

Weekly Highlights Report July 23, 2021

City Manager

- **City Manager Column** – On July 1, a significant change was made to a State law that impacts the way our Code Enforcement Department operates. In the past, residents could phone or email in a report of a suspected code of ordinances violation anonymous.

Florida Statute Chapter 162 no longer permits anonymous violation complaints. When a resident would like to report a situation they would like investigated, they must give their name and address before accepting your complaint. Florida Statute Chapter 162, 162.06 (1) (b); and 162.21 (3) (b): A Code Enforcement Officer may not initiate enforcement proceedings for a potential violation of a duly enacted code or ordinance by way of an anonymous complaint. A person who reports a possible violation of a code or an ordinance must provide their name and address to the respective local government before an enforcement proceeding may occur.



The fear of retaliation is often cited as a reason why a person wishes to remain anonymous. If a complainant states that they have a substantial fear of retaliation or status-based legal jeopardy directly when making a complaint. City staff will then advise the complainant that if the claim is a false claim of fear of retaliation or of status-based legal jeopardy, then they are liable for all costs incurred by the City of Punta Gorda in investigating the claim of violation, including costs of personnel, equipment, testing, and reasonable costs and attorney fees if the City of Punta Gorda brings an action to prosecute the complainant or to collect amounts made payable.

What hasn't changed is the city's philosophy on code enforcement. The goal is to achieve voluntary compliance with [reported and discovered code violations](#). Education is the key to reaching this goal. One of the most significant obstacles to gaining compliance is that many citizens do not realize that they are violating local ordinances. For instance, it is not at all unusual for a resident to be unaware that parking a vehicle on the city right-of-way without a valid tag, or parking an inoperable car on your private property, violates city code. Suppose a code enforcement officer finds a code violation. In that case, an attempt is made to verbally contact the property owner and issue a Courtesy Notice via hand delivery; a notice left on-premises, or via the United States Postal Service mail. The property owner is given reasonable time to correct the violation, and the property is then re-inspected. If the violation was corrected, the complaint is closed. If the violation is not corrected, a Certified Mail notice of violation is sent. The owner is given reasonable time again to fix the issue, and a re-inspection retakes place. If the owner does not remedy the situation at

this point, the violation escalates to a situation that may involve fines.

Most people are willing to play by the rules if they know the rules. Property maintenance laws are designed to promote neighborhood integrity, prevent property value decline, reduce visual clutter and blight, and preserve the quality of life. Residents can still assist code enforcement officers with keeping our neighborhoods safe and attractive by reporting concerns. Code violations can be reported at <https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/.../report/a-code-violation> or by calling 941-575-3352, or via text at 941-347-0747. *Readers may reach City Manager Greg Murray at citymgr@cityofpuntafordafl.com or by calling (941) 575-3302.*

- **Comcast/FPL** –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.

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/#>
- October 2, Walk to End Alzheimer's, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St., for more information visit https://act.alz.org/site/TR/Walk2021/FL-FloridaGulfCoast?pg=entry&fr_id=14378
- October 23, Out of the Darkness Suicide Prevention Walk, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St., for more information contact, tsullivan@afsp.org.
- November 6, C.A.S.T. for Kids Charlotte Harbor, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St., for more information visit, <http://castforkids.org/events/>
- November 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:

Downtown and Historic District (W. Marion Avenue, W. Olympia Avenue, Shreve Street, and Harvey Street).

East Side and the area behind Dunkin Donuts (E. Marion Avenue, E Olympia Avenue, Narranja Street, E Henry Street, and Cooper Street).

Burnt Store Isles (Monaco and Macedonia Drive, Tripoli and Madrid Boulevard)

Burnt Store Meadows (Areas of Tamiami Trail, N. Blue Sage, S. Blue Sage, Royal Poinciana, and Gold Tree).

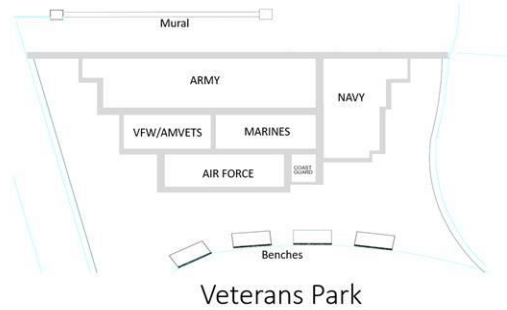
PGI (Magdalena Drive, Via Vento, W Henry Street, Appian Drive, and Columbian Drive).

PGI Bird Section (Almar and Albatross Drive, Whippoorwill and Turtle Dove Boulevard)

PGI (Bal Harbor Boulevard, Deborah Drive, Ryan Boulevard, Suzi Street, and Casey Key Drive).

Urban Design

- **Veterans' Park** – The paver installation at Veterans Park has been completed. In the upcoming weeks staff will be reviewing the pavers to create a master list. The pavers have been placed directly in front of the Veterans mural. The map (at right) identifies where the branches of services are located. The individually pavers are randomly placed and you will need to search for your specific paver.
- **Planning Corner** – Form-Base Code Understanding Regulating Plans – In the second video, City staff and the consultants summarized the Code Workshop and the results from the surveys. In the third installment, City staff will be showing you the draft regulating plan for Punta Gorda's new Form-Based Code! Watch the video here: <https://youtu.be/JAnJS6wPkp4>. For more information, please visit <https://www.puntagordamasterplan.com/>.



Public Works

Canal Maintenance

- **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>.
- **Seawall Replacement Projects** - The seawall replacement contractor has seven projects under construction and 19 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 36 locations.

Engineering

- **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Sidewalk Ramp Improvements** – The contractor continues with demolition, construction and updates for (ADA) sidewalk ramps
- **Adrienne Street Pier** – The contractor is tentatively scheduled to complete pile jacket installations this week, weather permitting. Work is also being completed on the decking and hand rails.

- **Boca Grande Drainage Improvements** – Bi-weekly design project update meetings continue. The design is in process, with 60% to 90% plans complete.
- **City Wide Drainage Swale Regrading** – The contractor has indicated that they will begin work on the punch list next week. A new swale contractor has been selected. Swale regrading will begin once everything has been finalized to commence work.
- **Henry Street Sidewalk** – All surveying information has been received and the design will continue. We will begin coordination with FDOT on work within their drainage easement and the sidewalk connection at US41.

Right of Way

- **West End Drive Lighting Project** – The lighting has been installed. The Right of Way department is working diligently on completing the restoration work on the swale on West End Drive. The swale work will be completed by the end of next week (weather permitting).

Police

- **VIP Program** – The Volunteers in Policing (VIP) program contributed a total of 869 hours of volunteer time to the City of Punta Gorda during the month of June 2021. Our volunteers are an absolutely vital part of this police department and we appreciate them greatly! 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.



- **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 August 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 August 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



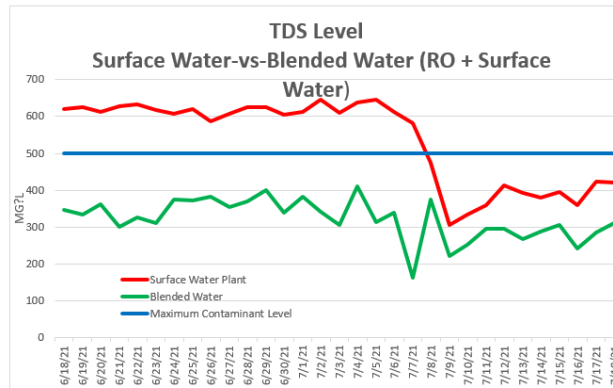
- **Wear it Florida** – Did you know that Florida has the unfortunate distinction of being the national leader in annual boating fatalities? A majority of fatalities every year are boaters that are reported swimmers who fall overboard and drown. These deaths can be easily prevented by wearing a lifejacket. Wearing a lifejacket can mean the difference between a fun day on the water and becoming a statistic. Don't believe it could happen to you? It happens in Florida to an average of one person each week who never thought it could happen to them either. This is where the Wear It Florida campaign comes in to play. The campaign goal is clear and simple: to increase the number of recreational boaters who consistently wear a life jacket while on the water.

Common Misconceptions Associated with Life Jacket Wear

- I'm a great swimmer! Why would I need to bother with a life jacket? Even the greatest swimmers aren't always ready to be thrown overboard and a quick look at boating safety statistics make that quite evident. Typically, over half of Florida's boating fatalities each year are due to falls overboard and boaters entering the water unprepared.
- I'm not a kid; I'm an experienced boater. I know what I'm doing. Age and experience don't float. They also are not good indicators of whether you would survive an unexpected fall overboard.

Utilities

Groundwater R.O Update



Water Treatment Plant Operations

- 40.9 MG delivered to the distribution system with a 5.8 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 July 2020 2.40" July 2021 12.35"
- Hardness is a measurement of calcium and magnesium ions naturally occurring in the raw water. Currently "moderately hard" – Grains of Hardness 7 ppm –Total hardness 116 ppm
- TDS for July 22 – Current 307 ppm, Low 225 ppm, High 519 ppm, 12 Year Avg. 379 ppm
- Reservoir July 22– Current 5.59', Record Low 5.00', Record High 6.27', 55 Year Avg. 5.50'

City Clerk

Current Board and Committee Vacancies ([Volunteer Appointment Information Form](#))

- **Board of Zoning Appeals** – (three regular and two alternates) Meets the fourth Tuesday at 4 p.m. in City Council Chambers. City residency is 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** – (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.