

Weekly Highlights Report March 26, 2021

City Manager

- **City Manager Column** – According to the FBI's Uniform Crime Report statistics, the City of Punta Gorda continuously has a higher safety ranking than our surrounding cities. While our police department plays a large role in keeping residents safe, we also need the help of our residents to keep Punta Gorda from being a target for criminals. It is no secret that our residents enjoy a high quality of life in the city. This high quality of life also makes us attractive to criminals. Last week areas of the city experienced a rash of vehicle break-ins and a stolen vehicle. The stolen vehicle has been recovered and suspects are believed to be from the St. Petersburg area. The vehicles that were burglarized had one thing in common. They were all unlocked.



The Punta Gorda Police Department (PGPD) does extensive outreach and education with our residents and their number one request is for residents to lock their vehicle doors. You may have even seen the 9 p.m. Lock Your Doors messaging from the department. I too ask our residents to please lock your vehicle doors. Remind your neighbors to lock their car doors too. Let's send the message that Punta Gorda is not an easy target for crime. When faced with a locked door these types of criminals generally move on. Past experience has shown they only target those vehicles with unlocked doors, many times walking down the street flipping door handles and simply taking advantage of opportunity because the door was not locked.

Our PGPD Marine Patrol recently conducted night operations last week. Two warnings and two citations for anchor light violations were issued. Marine Patrol is also dealing with two at problem vessels in the harbor near Gilchrist Park. One is considered a derelict vessel and is going through the investigative process for removal. The other has potential to reach derelict vessel status soon. A complete map of all derelict vessels in the waters of the State of Florida is available at <https://tinyurl.com/yftpaez5> . The PGPD is also patrolling canals to insure that minimum wake is respected. Please be considerate of all that have vessels on the canals as you make way to and from your home. The PGPD is also participating in the Handle with Care Program along with Charlotte County Schools, Charlotte Behavioral Health Care and CCSO. This is a statewide program where the law enforcement partners alert the schools if a child in our community has been exposed to some type of traumatic experience. Law enforcement does not share the report, just the child's name, school, age, and that he/she must be handled with care. This info goes to the school psychology supervisor who will then alert the child's school. They will then make sure the child receives any extra assistance, counseling, etc. This is just a sampling of all the work the PGPD engages in to keep the community safe. The efforts that residents take to protect themselves and each other are also valued. Let's do our part to cooperate with law enforcement and remember, especially, to lock our cars each and every day.

- **Promote Punta Gorda “Small Business Spotlight” The Yoga Sanctuary** – The Yoga Sanctuary is located at 112 Sullivan Street, phone (941) 505-9642 or learn more at <https://www.theyogasanctuary.biz/>



What is The Yoga Sanctuary? The Yoga Sanctuary is a full service yoga studio that offers group yoga classes, in-studio, online, and sometimes outside in our local parks. They also offer yoga in private one-to-one or small group settings. In addition to yoga classes, they offer regular workshops and special events that are led by their own teachers plus guest teachers from all over the country.

What facts are important for customers to know about The Yoga Sanctuary? Currently, it is important for people to know that we have limited the number of people that can be in our space at one time. We are also highly Covid-19 sensitive: require masks, have increased cleaning procedures, air filtration, and again, limited capacity. We have a full seven days a week schedule with the majority of our classes online.



But most importantly, we want to let people know that we are a studio that is accessible - we make the yoga fit the person! In other words, anyone can do yoga! One of the things that makes our business so special is our strong connection to our community. Many of our clients/students have been with us for many years through many different phases of their lives. We provide a space for people to find a bit of calmness and serenity of mind while moving their bodies in ways that are accessible and comfortable. This strong connection also allows for us to know our student base and what their unique needs are. Our focus is on the person in front of us and we will always adjust how we approach the practice of yoga to meet the needs of each unique individual.

Fun facts about The Yoga Sanctuary? We've been in Punta Gorda since 2007. We've been in our beautiful building since 2010. Our 14th birthday is coming up in May! We are Punta Gorda's **FIRST** yoga studio. Our logo symbolizes the energy of the heart center - universal and unconditional love.



How does The Yoga Sanctuary help the community? We are extremely active in our community. We regularly offer donation based yoga classes, sometimes in the studio, sometimes outside in local parks--this particularly addresses the needs of some during these times of Covid-19. We regularly offer Community Yoga Classes that raise funds for local non-profits and charities.

Upcoming Events

- Charlotte Harbor Event Center, 75 Taylor St. For additional information, visit <https://www.charlotteharborecc.com/events>
- Fishermen's Village events can be accessed at <https://www.fishville.com/events/>
- Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce events can be accessed at <https://puntagordachamber.com/calendar-events/>
- Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce events can be accessed at <https://business.charlottecountycommerce.org/events/calendar>
- Military Heritage Museum events can be accessed at <https://freedomisntfree.org/#>
- Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association, 2001 Shreve St., PGICA's Education Program classes can be accessed at https://pgica.org/content.aspx?page_id=22&club_id=799073&module_id=364888
- Visual Arts Center events can be accessed at <https://visualartcenter.org/pages/calendar-of-events>
- Mar. 27, National Welcome Home Vietnam Veteran's Day from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Laishley Park Gazebo, 96 Nesbit St., for more information contact awbill2003@gmail.com
- Mar. 27-28, End of Season Arts & Craft Show, City Marketplace, 115 Tamiami Tr. For more information contact mypromo@mypromotions.com
- Apr. 4, 1st United Methodist Church Easter Sunrise Service and Life Petting Zoo, Gilchrist Park, 400 W Retta Esplanade, contact kathy@whatis1st.com
- Apr. 10-11, Bloom and Art, Art & Craft Show, Gilchrist Park, 400 W Retta Esplanade. For more information contact blueribboneventsllc@gmail.com
- Apr. 30, Hibiscus Festival, Gilchrist Park, 400 W Retta Esplanade, contact teresadesguin@iheartmedia.com
- May 1, Mental Health Awareness Walk, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St., for more information contact kpomerville@cbhcfl.org
- May 9, YMCA Healthy Kids Day 5K Run, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St., for more information contact lnason@skyyymca.org
- May 22, Girls on the Run 5K Run, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St., for more information contact kim.amontree@girlsontherun.org
- May 27, Healing Field of Honor, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St. For more information contact adairrobin@gmail.com
- May 31, Memorial Day Veterans Race, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St. For more information www.memorialdayrace.org
- May 31, Memorial Day Car Show, Fisherman's Village, 1200 W. Retta Esplanade. For more information contactmkting@fishville.com

Code

- **Permits required** – Staff would like to remind our residents and contractors that a Right-of-Way (ROW) permit is required prior to restoring or re-sodding any right-of-way, for all properties, developed or vacant. ROW permit applications must be submitted by a licensed contractor. The ROW permit will initiate a line and grade inspection to ensure that proper drainage is maintained as the property is restored.
- **Signs in the Right-of-way (ROW)** – Code Compliance has resume the enforcement and removal of all signs placed *in a public ROW*, in all zoning districts, regardless of content, with the exception of approved special event signage.

Lot Mowing Program – The City has completed mowing in 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.).
- PGI (Magdalena Dr., Via Vento, W. Henry St., Appian Dr., and Columbian Dr.).

- PGI Bird Section (Almar Dr., Albatross Dr., 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 – Land Development Regulations (LDR’s):
Code Framework Workshop: Part I**

The first Code Framework Workshop was held last Tuesday, March 23, 2021. The Code Framework Workshops were designed to involve the community of Punta Gorda in establishing the building blocks of the new form-based code. In the first part of this two-meeting workshop, Dover, Kohl & Partners gave a brief overview of what land development regulations and form-based codes are and provided \ details regarding the challenges and issues with Punta Gorda’s existing zoning regulations. A Q&A session followed. After questions were answered, the planning team presented some initial elements for the future FBC framework for the community to consider. Participants were asked what building types they preferred and where they thought those were appropriate, as well where the most and least intense building forms should be permitted. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=79VqKvKIKIQ>



Code Framework Workshop: Part II Mar. 30 from 6 – 7:30 p.m.

The Code Framework Workshops have been designed to involve the community of Punta Gorda in establishing the building blocks of the new form-based code (FBC). In the second part of this two-meeting workshop, Dover, Kohl & Partners will summarize the community input from Part I, as well as input received during the technical meetings. The team will then present an updated Regulating Plan, which is a fine-grained version of a zoning map that divides the FBC area into distinct zones that correspond to unique building form standards. Participants will be asked if they agree or not with the zones defined in the plan and will have a chance to recommend revisions. To get into more detail about the character of development that is appropriate for each zone, participants will also be asked about specific architectural styles, building form standards, and frontage types.

In-Person Registration: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/code-framework-workshop-part-ii-in-person-event-tickets-146474486131>

Virtual Registration:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_dmYKLO0bSoKL3cETXbndyw

For more information, please contact UrbanDesign@CityofPuntaGordaFL.com.

Public Works

Administration

- **Citizens' Academy Urban Design Session** – Urban Design held their session of the Citizens' Academy this week. Urban Design had very informative discussion about the City Wide Master Plan, Comprehensive Plan, and Capital Improvement Projects. The Building Department explained the building permit process, inspections, contractor licensing and origin of building codes. Code Compliance explained the importance of the department within the City organization. The presentation covered due process, violation notices, common code violations, and the lot mowing program.



Parks and Grounds

- **Hounds on Henry Street** – Hounds on Henry Street will be closed on Mar. 31 for maintenance and repairs. The park will re-open on Apr. 1 for normal operation.

Canal Maintenance

- **Seawall Replacement Projects** – The seawall replacement contractor has eight projects under construction and nine projects completed in Punta Gorda Isles. There are 26 seawall replacement projects scheduled for Punta Gorda Isles. All seawall replacement projects in Burnt Store Isles have been completed. A seawall project is not considered complete until the sod has been placed.
 - Crews filled depressions at 22 locations.
 - Crews patched/repared 200' linear feet of seawall cap/seams.

Engineering

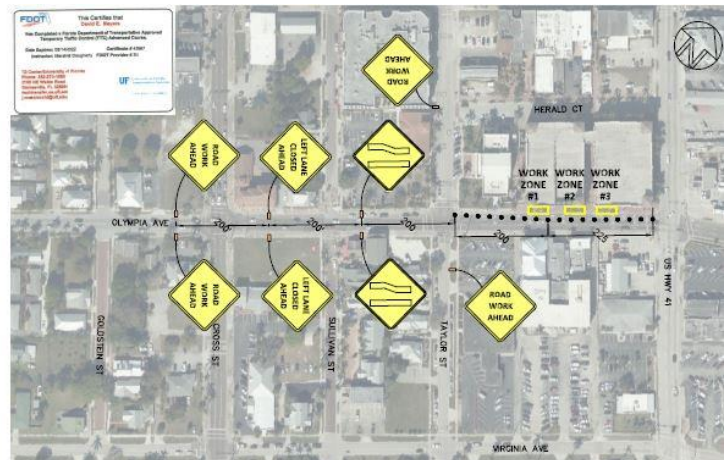
- **City Wide Drainage Swale Regrading** – Work on Terin Court is scheduled to begin next week.
- **King Street Survey and Plan** – The survey work is in process to determine existing topography and actual City right-of-way limits. Anticipated deliverables are due mid-Apr.

- **Madrid Boulevard Warranty Work** – The week of Mar. 29 through Apr. 2 (weather permitting), warranty work is scheduled to correct settlement dips on Madrid Boulevard near the Publix Plaza entrance. Single lane closures are to be anticipated while work is performed. Travelers are requested to use extreme caution while workers are present in the right of way and allow additional time for travel. Temporary delays are to be anticipated.
- **Adrienne Street Pier** – Work has commenced to lift the pier and installed pile jackets. A Media Advisory has been issued. The pier will be closed to the public while work is being performed. Pedestrians and cyclists are required to use extreme caution while workers are present in the right of way.
- **Palm Avenue Between Chasteen Street to McGregor Street Road Closure** – Contractor has completed excavation of the existing material and placing 6” of crushed concrete, rolling it to grade. The following contracted scope of work is: some curb replacements, ADA ramps, crushed concrete road base, asphalt, sand and re-placement of historic street bricks. This work is anticipated to complete in May (weather permitting).



Right-of-Way

- **Olympia Avenue Lane Closure** - Beginning the week of Mar. 29 through Apr. 23 (weather permitting), construction is scheduled to begin on Olympia Avenue from the Taylor Street intersection to 41 North. The project will be done in 3 phases starting with the first planter and proceeding to the second and third planters. The right of way department (ROW) will install root barriers to control root growth of the palm trees. Part of the brick walkway will be removed. Pedestrians will have access through the area. The left lane on Olympia Ave. will be closed Mon. – Fri. from 7:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. Mar. 29 through Apr. 23 (weather permitting). Travelers are requested to use extreme caution while workers are present. Allow additional time for travel due to detours while work is performed. Temporary delays are to be anticipated. If you have any questions, please contact David Meyers, ROW Supervisor, Public Works Department at (941) 575-5050 between the business hours of 8 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.



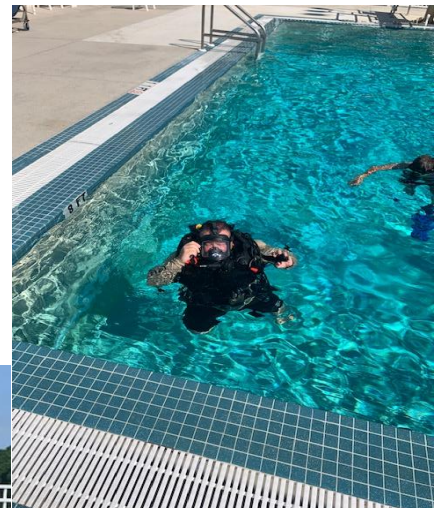
Police

- **Prevent Vehicle Thefts and Burglaries** – Many areas in Southwest Florida have seen an increase in vehicle burglaries and thefts from juvenile gangs out of the St. Petersburg/Bradenton area. These gangs come in small groups in the middle of the night searching for unlocked vehicle doors and vehicles with keys left inside. Recent investigations have shown that these gangs have been searching on their phones for “safest neighborhoods nearby” as these areas are most likely to have unlocked vehicles. While being one of the safest cities is a great thing it attracts these types of property crimes. Please remember to remove valuables and lock your vehicle at night! Never leave your vehicle keys or key fobs inside the vehicle!

- **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. Spots fill up quickly so we encourage potential interns to apply today! To apply for any of these positions or for more information please visit www.pgjobs.com (941) 575-5571 or employeedevelopment@pgorda.us for more information.
- **Volunteers in Policing (VIP) Program** – The police department has an active and diverse volunteer program including vehicle patrol, bike patrol, marine patrol, community services, and more. We are always looking for dedication volunteers. Members of the community interested in volunteering are encouraged to contact the Volunteer Staff Coordinator at (941) 575-5536 or by emailing vip@pgorda.us.
To apply for employment, please visit www.pgpdjobs.com or contact our Employee Development Coordinator at (941) 575-5571 employeedevelopment@pgorda.us.

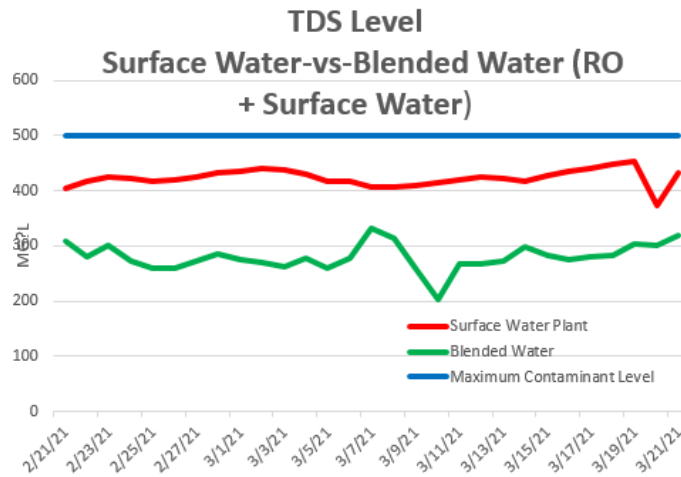
Fire Department

- **Rapid Diver Training** – The fire department trained with the Rapid Diver equipment this week. The Rapid Diver system allows for personnel to rapidly don equipment and enter the water in under 2 minutes. The city covers roughly 54 miles of canals and our residents can take comfort knowing that all of our apparatus carry Rapid Diver equipment. In the event of a water related emergency we can have a diver make entry from a sea wall and perform underwater lifesaving operations in minutes.



Utilities

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



Water Treatment Plant Operations

- 55 MG delivered to the distribution system with a 7.9 MG daily average
- Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority Emergency Interconnect – Receiving 950 gallons per minute from the new Interconnect (Phase 1 Pipeline). Sending 750 gallons per minute from the tank on 17 (Phase 1A Pipeline).
- Rainfall March 2020 0.00” March 2021 0.030”
- Hardness is a measurement of calcium and magnesium ions naturally occurring in the raw water. Current Condition “moderately hard” – Grains of Hardness 10 ppm – Total hardness 171 ppm
- TDS for Mar. 25 – Current 317 ppm, Low 317 ppm, High 655 ppm, 12 Year Avg. 505 ppm
- Reservoir Mar. 25 – Current 5.06’, Record Low 4.87’, Record High 6.08’, 55 Year Avg. 5.21’

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.
- **Donation Review Committee** – (representative of non-profit organization related to history of City) Meets quarterly, as needed, immediately following meetings of the Historic Preservation Advisory Board. Five member board. Three of the total five members will be appointed from the Historic Preservation Advisory Board membership. Reviews nonmonetary donations received by the City and recommends acceptance or rejection of same.
- **Firefighters’ Pension Board** – Meets quarterly and as called in Council Chambers. Five members – two City residents, two firefighters and one at-large as appointed by the Board. Two year terms – no maximum. Financial disclosure required. Charged with management of the Firefighters’ Pension Fund.

- **Building Board** – 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 OR partial term plus two more 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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **Historic Preservation Advisory Board** – (two alternates) 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.
- **Burnt Store Isles Canal Advisory Committee** – Meets the second Tuesday at 1:30 p.m. in City Council Chambers. Must be resident of Burnt Store Isles. Five 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 of Ordinances.

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:
 - ✓ Cambridge Federal, LLC 126 E. Olympia Ave
 - ✓ Cooper vacation rental, 830 Coronado Dr.