

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS REPORT SEPTEMBER 25, 2020

City Manager

It has been a wonderful 15 and ½ years as your City Manager and, as such, I would like to take this time to offer some final thoughts. First and foremost, we have tried to instill in our organizational philosophy and governing style a blend of genuine personal humility and fierce resolve with intense professional will. We have tried to produce the best long-term results with calm determination, modesty and ethical standards that will hopefully lay the groundwork and guide our organization to be even more successful in future years to come.

Most important is the customer service culture employed by our employees through our delivery of services. When you call a city department, you get a live person. When you need to have your smoke detector battery replaced, a fire crew will come to your home and perform the work. Every week, a police volunteer calls customers who have been in contact with a police officer to gauge the officer's professionalism and whether the person was satisfied with the service provided. If you have an idea for a future development, you can come in and meet with staff from various departments in a design studio format to evaluate the opportunity and identify obstacles, if any, to overcome. If you need a building inspection, the service will be handled with a one-day or less turnaround. If trash or horticulture is left at the curb, our sanitation workers will ensure nothing remains on their route. If you want your cul-de-sac beautified, city staff will work with the property owners to evaluate the landscaping plan and get you started with irrigation for the owners to take over maintenance thereafter. And the list goes on and on. It is this can do attitude that permeates throughout the city workforce.

It is that human touch and personal service provided by our employees and volunteers that make Punta Gorda such a desirable place to live. I move to the next phase of my life confident that this City will maintain a culture of community engagement, teamwork, partnerships, transparency, respect customer service and stewardship. That the pride in Punta Gorda's history and well-preserved historical areas and natural resources will continue. With confidence that local businesses will be supported and promoted. Knowing that the City of Punta Gorda government will continue to be open, fair, transparent, equitable, ethical and accountable to our residents. That what we do as public employees is essential to the functioning of our community. That our citizens will be treated with respect and civility, enabling City staff to answer any question and respond to any challenge that may come its way.

If one was to judge the progress we have made over the years, it would be whether we are leaving the community a little better than one found it. I'm pretty confident that I have lived a rich life in Punta Gorda. And confident you will give our new City Manager Greg Murray the support you gave me in making the power of partnerships a reality.

- **City Council Meeting** – City Council highlights this week include:

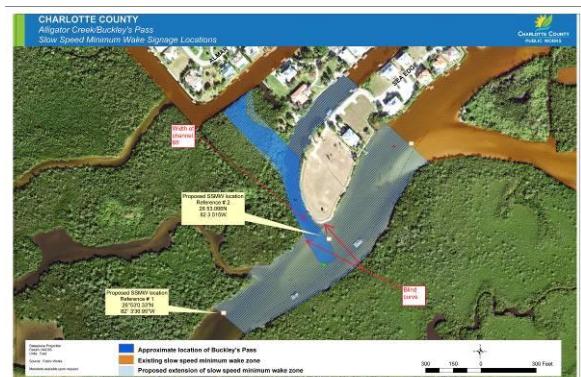
- ✓ Presentation of an official shovel for City Manager Kunik’s post retirement career and heartfelt appreciation of all of Howard’s contributions over the past 15 ½ years.
- ✓ The face covering ordinance will remain in effect for the next 30 days. **Please**



remember that there are a number of exemptions to the ordinance and those who are not wearing a face covering likely qualify for one of the following exemptions: Children under the age of two (2) years; Persons observing social distancing; Persons for whom a face covering would cause impairment due to an existing health condition or for whom compliance with the mandatory requirements imposed herein would conflict with the Americans with Disabilities Act; Persons communicating with an individual who is hearing impaired who needs to see the mouth of the person speaking to facilitate communication; Persons while working in a business or profession who do not have interactions with other persons; Persons while working in a business or profession where use of a face covering would prevent them from performing the duties of the business or profession; Persons exercising, while maintaining social distancing; Persons while eating or drinking, provided they are maintaining social distancing. It is the intent of this provision that a face covering must be worn while traversing an Indoor Public Place for ingress and egress, when walking to and from restroom facilities, and while standing when unable to maintain social distancing; Public safety, fire and other life safety or health care personnel, as their personal protective equipment requirements will be governed by their respective agencies or employers; Persons who are engaged in obtaining a service involving the nose or face for which temporary removal of a face covering is necessary to perform the service; Persons engaged in an activity where some other form of face covering is required pursuant to the regulations of the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration. For clarification: face shields are appropriate face coverings under this ordinance. The full ordinance can be accessed at <https://bit.ly/3hY427W>.

- ✓ Council approved moving forward with drafting of an ordinance and installation of a new traffic sign on Cooper Street (north) at E. McKenzie Street. The purpose of this sign is to regulate the traffic flow to alleviate congestion due to traffic that backs up during the morning drop off and afternoon pickup times. Additionally this will improve safety for motorists and pedestrians walking to school. The ordinance will prohibit a left turn from Cooper Street north onto E. McKenzie Street from 7:45 a.m. to 8:15 a.m. (student drop off), and 2:45 p.m. to 3:15 p.m. (student pickup).

- **Alligator Creek Proposed Slow Speed/Minimum Wake Zone** – The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission received a complete application from Charlotte County requesting approval of a draft ordinance to establish a Slow Speed Minimum Wake boating-restricted area within Alligator Creek. The public may provide comment at waterway.management@myfwc.com.



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 in the following areas:
 - PGI (Magdalina Drive, Via Vento, W Henry Street, Appian Drive, and Columbian Drive).
 - PGI Bird Section (Almar Drive, Albatross drive, Whippoorwill Blvd, and Turtle Dove Blvd).
 - Downtown and Historic District (W. Marion Ave., W. Olympia Ave., Shreve St., and Harvey St.)
 - East Side and the area behind Dunkin Donuts (E. Marion Ave, E Olympia Ave, Narranja St, E Henry St, and Cooper St).
 - Burnt Store Isles (Monaco Dr, Tripoli Blvd, Madrid Blvd, and Macedonia Dr).
 - Burnt Store Meadows (Areas of Tamiami Tr., N. Blue Sage, S. Blue Sage, Royal Poinciana, and Gold Tree).

Urban Design

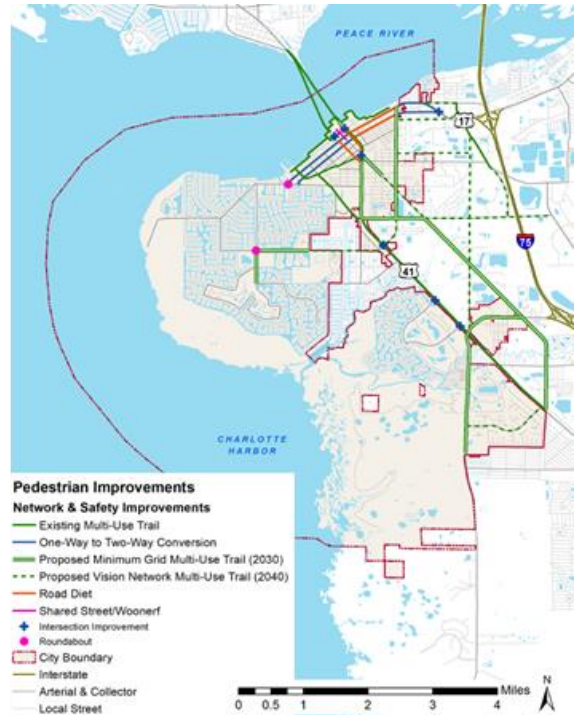
- **The Planning Corner Comprehensive Plan Elements Update –**
During the [Aug. 26 City Council meeting](#), City staff provided an update to the Council on the progress of the Comprehensive Plan project. A brief overview was given of major items for revision in each of the following five elements:
 - **Future Land Use** - Broadly sets development expectations
 - **Coastal Management** - Water dependent uses and environmental resilience
 - **Housing** – Population demographics and housing needs
 - **Transportation** - Safer streets for everyone
 - **Historic** - Preservation of built legacy
 -



Next week the first drafts of the Coastal Management, Housing, and Historic Elements will be published online to the [Plan Punta Gorda](#) and [City of Punta Gorda](#) websites. This publication will provide the opportunity for the public to read the proposed documents and provide direct input in advance of the presentation of these drafts to Planning Commission and City Council.

Over the last few weeks, explanations of the Coastal Management, Housing, and Historic Elements were featured in the Planning Corner. This week’s feature is the [Transportation Element](#), which provides data and analysis regarding current needs within the transportation system as well as projecting future travel demands. The Transportation Element purpose is to develop a true multimodal system built around a strong street network that safely and efficiently accommodates walking, bicycling, and in future public transportation as well as automotive traffic. With its small-town feel, geographic size, and high level of civic, institutional, and commercial amenities, Punta Gorda provides an ideal platform for focusing on modes of transport beyond the single-occupant automobile. While the current Transportation Element recognizes these opportunities, it does not delve too far into specific projects and programs that may move the City closer to its goals.

The update Transportation Element draws on the work from the [2019 Transportation Buildout Study](#) and the [Citywide Master Plan](#) to provide more concrete details for how the City can achieve its goals. The Transportation Element also acknowledges the valuable contributions of the City's partners at the [Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO](#) and the [Florida Department of Transportation](#) in providing planning support and transportation project funding vital to ensuring that the City's street network is safe and efficient for all who use it.



Public Works

Canal Maintenance

- **FY 2020/2021 Seawall Replacement Program** – The list of properties scheduled to have their seawalls replaced in fiscal year 2020/2021 has been posted to the Canal Maintenance Website. Notices have already been sent to residents that will have worked performed on their seawalls starting in Oct. 2020. Residents can expect to receive a notice in the mail approximately six weeks prior to construction. It is highly recommended that property owners contact the contractor to discuss how to prepare the property for construction. Contact information is provided in the notice.
 - As we begin the next Seawall Replacement Work Program, property owners may be curious about the process and what to expect. There is a series of informational videos on the Public Works - Canal Maintenance website <http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/government/public-works/canal-maintenance/canal-maintenance-video-series> that will inform you “How to prepare your Property for Seawall Replacement”; “Seawall Replacement Process”; and “Manufacturing of Seawall Panels”. If you have any questions or concerns please contact Cathy Miller, Canal Maintenance Supervisor at 941-575-5050.
 - Crews filled depressions at 18 locations.
 - Crews performed eight seawall cap and seam patches (68’ linear ft.).
 - Staff removed two pilings from the canal.

Right-of-Way

- **Mangrove Trimming** – The City contractor trimmed and maintained the mangroves along Linear Pathway from Gill Street to Fishermen’s Village.

Engineering

- **ADA Improvements City Hall Annex** – The second and third floor men’s restrooms and the third floor break room demolition are complete with construction occurring. This work is tentatively scheduled to complete by mid-November.
- **Harborwalk (Gilchrist Gazebo to Berry St.)** - Electrical wiring continues for the decorative lights and bollards. Coordination with FPL is occurring to schedule the meter installations to energize the decorative lights and bollards. The remainder of Royal palms and mulch have been received and installed. Sod placement continues. Miscellaneous concrete work is to be scheduled. A Substantial Completion walk-through is scheduled Sept. 30. 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>.
- **Shreve St. MURT Lighting** - Staff continues coordination efforts with concrete, electrical and directional drilling contractors for this project between History Park and the Airport/Pompano intersection. The temporary driveway access to the garden plots has been removed by City staff.
- **Sullivan Street Renovation to Historic Bricks** - Milling of asphalt and removal of unsuitable material is complete. Placement, grading and rolling of crushed concrete base rock continues. Demolition of select existing curb is occurring with concrete curb replacement pending. The Sullivan Street renovation will require this section to be closed to all traffic until November 2020. Travelers are requested to use extreme caution while workers are present in the right of way and allow additional time for travel while work is performed. Temporary delays are to be anticipated. For information please contact Linda Sposito, Sr. Project Manager, Public Works Department at (941) 575-5060 between the business hours of 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Monday thru Friday or <http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/Home/Components/News/News/3231/17>.

Police Department

- **Vehicle Burglaries** – Did you know that nearly every vehicle burglary that occurred in Punta Gorda in the last year involved an unlocked vehicle? Most criminals that come into our city to commit vehicle burglaries ignore locked vehicles. The best way you can avoid becoming a victim is to make sure your vehicle doors are locked and valuables are removed from your vehicle.
- **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. Currently we are only accepting applications from candidates who are currently certified, Equivalency of Training (EOT) eligible, or law enforcement academy students.
- **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 Jan. 19.

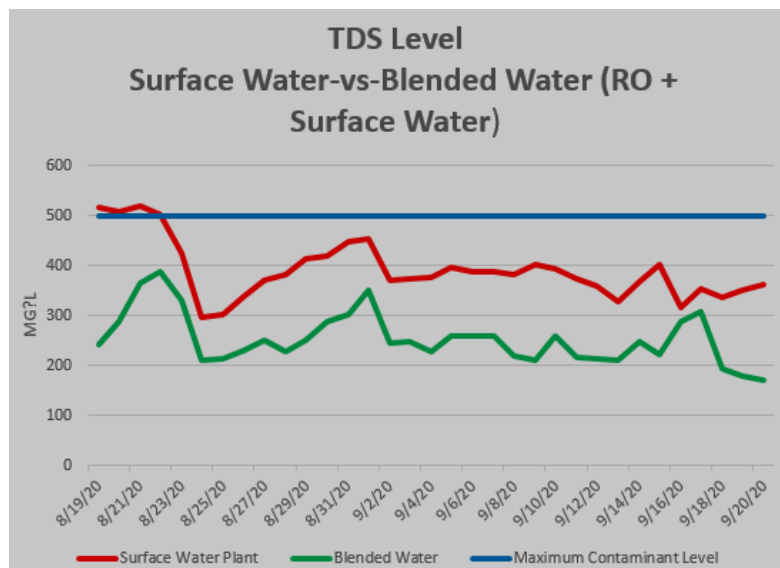
- **Internship Program** – The police department is currently accepting internship applications for the Spring Semester of 2021. Our internship program is open to college students and high school seniors interested in gaining educational experience in law enforcement, criminal justice, and small government 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

- **Emergency Systems Operation Training (ESO)** – Fire Department personnel just completed the last part of ESO training. This new reporting system software program will help the department track statistics of not only calls and types of calls but also individual treatment and assessment statistics to better understand the needs of the community and to assist in creating medical scenario based trainings to ensure the highest level of service. The ESO software is a reporting system that captures both Fire and EMS data and also includes pre-fire plan integration that will allow building drawings to be pulled up while en route or on scene of fire alarms and will identify key factors such as alarm panel locations, hydrants and contact info. The current system in use is over 10 years old.

Utilities Department

Ground Water RO Update – Maximum total dissolved solids (TDS) allowable is 500 without a waiver.



Water Treatment Plant Operations

- 45 MG delivered to the distribution system with a 6.4 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 Sept. 2019 0.08” Sept. 2020 6.10”
- Hardness is a measurement of calcium and magnesium ions naturally occurring in the raw water. Current Condition “slightly hard” – Grains of Hardness 3 ppm – Total hardness 51 ppm
- TDS for Sept. 24 – Current 178 ppm, Low 178 ppm, High 395 ppm, 12 Year Avg. 300 ppm
- Reservoir Sept. 24 – Current 5.87’, Record Low 5.06’, Record High 6.95’, 55 Year Avg. 5.58’

City Clerk

- **Business Tax Receipt Renewal Deadline Next Week** – Sept. 30 is the last day payment can be made to renew the Local Business Tax Receipt for the upcoming 2020/2021 Fiscal Year without a late penalty. Payment can be made over the phone with a credit card by calling (941) 575-3369 or by mailing a check to 326 West Marion Avenue, Punta Gorda FL 33950. If your business is currently active but did not receive a Renewal Notice, please contact the City Clerk’s office at pturner@cityofpuntagordafl.us. If your business is no longer operating in the City, please let us know so that we can inactivate your tax receipt

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

- **Board of Zoning Appeals** – (Two alternates) 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.
- **Building Board** – (One alternate) Meets the 4th Tuesday at 9 a.m. in City Council Chambers – City residency not required. Seven member board with two alternate members. Three year terms – maximum of three terms. Four members must be involved with the building industry and three members must be consumer advocates who are not, nor ever have been, involved with building industry. Makes recommendations to City Council on the minimum qualifying requirements for obtaining Certificates of Competency in the various construction trades and the fees for same. Periodically reviews and holds public hearings on all building, electrical, plumbing, housing, gas, fire prevention and other related codes. Reviews enforcement of all codes relating to construction standards and acts as condemnation board in matters of violation of minimum standards. Hears alleged complaints against contractors.
- **General Employees Pension Board** – Meets quarterly and as called in Council Chambers. Five members – two City residents, two general employees and one at-large as appointed by the Board. Four year terms – no maximum. Financial disclosure required. Charged with management of the General Employees’ Pension Fund.

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:
 - ✓ Glass In Motion, 525 East Olympia Avenue, #5
 - ✓ Kevin Moore, 820 Bal Harbor Blvd.
 - ✓ Florida Urology Physicians PA, 100 Madrid Blvd
 - ✓ Gulf Coast Urology, 713 E Marion Avenue, Suite 135
 - ✓ Quigley Eye Specialists, 2529 Tamiami Trail
 - ✓ Theodore Yaremo MD PA, 150 W McKenzie Street