

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS REPORT NOVEMBER 6, 2020

City Manager

- **Veteran's Day Holiday** – The government offices of the City of Punta Gorda will be closed on Nov. 11, for the Veteran's Day holiday. Residents and Commercial customers will notice **NO CHANGE** in the collection of trash, yard waste or curbside recycling.
- **Council Election and Reorganization** – Councilmembers Jaha Cummings (District 1), Debby Carey (District 2) and Lynne Matthews (District 4) were sworn in to office. Lynne Matthews was unanimously elected Mayor and Debby Carey was unanimously elected Vice-Mayor by the Council.



- **Facial Covering Ordinance** – City Council adopted a resolution to extend the facial covering ordinance until Apr. 30, 2021. In response to the public health emergency within the City of Punta Gorda resulting from the spread of COVID-19 face coverings are required to be worn indoors. Additionally, all persons preparing or serving food or beverages for public consumption shall be required to wear a face covering. There are a few exceptions that can be found at <http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/i-want-to/advanced-components/covid-19-microsite>.
- **What guides the city's long term decision making processes?** – A few weeks ago I discussed the strategic plan for the city and what happens at a tactical level to accomplish the goals of the city and further the mission and vision with which we are charged. Another aspect of planning for the future of the city is the Comprehensive Plan. State legislation requires local governments to create comprehensive plans and update them at least every seven years to ensure that they are current with changing State regulations. The Punta Gorda City Council has contracted with Dover Kohl and Partners to work with staff to provide this Comprehensive Plan update.



This firm also worked with the city to create the Citywide Master Plan that was created through a series of charrettes and technical meetings with over 1,000 hands-on touch points from residents. The plan produced five main ideas; make Downtown a vibrant and attractive place, celebrate Charlotte Harbor and welcome more boating, diversify housing types, fully embrace walking and biking, and encourage strategic commercial development. While the decision to accept the document as informational was unanimous, Council has been clear that they were not in agreement with all aspects of the Plan. One aspect though that was agreed upon was the desire to update areas of the city with a form based code and create architectural guidelines.

The first step to implementation of the form based codes is the modification/update of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The comprehensive plan acts as a policy guide for planners, public officials, developers, and citizens for achieving the community's goals. Working with city staff, representatives from Dover Kohl have created a draft update to the City's Comprehensive Plan. The approach is similar to that of 2019 Plan Punta Gorda Citywide Master Plan giving residents and stakeholders the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the proposed draft changes to the current Comprehensive Plan. The Coastal Management, Future Land Use, Housing, Historic and Transportation Elements are now available for review along with a comment form and can be found at <http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/government/comprehensive-plan/plan-punta-gorda-comprehensive-plan-update>. The changes are presented in strikethrough version for easy comparison to the existing plan.

A presentation of the draft elements comprising this Plan amendment was presented to the Council by Dover Kohl this week. Due to the level of detail included, this presentation will be informational only, and followed by staff presentation. The draft will then be brought back to Council for further discussion and changes, so that a final discussion and adoption can occur at a subsequent meeting. The complexity of the topic warrants full and thorough discussion, with time for contemplation of the context before a decision is even requested.

Once the Comprehensive Plan amendments are adopted and transmitted to State agencies for review and approvals, Dover, Kohl and Partners will begin work updating the city's land development code which must be consistent with the newly adopted Comprehensive Plan. During this part of the process, the community will be invited to participate in a series of public workshops to help develop a new code framework, review initial proposed land development regulations, and learn how the code will shape development. At the heart of Punta Gorda is the willingness of residents to engage in creating the community they want to see in the future, while supporting the Council in their decision-making process in the present.

These two initiatives constitute some of the biggest planning decisions that the Council must make, requiring enormous time commitments to review and understand the material. We encourage your involvement. Working together, we will deliver on the vision to continue to preserve our small-town character while promoting diversity, economic development and sustainability.

Upcoming Events

- Nov. 7, Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association Arts and Craft Fair, 2001 Shreve St. For additional information visit, <https://pgica.org/>.
- Nov. 11 multiple events for Veteran's Day being held at the Military Heritage Museum visit <https://freedomisntfree.org/upcoming-events/>.

- Nov. 14 and 14, MY Promotions Arts and Craft Show, City Marketplace Property. For additional information, visit www.mypromotions.com
- Nov. 21 Virtual Kid's Fishing Clinic hosted by Coastal and Heartland National Estuary Partnership. The clinic will take place from 9:30 a.m. until 10:30 a.m. via Zoom. For more information visit <https://myemail.constantcontact.com/CHNEP-November-Volunteer-Events.html?soid=1120876307235&aid=VtDJXXYAMG4>
- Nov. 28 and 29, Sullivan Street Craft Fair, Sullivan Street downtown Punta Gorda. For additional information, visit www.puntagordachamber.com

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 Dr., Ryan Blvd., Suzi St., and Casey Key Dr.).

Urban Design

- **The Planning Corner – Comprehensive Plan Elements Update** – At the Nov. 4 City Council meeting the City's consultants Dover Kohl and Partners made a presentation regarding the ongoing project to update the City of Punta Gorda [Comprehensive Plan](#). A video of this presentation is available on the City's [YouTube Channel](#). The presentation highlights the major changes to the Coastal Management, Housing, Historic, Transportation and Future Land Use Elements. This presentation represents the kick-off of a public comment period for the proposed changes. For more information on the proposed changes or to provide comment please visit any of the following links: Plan Punta Gorda Comprehensive Plan update website <https://www.puntagordamasterplan.com/engage> City of Punta Gorda website: <http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/government/comprehensive-plan/plan-punta-gorda-comprehensive-plan-update> or email City planning staff directly: urbandesign@cityofpuntagordafl.com. City staff looks forward to hearing from you about the future of our great community.



- **Bicycling and Pedestrian Safety Reminder** – Punta Gorda is a wonderful year-round place to ride a bicycle, but safety comes first. In Florida, the bicycle is legally defined as a vehicle and the bicyclist is a driver. Bicyclists have the same rights on the roadways and must obey the same traffic laws as the drivers of other vehicles. Bicyclists are also permitted to ride on the sidewalk. If you find yourself sharing a path with a bicyclist or pedestrian, be sure to adhere to the following shared path etiquette:

- Keep right
- Bicycles ride slowly
- Stop at driveways and intersections
- Audibly warn when passing
- Keep pets under control
- Listen for audible warning from passing joggers and bicycles
- Groups or couples give way to passers of oncoming traffic.



For more information on bicycle and pedestrian safety, please visit <http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/visitors/bicycling>.

- **Parks and Recreation Master Plan General Survey – Executive Summary** – The Parks and Recreation Master Plan (PRMP) General Survey Executive Summary is now complete. To view the information from the survey, click <http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/home/showdocument?id=11621>. For more information and updates on Punta Gorda’s Place to Play, please visit <http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/visitors/punta-gorda-pathways/park-recreation-master-plan>.

Public Works

Administration

- **Citizens’ Academy** - Applications are now being accepted for the upcoming Citizens Academy 2021 Session <http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/i-want-to/register-for/citizens-academy>. This academy is a free, eight session course of interactive classes designed to provide insight into City government and to develop future leaders through well informed and civically engaged residents. The Academy is limited to 15 participants who reside or own a business within the City of Punta Gorda. The deadline for registration is 4:30 p.m. on Dec. 28. For more information, please contact Public Works Senior Executive Assistant, Jennifer Daumann at (941) 575-5002 or jdaumann@cityofpuntagordafl.com.



Canal Maintenance

- **Dredging Ponce Inlet** – The week of Nov. 16 thru Nov. 30 (weather and equipment operation permitting), the Ponce De Leon Inlet is scheduled to be dredged. The contractor will off load dredge material at the vacant lot at the southerly end of Colony Point; then the material will be transported to another location by dump trucks. For information on this project, please contact Canal Maintenance Supervisor, Cathy Miller, Punta Gorda Public Works Department at (941) 575-5050 between the business hours of 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Mon. thru Fri. For more information [Ponce Inlet Dredging Press Release](#).
- **Seawall Replacement Projects** – The seawall replacement contractor has two projects under construction in Punta Gorda Isles. There are 26 seawall replacement projects scheduled for Punta Gorda Isles. There are no seawall replacement projects currently underway in Burnt Store Isles. Four seawall replacement projects are scheduled for Burnt Store Isles later this fiscal year.
- **Mangrove Trimming on Ponce Inlet** – The contractor has completed the mangrove trimming at Sancho Panza Point and Ponce De Leon Inlet.
 - Crews filled depressions at eight locations.
 - Crews removed one large board from the canal.
 - Crews manufactured 40 (10’ ft. each) and six (12.5’ ft. each) seawall panels.
 - Crews performed one seawall cap patch (2’ linear feet).

Engineering

- **Americans with Disabilities Act Improvements City Hall Annex** – Work continues to complete the construction in the third floor break room. The countertop is ordered with installation pending. The third floor restroom construction continues with rough-in inspection scheduled prior to dry wall and tile installation. The project is scheduled to be completed the first week in Dec.



- **Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) - US 41 Carmalita Street to Marion Ave. within City of Punta Gorda** – FDOT 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>.
- **Gilchrist Park Pier Deck Replacement** – The Purchase Order has been issued to the contractor. A pre-construction date is to be determined upon delivery schedule.
- **Harborwalk (Gilchrist Gazebo to Berry St.)** – Construction is complete. Pending is the receipt of the final close out documents.
- **Laisley Park Americans with Disabilities Act Ramp** – Core drilling of ramp locations for railing posts commenced. Railing installation should be substantially completed by the week of Nov. 9.
- **Sullivan Street Renovation to Historic Bricks** – A substantial completion walkthrough is complete. A preliminary punchlist was developed to complete the project and open the roadway on or before Nov. 16. For details on the Sullivan Street project, visit the City website. <http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/Home/Components/News/News/3231/17>.
- **Ponce De Leon Park Seawall Repairs** - Construction has commenced, inspection and identification of locations requiring tie-back, panel gap and spall repairs was completed this week. Rip rap removal and storage is underway at the northern end of the project. During construction the beach area as well as the seawall between the beach and fishing pier will be closed. The contractor will accommodate the public by leaving sections of the beach area open when possible. Construction is anticipated to be completed in Mar. 2021.



Parks and Grounds

- **Christmas Wreaths and Tree Installation:** The areas outlined in red (*see picture*) at the intersection of Marion Avenue and Taylor Street will be blocked off to allow access for City crews and equipment to install the Christmas tree through the week of Dec. 4. Parking spaces along Marion Ave. and Taylor St. will be opened up in the evening and on the weekends.
- **Gilchrist Park Playground Resurfacing** – The playground resurfacing work is complete. The playground is re-opened to the Public.



Police Department

- **Officer Training** – This week officers participated in our in-service training class, which included duty to intervene, de-escalation, use-of-force, and mental health crisis scenario training utilizing our Ti Training Simulator. This technology allows officers to conduct scenario based training, which include simulated, but realistic firearms and weapons. The officers interact with life sized video projections and instructors have the ability to change the outcome of the scenario based on the officer's reactions.
- **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.pgjobs.com (941) 575-5571 or employeedevelopment@pgorda.us for additional information or to have an application package sent.



Fire Department

- **Tropical Depression Eta** – Keep an eye on the weather this weekend. Eta still has the potential to affect weather in the Punta Gorda area. Here are a few tips to assist with getting ready for a storm event:
 - Keep trees around your home trimmed well before a storm to prevent damage from broken branches
 - Have the proper materials in advance to board up your windows to protect them from flying debris
 - Bring loose outdoor items such as patio furniture inside. They can blow around and cause damage to homes.
 - Secure all doors on your property. Remember that the garage door is usually the most vulnerable.
 - Move your car inside a garage or to another secure location.

5 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT STRENGTHENING YOUR HOME

- 1** Keep trees around your home trimmed well before a storm to prevent damage from broken branches
- 2** Have the proper materials in advance to board up your windows to protect them from flying debris.
- 3** Bring loose outdoor items such as patio furniture inside. They can blow around and cause damage to homes.
- 4** Secure all doors on your property. Remember that the garage door is usually the most vulnerable.
- 5** Move your car inside a garage or to another secure location.

For more Hurricane Safety Information, visit weather.gov/hurricanesafety

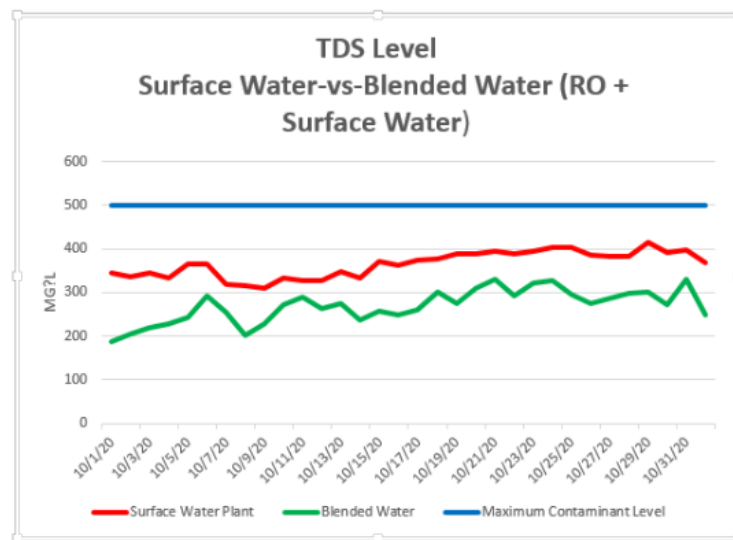
Utilities Department

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** – Maximum total dissolved solids (TDS) allowable is 500



Water Treatment Plant Operations

- 40.2 MG delivered to the distribution system with a 5.7 MG daily average
- Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority Emergency Interconnect – Receiving 450 gallons per minute from the new Interconnect (Phase 1 Pipeline). Sending 550 gallons per minute from the tank on 17 (Phase 1A Pipeline).
- Rainfall in Oct. 2019 5.02” Oct. 2020 1.10”
- Hardness is a measurement of calcium and magnesium ions naturally occurring in the raw water. Current Condition “moderately hard” – Grains of Hardness 4 ppm – Total hardness 74 ppm
- TDS for Nov. 5 – Current 182 ppm, Low 182 ppm, High 498 ppm, 12 Year Avg. 376 ppm
- Reservoir Nov. 5 – Current 5.35’, Record Low 5.02’, Record High 5.59’, 55 Year Avg. 5.22’

City Clerk

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

- **Board of Zoning Appeals** – (Two alternates) Meets the fourth 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.

- **General Employees Pension Board** – Meets quarterly and as called. 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.
- **Building Board** – (One alternate) Meets the fourth 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.
- **Utility Advisory Board** – Meets the fourth Monday at 9 a.m. in City Council Chambers. Must be City resident. Seven-member board. Three-year terms – maximum of two terms. Makes recommendations to City Council with regard to, but not limited to, revisions to the utility construction standards, alleged billing discrepancies and review of utility specifications.

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:
 - Copperfish Books, 212 West Virginia Avenue, #112
 - Keenan Vacation Rental, 440 Capri Isles Court
 - Punta Gorda Dental Care, 428 East Olympia Avenue
 - Sellstate Titanium Realty, 208 Tamiami Trail
 - Trabue Woods Economic Development, 418 East Virginia Avenue