

Weekly Highlights Report Oct. 15, 2021

City Manager

- **City Manager Column** – It is hard to believe that an entire year has passed since I became the City Manager of Florida's Harborside Hometown. FY2021 provided the opportunity to assess the city overall. I found a dedicated group of 283 employees who are genuinely proud of the city they serve and who work hard to provide needed services to our residents and beyond continually. I have also had the privilege of working with a City Council that is engaged, thoughtful, and works tirelessly for the City of Punta Gorda residents as we crafted a long-range plan moving into FY2022. Two of our Councilmembers who chose not to retain their seats will have their final meeting on Oct. 20, and we thank them for their service as we welcome the two new members into their positions.



Over the past year, the Punta Gorda City Council has accomplished many vital goals. To name a few: The approval of a rewrite and reorganization of Chapter 6 of waterways, including the operation of vessels, construction within waterways, seawalls, and canal maintenance. The challenge of a rewrite of Chapter 26 regarding sign code regulations. The approval of a budget based on a five-year plan structured to support operations, reach necessary reserve levels, evaluate operating impacts of projects, and address staffing levels to meet the service levels expected by residents. The continued proactive response to the COVID-19 public health emergency. Declared a State of Local Emergency; implemented controlled access and use of city facilities; adjusted daily operations and services to meet the changing needs of employees, customers, and businesses; and adopted regulations to protect the health and safety of the community. Continued support for annexation/development initiatives to increase the assessable base and opportunities for citizens. Successfully championed the project needs for a six-year extension of the 1% Local Options Sales Tax resulting in residents voting to adopt the sales tax extension. Continued to evaluate and provide input for amendments to the comprehensive plan and land development regulations focused on form-based codes. Facilitated and approved project implementation for major infrastructure initiatives needed to support city operations and services. Supported administrative restructuring for succession planning and continuity of government operations.

This has helped put the city in a position where we are ready to turn the corner from the challenge of rebuilding and maintaining our infrastructure with available resources to a position of proactively improving and expanding needed services. We have a clear direction with initiatives such as additional infrastructure projects, the staffing necessary to maintain our infrastructure and provide services, annexation initiatives, economic development and support for businesses, and the strategic planning that incorporates the

needs and resulting impacts into our long-range planning efforts. Based on Council goals, citizen input, issues provided by staff, and the resulting fiscal analysis, this then allows us to continue improving City services according to an efficient, effective strategy.

We are always eager to engage with those who help us to continue to improve our city, and I look forward to working with the community, City Council and staff in FY2022 to continue to enhance Punta Gorda's identity as a vibrant waterfront community, unique in character and history, and one of the most desirable places to live, work and visit.

- **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.
- **City Council** – City Council will meet on Oct. 20 at 9 a.m. in the Historic City Hall. A few of the items of interest include:
 - Consideration of approval for a final plat subdividing a property located at 1700 Jamaica Way
 - Northbound Tamiami Trail (US 41) Vision Study Presentation
 - Consideration of a request to add Champagne Estates to the Punta Gorda Isles Canal Maintenance District
 - Consideration to modify the City of Punta Gorda Shell Creek Water Treatment Plant Water Use Permit to comply with proposed Minimum Flows for Lower Shell Creek

The complete agenda will be available at <https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/government/city-council/agendas-meetings>

- **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.
- **FPL/Comcast** – 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.

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/#>
- Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association, 2001 Shreve Street, for all community event and class information visit <https://pgica.org/>.
- Oct. 16, Heritage Culture Fest, Fishermen's Village, 12 p.m. until 4 p.m., for more information visit <https://www.culturalheritageswfl.org/>.
- Oct. 21, Water Quality Assessment and Improvement, 5 p.m. until 7 p.m. at Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association, hosted by PGICA and TEAM Punta Gorda, for more information visit <https://www.teampuntagorda.org/maritime/>.
- 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
- 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
- Oct. 31, 1st United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat, 507 W Marion Ave., for more information visit <https://www.whatis1st.com/>
- Oct. 31, Trick or Treat at the City Hall Annex Parking Garage, 126 Harvey Street for more information visit <https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/visitors/events-festivals/trunk-or-treat>
- 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
- Nov. 9, "The 5th 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
- Nov. 29, Ditchfield Family Singers, 11330 Burnt Store Rd. for more information visit www.bspconline.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

- The City has started a new lot mowing cycle.

Urban Design

- Southwest Florida Regional Resiliency Compact (SFRRC)** – Urban Design Staff and Councilmember Jaha Cummings joined leaders and elected officials from across Charlotte, Collier and Lee counties Oct. 8, for the first SFRRC meeting. The purpose of the compact is to build an alliance among county and municipal governments and natural and cultural resource managers to improve the region’s resilience to the effects of sea-level rise, storminess, and warming temperatures. The group discussed and evaluated possible governance and operational framework for the compact. The discussion favored a slower approach and a request for existing compacts to share the challenges, successes, and failures of forming their specific compacts.
- The Planning Corner – Form Based Codes** – In an effort to make the Proposed Land Development Regulations Form Based Code (FBC) PROPOSED changes easier to understand, Urban Design staff are continuing to answer some of the frequently asked questions we have received. This week’s questions pertain to set back and open space. **How does the new code affect set back rules from the street?** The proposed FBC rules are largely in line with the current setback requirements for this area. The table below provides a comparison of existing and proposed front (street), rear and side setback requirements:



Proposed Regulating District (current zoning classification)		Existing (Feet)			Proposed (Feet)		
		Front	Rear	Side	Front	Rear	Side
Parks and Open Space (Public)		Set by City Council			Set by City Council		
Traditional Residential (Neighborhood Residential 10)	Minimum	10	15	5	10	15	5
	Maximum	25	-	-	25	-	-
Residential Edge (Neighborhood Residential 15)	Minimum	10	15	5	10	15	5
	Maximum	25	-	-	25	-	-
Neighborhood Transition (N/A)	Minimum	Added District			10	15	0
	Maximum				25	-	-
Maker Village (Special Purpose)	Minimum	25	25	25	10	15	0
	Maximum	-	-	-	25	-	-
Flex Commercial Corridor (Highway Commercial)	Minimum	10	25	5	10	25	0
	Maximum	25		-	25	-	-
Village Center (Neighborhood Center)	Minimum	10	20	0	0	5	0
	Maximum	25	-	-	10	-	-
Downtown Core (City Center)	Minimum	0	15	0	0	5	0
	Maximum	10	-	-	10	-	-

Do you have a question regarding the proposed Land Development Regulation (Form Base Code) Update? Please let us know by visiting <https://www.puntagordamasterplan.com> or emailing UrbanDesign@cityofpuntagordafl.com.

Public Works

Canal Maintenance

- **Seawall Replacement Projects** - The seawall replacement contractor has one project under construction in last fiscal year's work program. This project was added at the end of the fiscal year due to a seawall failure. Punta Gorda Isles has 42 seawall replacement projects scheduled for fiscal year 2021/2022 and the seawall replacement contractor has three projects under construction. All seawall replacement projects are completed for Burnt Store Isles in last fiscal year's work program. Burnt Store Isles has seven seawall replacement projects scheduled for fiscal year 2021/2022 and at this time none are under construction. A seawall replacement project can consist of multiple properties. A seawall project is not considered complete until the sod has been placed.
 - Crews filled depressions at 13 locations.
 - Crews patched/repared 108' linear feet of seawall cap/seam.
 - Crews manufactured 16 (10' linear feet) seawall panels.
- **Seawall Replacement Schedule** - 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 12,000 linear 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 repairs have been completed and the pier is now open to the public.
- **Boca Grande Drainage Improvements** - Bi-weekly design project update meetings continue. The revised 60% design plan staff comments have been sent to the engineer for incorporation into the 90% plans. The engineering firm is making plan revisions and preparing for submittal to the Southwest Florida Water Management District.
- **East of US 41 Historic District Lighting Project** - The conversion of 71 high pressure sodium street lights to LED lights has been completed along with the installation of 30 new LED street lights on existing utility poles, 4 new decorative LED street lights on concrete poles and 13 new LED street lights on new poles.
- **Henry Street Sidewalk** - The construction plans are nearing completion. Coordination will continue with FDOT on work within their drainage easement and the sidewalk connection at US41.
- **Paving Program Street Resurfacing** - The Purchase Order has been issued to the contractor. A Media Advisory has also been issued listing each street scheduled for mill and resurfacing. The "Notice" signs are scheduled for placement at each street. Work is tentatively scheduled to commence Oct. 23 through Nov. 12 weather and operations depending. The paving program can be found on the City of Punta Gorda website under Engineering [Paving Program | City of Punta Gorda, FL \(punta-gorda.fl.us\)](https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/home/showpublisheddocument/12550/637643718591830000).



Police

- **Criminal Justice Information Services Meeting** – Lieutenant Renz attended the Criminal Justice Information Services meeting held by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement in Fort Myers.
- **Do the Right Thing** - The Police Department just completed their second Do the Right Thing ceremony for the year. The ceremonies are held the first Thursday of the month throughout the school year at 3:30 p.m. at the Military Heritage Museum located at 900 W. Marion Ave. Do the Right Thing of Charlotte County was founded in 1995 by the late Captain Don Cerbone with the Punta Gorda Police Department. In the last 25 years, over 1,000 students in Charlotte County have been recognized for their achievements in academics, athletics, acts of heroism, community service, and for doing the right thing. The goal of the program is the same as it was in 1995, which is to instill positive attitudes, self-esteem, and to publicly recognize students for their achievements. A special thank you goes out to all of this year’s sponsors who are the American Legion Post 110, Alan Ford, Peace River Riders Club, Gulf Coast Engraving, Publix, Brandon Paulson, Primeamerica, Military Heritage Museum, The Blanchard House, Kim Amontree, Gettel of Charlotte County, Creative Window Treatments, John Wright, Alice Zachos, Time Realty Services, AMS Floors, Mayor Lynne Matthews, and Simply Sweet.
- **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.



To apply for employment or for more information, please visit www.pgpdjobs.com or contact our Employee Development Coordinator at (941) 575-5571 or by email at employeedevelopment@pgorda.us.

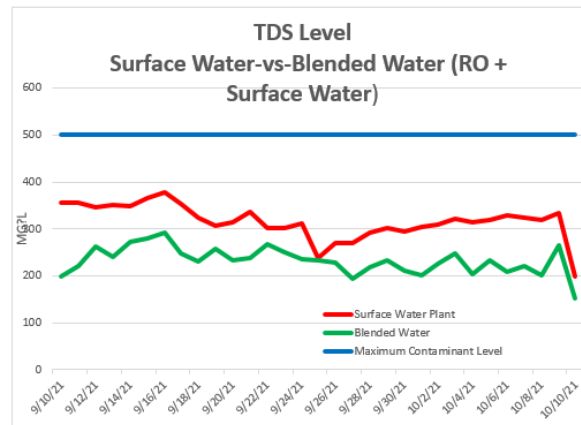
Fire

- **Survival Training** – The fire department conducted firefighter survival training this week under the guidance of Field Training Officer Bala. The training focused on self-rescue operations under duress. Some of the key components included: forcible entry props, entanglement hazards, confined space, window bail out techniques. The entire training took place at the departments training facility while using a smoke machine to create a zero visibility atmosphere.



Utilities

- **Groundwater R.O Update** –



Water Treatment Plant Operations

- 51.7 MG delivered to the distribution system with a 7.4 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 Oct. 2020 1.1” Oct. 2021 0.10”
- 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 100 ppm
- TDS Oct. 14 – Current 231 ppm, Low 231 ppm, High 430 ppm, 12 Year Avg. 316 ppm
- Reservoir Oct. 14 – Current 5.35', Record Low 5.06', Record High, 6.121' Year Avg. 5.37'

Wastewater Treatment

- **Maintenance** – A crew replaced all of the air diffuser in the South Digested Sludge Storage Unit. The tank was then filled and the air diffusers were checked for proper operation. No problems were found and the tank was returned to service. Team members have finished installing the new sludge supply pipping to the filter press project. Maintenance crews continue to mow and trim the plant and remote station grounds. The spraying of weed control has been finished which completes the spraying of all 440 acres of fields for this calendar year.

- **Operations** - The average daily flow for the past week was 2.34 million gallons for a total of 16.34 million gallons of wastewater being treated this week.
Rain totals MPF = 0.31” Plant = 0.30”

City Clerk

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

- **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.
- **Code Enforcement** – (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.
- **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. 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.

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:
 - Reflections Comics – 318 Tamiami Trail Unit #226