



Interoffice Memorandum

August 25, 2023

TO: Mayor Jerry L. Demings
-AND-
County Commissioners

FROM: Ed Torres, M.S., P.E., LEED AP, Director
Utilities Department

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Ed Torres", written over a light blue rectangular background.

**SUBJECT: BCC AGENDA ITEM – Discussion Agenda
September 12, 2023, BCC Meeting
Pluris Wedgefield Water and Wastewater System Update
Contact Person: Tim Armstrong, Deputy Director
Utilities Department
407-254-9745**

The Wedgefield subdivision, located in east Orange County, was initially developed in 1962 and was built as a 20,000-acre development that would supply housing for the Kennedy Space Center. Portions of Wedgefield are served by well and septic, while additional properties (approximately 1,800) have centralized water and sewer infrastructure. Since their inception, these centralized systems have been owned and operated by private utility companies. Currently, Pluris Wedgefield LLC owns and operates these systems.

Throughout the history of these systems, Wedgefield residents have voiced their concerns regarding water quality, water aesthetics, high rates/pricing, and customer service levels. In late 2016, the Wedgefield homeowners' associations requested that Orange County consider acquiring the Pluris Wedgefield LLC water and wastewater systems. Subsequently, the Board authorized the Utilities Department to competitively solicit an RFP for securing professional consultant services to obtain an opinion of value for the systems. This work was awarded to Hartman Consultants LLC, and the first two phases of their efforts are complete. Each subsequent phase requires BCC approval prior to commencing the next phase.

Significant events have occurred over the last two years which necessitate this update. First, Pluris Wedgefield LLC was sued and subsequently settled the lawsuit for \$3.3M in April of this year. Second, staff conducted home sales research for the Wedgefield subdivision and determined that nearly 600 homes have changed ownership in the last six years. This means nearly one-third of all the 1,800 properties served by Pluris Wedgefield LLC haven't been involved in the previous Utilities Department project outreach and education or opined on their support for the system purchase. As such, the decision was made to hold additional public meetings and conduct a straw poll, which have all been completed. This update will provide the terms of the settled lawsuit, provide the results from the June 2023 straw polling of 1,768 property owners, and provide potential next steps for Board consideration.

This item is for informational purposes only; No action is required.