and participate in this customer hearing.

5 Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you.

7 OPC.

8 MS. CHRISTENSEN: Good morning, Commissioners,
9 Chairwoman. Patty Christensen with the Office of
10 Public Counsel. I also would like to put in an
11 appearance for Octavio Ponce and Walt Trierweiler,
12 the Public Counsel.

13 MR. FAROOQI: You have Saad Farooqi and
14 Zachary Bloom on behalf of staff.

15 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you.

16 All right. Thank you all for participating
17 today and sharing your experience with the quality
18 of service provided by Sunshine and providing any
19 comments you may have regarding the utility's rate
20 request. While we recognize this proceeding is
21 limited to cost recovery for the upgrade of the
22 Mid-County Wastewater Treatment Facility in
23 Pinellas County, any recovery ultimately granted by
24 the Commission impacts all of Sunshine's customers,
25 therefore, it's important to us that all Sunshine's

1 customers be afforded an opportunity to
2 participate.

3 In addition to sharing your comments here, you
4 can also provide written comments or additional
5 materials by paper mail or by email. The rate case
6 overview includes instructions on how to provide
7 written comments to the Commission, and rest
8 assured that your written comments will be made
9 available to us to review.

10 If you have specific service or billing
11 issues, representatives from Sunshine are here to
12 assist you. In a bit, Mr. Twomey will go -- will
13 give you a number that you can call to reach a
14 customer service representative to have those
15 questions answered.

16 Before we hear from the customers, I will
17 allow brief opening statements by the parties.
18 We'll start with Sunshine.

19 MR. TWOMEY: Good morning, Chair and
20 Commissioners. Thank you very much for this
21 opportunity to participate in this customer hearing
22 this morning.

23 Sunshine Water Services' application for a
24 limited proceeding seeks recovery of the Mid-County
25 Wastewater Treatment Facility. This project

1 improves the ability of Sunshine to provide safe,
2 reliable and environmentally sound wastewater
3 treatment services to our customers now and into
4 the future.

5 The company's service team is available to
6 help customers with any questions, and may be
7 reached at (866)842-8432. Additionally, we have a
8 designated representative from my office also
9 available during this hearing for questions. The
10 representative may be reached at (321)972-0369.
11 And, of course, I will answer any questions you may
12 have of me this morning.

13 Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you.

15 Ms. Christensen.

16 MS. CHRISTENSEN: Good morning again. Patty
17 Christensen with the Office of Public Counsel.

18 The Office of Public Counsel represents the
19 customers of utilities in Florida, and we represent
20 Sunshine Utilities' customers in this matter. We
21 want to thank you for participating in this
22 proceeding, and we ask you to share your thoughts,
23 concerns or any issues you have with Sunshine or
24 regarding Sunshine utility with the Commissioners
25 today.

1 Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you.

3 Okay. We are now going to move to the
4 customer testimony portion. Your comments will
5 become a part of the official record and,
6 therefore, are subject to cross-examination. That
7 just means that one of the parties or a member of
8 the Commission might ask you a follow-up question
9 just to get some clarity on your comments.

10 It appears everybody who signed up on-line has
11 already been sworn in, so I don't have to do that.

12 Ms. Christensen, from OPC, will be helping
13 today. She's going to call out two names at a
14 time, so you know if you hear your name second that
15 you are on deck.

16 So with that, you are recognized, Ms.
17 Christensen.

18 MS. CHRISTENSEN: Certainly, Commissioner.

19 The first two speakers we have today are Ivan
20 Lachem and Dina Carstens. And the first one is
21 Ivan Lachem.

22 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Mr. Lachem?

23 Dina Carstens, are you on the line?

24 Well, maybe we will circle back to those two
25 if you -- what are the next two names?

1 MS. CHRISTENSEN: Certainly, Cara Morales and
2 Lena DelGenio.

3 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Ms. Morales, are you on the
4 line?

5 MS. MORALES: Yes, I am. My name is Cara, by
6 the way.

7 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Oh, Cara, you are recognized.

8 PUBLIC COMMENT

9 MS. MORALES: Okay. Great. Should I begin?

10 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yes, whenever you are ready.

11 MS. MORALES: Okay. So I did attend this
12 meeting the last time they requested the rate hike,
13 and honestly, I can tell you that I have never
14 complained about a utility service in my entire
15 almost 52 years of live, ever. So it has to be,
16 you know, significant for me to even attend one of
17 these meetings and, you know, share my thoughts.

18 So still what's happening is that I keep
19 reducing and reducing and reducing my usage, and my
20 bill keeps going up and up and up and up and up.
21 And you can see, based on my bills, they have all
22 the records of those bills, what the use is
23 compared to past years, and it's huge differences,
24 yet that price keeps going up and up and up and up,
25 and I see this with my, you know, with my other

1 utilities. I feel like, you know, the price is
2 reasonable for my usage.

3 In addition to that, the water pressure is
4 extremely low, and I have already had it checked by
5 a plumber when I first moved back in, and he said
6 it was nothing to do with what was inside of my
7 house. There wasn't a problem within the house.

8 I know that my next door neighbor also has an
9 issue with the water pressure. It's to the point
10 where when -- just for an example, if I have a
11 faucet on, or if I put a load of laundry on
12 downstairs, my upstairs faucet, if I go up to brush
13 my teeth, there is no water at all that comes out.
14 Zero. And, you know, even with, you know, going
15 into the shower, very low water pressure. It takes
16 me forever to get my hair rinsed out and my body
17 rinsed off from the soap. It's just really
18 annoying.

19 And then I keep seeing these rate hikes. Rate
20 hikes. Rate hikes. And I just think it's fishy.
21 I don't know if this is due to maybe there is tons
22 more developments coming in and it's putting more
23 pressure on the water system, but I was thinking
24 that, you know, the developers that are rich and
25 doing this, maybe they should be taking up some of

1 this price hike instead of, you know, the customers
2 that keep having to reduce and reduce and reduce
3 and, like I said, the price keeps climbing. And
4 it's really irritating, and I am not seeing it
5 anywhere else except with Sunshine.

6 When I have had -- I have lived in Florida
7 almost my whole life, and I paid Seminole County --
8 it was Seminole County Water, and never a problem.
9 Never, ever, ever. It wasn't astronomical bills.
10 The bills were expected for what my usage is, no
11 problem in any of the homes I have lived in with
12 Seminole County Water. But when I moved back into
13 this house, I believe it used to be Seminole County
14 Water many years ago, but I -- I was very upset to
15 see that Sunshine was in, and there was, like,
16 really bad smells coming from the water. It was --
17 it was just a mess.

18 And luckily, the smell is gone. Thank
19 goodness. But I am not happy with the price hike
20 suggestion, because I feel like they should be --
21 there is something fishy going on. They should be
22 using all this money that they keep, you know,
23 raising our bills, you know, they need to make it
24 work, because I think it's getting out of hand.

25 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you, Ms. Morales. I

1 appreciate your comments today.

2 MS. MORALES: Of course. I hope it does some
3 good. That's all I can say.

4 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you very much. Thank
5 you for your time.

6 MS. CHRISTENSEN: Chairwoman, did you want to
7 go to the last speaker signed up, or do you want to
8 circle back to the first?

9 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Let's see if the last one is
10 on, and then we will circle back and see if there
11 is anybody else on the line.

12 MS. CHRISTENSEN: Okay. That would be Lena
13 DelGenio.

14 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Ms. DelGenio.

15 Okay. I am going to repeat the names that we
16 called earlier to see if they joined in in the last
17 couple of minutes. Ivan Lachem, or Lachem. I
18 might be pronouncing it wrong, so I apologize.
19 Ivan?

20 Okay. Dina Carstens?

21 Okay. I don't think we have anybody else on
22 the line.

23 Well, thank you very much for -- thank you,
24 Ms. Morales for participating. And like I said
25 earlier, written comments can still be submitted to

1 us, and I am going to turn to the parties for any
2 follow-up comments that they might have.

3 Yes, Mr. Twomey.

4 MR. TWOMEY: Thanks, Chair. Just a quick
5 follow-up from yesterday's with regards to the
6 customers from Leesburg and the curb stop. There
7 was a dispute about the need to repair and replace
8 the curb stop, but upon further review, we are
9 going to have that replaced in the next two weeks.

10 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Okay.

11 MR. TWOMEY: Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you.

13 Is there any other concluding matters from
14 Commissioners? No? Okay.

15 All right. Well, I guess, yes, you can submit
16 written comments, otherwise this service hearing is
17 adjourned. Thank you very much.

18 (Proceedings concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER


STATE OF FLORIDA)
COUNTY OF LEON)

I, DEBRA KRICK, Court Reporter, do hereby
certify that the foregoing proceeding was heard at the
time and place herein stated.

IT IS FURTHER CERTIFIED that I
stenographically reported the said proceedings; that the
same has been transcribed under my direct supervision;
and that this transcript constitutes a true
transcription of my notes of said proceedings.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a relative,
employee, attorney or counsel of any of the parties, nor
am I a relative or employee of any of the parties'
attorney or counsel connected with the action, nor am I
financially interested in the action.

DATED this 23rd day of March, 2026.


DEBRA R. KRICK
NOTARY PUBLIC
COMMISSION #HH575054
EXPIRES AUGUST 13, 2028