

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS REPORT AUGUST 21, 2020

City Manager

- **Attraction Signage** – Pursuant to several communications among representatives of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Vice Mayor Matthews and City Manager, City Council has reconfirmed the desire to make the following changes to I-75 South signage on the exit ramp at Exit 164: Punta Gorda, Arcadia, Peace River Wildlife Center, Military Heritage Museum, Vietnam Memorial Wall. FDOT is willing to place all five attractions on a sign. In addition, City Council has requested the current sign designating the Military Heritage Museum and Vietnam Memorial Wall on I-75 South near Exit 167 be relocated to a location between the two aforementioned exits.

- **Attention Contractors** – Given the possibility of a storm affecting our area early next week, the City of Punta Gorda Building Division is requesting the following to be addressed on all jobsites:

- 1) If dumpsters are ½ full or more, make arrangements to have them emptied prior to the Monday the 24th. If this is not possible, please ensure that they are tarped by Friday evening.
- 2) Ensure that all silt screens are securely in place.
- 3) Keep all swales clear.
- 4) If roofing tiles or shingles are being or have been delivered, but not yet installed, be prepared to bundle them if conditions warrant this week.



Building inspectors will be out today to ensure jobsites are secure. Whether we are impacted or not by adverse weather, the residents around these sites will be concerned and we should have the sites secured for the weekend. We will continue to monitor this storm and provide further instructions as required, however, we request that you also monitor the storm and take any actions as needed.

- **Halloween in the Historic District** – As most Punta Gorda residents know Halloween is celebrated in grand form in Punta Gorda. Thousands of visitors from all over Southwest Florida flock to Downtown Punta Gorda and the Historic District for the annual celebration. It is by all definitions a large gathering. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidance states the higher the level of community transmission is in the area that the gathering is held, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spreading at the event. While we don't know exactly what the rate of community transmission will be at the end of October we do know that over 56% of our residents are over the age of 65. The CDC warns that among adults, risk increases with COVID-19 steadily as you age. Those simple facts make it in the best interest of our residents to not host the traditional Halloween celebration. This doesn't mean that you can't take your children trick or treating in your own neighborhood. If you choose to do this please follow all the typical Halloween protocols for safety and COVID-19 precautions.

- **Tree Lighting Celebration** – The annual Tree Lighting celebration is hosted by a group of community volunteers. Given the advice of public health professionals and the sensitivity of current economic conditions in relation to fundraising, the committee made the decision not to host the event in the same manner as previous years. The Tree Lighting committee has generously agreed to purchase lights and other decorations as a gift to the City. City Council agreed to fund the electricity and electrical infrastructure necessary to support the new additions to the holiday decorations. The committee continues to explore virtual options and other celebratory activities to take part in as well. Stay tuned for further updates.
- **Aug. 26 City Council Meeting** – City Council will meet on Aug. 26 at 9:00 a.m. in Historic City Hall. Items of interest include:
 - Comprehensive Plan 2040 update
 - Parks and Recreation Master Plan update
 - Utility Rate Study and Septic to Sewer Implementation Plan update.
 - Historic District overnight parking restriction proposal.

Next month, the Council will meet on Sep. 9 and 23. The meetings are also available live at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-Qo-k4PpXWo4IIQah6_Kqw.

Upcoming Events

- Fishermen’s Village Events – available at <https://www.fishville.com/events/>
- Military Heritage Museum Events – available at <https://freedomisntfree.org/upcoming-events/>.
- Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce Events – available at <https://puntagordachamber.com/calendar-events/>
- Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce Events – available at <https://business.charlottecountychamber.org/events>

Lot Mowing Program

- The City has completed mowing the following areas:
 - Colony Point (Colony Point Dr., W. Marion Ave., Socorro Dr., and Coronado Dr.).
 - PGI (Bal Harbor Blvd, Deborah Drive, Ryan Blvd, Suzi Street, and Casey Key Drive).
 - PGI (Magdalena Drive, Via Vento, W Henry Street, Appian Drive, and Columbian Drive).
 - PGI Bird Section (Almar Drive, Albatross drive, Whippoowill Blvd, and Turtle Dove Blvd).
 - Burnt Store Isles (Monaco Dr, Tripoli Blvd, Madrid Blvd, and Macedonia Dr).

Urban Design

- **Comprehensive Plan Update** – City staff has been working with the consultant on the City of Punta Gorda 2040 Comprehensive Plan update and will be providing an update to the [Planning Commission](#) on Aug. 24 at 2 p.m. This update will amend the Future Land Use, Coastal Management, Housing, Transportation and Historic Elements. These amendments are intended to enact strategic visions as directed by City Council to enable future Land Development Regulation changes including implementation of Form Based Codes in key areas. Modifications within the Future Land Use Element will be critical to enabling appropriate infill and redevelopment within the areas of the City identified by the public and City Council as most in need of attention. The initial draft of these changes includes the establishment of new mixed use land use categories and overlays. These new categories and overlays are designed to ensure that development has residential densities that are calibrated with traditional residential patterns found within the City. Additionally these new categories and overlays will permit an array of commercial, industrial, and institutional uses in targeted areas consistent with the vision embodied within Plan Punta Gorda – 2019 Citywide Master Plan and historic patterns of development.

- **Punta Gorda’s Place to Play: Parks and Recreation Master Plan General Survey** – Don’t forget to participate in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan General Survey. Let us know how Punta Gorda’s Place to Play can improve! It is a 30 question survey that takes approximately nine minutes to complete. Your input will be used to shape the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Let your voice be heard and take the survey here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LTXP5X6>. For more information, please visit <http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/visitors/punta-gorda-pathways/park-recreation-master-plan>.



- **The Planning Corner – Comprehensive Plan Elements Update Goals, Objectives and Policies (GOPs)** – The Comprehensive Plan is to provide the overall policy framework from which zoning and other land development regulations (or code) are developed and implemented consistent with the state statutory standards. The heart of the Comprehensive Plan are the Goals, Objectives and Policies (GOPs) within each Element. They provide the necessary focus for long-range policies, action programs and identify the City’s general direction and its desire future. The GOPs establish meaningful, predictable standards providing the overall policy framework from which the City can be developed.

The Planning Corner



- **Goals** are general statements of desired outcomes of the community. While often broadly written, goals should be stated specifically enough so that it is possible to assess whether progress has been made in achieving them.
- **Objectives** are more specific and are a subset of goals, providing measurable strategies. Objectives are the specific purposes that advance action toward the goal.
- **Policies** are “operational” actions that the City will undertake to meet the goals and objectives.

Public Works

Canal Maintenance

- **Seawall Replacement Projects** - The seawall replacement contractor has completed 29 seawall replacement projects in PGI and there are six projects under construction. Six seawall replacement projects have been completed in BSI and the work program for this fiscal year has been completed. A seawall replacement project is not considered complete until the sod has been placed.
 - Crews filled depressions at 24 locations.
 - Crews performed six seawall cap and seam patches (61’ linear ft.).

Engineering

- **City wide Drainage Swale regrading** – During the week of Aug. 17, work began near the intersection of Ryan Blvd. and Crooked Island Dr. To date the contractor has completed work at 795 properties totaling 603,000 square feet of grading and sodding.
- **Cooper Street Recreation Center** – Work began on the ADA improvements near the tennis court, pavilion and basketball courts. The project should be completed by Aug. 28, weather permitting. Pedestrians and cyclists are restricted from the work area during construction.

- **FDOT - US 41 Carmalita Street to Marion Ave. within City of Punta Gorda** - The Florida Department of Transportation's contractor, Highway Safety Devices, continues work to install new signals on US 41 from Carmalita St. to Marion Ave. The construction will take place Monday through Friday during daytime and nighttime/overnight hours, weather permitting. Lane closures may occur during daytime hours from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For complete details, contact information and map <http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/government/public-works/engineering>.
- **Harborwalk (Gilchrist Gazebo to Berry St.)** - Irrigation and electrical work continues. Grade, site work and sidewalk base prep is near completion. The last colored concrete placement is complete. There are a few locations of grey concrete walk to be placed. Sod deliveries and placement continues. Landscape trees and bushes are 98% complete. Pedestrians and cyclists are restricted from the work area during construction. The project is anticipated to be complete by the end of Sept. 2020.



Police Department

- **Advanced Call Taking** – Our Communications Center, which handles all 911 calls in the City and dispatches for both the police department and fire department, has fully implemented advanced call taking through the PowerPhone software system. This software, which fully integrates with our current Computer Aided Dispatch program will allow dispatchers to process calls for service more quickly and consistently.
- **9PM Routine** – Locking car doors at night could have prevented nearly all vehicle burglaries in the City of Punta Gorda in the past year. Most criminals are only interested in easy access and will not force entry into a vehicle unless valuables are clearly visible. Follow the **9PM Routine** and check to make sure your valuables have been removed from your vehicles and your vehicle doors are locked each night before bed to help prevent crime in our city!
- **Police Officer Testing** – The Punta Gorda Police Dept. is currently accepting applications for the position of Police Officer. Testing will be held on Jan. 11 with oral board interviews scheduled on Jan. 12 and Jan. 13.
- **Public Safety Dispatcher Testing** – The Punta Gorda Police Department is currently accepting applications for the position of Public Safety Dispatcher. Testing will be held on Sept. 21.
- **Internship Program** – The police department is currently accepting internship applications for the Spring Semester of 2021. Our internship program is open to college students and high school seniors interested in gaining educational experience in law enforcement, criminal justice, and small government administration. To apply for any of these positions or for more information please visit www.pgdjobs.com (941) 575-5571 or employeedevelopment@pgorda.us for additional information or to have an application package sent.



Fire Department

- **Flooding** – Floods are the most common natural disaster in the United States. Failing to evacuate flooded areas or entering flood waters can lead to injury or death. If you are under a flood warning, find safe shelter right away. Learn more at <https://www.ready.gov/floods>.
 - Do not walk, swim or drive through flood waters. **Turn Around, Don't Drown!**
 - Just six inches of moving water can knock you down, and one foot of moving water can sweep your vehicle away.
 - Stay off of bridges over fast-moving water.
 - Depending on the type of flooding:
 - Evacuate if told to do so.
 - Move to higher ground or a higher floor.
 - Stay where you are.



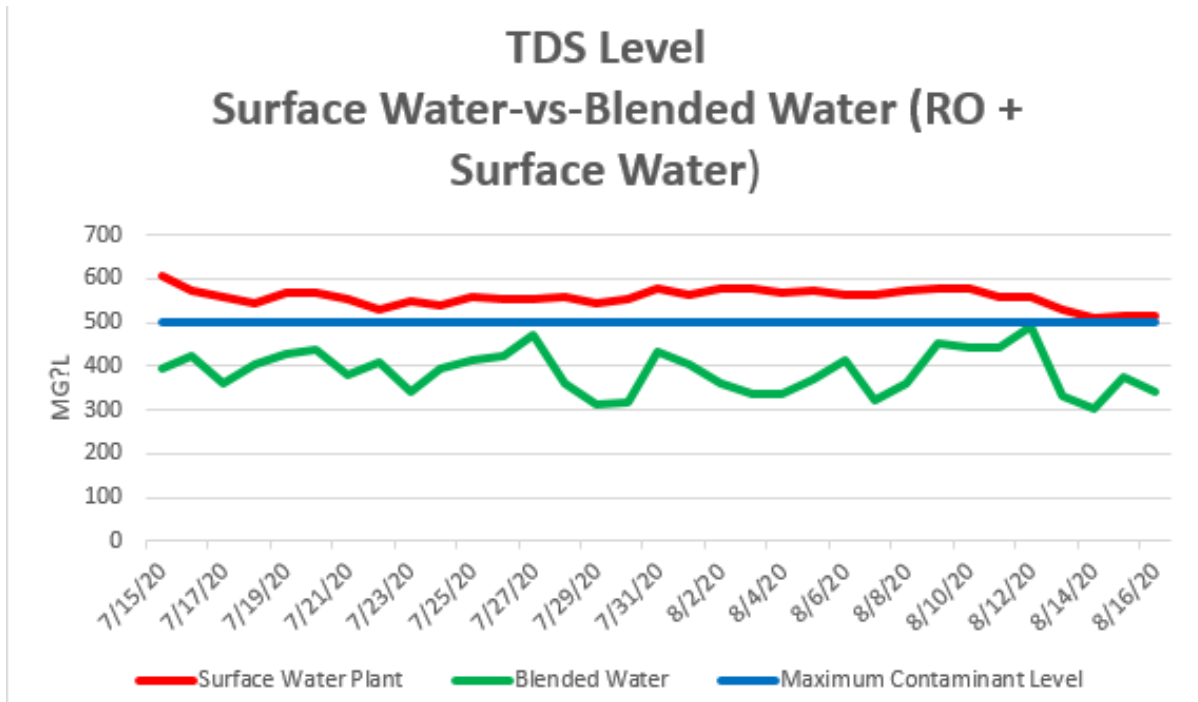
Utilities Department

Utilities Administration

- The City flushes fire hydrants throughout the service area when required for the following:
 - Routine maintenance and testing
 - Adhere to strict regulations from regulatory agencies.
 - Help find weaknesses in the water system
 - Improvement of water quality
 - Taste and Odor issues
 - Water Sampling

The time involved in flushing can vary from a few minutes to several hours depending on the circumstances.

- **Ground Water RO Update**



500 is the maximum contaminant level allowable by law.

Water Treatment Plant Operations

- 49.2 MG delivered to the distribution system with a 7.0 MG daily average
- Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority Emergency Interconnect – Sending water at a rate of two million gallons per day, started July 13.
- Rainfall in Aug. 2019 8.26” Aug. 2.00”
- Hardness is a measurement of calcium and magnesium ions naturally occurring in the raw water. Current Condition “hard” – Grains of Hardness 9 ppm – Total hardness 154 ppm
- TDS for Aug. 20 – Current 288 ppm, Low 214 ppm, High 427 ppm, 12 Year Avg. 327 ppm
- Reservoir Aug. 20 – Current 5.24’, Record Low 5.18’, Record High 6.34’, 55 Year Avg. 5.55’

City Clerk

Business Tax Receipt Renewal Notices

On Aug. 3, the City Clerk’s Office emailed Business Tax Receipt Renewal Notices to all City businesses for the upcoming 2020/2021 Fiscal Year. Payment can be made using a credit over the phone by calling (941) 575-3369 or by mailing a check to 326 West Marion Avenue, Punta Gorda FL 33950. Deadline for payment submission is Sept. 30. If your business is currently active but did not receive a Renewal Notice, please contact the City Clerk’s office at pturner@cityofpuntafordafl.us.

Current Board and Committee Vacancies ([Volunteer Appointment Information Form](#))

- **Board of Zoning Appeals** – (Two regular and one alternate) Meets the 4th Tuesday at 4 p.m. in City Council Chambers. City residency required. Seven member board with two alternate members. Three year terms - maximum of three terms. Financial disclosure required. Makes recommendations to City Council on variances to City Code.

New Businesses

- All persons, firms or corporations engaging in business or occupation within the City of Punta Gorda are required to obtain a Local Business Tax (LBT) Receipt in accordance with Chapter 12 of the Punta Gorda City Code. As part of our effort to promote economic development and vitality in our area, we offer the following list of new or transferred business within our community this week:
 - A Better Solution of Punta Gorda, 265 E Marion Avenue, Suite 116
 - Delta Hearing, 252 East Olympia Avenue
 - Dunkin Donuts 2517 Tamiami Trail