

## RESULTS OF THE SEWALL'S POINT SEPTIC TO SEWER SURVEY

In early April, our town government sent a survey to 706 homes in south Sewall's Point. It asked residents when they would like to connect to sewers. The survey did not ask "if." Instead, it asked "when."

The town has not yet released the results of this survey. Please read on for current status.

### Backstory

FDEP data and reports show that our lagoon is neither impaired nor polluted. Our town's contribution to nutrient load is "relatively low."

Despite overwhelming community opposition to sewers and the absence of any environmental reason to install sewers, commissioners Tompeck, Mayfield, and Fender have relentlessly pushed to connect 100% of the homes here.

At several town meetings, Commissioner Kurzman has advocated for a community vote to assess residents' views before spending their tax money on sewer studies and/or planning. The pro-sewer majority rejected his common-sense proposals. In January 2022, Mayor Tompeck said residents needed a cost estimate before we could vote on the project. The Commission then contracted with Captec to develop the estimate. Captec sub-contracted the job to Giffels-Webster and paid them \$75,000, for which the town reimbursed Captec.

The report came in around 7/31/22. Despite paying \$75,000 for the report, residents were denied the right to read it. Mayor Tompeck said it was too "long and complex." on 11/8/22, the Commission released a smaller report from Captec Engineering. On 12/13/22, the pro-sewer majority (Tompeck, Fender and Mayfield) voted to deny residents a vote on the sewer project and refused to hold a non-binding referendum.

340 homes (mostly low lying, east side) will connect to a grinder system. These homes are mapped in pink on p27 of the CaptecReport [https://legistarweb-production.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/attachment/pdf/1662931/Final\\_TOSP\\_South\\_S\\_2S\\_Residential\\_Area\\_Report\\_11.7.2022\\_draft\\_9.pdf](https://legistarweb-production.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/attachment/pdf/1662931/Final_TOSP_South_S_2S_Residential_Area_Report_11.7.2022_draft_9.pdf)

The remaining 366 homes, shown in the report as white, are scheduled for connection to a gravity system because Martin County Utilities has capped the number of grinder systems it will connect in a neighborhood. The Captec report states on multiple pages in **bold** type that gravity sewers "will require a mandatory special assessment." It also states that installation will have "significant impact to the existing pavement," landscaping, driveways, and curbing.

Despite being more suited for a gravity system due to its elevation, High Point will get grinders because "serving these homes with gravity sewer would require significant

disruption to roads within High Point due to the depth of gravity sewer across the high elevations in the middle of High Point." (p24 of Captec report.)

This means that High Point residents will not be inconvenienced by road disruptions. However, if an assessment applied, the Commission has not answered the question of how and to whom it will be applied.

A boat ride down the St Lucie River shows that our entire western shoreline is elevated. It sits atop the Atlantic Coastal Ridge.

Why were the other homes with high elevation not given the same courtesy as the homes in High Point?

### **Analysis of the Survey Methodology**

Once the sewer project was well underway, the town sent out a survey to 706 homes.

- It has a clear pro-sewer bias
- The only way to register opposition to sewers is to write a comment (for which not much space was allocated) or to ignore the survey
- There is no mention of what type of system(s) would be constructed
- There is no mention of project cost
- There is no mention of connection costs to residents
- Multiple checkmarks for the same home were counted as multiple votes. One home checked all 4 boxes; it was counted as 4 "yes" votes
- "TBD comments" were counted as "yes"
- "Maybe" comments were counted as "yes"

### **The results: No Interest**

- 446 surveys were not returned. lack of response suggests lack of interest. (63.17%)
- 64 homes said "no" via write-in comments, or by returning empty envelopes or blank surveys. (9.07%)
- This totaled to 510 surveys or 72.24% of the homes in south Sewall's Point

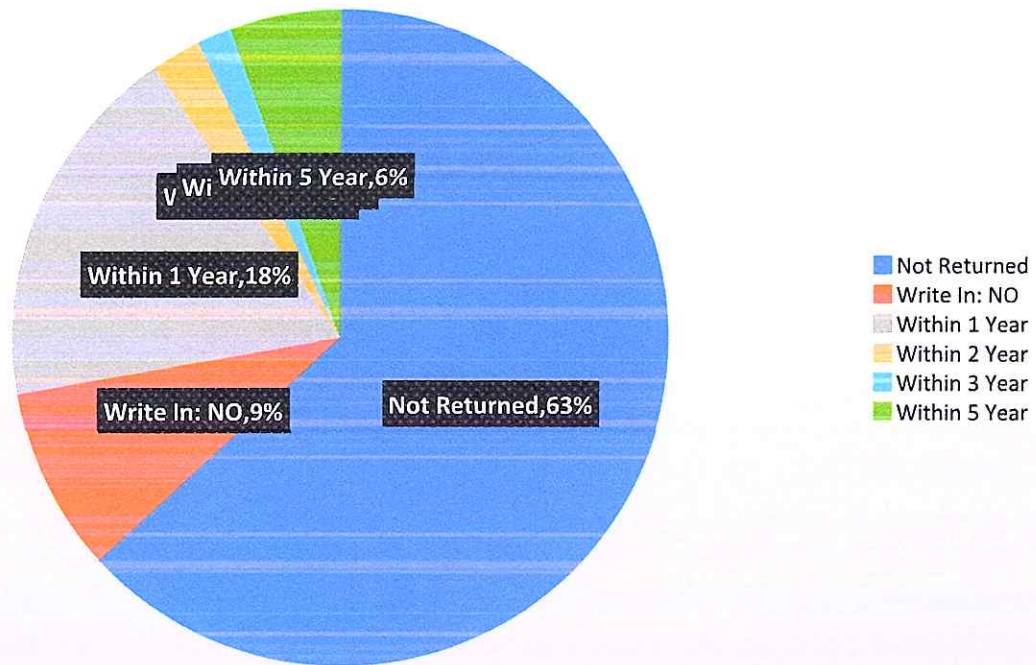
### **The Results: Interested; (adjusted downward to correct town errors)**

- 128 homes indicated they would connect within 1 year (18.13%)
- 17 homes indicated they would connect within 2 years (2.41%)
- 12 homes indicated they would connect within 3 years (1.70%)
- 39 homes indicated they would connect within 5 years (5.52%)
- This totaled to 196 surveys or 27.76 of the homes here

These survey results (72% "no" vs 28% "yes") are strongly consistent with the results of a door-to-door survey taken in 2017, which found that 79% of South Sewall's Point residents were opposed to sewers.



## Septic System Survey Results



The information above is correct as of May 14, 2024. A request was made to TSP for clarification of the double counting of duplicate checked boxes, how "TBD" responses were counted and how "Maybe" responses were counted. The request was not answered as of this publication.

In summary, This unnecessary and unpopular project is a reality because 3 commissioners disregarded residents' voices. They did not adhere to their sworn oath to represent the residents of Sewall's Point. Instead, it appears that they voted to advance their own personal agendas.