

Weekly Highlights Report Jan. 28, 2022

City Manager

- **City Manager Column** – The Strategic Plan is used to set the overall goals for the City, provide direction to City departments, and create the basis for each year's annual budget. The plan provides a tool for more effective and economical operations and demonstrates to the public that careful consideration has been given to the future development and direction of the organization. The plan also provides a realistic view of the expectations for the organization and community at-large.

City Council has spent considerable time developing and approving a framework that reflected a shift to an outcomes based annual plan. The framework continues to serve as the strategic operational plan annually. The missions, vision and value reflect the learning that was acquired as a result of the Citywide Master Plan process as well as strategic planning public input sessions. Components of the master planning efforts, such as the rewrite of the Comprehensive Plan, rewrite of the Land Development Regulations, and developing Form Based Codes are a part of the near-term planning that will guide the overall look and feel of the city.



I have asked each of the department and division leaders for the city to forecast their needs to meet the goals and objectives of long-term plans. This includes developing a clear understanding of operating impact for each Capital Improvement Project, staffing needs, and equipment needs. This internal strategic planning process positions the city to better understand the revenue needs over time to maintain the assets of the city and enhance programming provided to the community. The results are used to create a business plan that communicates to the City Council how Council's vision for the City will be pushed forward over the next three years. It also provides residents with a clear picture of how City services will be enhanced over the course of time.

One of the first steps to developing the budget each year is the Capital Improvement Projects program update. This update delineates the projects that are worked on in a given fiscal year. It includes strategic objectives, periodic status reports that highlight progress to date, funding and timelines for completion. The 1 % Sales Tax projects are prioritized by City Council and scheduled over a six-year plan. Studies such as those focusing on Septic to Sewer, Seawall Methods, and the Wastewater Treatment Plant are also key drivers of planning.

In FY2022 as part of the planning process each of the departments and divisions will undertake a comprehensive look at the internal policy that governs the work within each of the areas. This will aid in the identification of areas where the City can increase efficiencies and value to the residents.

The planning process also includes input from residents. A one hour public input session for strategic planning will be held in conjunction with the March 16th City Council meeting. I also invite you to email any comments you have regarding future plans and priorities for the City of Punta Gorda to citymgr@cityofpuntagordafl.com. Through proper planning for the future we will achieve our 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. *Readers may reach City Manager Greg Murray at citymgr@cityofpuntagordafl.com or by calling (941) 575-3302.*

- **State of the City** – Mayor Matthews delivered the State of the City address on Wednesday at the Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association. The video is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZVR453nfb4Y&t=3s>.



- **FPL/Comcast Update** – Comcast Restored services at 2100 Aqui Esta Drive, fixed the lines at 3618 Bonaire Court and the lines at 3439 Nighthawk Ct should be fixed Jan. 29. 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.
- **City Council Meeting** – City Council will meet on Feb. 2 at 9 a.m. in the Historic City Hall. A few items of interest included:
 - FY2022-FY2026 Long Range Financial Plan
 - Punta Gorda Police Department Therapy Dog Program
 - Community Redevelopment Agency update

Urban Design

- 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/>.
- Jan. 15, CHNEP Vertical Oyster Garden Workshop, 10 am at 326 W. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda. For more information and to sign-up, visit <https://www.chnep.org/monthly-volunteer-events>.
- Jan. 15-16, Punta Gorda Chamber Sullivan Street Arts & Craft Festival. For more information visit, <https://puntagordachamber.com/calendar-events/>.
- Jan. 22, Fiesta Family 5K, Charlotte High School. For more information contact Teresa (941)575-5450 x 7031.
- Jan. 24, The Tribute Company concert at Burnt Store Presbyterian Church buy tickets and learn more at <http://www.bspconline.org>.
- Jan. 29, 11th Annual Chili, Beer & Blues Festival, City Marketplace property. For more information, visit <http://www.smuglersevents.com/>.
- Jan. 30, YMCA Harbor Hustle 5K, Laishley Park. For more information, visit <https://www.ymcaswfl.org/events/harbor-hustle-5k>
- Feb. 4 and 5, Beyond Ourselves Home Tour, various addresses. For more information, visit <https://pgica.org/>.
- Feb. 5 and 6, Local Ladies Social Network Arts and Craft Fair, Laishley Park. For more information, visit <http://www.llsnevents.com>.
- Feb. 5 and 6, The Invitational Arts & Craft Show, Gilchrist Park. For more information, visit <https://daniellesblueribbonevents.com/>.
- Feb. 11 and 13, Big Boy Toy Expo, Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center. For more information, visit <https://www.bigboytoyexpo.com/>

- Feb. 12, CHNEP Trail Blaze and BioBlitz at CHEC, 9:30 a.m. at Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center at Alligator Creek Preserve. For more information visit <https://www.chnep.org/monthly-volunteer-events>.
- Feb. 14, The Boys of D63 concert at Burnt Store Presbyterian Church buy tickets and learn more at <http://www.bspconline.org>.
- Feb. 14, through Apr. 18 Zimsculpt at the Peace River Botanical Gardens. For more information visit <https://peacrivergardens.org/zimsculpt>.
- Feb. 19, St. Vincent de Paul Walk for the Poor, Gilchrist Park. For more information visit, <https://sacredheartfl.org/serving-the-poor/>.
- Feb. 25 and 26, Florida Frontier Days, History Park, 501 Shreve St. For more information contact, Frank Desguin, (941)769-1270.
- Feb. 26, 11th Annual Punta Gorda Pub Crawl. For more information and tickets, visit <https://puntagordapubcrawl.com/index.html>.
- Feb. 26, Boys and Girls Club of Charlotte County Farm to Table Fundraiser, Laishley Park. For more information and tickets, visit <https://www.bgcofcc.org/>.
- March 6, Rotary Club Taste of Punta Gorda, Laishley Park. For more information, visit <https://tasteofpuntagorda.org/>
- March 12, Punta Gorda ½ Marathon, beginning and ending in Laishley Park. For more information, visit <https://www.puntagordahalf.com/>
- Mar. 14, Everly Set concert at Burnt Store Presbyterian Church buy tickets and learn more at <http://www.bspconline.org>

Lot Mowing Program

- The City will begin a new mowing and trim cycle on Feb. 14.

Planning

- **The Planning Corner** – Due to the recent storms in our area, there have been numerous reports of roofing companies and contractors going door to door offering free roof inspections. These companies may not be licensed in the city and soliciting is prohibited. If you receive a visit from a solicitor please contact Code Compliance at (941)575-3352. If this occurs after normal business hours or on a weekend, please contact the Police non-emergency number, (941)639-4111. Under Florida Statute 489.127, anyone providing unlicensed contracting services during a state of emergency commits a felony of the third degree.
- **Save the Date** – The PGI Green Thumbs will hold their last community education talk of the season in the Punta Gorda Nature Park at the corner of Aqui Esta and Bal Harbor on Feb. 11 at 9:30 a.m. Learn about the many varieties of these beautiful plants. Find out which ones may be best suited to your garden and how to care for them. The class is held outdoors, where you will be surrounded by the multiple park beds planted with Bromeliads of many varieties. Park at the shopping center across the street and bring your own chair. For more information about the PGI Green Thumbs, visit www.PGIGreenThumbs.org.




Finance

- **Billing and Collections Service Update** – For the QUICKEST response to inquiries or concerns about your utility account, please contact the Billing and Collections office by sending an email to pgcollections@cityofpuntagordafl.com rather than trying to reach the office by phone. Due to an unprecedented staffing shortage, phone calls may go to voice mail and be subject to a delay in response time. Thank you for your patience and assistance.

Public Works

Canal Maintenance

- **Manatee Awareness** - Canal Maintenance is reminding people on the water to slow down and look out for migrating manatees this time of year. As water temperatures drop manatees tend to travel to the internal canal systems in order to stay warm. Manatees depend on water generally warmer than 68 degrees Fahrenheit to survive the winter. Recently there have been several manatees spotted in the Sunset Lake area, which is the body of water located near Casey Key Dr. and Surfbird Ct. So please go slow and look out below to allow them to swim safely.
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- **Seawall Assessment** –City staff is currently performing the Annual Seawall Assessment during low tide periods through March. City staff will be inspecting an estimated 303,868 lineal feet of seawalls in the southerly half of Punta Gorda Isles and all of Burnt Store Isles from the waterside while traversing canals in a boat. Residents may see city staff in a boat close to their seawalls while inspecting the condition of seawalls. To date staff has collected 3,083 points of data covering 208,666 lineal feet. The southerly half of Punta Gorda Isle has been completed and crews will be moving over to Burnt Store Isles next week.
 - **Seawall Replacement Projects** - Punta Gorda Isles has 44 seawall replacement projects scheduled for this fiscal year and the seawall replacement contractor has six projects under construction and six projects completed. Burnt Store Isles has eight seawall replacement projects scheduled for this fiscal year and the seawall contractor has three projects under construction at this time. 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 19 locations.
Crews patched and repaired (10' linear feet) of seawall cap/seam.
Crews manufactured 20 (10' foot) 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

- **Boca Grande Drainage Improvements** – The engineering consultant has received additional survey data for the project and is incorporating it into the project. The engineer of record anticipates submitting the Environmental Resource Permit application to the Southwest Florida Water Management District in February.
- **Henry Street Sidewalk** - Final construction plan revisions and drainage calculations are being completed. Coordination will continue with FDOT on work within their drainage easement and the sidewalk connection at US41.

Parks and Grounds

- **Christmas Tree and Decoration Removal** - The areas outlined in red (see picture) at the intersection of Marion Avenue and Taylor Street will be blocked off to allow access for City crews and equipment to remove Christmas tree and decorations. Parking spaces along Marion Avenue and Taylor Street will be opened up in the evening and on the weekends. Crews will begin removal of the Christmas decorations on Jan. 31. Please take special care when driving in the City to be aware of Public Works employees removing holiday decorations.



Police

- **Bicycle Safety** – Punta Gorda is a great place to bike, but it is important that cyclists follow the law to ensure the safety of everyone. Bicycles can legally be operated on sidewalks and when bicycles are operating on sidewalks they have the same rights and duties as a pedestrian. However, bicycles on sidewalks must yield the right-of-way to those on foot. Bicycles who are passing a pedestrian on foot must give an audible signal before overtaking them. In addition, electric bicycles (which are considered bicycles under Florida law) must follow the same rules, but should also slow down their speed substantially when pedestrians are walking in the area.



Open Positions

- **Public Safety Dispatcher Testing** - The Punta Gorda Police Department will be testing for the position of Public Safety Dispatcher on Feb. 28, 2022 at 9 a.m. Our dispatchers handle 911 calls in the city and dispatch for both the police department and fire department. Previous dispatching experience is not needed. If you are a good communicator, are able to multi-task, and can remain calm under pressure, you may have what it takes to be one of the “unseen” heroes of public safety! Visit www.pgpdjobs.com or call (941) 575-5571 for more information.



- **Internship Program** - The police department is currently accepting internship applications for the Summer Semester and Fall Semester 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 Summer Semester of 2022 is March 15.

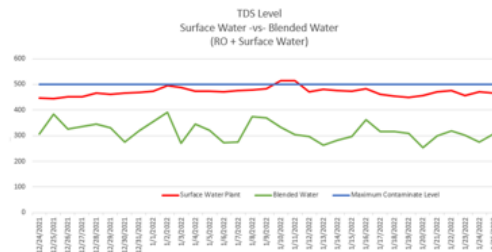
Fire

- **Training** – The fire department conducted its annual Emergency Vehicle Operator Course (EVOC) training this week. Crews had to navigate a cone course full of obstacles which simulate scenarios that could possibly occur while responding to actual emergencies. The course is conducted annually to ensure our first responders are confident and proficient in maneuvering emergency apparatus on a daily basis.



Utilities

- **R.O. Plant**



Water Treatment Plant Operations

- 52.5 MG delivered to the distribution system with a 7.5 MG daily average
- Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority Emergency Interconnect – Receiving 750 gallons per minute from the new Interconnect (Phase 1 Pipeline). Sending 1500 gallons per minute from the tank on 17 (Phase 1A Pipeline).
- Rainfall Jan. 2021 0.20” Jan. 2022 1.70”
- Hardness is a measurement of calcium and magnesium ions naturally occurring in the raw water. Currently "moderately hard" – Grains of Hardness 8 ppm –Total hardness 144 ppm
- TDS Jan. 27 – Current 274 ppm, Low 274 ppm, High 665 ppm, 12 Year Avg. 471 ppm
- Reservoir Jan. 27 – Current 5.09', Record Low 4.88', Record High, 5.88' 57 Year Average 5.18'.

Wastewater Treatment

- **Maintenance** – The contracted vendor continues the work of repairing the walls of the North tank at the Master Pumping Facility.
- **Operations** – The average daily flow for the past week was 2.73 million gallons for a total of 19.12 million gallons of wastewater being treated this week.
- **Wastewater Collection** – Work has begun on Fitzhugh Ave. between Mary St. and Booth St. Over the next couple weeks crews will be replacing the old gravity sewer main along with extending the main 190 ft. to provide additional services for future sewer customers on the street. This section of roadway will be closed to thru traffic during this time

City Clerk

Charter Review Committee

- Review of the City’s Charter, a process that occurs once every six years, is underway. Video of the Committee’s meetings are available on the City’s [Agendas and Meetings page](#) and [YouTube channel](#). The Committee’s next meeting will be held in Council Chambers at City Hall (326 West Marion Avenue) on February 14, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. Topics for discussion at the next meeting include establishing how to stagger four-year terms, term limits, councilmember compensation and the candidate residency requirement. All meetings of the Charter Review Committee are open to the public and attendance is encouraged.

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

- **Board of Zoning Appeals** – (two alternate) Meets monthly on 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.
- **Burnt Store Isles Canal Advisory Committee** – (one regular) Meets monthly on the second Tuesday at 1:30 p.m. in City Council Chambers. Burnt Store Isles Canal Maintenance Assessment District residency required. Five-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 effective maintenance of existing canals, waterways and navigable channels within the district, together with maintenance and reconstruction of seawalls. Holds public hearings and makes final decision on petitions for special permit to provisions of Section 2-1(c) of Chapter 6, City Code of Ordinances.
- **Code Enforcement Board** – (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.
- **Historic Preservation Advisory Board** - (one alternate) Meets monthly on the fourth Thursday at 9 a.m. in City Council Chambers. City residency required. Seven-member board with two alternate members. Two members must reside within the Historic District. Three year terms, maximum of three terms OR partial term plus two more terms. Identifies for the City Council historically significant structures and sites that should be considered for designation as a “Local Historic Landmark” or be nominated for listing on the Florida Master Site File and the National Register of Historic Places. Makes recommendations of the policies for the protection of historically significant structures and sites. Makes recommendations to staff with regard to certificates of appropriateness for any demolition, variance, sign or relocation of structures. Promotes public awareness of historic archaeological preservation and its community benefits.
- **Police Officers’ Pension Board** – (one City resident member). Meets quarterly and as called in City 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.

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:
 - Allen Vacation Rental – 131 Casa Lane
 - Zen Art Den – 1133 Bal Harbor Boulevard, #1151