

**CITY OF PUNTA GORDA, FLORIDA  
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
FRIDAY, AUGUST 21, 2020, 3:30 P.M.**

**COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT:** Carey, Cummings, Matthews, Miller, Prafke

**CITY EMPLOYEES PRESENT:** Kristin Simeone, Finance; Rick Keeney, Public Works; Charles Pavlos, Utilities; Phil Wickstrom, Human Resources; Joan LeBeau, Urban Design; Pamela Davis, Police; Ray Briggs, Fire; City Attorney Levin; City Manager Kunik; City Clerk Smith

**Mayor Prafke** called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**An Emergency Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Punta Gorda, Florida, declaring a State of Local Emergency and providing for emergency governmental operations related to Tropical Storm Laura if deemed necessary and in conjunction with Charlotte County; providing for termination of emergency powers, providing for conflicts; and providing an effective date.**

City Manager Kunik read the ordinance by title.

Fire Chief Ray Briggs provided an update on Tropical Storm Laura, noting the storm had continued to track west; however, the forecast was subject to change. He indicated staff would continue to monitor and prepare for the storm as appropriate.

Ms. Melissa Reichert, Communications Manager, stated information would be provided to the public over social media, formal media, the City's website and Alert Punta Gorda.

Mr. Brad Schuette, IT Manager, stated full backups would be completed by Monday, noting further action would depend on how the storm progressed.

Ms. Joan LeBeau, Urban Design Manager, stated the Building Division had advised contractors to clean up their sites to limit debris, adding pickups were scheduled to address overloaded bins on job sites. She stated staff's vehicles were fueled and ready and staff was on standby.

**Councilmember Matthews** confirmed staff would ensure political candidates were informed their signs should be removed until the storm passed. She then questioned who should be contacted regarding construction sites which had not been secured.

Ms. LeBeau replied the Building Division, adding she would be available to address such issues over the weekend.

Ms. Kristin Simeone, Finance Director, reported City staff had been directed to key payroll early so that process could be completed on time. She noted a project code had been set up in case tracking time or materials became necessary.

Ms. Anne Heinen, Procurement Manager, reported all emergency contracts were up to date and hardcopies were prepared in the event electricity was lost, adding disaster recovery contract vendors were on standby in case their services were needed.

Mr. Rick Keeney, Public Works Director, stated the Public Works Division began preparing their vehicles and equipment, adding sandbags would be available over the weekend if needed. He indicated staff had discussed a plan of action in case the first-in team needed to be mobilized. He stated staff and contractors working on City projects were directed to secure their job sites. He noted one seawall repair site was not completely backfilled but would be secured, adding one barge in the canal system would be secured. He stated sanitation would run as normal on August 22, 2020. He then noted shutters would not be installed at this time.

Mr. Phil Wickstrom, Human Resources Manager, stated printouts of employee records had been prepared and arrangements had been made for laundry and food services for staff in the event of a catastrophic storm.

Mr. Holden Gibbs, Fire Department Operations Chief, stated Fire Department staff had met with healthcare facilities to ensure plans were in place if evacuation became necessary. He reported Fire Department staff had plans in place for their families and had completed preparation for the storm. He indicated the Fire Department, Public Works and Police Department had met for pre- and post-storm planning.

Mr. Jason Ciaschini, Police Department Support Services Commander, stated the Police Department were following their standard operating procedures for hurricanes and staff members were preparing their family plans. He reviewed the Police Department's preparation activities, noting this was the first storm event since the new radio system had been implemented and would provide an opportunity for testing.

Mr. Chuck Pavlos, Interim Utilities Director, stated the Utilities Department's generators, vehicles and equipment were prepared. He noted the plants were functioning well and could be opened to house staff if necessary.

**Councilmember Carey** questioned if there was a certain wind intensity which would necessitate removal of the sound barrier from the pickleball courts.

Mr. Keeney replied the sound barrier would be removed if a hurricane or strong tropical storm were anticipated to hit the City. He stated once the sound barrier was removed, it would likely remain down until hurricane season ended.

Ms. LeBeau confirmed the Charlotte County Supervisor of Elections would notify candidates their signs should be secured or removed for the storm. She added residents could email their concerns to the Building Division or Code Compliance Division over the weekend.

City Manager Kunik stated City vehicles had not yet been relocated to the second and third floor of the Herald Court Centre parking garage. He noted the emergency ordinance would sunset after seven days, explaining same could be extended at the next the City Council meeting on August 26, 2020, if needed.

Councilmember Matthews **MOVED** approval of the ordinance, **SECONDED** by Councilmember Cummings.

**MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.**

**COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS**

**Mayor Prafke** and **Councilmembers** expressed appreciation to staff for their time and effort, requesting everyone monitor the situation.

**CITIZENS COMMENTS**

None.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:01 p.m.

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Mayor

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City Clerk