

## Weekly Highlights Report April 30, 2021

### City Manager

- **City Manager Column** – This has been a month of great focus on the topic of policing. I think it is appropriate to share the message of our Punta Gorda Police Department (PGPD) Chief Pam Davis regarding the verdict of former police officer Derrick Chauvin found guilty of the murder of Mr. George Floyd. “...As I previously stated when this tragic incident happened, this individual tarnished the law enforcement profession with his blatant disregard for human life. On behalf of the men and women of the PGPD, I want to assure our community that we will continue to *earn* your trust. We believe in the sanctity of human life. It is at the core of our department along with our organizational values: Integrity, Respect, Fairness and Impartiality, Excellence, and Teamwork. We will continue to embrace the efforts to move policing forward alongside *all* members of our community.” In furtherance of the transparency of the PGPD the standard operating procedures are available on the city website at <http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/government/standard-operating-procedures>.



Also, the PGPD has recently released the quarterly crash analysis. This is created to be proactive in reducing the number of crashes that occur yearly. The data is used as a resource for identification of problem areas and recommendations for public education and or enforcement actions. In total there were 194 crashes this quarter within the city. 86 of these crashes were at intersections. Another 64 occurred at some other area of a roadway that is not an intersection. Parking lot crashes accounted for 44 of the reported incidents. The parking lot crashes are noted but not broken down by location. The total of crashes increased by nine over the first quarter of 2020.

The intersections with the most crashes, five in total, were West Marion Avenue at Cross Street and West Marion Avenue at Maud Street. Cross Street at West Retta Esplanade, East Marion Avenue at Tamiami Trail, and Taylor Street at West Charlotte Avenue each saw four crashes. Tamiami Trail at Aquí Esta Drive, Tamiami Trail at Taylor Road, West Marion Avenue at Goldstein Street and West McKenzie Street all saw three crashes in the first quarter. Of these crashes occurring at intersections eight of these crashes were rear end collisions. Other causes included failure to yield the right of way, side swiping parked cars, and turning in to vehicles.

The full results of the report are available at <https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/government/police/traffic-safety-and-performance> . This information will be used by the PGPD for enforcement related actions and educational purposes. Some of the tools our officers use to obtain voluntary compliance of traffic laws include the use of unmanned line vehicles, unmarked patrol units, speed radar trailers and directed traffic patrols. I encourage all of our residents and visitors to utilize defensive driving skills such as keeping a safe following distance, avoiding distractions, and when in doubt yield.

Our PGPD staff and Volunteers in Policing will continue to provide the highest level of professional police services. Every member of the agency serves with pride, integrity, fairness, respect, compassion, and dedication. The team strives to deliver outstanding customer service while partnering with the community they protect and serve. Thank you for all you do to focus on the safety of our residents and visitors and don't forget to lock your doors

- **City Council** – City Council meets at 9 a.m. on May 5 at 9 a.m. at the Historic City Hall. A few of the items of interest include:

- Consideration of a Developers Agreement for a Forcemain on Riverside Drive
- Request to Relocate Historic Structure from 509 Gill Street to 415 Virginia Avenue
- CRA Report



The meeting will be available on YouTube at:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-Qo-k4PpXWo4IJQah6\\_Kqw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-Qo-k4PpXWo4IJQah6_Kqw)

- **Candidate Packets Now Available** – Candidate packets for the 2021 City General Election are now available through the City Clerk's Office, City Hall, 326 West Marion Avenue. The 2021 General Election will take place on Nov. 2 and will include City Council District 3 and 5. Councilmembers serve a two (2) year term and are elected at-large. Only opposed candidate races will appear on the ballot. If more than two candidates seek election for any one district seat, a primary election must be held on Aug. 17 (11 weeks prior to the General Election). Qualifying for the 2021 General Election cycle begins, Jun. 7 at noon and ends on Jun. 11 at noon. For information or questions regarding qualifying, please contact Karen Smith, City Clerk, at (941) 575-3369 or email [pgclerk@cityofpuntafordafl.com](mailto:pgclerk@cityofpuntafordafl.com). Questions regarding voter registration, vote-by-mail ballots or precinct and polling information should be directed to the Charlotte County Supervisor of Elections Office at (941) 833-5400. Candidate forms can also be obtained online from the City's website at <https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us> as well as from the Division of Elections website at <https://dos.myflorida.com/elections>.
- **Florida Power and Light (FPL)/Comcast Update** – FPL reports that to date, they have removed a total of 254 abandoned poles. They have now dedicated a team of people who will exclusively work on this project to keep things moving forward. They have identified another 141 poles that need to still be pulled, 23 that still have FPL attachments on them and the rest are Comcast and other utilities. Comcast is scheduled to move wires on 84 more poles. They have one team working on this full time now. On Bal Harbor, FPL identified 43 locations where double poles needed to be pulled, 22 are done and 21 remain. Of those, 7 are ready to pull and 14 still have attached wires on them. On Marion, 7 double poles were identified, three have been removed and four remain with wires on them. On Aqui Esta, 21 double poles were identified, 11 have been removed and 10 are still left, seven of which still have attached wires on them. Also, FPL has started to restore some of the sites that have recently had new handhole boxes placed beside the new poles. They are now going back through and cleaning up the areas around the boxes and filling in with fill dirt and sod. They are working in the bird section this week.

- **Promote Punta Gorda “Small Business Spotlight” PG Social House** is located at 124 Cross Street with parking and access from 258 West Marion Avenue, (941) 347-7888 website is <https://www.pgsocialhouse.com/> .

**Products and Services offered:**



We provide a selection of quality products including sweets, yummy desserts, milkshakes, beer, wine, and candy cocktails. We also have an on-site furniture and home goods store, as well as an old school candy shop with an outdoor beer garden.

**What makes your business special?**  
PG Social House is where families and individuals can meet for a fun outing sweet treat and shop all

conjoined by an outdoor courtyard embracing the true essence of eat, drink, shop.

**How does your business help the community?**

We provide a safe, outdoor environment for individuals of all ages to enjoy. We also host many outdoor events to involve our community and promote gatherings, including our monthly "Moonlight Market."

**What facts are important for customers to know about your business?**

We are a woman owned business and we are sisters. We have a passion for our businesses and our community, mainly because we are locals. Being in downtown Punta Gorda really touches home for us.

**Any fun facts you would like to share about your business?**

Our buildings were both built in the early 1900's! Room by Room Furnishings was even one of the first 'talkie" theaters!

**Upcoming Events**

- Visual Arts Center events can be accessed at <https://visualartcenter.org/pages/calendar-of-events>
- Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce events can be accessed at <https://business.charlottecountychamber.org/events/calendar>
- Military Heritage Museum events can be accessed at <https://freedomisntfree.org/#>
- 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/>
- 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](https://pgica.org/content.aspx?page_id=22&club_id=799073&module_id=364888)



*Small*  
**Business**



**Spotlight**



- April 30, Hibiscus Festival, Gilchrist Park, 400 W Retta Esplanade, contact [teresadesguin@iheartmedia.com](mailto:teresadesguin@iheartmedia.com)
- May 1, Mental Health Awareness Walk, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St., for more information contact [kpomerville@cbhcf.org](mailto:kpomerville@cbhcf.org)
- May 9, YMCA Healthy Kids Day 5K Run, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St., for more information contact [lnason@skyyymca.org](mailto:lnason@skyyymca.org)
- May 22, Girls on the Run 5K Run, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St., for more information contact [kim.amontree@girlsontherun.org](mailto:kim.amontree@girlsontherun.org)
- May 27, Healing Field of Honor, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St. For more information contact [adairrobin@gmail.com](mailto:adairrobin@gmail.com)
- May 31, Memorial Day Veterans Race, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St. For more information [www.memorialdayrace.org](http://www.memorialdayrace.org)
- May 31, Memorial Day Car Show, Fisherman's Village, 1200 W. Retta Esplanade. For more information contact [mkting@fishville.com](mailto:mkting@fishville.com)



### Lot Mowing Program

- The city has completed mowing the following areas:
  - Colony Point (Colony Point, Socorro and Coronado Drives, and West Marion Avenue)
  - PGI (Bal Harbor and Ryan Boulevards, Deborah and Casey Key Drives, and Suzi Street)
  - PGI (Magdalena, Appian, and Columbian Drives, Via Vento and West Henry Streets)
  - PGI Bird Section (Almar and Albatross Drives, Whippoorwill and Turtle Dove Boulevards).
  - Downtown and Historic District (West Marion and West Olympia Avenues, Shreve and Harvey Streets.)
  - East Side and the area behind Dunkin Donuts (East Marion and East Olympia Avenues, Narranja, East Henry and Cooper Streets).
  - Burnt Store Isles (Monaco and Macedonia Drives, Tripoli and Madrid Boulevards).
  - Burnt Store Meadows (Areas of Tamiami Trail, North Blue Sage, South Blue Sage, Royal Poinciana, and Gold Tree).

### Urban Design

- **The Planning Corner- Sign Code**

The sign code draft was reviewed at the Apr. 26 Planning Commission meeting. The intent and purpose is to adopt a sign code which, through a comprehensive system of reasonable, effective, consistent, **content-neutral**, and non-discriminatory standards and regulations, provides for consistency and the public health, safety and welfare of the community. Content neutral means signs can only be regulated by size, location and number of signs per parcel. The main changes proposed with the sign code re-write include but are not limited to the following:

  - Proposed residential yard signs/flags:
    - 4 signs per parcel
    - 4 square feet in area
  - Proposed commercial freestanding signs:
    - 4 signs per acre
    - 32 square feet in area



City Council will consider approval of the first reading of the sign code draft at the May 19 Council meeting. Community input is always accepted and appreciated.

## Public Works

### Canal Maintenance

- **Channel Marker Inspections** – The Peace River Sail and Power Squadron has volunteered to inspect City maintained channel markers. They located and verified the Global Positioning System coordinates (latitude and longitude) of each channel marker and compared the data with the United States Coast Guard Light List - any discrepancies will be reported for correction. Each sign has been inspected, inventoried and photographed.
- **Seawall Replacement Projects** – The seawall replacement contractor has six projects under construction and 13 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 15 locations and repaired a seawall panel seam at one location.
  - Crews installed a rip rap driveway extension at the spoil site (located on Colony Point) to prevent dirt from tracking onto the roadway.



### Engineering

- **Adrienne Street Pier** – After further assessment, the pier will remain closed to the public for additional work.
- **City Wide Drainage Swale Regrading** – Installation of a catch basin at 3507 Terin Court as well as grading and sodding at 685-699 Macedonia Drive is complete. Grading and sodding is underway in Burnt Store Meadows at several locations including along Royal Poinciana, North Tulip Tree and Allamanda Lane.
- **King Street Survey and Plan** – The survey work is in process to determine existing topography and actual City right-of-way limits. We are awaiting final review of deliverables by the surveyor.
- **Madrid Boulevard Warranty Work** – The placement of thermoplastic striping is complete.
- **Pavement Rejuvenation** – The week of May 3 through May 7 (weather and equipment operations permitting) the contractor will begin with placement of public notification door hangers, roadway signage placement and the application of the pavement rejuvenation product on the following streets: Deborah Drive from Bal Harbor Boulevard to the cul-de-sac; Padre Island Drive from Carmichael Drive to the cul-de-sac; Charlotte Amalie Court from Deborah Drive to the cul-de-sac; Crooked Island Drive from Ryan Boulevard to the cul-de-sac; and Socorro Drive from Aqui Esta Drive to the cul-de-sac. The road will be open to local traffic only. Detours and impact to traffic are to be anticipated. Hours of operation will be between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. When driving in the area, motorists are encouraged to drive with extreme caution and be alert for workers in the right-of-ways. For additional information on this project, please 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. through Fri.

## Police

- **Help Prevent Crime** – Nearly all vehicle burglaries and thefts that have occurred in Punta Gorda over the last few years have involved unlocked vehicles. Please help prevent crime in our city by removing valuables and locking your vehicles at night! they do for this community we love!
- **Watch Out for Gift Card Scams** – Please remember that legitimate businesses, organizations, and government entities will NEVER ask you to make a payment using gift cards. If anyone calls you and requests that you make a payment by purchasing gift cards and providing the numbers, please hang up the phone! Gift cards are nearly impossible to trace and the chances of identifying the scammer and returning the money spent on them is very low. If someone asks you to purchase gift cards to pay a past due bill, provide money for a loved one in trouble, to pay back taxes, or for any other reason, please call (941) 639-4111 and ask to speak with an officer before making any purchases.
- **Police Officer Testing** – The police department is currently accepting applications for the position of Police Officer. Testing will be held on Aug. 23 with oral board interviews scheduled on Aug. 24 and Aug. 25. 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 Aug. 30.
- **Internship Program** – The police department is currently accepting internship applications for the Fall Semester of 2021 and Spring Semester 2022. 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.pgdjobs.com](http://www.pgdjobs.com) (941) 575-5571 or [employeedevelopment@pgorda.us](mailto: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.

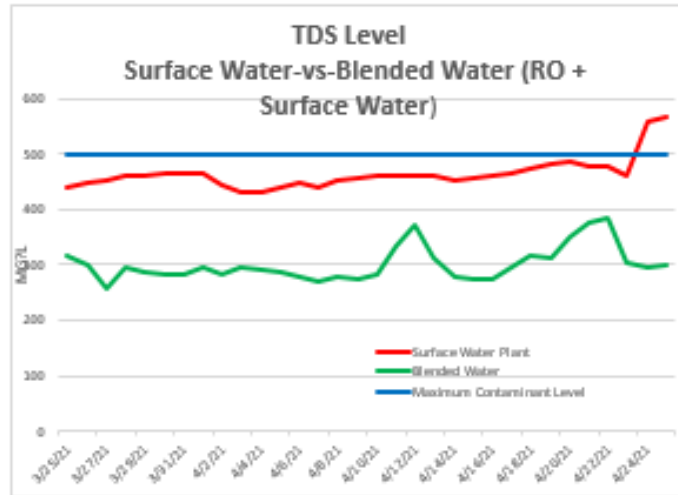
## Fire Department

- **Smoke Detector Services** – Fire department partnered with the residents of the Fountain Court community by assisting them with their annual smoke detector maintenance. The fire department performed smoke detector services at a total of 25 units consisting of 107 smoke detector battery change outs. This a service that the fire department offers to its residents to help reduce fall risks for those who are not able to climb ladders. This is just one of many programs our fire department offers to help keep our community the best place to live in the south.



## Utilities

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



### **Water Treatment Plant Operations**

- 47.1 MG delivered to the distribution system with a 6.7 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 Apr. 2020 3.40” Apr. 2021 3.03”
- Hardness is a measurement of calcium and magnesium ions naturally occurring in the raw water. Current Condition “moderately hard” – Grains of Hardness 8 ppm – Total hardness 132 ppm
- TDS for Apr. 29 – Current 228 ppm, Low 228 ppm, High 614 ppm, 12 Year Avg. 505 ppm
- Reservoir Apr. 29 – Current 5.08’, Record Low 4.63’, Record High 5.70’, 55 Year Avg. 5.08’

## 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.
- **Code Enforcement** – (one alternate) Meets monthly on the fourth Wednesday at 9 a.m. in City Council Chambers. City residency required. Seven-member board with two alternate members. Three-year terms. Maximum of three terms OR partial term plus two more terms. Financial disclosure required. Makes recommendations to City Council on variances to City Code.

### **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:
  - Merolla Vacation Rental, 3886 Bordeaux Drive