

Weekly Highlights Report June 18, 2021

City Manager

- **City Manager Column** – Every year the City of Punta Gorda shares its priorities for the state budget with the Charlotte County Legislative Delegation. The Boca Grande area of the City of Punta Gorda has been a top priority for the city for a number of years. Fortunately, this year the project emerged as a priority that was supported state wide by legislators and by Governor DeSantis as well.



The City of Punta Gorda, with the assistance of the lobbying firm, Capitol Access has secured a one million dollar appropriation for the Boca Grande Boulevard area water quality improvement project. The City offers a sincere thank you to Governor Ron DeSantis, State Representative Michael Grant, State Senator Ben Albritton and State Senator Joe Gruters for their support and work on this important initiative. The project also has substantial local support through the one percent sales tax program. The project will increase community resiliency and provide necessary flood control and water quality treatment of stormwater runoff from the city's Boca Grande neighborhood. The area experiences significant flooding and the current drainage conveyance does not provide a formal measure of water quality treatment. The drainage from this area ultimately outfalls to Charlotte Harbor. The harbor and surrounding coastal areas will benefit from the project's treatment of impairments. Design and property acquisition are almost complete and construction is anticipated to start in fiscal year 2022.

While the statewide budgeting process is complete for this fiscal year, the City of Punta Gorda budget process continues at the next City Council meeting. On June 16 at 9:00 a.m. at the Historic City Hall City Council considered the five year capital improvement project proforma including the General Construction Fund, 1% Sales Tax Fund, and Unfunded Construction Projects. They will also reviewed the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Burnt Store Isles (BSI) Canal Maintenance Assessment District Budget Status. The FY 2022 Punta Gorda Isles (PGI) Canal Maintenance Assessment District Budget Status was also presented.

Resident engagement is critical to the success of our small city. The City Council meetings have a dedicated time on the agenda for public comment and no longer reading comments received via email into the record. The City Council designates a public comment time to receive in-person comment from members of the public on agenda items

and other items of interest. Anyone wishing to address the Council on any item may do so at this time during the meeting. Those who choose to speak must state their name for the record. Each person will be allowed to speak once on each subject up to a maximum of three minutes. We welcome all residents to attend the City Council and other committee meetings to have their voices heard in the decision making processes for Florida's Harborside Hometown. *Readers may reach City Manager Greg Murray at citymgr@cityofpuntagordafl.com or by calling (941) 575-3302.*

- **Comcast** – This week's update is from Comcast. Wires were transferred to new poles at the following locations: 301 Via Esplanade, 1525 Oriole Ct., 305 Shreve St., 325 Shreve Ste., 2255 Palm Tree Dr., 74 Ocean Dr., 322 and 324 W. Charlotte Ave., 328 Goldstein St., 415 Durrance St., 431 Harvey St., 351 and 379 Capri Isles Ct., 334 W. Olympia Ave., 1981 and 2301 W. Marion Ave., 112 Maria Ct. and 2126 Via Veneto. They also have wire clean ups in progress at nine locations including Madrid Blvd., Macedonia Dr., San Pietro Ct., San Rocco Dr. and Rosa Lane.

If you have a more than one pole in your front yard and an old pole that hasn't been taken down, if wires are hanging on the new pole or any other concern about this project, please email Mayor Matthews with your name, address and contact phone and email WITH PHOTOS to support your request, and send to lmattews@cityofpuntagordafl.com. The City Manager and Mayor Matthews are sharing the emails with both companies so all properties get restored.

View the meeting at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-Qo-k4PpXWo4IJQah6_Kqw

- **Promote Punta Gorda “Small Business Spotlight” – Featuring River City Grill and ITALIA located at 127 and 131 West Marion Avenue (239) 370-0583. Products and Services offered:**

Two full service restaurants located in the heart of downtown Punta

Gorda. RCG has a very diverse menu with creative twists on international/regional comfort food. As our country is a melting pot, so is our menu. Influences coming from many cuisines such as France/Italy (scallops), Italy (scampi), France (pot roast), New England (baked cod and shrimp), Florida (butterfish), Portugal (Portuguese Steak), USA (Meatloaf), Japan (Miso-honey salmon) England (fish and chips) Mexico (shredded beef taco), North Carolina (bbq chicken bites). ITALIA is a classic Italian American restaurant with a contemporary creative twists on classic dishes.



What makes your business special?

We were the catalyst for the renaissance of downtown Punta Gorda! When I purchased these two historical buildings (1914/1917) in 2002 they were boarded up and downtown restaurant presence was non-existent. We opened both in a year and invited restaurateur friends from Naples to join in the renaissance of downtown (Turtle Club). We opened in early 2003 and have won the Sun News “ People’s Choice” best all around 17 years in a row. Soon after opening (2004) hurricane Charley devastated Punta Gorda. We were the first restaurant to reopen and were instrumental in feeding the community by putting grills on the street and cooking up what food we had. We feel we have been the leader in creating the wonderful down town Punta Gorda has today!



How does your business help the community?

We are involved in most City and private events held downtown and have consistently donated to community and law enforcement charities throughout are years in Punta Gorda. Our two biggest charitable (annual) endeavors are for “Meals on Wheels “ and C.A.R.E. We work closely with our Chamber in their events.



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

We are chef driven with a focus on quality ingredients and have the longest running relationship with “Worden Farm” organics. We have hands on ownership and can generally be seen greeting guests at either restaurant.

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.charlottecountychamber.org/events/calendar>
- Military Heritage Museum events can be accessed at <https://freedomisntfree.org/#>
- June 14, Punta Gorda Elks Lodge 2606 Flag Day Ceremony at 9 am at Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit Street. Contact Bob Hahn at (941) 661-1775.
- July 3, 4, Fisherman's Village Independence Weekend Celebration, 1200 W. Retta Esplanade, for more information contact mkting@fishville.com
- July 4, Fourth-Fest Independence Day Celebration & Fireworks, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St., for more information visit www.smugglersevents.com

Lot Mowing

The City has completed mowing the following areas:

Colony Point (Colony Point Drive, W. Marion Ave., Socorro Drive., and Coronado Drive.). PGI (Magdalena Drive, Via Vento, W Henry Street, Appian Drive, and Columbian Drive).

Urban Design

- **Kiwanis Shoes for Kids** – This year the Kiwanis Shoes for Kids Project begins its seventeenth year of collecting new sneakers for students in the Charlotte County Public School System. The focus of this project is to collect new tennis shoes, for children in need and then distribute them to all of the schools in the Charlotte County Public School System at the start of the 2021-2022 school year. This year the goal will be 4500 new pairs of sneakers. Collection bins will be placed outside the City Clerk's office for a 5-week period, from June 20 - July 25. You can participate in this event by purchasing a new pair of tennis shoes and dropping them off in the collection bin or by making a monetary donation. For more information or making an online donation, visit the Shoes for Kids website at www.shoesforkidsproject.org or call 941-769-0864. All monetary donations should be made payable to the clubs 501c3: Kiwanis Club of Port Charlotte Sunrise Foundation Inc. Your support of this outreach project can make a difference in lives of the children in Charlotte County.
- **Planning Corner – Form-Base Code: Introduction** – City staff wanted to summarize the updates being made to the City's Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations – specifically the addition of form-based codes. However, if you're new, this video will bring you up to date! The next steps will be a presentation of the first draft of the proposed changes sometime in the Fall. To watch the video, click here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3vH7gOSGJA> For more information, please visit <https://www.puntagordamasterplan.com/>.



Public Works

Sanitation

- **Independence Day Holiday** - The government offices of the City of Punta Gorda will be closed on July 5 in observance of the Independence Day holiday. Residents of the City of Punta Gorda will notice **NO CHANGE** in their trash, yardwaste or recycling collections during this holiday. Commercial customers will notice **NO CHANGE** in trash collections during this holiday. If you have any questions, please contact the Public Works Department at (941) 575-5050 during the hours of 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Mon. through Fri.

Canal Maintenance

- **Bass and Snook Inlet Dredging** – Beginning June 3 through June 18 (weather and equipment operation permitting), the Bass and Snook Inlet is scheduled to be dredged. The contractor will off load dredge material at the easterly end of Elizabeth Park and then the material will be transported to another location by dump trucks. Boaters are asked to please use caution in this area during construction. For additional 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., Monday through Friday.
- **How to Find out If Your Seawall Is Scheduled for Replacement** - Residents have been asking how they know when their seawall is scheduled for replacement and how the process works. Every year the City replaces approximately 7,000 lineal feet of seawall. By utilizing the Seawall Assessment Data, the seawall replacement program is planned a year in advance (unexpected seawall failures or seawalls that are inspected and found to be at extreme risk of failure are given top priority and may bump planned projects to the following year). The annual list of seawall replacements can be found on the Canal Maintenance website. To see if your seawall is scheduled for replacement: <https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/home/showpublisheddocument/11454/637352343548330000>.



- **Ponce Inlet Dredging** - Beginning the week of June 16 through June 30 (weather and equipment operation permitting), the Ponce 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 additional 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.



- **Seawall Replacement Projects** - The seawall replacement contractor has nine projects under construction and 17 projects completed in Punta Gorda Isles. There are 26 seawall replacement projects scheduled for Punta Gorda Isles. All seawall replacement projects are completed for Burnt Store Isles this fiscal year. A seawall project is not considered complete until the sod has been placed.
 - Crews filled depressions at 10 locations.
 - Crews patched/repaired 4' linear feet of seawall cap/seams.
 - Crews manufactured (40) 10' feet seawall panels.

Engineering

- **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Sidewalk Ramp Improvements** - The contractor has commenced with work at various locations throughout the City.
- **Adrienne Street Pier** - The contractor has notified City staff that the materials ordered by the contractor are on back log for delivery due to increased demand. Work is to be scheduled accordingly upon delivery tentatively anticipated next month. The pier will remain closed to the public for additional work.
- **Boca Grande Drainage Improvements** - A project progress meeting is scheduled for June 18. 60% to 90% design work continues.
- **City Wide Drainage Swale Regrading** - City staff is reviewing all work completed in 2021 by JRL Underground Utilities as part of the contract close out. City staff is in the process of reviewing bids for a new swale regrading contractor.
- **Paving Program** - City staff has prepared a draft tentative 5 year paving program and provided to Finance Department to include in the presentation to City Council for the upcoming budget year recommending approval. For additional information on this project, please contact Engineering Senior Project Manager, Linda Sposito, City of Punta Gorda Public Works Department at (941) 575-5050 between the business hours of 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Mon. through Fri.
- **Taylor Street and West Charlotte Avenue Stop Sign** - A message board advising motorists of new signage is placed on Taylor Street at the intersection of West Charlotte Avenue. Stop signs will be installed with bags over them until June 21, when the intersection will become a four way stop. Drivers and pedestrians are requested to use extreme caution while drivers become aware of the new traffic control devices. For additional information on this project, please contact City of Punta Gorda Public Works Department at (941) 575-5050 between the business hours of 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Police

- **Text to 9-1-1** – Text to 9-1-1 is a system that allows cell phone users to send text messages to a 9-1-1 operator in situations where making a phone call would be dangerous or impossible. The police department has recently put out two videos on the system which can be viewed on Facebook (@pgpdf1) or Twitter (@pgpdf1).
- **Police Officer Testing** – The police department conducts new hire testing continually in order to be prepared for future openings. We are currently accepting applications for the position of Police Officer. Testing will be held on Aug. 23 and oral board interviews scheduled on Aug. 24 and 25. 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 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.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.

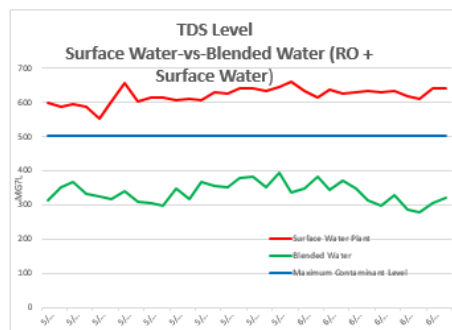
Fire

- **Punta Gorda Fire Department Responds to Gas Leak** – The fire department responded to a gas leak at Fisherman’s Village after reports of a construction vehicle hit a natural gas line. The village was evacuated out of precaution until the emergency could be mitigated. Fire department personnel were able to shut the gas off without incident. TECO arrived on scene to conduct their investigation. No one was injured thankfully and the evacuation only lasted about 10 minutes.



Utilities

Groundwater R.O. update



Water Treatment Plant Operations

- 49.6 MG delivered to the distribution system with a 7.1 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 1,111 gallons per minute from the tank on 17 (Phase 1A Pipeline).
- Rainfall June 2020 13.10” June 2021 4.65”
- Hardness is a measurement of calcium and magnesium ions naturally occurring in the raw water. Currently “moderately hard” – Grains of Hardness 10 ppm –Total hardness 172 ppm
- TDS for June 17 – Current 370 ppm, Low 336 ppm, High 599 ppm, 12 Year Avg. 451 ppm
- Reservoir June 17 – Current 5.16’, Record Low 4.18’, Record High 6.52’, 55 Year Avg. 5.34’

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.
- **Code Enforcement** – (three regular and two alternates) 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.
- **General Employees’ Pension Board** – (Fifth member) Meets quarterly and as called in Council Chambers. Five members – two City residents at-large, two general employees and one member appointed by the Board. Four-year terms – no maximum. Financial disclosure required. Charged with management of the General Employees’ Pension Fund.
- **Planning Commission** – Meets the 4th Monday at 2 p.m. in City Council Chambers. Must be City resident. Seven member board with two alternate members. Three year terms – maximum of three terms. Makes recommendations to City Council with regard to amending, extending or adding to the comprehensive plan for the physical development of the City, platting or subdividing land within the City and adopting and amending a zoning ordinance.

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:
 - Tender Touch Hair Removal – 252 W. Marion Ave Suite #1122
 - Turtle Bay Cay – 1200 W. Marion Ave. C-47
 - Vacation Rental – 410 Caicos Dr.
 - Vacation Rental – 740 Pamela Dr.
 - Western Union – 5007 Taylor Rd. (inside Walmart)