

## Weekly Highlights Report Sept. 24, 2021

### City Manager

- **City Manager Column** – As I mentioned last week, there are many opportunities to volunteer with the City of Punta Gorda including the Volunteers in Policing and Volunteer Fire Association. Another way to provide your time and expertise to benefit the residents of Punta Gorda is to serve on a board or commission. Several seats are available at this time:  
**Board of Zoning Appeals** – (two regular and two alternate) 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 or partial term plus two more terms. Financial disclosure required. Makes recommendations to City Council on variances to City Code.



**Code Enforcement** – (two regular and two 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. Hears and decides alleged violations of the City Code.

**Planning Commission** – (one regular) Meets monthly on the fourth Monday at 2:00 p.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 Special Exceptions, amending or extending the Comprehensive Plan, platting or subdividing land within the City and adopting and amending zoning ordinances.

Anyone interested in serving on a board or committee can complete a Board Appointment Information Form at <https://bit.ly/3Cddnn0> available at or through the office of the City Clerk by stopping by at 326 West Marion Avenue or calling (941) 575-3369. Appointed members and those interested in serving should review the Handbook for Advisory Board Members at <https://bit.ly/2YQLUci> and be willing to comply with the requirements therein. Topics covered include an overview of the City's boards and committees, meeting procedures and Florida's Public Records Law and Sunshine Law.

While volunteering to serve on a board or commission provides a great service to the community, many that have taken on the challenge find that they gain knowledge that helps them in their individual lives as well. Service also provides the opportunity to influence local government and policies, as well as connecting with others in the community that have similar interests. *Readers may reach City Manager Greg Murray at [citymgr@cityofpuntagordafl.com](mailto:citymgr@cityofpuntagordafl.com) or by calling (941) 575-3302.*

- **City Council Meeting** – City Council met on Sept. 22. Some of the actions included:
  - Setting fees solid waste removal. The refuse rates are increasing \$0.35 per month and yard waste rates are increasing \$0.15 per month for residential units. The overall increase for non-residential customers is approximately 1.0%. The residential curbside recycling rate is increasing \$0.33 per month with the approved annual contract adjustment.
  - Setting water and wastewater fees. Rates are available at [https://legistarweb-production.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/attachment/pdf/1054563/Ord\\_Ch17\\_Utility\\_Rates\\_FY2022.pdf](https://legistarweb-production.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/attachment/pdf/1054563/Ord_Ch17_Utility_Rates_FY2022.pdf)
  - Approved Charlotte High School Homecoming Parade event permit
  - Approved Light Up The Night event permit
  - Provided comments and revisions for Development Review Committee bylaws
- **City Council Special Meeting** – The FY2022 Budget Public Hearing occurred at 5:01 p.m. on Sept. 22 in the City Hall Council Chambers. Council adopted a final millage rate of 3.9500 mills for Fiscal Year 2021/2022. The calculated rolled-back rate for the City of Punta Gorda is 3.3203 mills. The proposed final millage rate is 3.9500 which is 18.97% over the calculated rolled-back rate. Council adopted a final budget for fiscal year 2021/2022 which constitutes appropriations and revenue estimate in the amount of \$161,959,899 (net of interfund eliminations, an amount of \$135,853,172).
- **Halloween in the Historic District** – Candy donations needed! Anyone wishing to help the City of Punta Gorda provide candy to all of our visitors on Halloween at the City Hall Annex parking garage can donate candy bags at the Historic City Hall, the Public Safety Center, the Public Works Campus, or the City Hall Annex.



### 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 Street, for all community event and class information visit <https://pgica.org/>.
- Oct. 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](https://act.alz.org/site/TR/Walk2021/FL-FloridaGulfCoast?pg=entry&fr_id=14378)
- Oct. 16, Heritage Culture Fest, Fishermen's Village, 12 p.m. until 4 p.m., for more information visit <https://www.culturalheritageswfl.org/>.

- Oct. 22, 23, 24, 29, 30, and 31, Haunting on the Harbor, 115 Tamiami Tr., aka City Marketplace property, for more information visit <http://www.puntagordahaunting.com/>
- Oct. 23, Punta Gorda Downtown Merchants Association Fall Downtown Bash, Taylor St. between W Olympia & Herald Ct., for more information visit <https://puntagordachamber.com/>
- Oct. 23, Out of the Darkness Suicide Prevention Walk, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St., for more information contact Tara Sullivan at [tsullivan@afsp.org](mailto:tsullivan@afsp.org)
- Oct. 23, Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association, Free Concert with The Shark Sisters, 7 p.m., 2001 Shreve Street, cabaret style, bring your own food and beverages, for more information visit <https://pgica.org/>.
- Oct. 28, Charlotte High School Homecoming Parade, downtown along Taylor St., for more information contact Emily Klossner at [Emily.klossner@yourcharlotteschools.net](mailto:Emily.klossner@yourcharlotteschools.net)
- Oct. 31, 1<sup>st</sup> United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat, 507 W Marion Ave., for more information visit <https://www.whatis1st.com/>
- Nov. 6, C.A.S.T. for Kids Charlotte Harbor, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St., for more information visit <http://castforkids.org/events/>
- Nov. 6, Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association, Art n Craft Fair, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., 2001 Shreve Street, vendor space available, for more information visit <https://pgica.org/>.
- Nov. 6, Punta Gorda Elks Lodge 2606 Veteran's Parade, 10 a.m. Taylor Rd to W. Retta Esplanade, for more information contact Charles Moore at [cam4fire@yahoo.com](mailto:cam4fire@yahoo.com)
- Nov. 9, "The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual BOB" The Beyond Ourselves Bash benefitting Peace River Wildlife Center and the Homeless Coalition of Charlotte County, for more information visit [https://www.pgica.org/Beyond\\_Ourselves](https://www.pgica.org/Beyond_Ourselves)
- Nov. 29, Ditchfield Family Singers, 11330 Burnt Store Rd. for more information visit [www.bsponline.org](http://www.bsponline.org)
- December 3-4 - Holly Days Garden Tour, various locations, 10 to 4. For information, visit <https://pggc.org/home-tour/>.
- Dec. 31, Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association, New Year's Eve Gala, 8:30 p.m., 2001 Shreve Street, sponsorship opportunities available, for more information or tickets visit <https://pgica.org/>.

### **Lot Mowing Program**

- City mowers are currently completing the last mowing cycle of the fiscal year. Mowing should be completed by the end of the week.

### **Urban Design**

- **Roundtable Discussion** – Staff hosted a roundtable discussion with members of the local building industry including the Charlotte Desoto Building Industry Association (CDBIA). The purpose of the meeting was to discuss concerns and suggestions related to the proposed Land Development Regulation changes within the historic areas of the City. This discussion primarily focused on architectural design standards, and the applicability of such standards to renovation of existing and construction of new single family and two family housing. Concerns regarding architectural standards included:
  - Limited number/type of architectural styles which may limit design freedom for builders and their clients

- Ensuring that architectural standards accommodate buildings which must meet FEMA Base Flood Elevation and Florida Building Code standards for mitigation of flood risk
  - Overly restrictive material requirements which may increase construction costs
- City staff will continue to meet with members of the CDBIA as this process moves forward to ensure that their technical concerns are addressed. The City staff views the local builders as partners in shaping the future of the community on a daily basis.
- **Punta Gorda in Bloom (PGIB)** – PGIB is an organization dedicated to beautifying downtown Punta Gorda, submitted a video to the America in Bloom organization. While PGIB’s current focus is on adding colorful planters, America in Bloom overall helps point the way to increase focus on environmental, cultural and heritage related impacts. PGIB is excited to share that the video is a finalist in the America in Bloom “People’s Choice Award” program. They are one of only seven cities nationwide vying for the top award. The winner is determined by which video gets the most online votes by the morning of October 1. Voting is simple, just click here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AIB2021> and select Punta Pots. You can only vote once, but if you know others who’d be willing to vote, please consider forwarding this request to them. If you want to know more, visit their Facebook page at Punta Gorda in Bloom. The winner will be announced on October 1 during the America in Bloom Online Symposium.

- **Planning Corner – The Punta Gorda Nature Park Nature Park A Neighborhood Park**

Parks and recreation facilities are a substantial resource for visitors as they add to their experience and the reputation of the City. For the residents, parks and recreation are an essential part of the quality of life and are valued by those living in Punta Gorda. Neighborhood Parks serve a variety of age groups within a limited area or neighborhood. They include areas for active recreation activities such as court games and playgrounds. Passive recreation activities may consist of walking, viewing, sitting, and picnicking.



One such “Neighborhood Park” is the Punta Gorda Nature Park located at the corner of Bal Harbor and Aquí Esta in PGI. Maintained in part by a local volunteer group known as the PGI Green Thumbs, the twenty-one (21) acre park provides a picnic area, a 1-mile nature walk, as well as upland butterfly, edible, rock succulent and native gardens. The volunteer group meets on a weekly basis to maintain and enhance the park for educational outdoor classroom training and nature lectures.

The PGI Green Thumbs are beginning a new series of lectures called “Talking Plants” at the City’s Punta Gorda Nature Park. These talks will run monthly from October – February. The first session is Friday, October 8, and is titled “Rose and Herbs”. Master Gardener, Dolly Tomalinas, is the guest speaker. She is known for her expertise in many aspects of gardening, none more so than herbs and roses. Dolly designed the park’s herb beds, specifically choosing to include rose bushes to highlight the little-known fact that rose horticulturally fit in the herb category. Success in growing roses or other herbs depends very much on understanding which varieties can thrive in our South Florida climate, and at which times of year. All sessions take place outdoors. Seating is limited so please bring a chair, sunscreen, mosquito repellent and water for your comfort. Next date for “Talking Plants” is Friday November 12. More info to come!

## **Public Works**

### **Canal Maintenance**

- **Seawall Replacement Projects** – There are 26 seawall replacement projects scheduled for Punta Gorda Isles this fiscal year; however another site was added due to a seawall failure. The seawall replacement contractor has one project under construction and 26 projects completed in Punta Gorda Isles. All seawall replacement projects are completed for Burnt Store Isles. A seawall project is not considered complete until the sod has been placed.
  - Crews filled depressions at 13 locations.
  - Crews patched/repaired 50' linear feet of seawall cap/seam.
  - Crews completed Burnt Store Isles storm boom material replacement at 40 storm drain locations.
- **Seawall Replacement Schedule** – Wondering if your seawall is on the list to be replaced in the next fiscal year? The annual Seawall Replacement Work Program can be found on the City of Punta Gorda website under Canal Maintenance <https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/home/showpublisheddocument/12550/637643718591830000>. Every year the City replaces approximately 8,000 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).

### **Engineering**

- **Adrienne Street Pier** – The pier is partially open to the public at this time. The tee at the end of the pier remains closed until further repairs can be made. The City contractor is tentatively scheduled to begin repairs to the end tee of the pier during the second week of Oct.
- **Boca Grande Drainage Improvements** – Bi-weekly 60% to 90% design project update meetings continue. The eminent domain process is in progress for the final acquisitions. Coordination with the permitting agencies continues as part of the design phase.
- **Henry Street Sidewalk** – All Surveying information has been received and the design will continue. Coordination continues with FDOT on work within their drainage easement and the sidewalk connection at US41.

### **Parks and Grounds**

- **Laishley Park Interactive Fountain Closed** – Laishley Park Interactive Fountain will be closed until further notice for repairs.
- **Hounds on Henry Dog Park** – The Hounds on Henry Dog Park will be closed on Sept. 22 starting at noon through Sept. 29 for the installation of the K9 grass (weather permitting). The Dog Park is tentatively scheduled to re-open on Sept. 30. For additional information on this project, please contact City of Punta Gorda Public Works Department at (941) 575-5050 between the business hours of 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Mon. thru Fri.

### **Right-of-Way**

- **Stormwater Pipe Repairs** – The right-of-way department is relocating a storm drain at 1329 Osprey Drive to be within the existing easement. 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.

## Police

- **Beware of 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 conducts new hire testing continually in order to be prepared for future openings. We are currently accepting applications for the position of Police Officer. We will be holding a virtual testing process in Oct. Applications must be received by Oct. 14. The written exam will be completed online anytime between Oct. 15 and Oct. 20, with a virtual oral board exam conducted via Zoom on Oct. 26. We are currently only accepting applications from candidates who are currently law enforcement certified or Equivalency of Training (EOT) eligible.
- **Public Safety Dispatcher 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 Public Safety Dispatcher. Testing will be held on Jan. 31.
- **Internship Program** – The police department is currently accepting internship applications for the Spring and Summer Semesters of 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 and the selection process can be competitive, so we encourage potential interns to apply today! The deadline to apply for the Spring Semester of 2022 is Oct. 15.
- **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 dedicated 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](mailto:vip@pgorda.us). **To apply for employment or for more information, please visit [www.pgpdjobs.com](http://www.pgpdjobs.com) or contact our Employee Development Coordinator at (941) 575-5571 or by email at [employeedevelopment@pgorda.us](mailto:employeedevelopment@pgorda.us).**



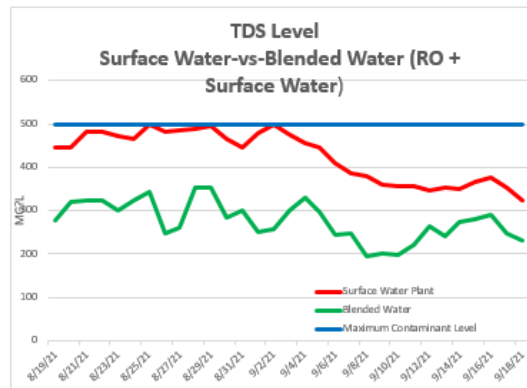
## Fire

- **Emergency Vehicle Operator Course (EVOC)** – The fire department conducted EVOC training this past week. EVOC is a course designed to enact real world driving obstacles that staff will encounter while responding to emergency calls. The fire department's newest certified EVOC instructor, Fire/Medic CW McLeod, was on hand to facilitate the training.
- **Did you know?** – The City's ladder truck is 37' long and weighs in at over 49,000 pounds! While EVOC is a course that is only required once by law, the city fire department conducts this course annually to keep vehicle operations a key safety point for all personnel.



## Utilities

### Groundwater R.O Construction Update –



### Water Treatment Plant Operations

- 41.5 MG delivered to the distribution system with a 5.9 MG daily average
- Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority Emergency Interconnect – Receiving 1,200 gallons per minute from the new Interconnect (Phase 1 Pipeline). Sending 1,250 gallons per minute from the tank on 17 (Phase 1A Pipeline).
- Rainfall Sept. 2020 8.10" and Sept. 2021 8.20"
- Hardness is a measurement of calcium and magnesium ions naturally occurring in the raw water. Currently "moderately hard" – Grains of Hardness 6 ppm –Total hardness 96 ppm
- TDS Sept. 23 – Current 250 ppm, Low 160 ppm, High 388 ppm, 12 Year Avg. 286 ppm
- Reservoir Sept. 23 – Current 5.72', Record Low 5.06', Record High ', 7.16 Year Avg. 5.63'

### Wastewater Treatment

- **Maintenance** – The City's contracted vendor has finished the welding repairs and coating of the sludge tanker. The tanker was filled with water and checked for leaks. One small leak was found and the contractor made can back to make that repair the next day. The tanker will be put back in service as weather permits. Maintenance crews continue to mow and trim the plant and remote station grounds. A crew entered and continued to make repairs to the air diffusers in both Digested Sludge Storage units, but some parts are on backorder and will need to be installed upon arrival.
- **Operations** - The average daily flow for the past week was 3.23 million gallons for a total of 22.58 million gallons of wastewater being treated this week.  
Rain totals MPF = 2.03” Plant = 2.62”

## City Clerk

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

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