

Weekly Highlights Report June 25, 2021

City Manager

- **City Manager Column –**

As the temperatures increase, so do the opportunities to take part in the many activities that help create a great quality of place in Punta Gorda. From dining to festivals and celebrations, year around living has great benefits for our residents.

The downtown restaurants are open and ready to serve up delicious food and beverages. In the downtown area you will find Carmelo's, Toula's, Hurricane Charley's, Burg'R Bar, Laishley Crab House, FM Don's, Dockside Bar and Grille, Leroy's Southern Kitchen, 88 Keys, Harbor Social, the Blue Turtle, Pizza Gorda, Sandra's, Wildwood Pizza, Isabel and Annabel's Mexican Restaurant, Dean's South of the Border, the Belgian Monk, Mint Thai Cuisine, Old Town Deli, Ice House, John Ski's House of Breakfast, Celtic Ray Public House, Shorty's, T n D Bakery, Hungry Howie's, Wood Street Grill, The Perfect Caper, Los Dos Cristianos Coffee Shop, PG Social House, Punta Gorda Coffee & Tea, Punta Gorda Chocolate & Wine, Pho Saigon Punta Gorda. Our Promote Punta Gorda "Small Business Spotlight" last week featured downtown local restaurants River City Grill and Italia located on West Marion Avenue. Owner Doug Amaral purchased the two historical buildings back in 2002 and they were the first restaurants to reopen after Hurricane Charlie. They actually fed the community after the hurricane by setting up grills on the street and cooking up the food they had on hand. Stop by, meet the owners and take advantage of the generous special they are offering.

If you haven't visited Fishermen's Village lately it is definitely worth a trip to check out the enhancements. Restaurant choices abound at this Punta Gorda landmark. The Village Fish Market, Harpoon Harry's, the Captain's Table, Village Brewhouse and the Pier offer a variety of entrees to tempt the taste buds. Joining the lineup is the new Turtle Bay Café featuring organic, vegan, vegetarian and keto options. Live entertainment is available every weekend but July 3rd and July 4th is further enhanced with a full weekend of activity. There will be a bounce house, play land, military display, juggling acts, special vendors and food trucks, a fireworks cruise available with King Fisher Fleet and fireworks display at the village on July 3rd, and viewing of the Laishley Park fireworks on the 4th.



Laishley Park continues to serve as a premiere event venue in Punta Gorda and July 3rd and July 4th will be no exception. The Celebrate America concert takes place on Friday featuring Josh Gracin, the Flying Buffaloes and Punta Gorda native, Jack-Michael. Saturday features Water-Mania and a Kid's Fun Zone. Food, drinks and live music will set the stage for the evening fireworks. The fireworks will light up the Peace River at 9:00 p.m. This is just a sampling of the great businesses and events that are offered in the City of Punta Gorda. I invite you to explore Florida's Harborside Hometown and find your favorites.

- **Comcast** – Comcast completed six more pole transfers in PGI at the following addresses: 2401 Palm Tree Dr., 2390, 2401, 2201, 2091 W. Marion Ave. They also fixed the wires on the pole at 2436 Rosa Lane. The wires on the pole at 626 Monaco Dr. that were reported last week have been repaired. There is a sagging wire located on Bobolink Dr. which has to be repaired and will be addressed shortly.
- **FPL** – This week's update from FPL - In the past two weeks, 41 poles have been pulled, making a total of 255 poles removed to date. There are still 128 poles to be removed, which are in process. Additional to these, FPL has 30, Comcast 7 and other utilities have 27 poles that still need to have wires moved off of old poles before FPL can take the duplicate poles down. The property at 2448 Ryan still needs to have a hole filled, and 2441 Palm Tree Dr. still has work to be done on it. 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 lmattthews@cityofpuntafordafl.com. The City Manager and Mayor Matthews are sharing the emails with both companies so all properties get restored.
- **Promote Punta Gorda “Small Business Spotlight”** – City of Punta Gorda business owners are invited to take part in Promote Punta Gorda. This is a small business spotlight to focus on the businesses that are at the heart of Florida's Harborside Hometown. Small business is a critical economic driver for the city. Not only do small businesses create jobs, they also foster community pride and create a unique sense of place. It is only with the partnership with business that the city can fulfill its mission to preserve and enhance Punta Gorda's identity as a vibrant waterfront community, unique in character and history; and as a desirable place to live, work, and visit. Promote Punta Gorda shines the light on the many business owners and their offerings. Small business owners within the City limits of Punta Gorda are eligible to have their business featured on the City's social media channels and in the Weekly Highlights Report. To sign up to be in the spotlight visit <http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/i-want-to/promote-punta-gorda-business-spotlight> or call (941) 575-3394 for more information.

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/#>
- 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
- Nov. 6, Punta Gorda Elks Lodge 2606 Veteran’s Parade, 10 a.m. Taylor Rd. to W. Retta Esplanade for more information contact Charles Moores at cam4fire@yahoo.com

Lot Mowing

The City has completed mowing the following areas:

PGI (Magdalena Drive, Via Vento, W Henry Street, Appian Drive, and Columbian Drive).
 PGI Bird Section (Almar Drive, Albatross Drive, Whippoorwill and Turtle Dove Boulevards).

Urban Design

- **Planning Corner – Design Studio** – The purpose of conducting a pre-application meeting is to assist the applicant in the best possible way in deciding if the proposed development meets guidelines in accordance to the Land Development Code prior to submitting any development application. Design Studio (pre-application meetings) meetings occur the second and fourth Thursday of the month from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. (with the exception of Nov. and Dec.). It is advised to schedule a meeting 2 weeks in advance ensure a spot. To request your appointment, please visit <https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/services/design-studio> .



2021 Design Studio Meeting Dates		
<i>Second and fourth Thursday of the month from 1 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. (exception of Nov. and Dec.)</i>		
• July 8 and 22	• Aug. 12 and 26	• Sept. 9 and 23
• Oct. 14 and 28	• Nov. 4 and 18	• Dec. 2 and 16

Building Division

- **Audit** – Earlier this year the Building Division was audited by ISO Services. The results were issued last month. The audit is conducted every three years and is used to show the effectiveness of the Building Division to administer and enforce state and local codes as they relate to new and existing construction. The charts below illustrate our jurisdiction as it compares to county, state and national averages. Punta Gorda consistently scores at or above other municipalities in all areas. This information is used by insurance companies to determine risk in a particular area and is utilized for setting insurance rates.

Chart 6-2 Comparison of Residential Points Scored

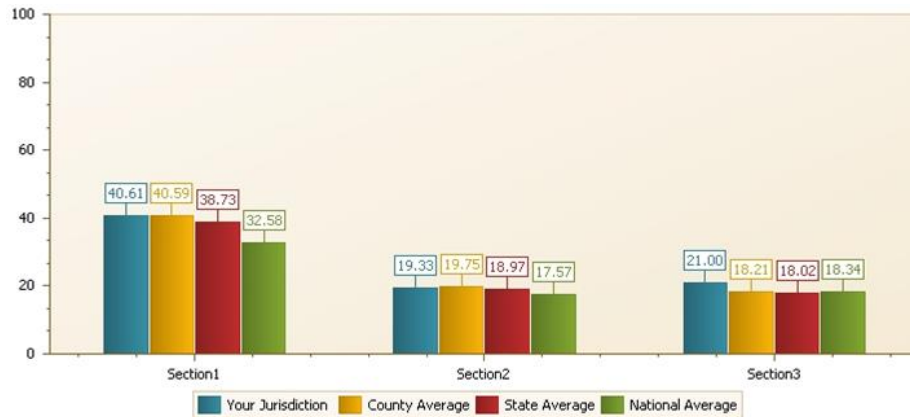
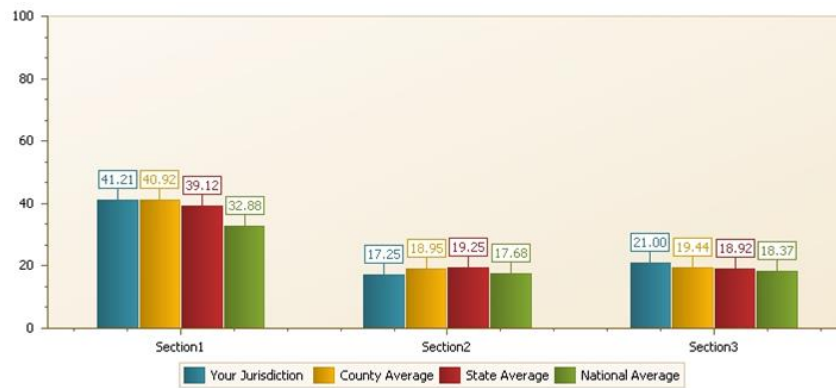


Chart 6-1 Comparison of Commercial Points Scored



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** – - The dredging operation at the Bass and Snook Inlet is complete, however the contractor still needs to restore Elizabeth Park which was used as a staging area. 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** – The dredging operation at Ponce Inlet is complete, however the contractor still needs to restore the vacant lot at the southerly end of Colony Point Drive which was used as a



staging area. 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 18 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 5 locations.
 - Crews patched/repared 4' linear feet of seawall cap/seams.
 - Crews manufactured (40) 10' foot seawall panels and (6) 12.5' foot 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 July 2. A Change Order to complete design is under review by City staff. Design work continues for the 60% to 90% plans and permit modification.
- **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.

- **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.

Police

- **Body Worn Camera Conference** – Members of the grant team attended the 2021 National Body Worn Camera Conference. The Punta Gorda Police Department implemented a body worn camera program in July of 2021
- **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

- **Row Challenge** – The Fire Department started a “Row Challenge” to promote health and wellness to our employees. Employees were challenged to row and log their meters-rowed over the period of one month. We knew this challenge would be a success, but were extremely impressed with the amount of participation this challenge received. We’d like to thank and congratulate all of our employees who participated in the challenge. We would like to give a special congratulations to the following employees who logged at least 100,000 meters (an equivalent of 62.14 miles): Lieutenant Jarrett Lombard, Lieutenant Alex Davenport, and our Chaplin Carlo Gargiulo.

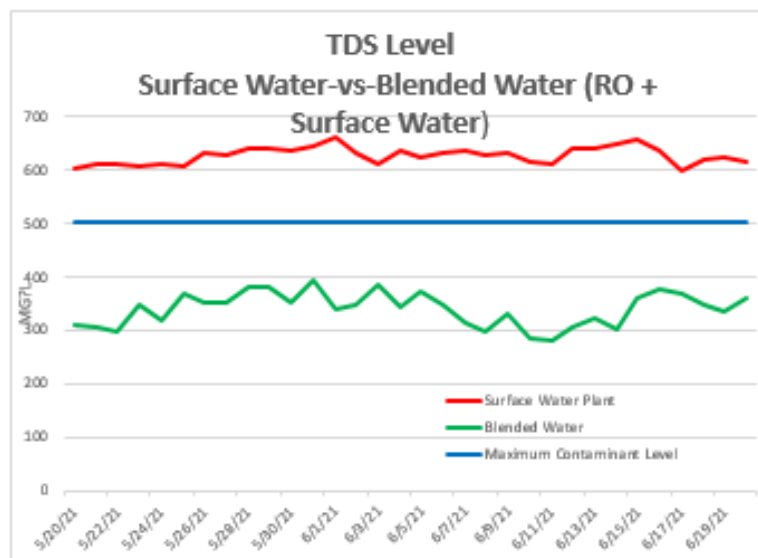


We would also like to congratulate the following individuals for logging at least 200,000 meters (an equivalent of 124.28 miles): Chief Ray Briggs and Firefighter/Paramedic Rhett Anderson. The personnel logging 100,000 meters and more will be receiving a special award for their hard work and dedication. We are so proud to have a department of individuals committed to bettering themselves, and making their health and wellness a priority.



Utilities

Groundwater R.O. update



Water Treatment Plant Operations

- 43.7 MG delivered to the distribution system with a 6.2 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 5.90”
- Hardness is a measurement of calcium and magnesium ions naturally occurring in the raw water. Currently “moderately hard” – Grains of Hardness 9 ppm –Total hardness 160 ppm
- TDS for June 24 – Current 374 ppm, Low 232 ppm, High 586 ppm, 12 Year Avg. 424 ppm
- Reservoir June 24 – Current 5.16’, Record Low 4.78’, Record High 7.72’, 55 Year Avg. 5.49’

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.
- **Building Board** – (one contractor) Meets monthly on 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 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. 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.
- **Planning Commission** – Meets the fourth 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:
 - C Global Inc., 526 King Street
 - Jon Gesicki DDS PLLC, 2705 Tamiami Trail, Suite 112