



Florida's Harborside Hometown

Weekly Highlights Report January 22, 2021

City Manager

- **City Manager Column** – Congratulations are in order for two important areas of city government. The Finance Department and the Punta Gorda Police Department both earned recognitions significant to the city and our residents over the past couple of weeks.

The Finance Department under the leadership of Finance Director Kristin Simeone has earned the Government Finance Officers Association's (GFOA) Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 2019 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in government accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by government and its management. The CAFR was judged by an impartial panel to meet the high standards of the program, which includes demonstrating a constructive "spirit of full disclosure" to clearly communicate its financial story and motivate potential users and user groups to read the CAFR. This Department also routinely receives the GFOA Distinguished Budget Award for excellence in budget detail presented to management and available to the public.



In the Punta Gorda Police Department (PGPD), the city is fortunate to have the 2020 Command Officer of the Year serving as the Captain. Captain Jason Ciaschini earned this statewide recognition from the Florida Police Chiefs Association. From revamping the recruitment, testing, hiring and promotional processes to implementing the new body-worn camera system Captain Ciaschini makes the lives of residents and visitors in Punta Gorda safer. In addition, he has implemented Chief Davis's directive to bring the lifesaving drug, Naloxone (Narcan) to the department and oversaw the development of a successful grant application to fund the purchase and the training of all sworn personnel to administer the drug in the event of an overdose. Within two weeks of issuance, officers administered Narcan twice saving two individuals from an overdose death.

As the commander of Support Services Division, Captain Ciaschini oversees the Administrative Services Section (Records, Accreditation/Grants, and Employee Development), the Communications Section, Evidence and Property, the budget, and the fleet. Chief Davis requested that the PGPD training be enhanced to include topics beyond what is required from the state for certified officers, and for the training program to be reconfigured to increase training

hours by 50%. Captain Ciaschini took the Chief's vision for training and increased it by 90% (from 40 hours to 76 hours) in 2019. In addition to the standard high liability courses, he implemented training on various topics to include: Integrating Communications, Assessment, and Tactics (De-escalation), Human Trafficking, Interacting with Persons with Autism, Employee Health and Wellness, Scenario-based Decision Making, Active Shooter, Ballistic Shield, Criminal Investigations, Defensive Tactics, Interaction with Transgender Individuals, Robbery Response, Specialty Vehicle Operations, Specialty Impact Munitions, Narcan Administration, Hearing Impairment Interactions, Interdiction Investigations, and Tactical Casualty Care. Additionally, all sworn police officers and one dispatcher at the PGPD are now trained in Crisis Intervention. Captain Ciaschini leads by example in delivering on the PGPD's mission to provide the highest level of professional police services.

These are just two stories of the efforts of people that are part of the city team and with which I am honored to work. This caliber of effort moves us toward achieving the vision of the City of Punta Gorda to continue to preserve our small-town character while promoting diversity, economic development and sustainability.

- **Upcoming Street Closure** – On Jan. 25 Taylor Road from Marion Avenue to approximately half to Herald Court will be closed the Sunloft building management was approved for a road closure to utilize a crane to remove the A/C unit from the roof and place a new one. They anticipate that this could be completed in four hours or could possibly take all day depending on how smooth it goes. The Sunloft Management will be notifying adjacent businesses so they can notify their customers. All deliveries are directed to utilize Sullivan that day.
- **Code and Public Works Communication** – Code is not receiving permit requests, code complaints or park rental requests through the website at this time. Public Works is also experiencing similar issues with their online processes. IT is aware of this and has contacted the responsible party with software support at Granicus, our provider, but it has not been resolved at this time. This has been an issue for approximately 2-3 weeks, so if you have not received a response from staff please contact pgcode@CityofPuntaGordaFL.com or call (941) 575-3352. For Public Works requests please contact jdaumann@CityofPuntaGordaFl.com or call (941) 575-5050. Text My Gov can also be used to report issues in the City by texting hi to (941) 347-0747 and following the prompts.

Upcoming Events

- Taylor St. For additional information, visit <https://www.charlotteharborecc.com/events>
- Jan. 23, Rumble on the River Boxing Event, Marketplace property, 115 Tamiami Tr. For additional information, visit <http://www.smuggersevents.com/>
- Jan. 23, Church of the Good Shepherd 125th Anniversary Celebration, 401 W Henry St. For additional information, visit <https://goodshepherdpuntagorda.dioswfl.org/>
- Jan. 30, Smuggler's Chili, Beer & Blues Festival, Marketplace property, 115 Tamiami Tr. For additional information, visit <http://www.smuggersevents.com/>
- Feb. 6, Punta Gorda Chamber City Wide Garage Sale, 1133 Bal Harbor Blvd. For additional information, visit <https://puntagordachamber.com/calendar-events/>
- Feb. 6 and 7, The Invitational at Punta Gorda Arts & Craft Show, Gilchrist Park, 400 W Retta Esplanade. For additional information, visit <https://daniellesblueribbonevents.com/>
- Feb. 7, Local Ladies Social Network Vendor Craft Fair, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St. For additional information visit, <https://www.ilsnevents.com/>
- Feb. 12-14, Big Boy Toyz Expo, Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center, 75 Taylor St. For additional information, visit <https://www.charlotteharborecc.com/events>

Code

- **Pet Waste Cleanup** – Staff would like to remind our residents and visitors to be good and responsible neighbors and canine owners and pick up after your canine from any street, sidewalk, swale, bike path, park area or any other public property or private property not owned by the canine owner/handler. The City’s entire Pooper Scooper Code can be viewed at <http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/home/showpublisheddocument?id=1409>, Sec. 5-2. Pooper Scooper.
- **Signs in the Residential Zoning Districts** – At the Jan. 6 City Council meeting, Council reaffirmed that there will be no enforcement of the sign regulations for signs on residential lots in the Right of Way or otherwise until such time as the sign ordinance is amended and adopted. This includes political signs/flags.

Urban Design

- **Joint meeting of Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)** – City staff will attend the annual joint board meeting the Sarasota/Manatee MPO and the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO at the Bradenton Area Convention Center on Jan. 25. This annual Joint MPO Board meeting is an important component of the regional transportation coordination vital to Southwest Florida’s continued development and economic stability. The Joint MPO Board meeting will be preceded by the regular Sarasota/Manatee MPO Board meeting. The meeting is open to the Public; however, due to attendance limits the Sarasota/Manatee MPO strongly encourages virtual meeting attendance.
 - Virtual attendance requires registration, for more information please visit: <https://publicinput.com/Q742> (second meeting on this page)
 - Agenda items include (<https://www.mympo.org/files/173/2021/1229/MPOs-Joint-Meeting-Packet-01-25-2021.pdf>):
 - Multi-Use Corridors of Regional Economic Significance (M-CORES) update
 - I-75 Corridor Study
 - I-75 Interchanges
 - SUNTrails
- **The Planning Corner – The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan Projects** – At the [Jan. 20 City Council Meeting](#) Urban Design Division provided an update to City Council highlighting the City’s action and progress for the previous year (FY 2020) and the projects for the upcoming year (FY 2021). Some of the approved projects include:
 - Add interior Wayfinding Signage to Fire Station II, Fire Station III, and Cooper St. Recreational Center to enhance the City’s branding while providing a consistent message when navigating City buildings.
 - Begin the design process for accessibility improvements in Nature Park by resurfacing the nature trail entrances. Engineering and permitting will be necessary to replace the trail’s platform bridge, observation deck, fishing pier and site furnishings.
 - Begin the design, engineering and construction of a pedestrian sidewalk along W William Street to connect the missing sidewalk to the adjacent shopping plaza.



To view the presentation or to see the complete list of projects can be viewed on the [City’s Website](#) and to learn more about the City’s accessibility efforts visit [Accessibility | City of Punta Gorda, FL \(punta-gorda.fl.us\)](#)

Public Works

Canal Maintenance

- **Seawall Assessment** –City staff continues the Annual Seawall Assessment during low tide periods until Feb. City staff will be inspecting seawalls from the waterside while traversing canals in a boat. Residents may see city staff in a boat close to their seawalls while inspecting the condition of seawalls.
- **Seawall Replacement Projects** – The seawall replacement contractor has five projects under construction and three projects completed in Punta Gorda Isles. There are 26 seawall replacement projects scheduled for Punta Gorda Isles. There are three seawall replacement projects currently under construction and one project completed in Burnt Store Isles. Four seawall replacement projects are scheduled for Burnt Store Isles this fiscal year. A seawall project is not considered complete until the sod has been placed.
 - Crews filled depressions at one location.
 - Crews manufactured 40 (10' ft. each) seawall panels.
 - Crews removed one large palm frond from the canal.
 - Crews patched 57' linear feet of seawall cap.

Engineering

- **City Wide Drainage Swale Regrading** – Work on the swale regrading program with JRL Underground Inc. has commenced in Burnt Store Isles subdivision.
- **Gilchrist Park Pier Deck Replacement** – Construction is well underway with the old decking removed and new composite decking being installed. Work is scheduled to be completed on or before Feb. 12 (weather permitting).
- **Palm Avenue and Chasteen Street Intersection to McGregor Street Road Closure** - The street bricks have been palletized, wrapped and staged for future placement. Utility staff and equipment are excavating, removing old water and sewer lines, and replacing them with new lines and backfilling. Well point dewatering is also occurring. The Bid Solicitation for contract work consist of; some curb replacements, ADA ramps, crushed concrete road base, asphalt, sand and re-placement of historic street bricks. The entire project is anticipated through April (weather permitting). For information [Engineering | City of Punta Gorda, FL \(punta-gorda.fl.us\)](http://punta-gorda.fl.us) or contact Linda Sposito, Sr. Project Manager, Public Works Department at (941)575-5050 between the business hours of 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Mon. thru Fri.



- **Paving Program Street Resurfacing** – The contractor has completed 4.25 miles of mill and resurface work. Permanent striping is scheduled to occur after some pavement cure time. Work is anticipated to complete by Jan. 22 (weather and equipment operations permitting). For complete list of streets [Paving Program January 2021](#). For information contact Linda Sposito, Sr. Project Manager, City of Punta Gorda Public Works Department at (941)575-5060 between the business hours of 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Mon. thru Fri.

- **Ponce De Leon Park Seawall Repairs** – Construction of the sidewalk between the fishing pier and the South end of the beach parking lot and the beach is anticipated to be complete during the week of Feb. 5. The beach parking lot will re-open for use during the week of Feb. 8.

Parks and Grounds

- **Christmas Wreaths and Tree Removal** – City crews have begun removing the decorations. Crews will begin removal of the Christmas tree and decorations in the downtown area the week of Feb. 5. 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 remove Christmas tree. Parking spaces along Marion Avenue and Taylor Street will be opened up in the evening and on the weekends. Please take special care when driving in the City to be aware of Public Works employees removing holiday decorations.



Police

- **Officer Training** – As part of our January in-service training academy officers received training regarding the use of force, Taser, subject control spray, and Integrating Communications, Assessment, and Tactics (ICAT). ICAT was developed by the Police Executive Research Forum focused on providing officers with the tools, skills, and options they needed to successfully defuse a range of critical incidents.
- **Dispatcher Testing Process** – The police department conducted Public Safety Dispatcher testing this week. The next testing will be held on Apr. 26. See below for details or visit www.pgpgjobs.com.
- **Police Officer Testing** – The police department is currently accepting applications for the position of Police Officer. Testing will be held on Apr. 19 with oral board interviews scheduled on Apr. 20 and Apr. 21. Currently we are only accepting applications from candidates who are currently certified, Equivalency of Training (EOT) eligible, current law enforcement academy students, or those with prior experience in a law enforcement related field.
- **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 Apr. 26.
- **Internship Program** – The police department is currently accepting internship applications for the summer and fall Semesters 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

- Punta Gorda Fire Department (PGFD) Hosts Cardiopulmonary**

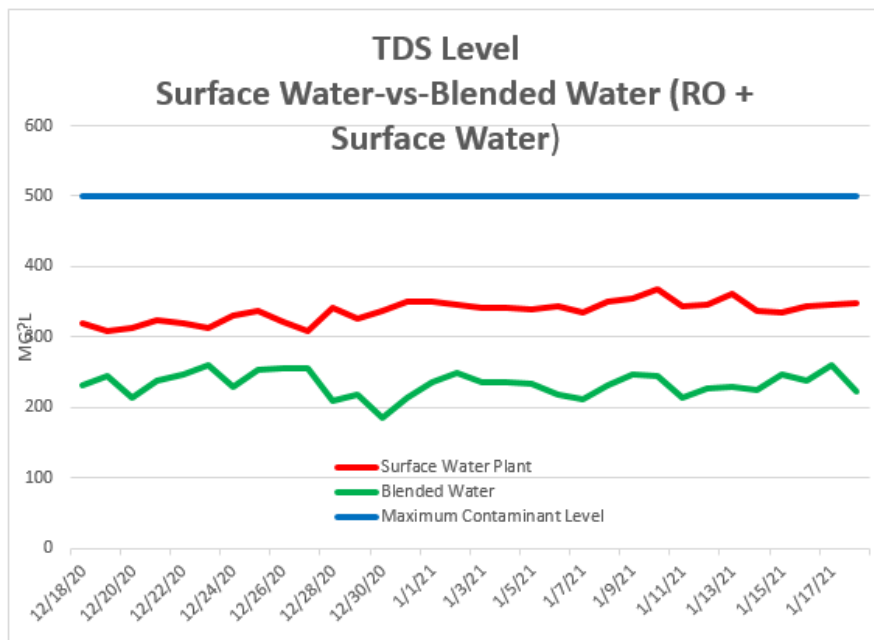
Resuscitation (CPR) Training – The PGRD hosted a hands only CPR course at Mondovi Bay Villas which included how to identify who needs CPR, how to administer CPR, as well as automatic external defibrillator (AED) use and intervention of choking victims. Stop the Bleed is also included in the course which focuses on how to stop major bleeding until emergency medical services (EMS) arrives which is critical for potential



boating injuries where EMS could be delayed due to victim being off shore or far away from land. The department has been hosting this course for approximately eight years now and it has been very successful in our community. Residents who are interested in receiving CPR/AED training can contact the PGFD administrative office at (941) 575-5529.

Utilities

- Ground Water RO Update** – Maximum total dissolved solids (TDS) allowable is 500



Water Treatment Plant Operations

- 48.5 MG delivered to the distribution system with a 6.9 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 Jan. 2020 .90” Jan. 2021 0.01”
- Hardness is a measurement of calcium and magnesium ions naturally occurring in the raw water. Current Condition “moderately hard” – Grains of Hardness 7 ppm – Total hardness 120 ppm
- TDS for Jan. 21– Current 210 ppm, Low 210 ppm, High 682 ppm, 12 Year Avg. 465 ppm
- Reservoir Jan. 21 – Current 5.13’, Record Low 4.89’, Record High 5.82’, 55 Year Avg. 5.18’

Water Distribution

- **Fire Hydrants** – Utilities personnel completed maintenance on 25 hydrants this week. There are 1254 fire hydrants in the city’s water service area and each one is inspected and tested annually. This includes extensive vegetation control around hydrants and flushing for water quality complaints.

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.
- **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.
- **Code Enforcement Board** – Meets the fourth Wednesday at 9:00 a.m. in City Council Chambers. Must be City resident. Seven member board with two alternate members. Three year terms, maximum of three terms. Hears and decides alleged violations of the City Code.
- **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.
- **Punta Gorda Isles Canal Advisory Committee** – Meets the third Monday at 1:30 p.m. in City Council Chambers. Must be a resident of Punta Gorda Isles. Seven member board. Three year terms – maximum of three terms. Makes recommendations to City Council on effective maintenance of existing canals, waterways and navigable channels within the district, together with the maintenance and reconstruction of seawalls. Holds public hearings and makes final decision on petitions for special permit to the provisions of Section 6-6(c) of the City Code.

- **Historic Preservation Advisory Board** – (Two regular) Meets the fourth Thursday at 9:00 a.m. in City Council Chambers. Must be City resident. Seven member board with two alternate members. Two members must reside within the Historic District. Three year terms, maximum of three terms. Identifies for the City Council historically significant structures and sites that should be considered for designation as a “Local Historic Landmark” or be nominated for listing on the Florida Master Site File and the National Register of Historic Places. Makes recommendations of the policies for the protection of historically significant structures and sites. Makes recommendations to staff with regard to certificates of appropriateness for any demolition, variance, sign or relocation of structures. Promotes public awareness of historic preservation.

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:
 - Southeastern Counseling and Consultation, 223 Taylor Street, #123
 - Specialized Pressure Washing, 27 Sabal Drive