

Weekly Highlights Report Feb. 4, 2022

City Manager

- **City Manager Column** – The City of Punta Gorda is seeking employment applicants that desire to work in a city that truly feels like a hometown. We are a progressive, forward-thinking community with a commitment to economic success. Punta Gorda's historic ambiance and intimate feeling are the backdrop for what may be the state's most picturesque, enjoyable, and accessible waterfront destination. The City of Punta Gorda actively seeks qualified individuals to join our team.



Our Utilities Department is accepting applications for a Utilities Director. The successful candidate will be a professional responsible for directing, planning, managing, and reviewing the activities and operations of the Utilities Department, including the Engineering, Utilities, Water Distribution, Waste Water Collection Divisions, and Treatment Plants; to coordinate assigned activities with other City departments, divisions, and outside agencies; and to provide highly responsible and complex administrative support to the City Manager. Utilities is also seeking a Utilities Maintenance Worker II. The individual selected for this position is responsible for maintaining and repairing wastewater treatment plant equipment and systems.

The Urban Design Department is seeking a Chief Building Official. This position is a professional administrative position responsible for directing the activities of the Building Department. Urban Design is also seeking either a Planner I or Planner II. If hired as a Planner I, the position is an entry-level planning position that assists in current and long-range urban planning efforts, including land development review and analysis, and planning studies supporting new and updated programs and regulations. Planner II is an advanced professional planning position responsible for researching and analyzing technical data in city planning. Performs professional and technical work developing, researching, data collection, mapping, and maintaining public planning studies and programs on land use, zoning, conservation, housing, transportation, population, coastal management, historic preservation, and other areas of comprehensive planning activities. The Lot Mowing Program Coordinator position under Urban Design will soon be available also. The skilled technical position is responsible for performing various inspections to ensure compliance with and identify violations of the city's lot mowing program.

Public Works is seeking Construction Engineering Inspector. This position provides construction inspection and project management for development projects from inception to completion to ensure the project meets specifications and expectations. Work is performed under the general supervision of the City Engineering Manager. The position is a full-time, temporary position with benefits lasting up to two years depending upon various projects' timelines. Canal Maintenance has an entry-level laborer position available responsible for maintaining, repairing, or replacing seawalls and related structures within the PGI and BSI canal maintenance districts. Also available is a Parks & Grounds Maintenance Worker I, an entry-level laborer responsible for daily maintenance of parks, medians, municipal properties, cul-de-sacs, and streetscape. A Right of Way Maintenance Worker is also available and is an entry-level laborer responsible for labor specific tasks, and a wide variety of road construction maintenance operations work. Sanitation has an entry-level laborer and a laborer position open to work in solid waste collections.

In the Information Technology (IT) Department, an IT Operations Analyst position is open and is responsible for performing professional and complex technical duties related to technology asset management, budgeting, training, and support of Information & Technology business operations.

From entry-level to highly skilled positions, the city provides an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of residents by joining a team committed to preserving our small-town character while promoting diversity, economic development, and sustainability. More information about employment opportunities is available by visiting <https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/government/human-resources/employment-opportunities> or by calling (941) 575-3303. Readers may reach City Manager Greg Murray at citymgr@cityofpuntafordafl.com or by calling (941) 575-3302.

- **FPL/Comcast Update** – Comcast technicians fixed messy wires at 3439 Nighthawk and 2090 Aqui Esta this week. The Cassino Ct. request is in motion. 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@cityofpuntafordafl.com. The City Manager and Mayor Matthews are sharing the emails with both companies so all properties get restored.
- **TEAM Punta Gorda Annual Meeting** – Mayor Matthews, Vice-Mayor Carey, Councilmember Cummings and Councilmember Lockhart attended the Jan. 26 meeting. The theme was Moving Forward Together. TEAM CEO Nancy Johnson recapped all of the successful TEAM projects from 2021. A development update was provided by Dave Gammon Executive Director of Charlotte County Economic Development and City Manager Greg Murray.



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/>.
- 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. 9 and Feb. 23, the Punta Gorda Historical Society will be hosting a variety of musicians in the Park on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month, through May 2022 from 4 to 6 p.m. Bring your own chair and beverage of choice, peruse the Food Trucks for your dining pleasure. In lieu of admission fees, the Punta Gorda Historical Society requests your donations for the ongoing maintenance of our four History Park buildings. For more information visit www.puntagordahistory.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/>.
- Mar. 4, Peter Mayer Group* and the Scott Trio Concert at the Woman's Club, 118 Sullivan Street. Tickets can only be purchased through: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/peter-mayer-group-w-scott-kirby-trio-tickets-250973527577?aff=ebdssbdestsearch>.
- Mar. 6, Rotary Club Taste of Punta Gorda, Laishley Park. For more information, visit <https://tasteofpuntagorda.org/>
- Mar. 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

- Due to the lack of rain and freezing weather, the City will begin the next trimming cycle on Feb. 7 and the next mowing cycle on Feb. 21.

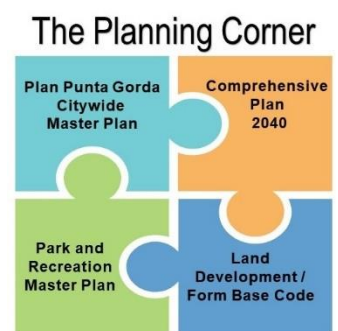
Planning

- **The Planning Corner – The City of Punta Gorda FY 2022 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan Projects –**

Section 37.5 of the Americans with Disabilities Act states: "No entity shall discriminate against an individual with a disability in conjunction with the provisions of public services" Title II of the ADA requires all State and Local Governments who have 50 or more employees have an ADA Transition Plan (Plan). The Plan is to identify physical obstacles, describe remediation, establish a schedule for completion and indicate the official responsible. The City's ADA Transition Plan is a living document that evaluates accessibility across all programs and projects, highlighting compliance efforts and charting a course for improvements.

At the Feb. 2 City Council meeting the Urban Design Division provided an update to City Council highlighting the City's action and progress for the previous year (FY 2021) and the upcoming year (FY 2022). Some of the approved projects include:

- Construction of the Laishley Park Playground area with enhanced water play equipment that promotes accessibility and inclusion
- Design process for accessibility improvements in Nature Park includes resurfacing the nature trail entrances. Engineering and permitting will be necessary to replace the trail's platform bridge, observation deck, fishing pier, and site furnishings.



- Add interior Wayfinding Signage to Fire Station II, Fire Station III, and Cooper St. Recreational Center providing fully ADA compliant messaging for navigating City buildings using the City’s current branding
- Construction of a pedestrian sidewalk along W William Street connecting a residential area to an adjacent shopping plaza

To view the presentation or see the complete list of projects, go to the [City's Website](#). To learn more about the City's accessibility efforts, visit [Accessibility | City of Punta Gorda, FL \(punta-gorda.fl.us\)](#). In accordance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the City of Punta Gorda has designated an ADA Coordinator to oversee and coordinate the City’s Title II compliance efforts. Compliance questions should be directed to Jeff Payne, City of Punta Gorda, Human Resources Manager / ADA Coordinator. Mr. Payne can be reached at humres@CityofPuntaGordaFL.com; Telephone: (941) 575-3371; TTY: (941) 575-5013; Florida Relay Service at 1-800-955-8771 (TTY) or for voice, call 1-800-955-9770 (English); 1-877-955-8707 (Spanish); or 1-877-955-8707 (French Cr).

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

Administration

- **Citizens’ Academy Fire Department Session** - The Fire Department session of 2022 Citizens’ Academy was a huge success. The evening involved a presentation highlighting the resources and capabilities of the department. Participants were given some hands on education with fire/EMS tools and gear. Participants were also given the opportunity to put out a live fire! Another area of interest was the historic mural painted on the Firehouse wall. The highlight of the evening was a treat to “Fire House Chili” prepared by Fire Department staff.



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.



- **Seawall Assessment** – City staff is currently performing the Annual Seawall Assessment during low tide periods through Mar. 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 3,656 points of data covering 250,378 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 eight 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 two locations.
 - Crews patched and repaired (41’ linear feet) of seawall cap/seam.
 - Crews manufactured 40 (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 Feb.
- **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 began 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.



Sanitation

- **President’s Day holiday** – The government offices of the City of Punta Gorda will be closed on Feb. 21 for the President’s Day holiday. Residents of the City of Punta Gorda will notice NO CHANGE in their trash, yard waste or recycling collections during this holiday. Commercial customers will notice NO CHANGE in collection service 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.

Police

- **Beware of Tax Scams** – Tax season brings with it an increase of tax related scam cases. Here are a few tips to make sure that you don't become a victim:

- The IRS does not use email, text messages, or social media to discuss personal tax issues involving bills or refunds. Do not engage with anyone claiming to be with the IRS using these methods.
- The IRS does not accept tax payments using prepaid debit cards, gift cards, or wire transfers. If someone asks you to pay a tax bill using any of these methods they are not with the IRS.
- Never call numbers or go to websites found in emails or letters. These can be used to trick you into call imposters or visiting fake websites. You should only use numbers and websites from legitimate sources. The IRS website is www.irs.gov.
- Never provide any personal or tax information to anyone who contacted you. If you believe someone may actually be with the IRS, they will be happy to allow you to call back using a number you located on the official IRS website.



Open Positions

- **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 June. Applications must be received by May 25. The written exam will be completed online anytime between June 1, and June 9 with virtual oral board exams conducted via Zoom on June 20, and June 21. 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 Punta Gorda Police Department will be testing for the position of Public Safety Dispatcher on Feb. 28 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 4.
- **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.

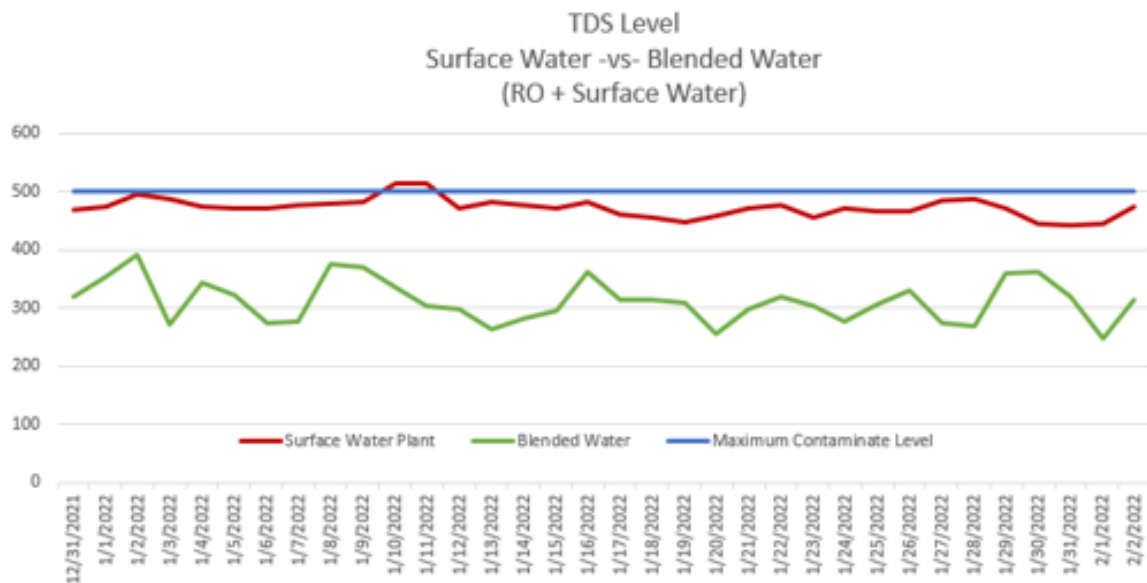
Fire

- **Resident** – The fire department recently responded to a public service call for something a little outside the norm. A neighbor had called seeking avenues to help another neighbor whose heat was not working and the occupant was freezing in their home. The fire truck crew and Battalion Chief went out and determined the unit was operational, however the thermostat was not working. The truck crew replaced the batteries in the home thermostat and after resetting the unit and was able to get the heat working again.



Utilities

- **R.O. Plant**



Water Treatment Plant Operations

- 54.3 MG delivered to the distribution system with a 7.8 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 1.80” Feb. 2021 1.20” Feb. 2022 0.00”
- 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 Feb. 3 – Current 286 ppm, Low 249 ppm, High 643 ppm, 12 Year Avg. 459 ppm
- Reservoir Feb. 3 – Current 5.08', Record Low 4.88', Record High, 6.26' 57 Year Average 5.20'.

Wastewater Treatment

- **Maintenance** – The contracted vendor continues the work of repairing the walls of the North tank at the Master Pumping Facility. Team members were able to haul and inject 224,000 gallons of bio-solids to field seven this week.
- **Operations** – The average daily flow for the past week was 2.67 million gallons for a total of 18.67 million gallons of wastewater being treated this week.

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 Feb. 14 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.
- **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.
- **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:

- Alpha Medicine & Rehab LLC – 150 McKenzie Street
- Allied Family Health LLC (formerly Allied Medical of SW Florida) – 150 McKenzie Street