

Weekly Highlights Report Feb. 18, 2022

City Manager

- **City Manager Column** – With 55 miles of canal, keeping the canals safe for boaters is quite an undertaking. Our Canal Maintenance Division focuses on picking up large items such as broken pilings or trees floating in the canals of BSI and PGI that are causing safety concerns. We are also fortunate to have a volunteer group in this instance that has scheduled a cleanup of the canals in Punta Gorda Isles (PGI). The PGI Islanders Cruising Club is organizing the Canal Cleanup Day on Mar. 5 from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and welcome and appreciate additional volunteer help to make this another successful day. We all enjoy a trip through the canals here in our beautiful city, whether you're fishing, out on a sunset happy hour tour with friends, or just transiting out for a trip down the harbor. Our waterways deserve a little sweat and elbow grease to keep them looking beautiful. What a great way to get together with your friends and have a fun time for a couple of hours! If you do not have a boat and would like to participate, let Mr. Obrien or Mr. Schmidt know, and they can try and team you up with another boat owner. Maps of the territories, trash bags, and instructions will be provided. Best of all for this event, they will be having a luncheon at the Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association Pavilion afterward from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. for all the volunteers. Please email your name, address, and best way to contact you so they can assign a specific territory convenient to you. Also, please let them know what type of vessel and how many people will be helping you and attending the luncheon. To sign up, please email us at Joe OBrien jfobrien5@comcast.net or call (610) 639-8131 or Rich Schmidt graphicsguymd@hotmail.com or call (240) 418-4575. We look forward to more events like this for our system of canals in the future.



Another group that works hard to keep the canals safe is the PGI Neighborhood Marine Watch. The PGI Neighborhood Marine Watch has 60 volunteer residents who participate in the water and land surveillance patrols. Volunteers work for a minimum of a two-hour shift once a month at night or in the early morning hours. The Marine Watch volunteers use their own boats for the patrols that are outfitted with signage identifying the boat as a "Neighborhood Marine Watch Patrol Boat." If you are a Punta Gorda Isles resident and interested in volunteering your time and boat for a couple of hours each month to this worthwhile program, contact Joseph and Nora Giardina Sr. at (941) 347-8739 or email pgimarinewatch@gmail.com.

The City of Punta Gorda as a whole benefits from the efforts of numerous volunteer groups such as those highlighted today. We appreciate all of the time and care put in by our residents 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.*

- **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.
- **FPL/Comcast Update** – FPL pulled another 15 poles during Dec. and Jan. There are 136 poles ready to be pulled and another 16 that have been entered into the design phase for removal. Additionally, there are 42 poles with FPL attachments, 85 with Comcast attachments and 45 other poles with various fiber optic attachments that still need wires removed before they can go into the removal process. We have requested that they expedite several other locations, including the duplicate poles along Bal Harbor Blvd. Numerous other locations that were reported to the City are being addressed individually with the property owners. 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@cityofpuntagordafl.com. The City Manager and Mayor Matthews are sharing the emails with both companies so all properties get restored.

Urban Design

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.charlottecounty-chamber.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. 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. 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. 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.bsponline.org>
- Mar. 17, St. Patrick's Day Event, Celtic Ray, 145 E Marion Ave. For additional information visit <https://celticray.net/>
- Mar. 19-20, Peace River National Art Show, Laishley Park. For more information, visit <https://visualartcenter.org/collections/peace-river-national-art-festival>
- Mar. 18-19, Premier Auto Auction, Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center, 75 Taylor St. For more information, visit <https://www.premierauctiongroup.com/vehicles>
- Mar. 19-20, Punta Gorda National Art Show. For additional information, visit <https://visualartcenter.org/>
- Mar. 26, Pedal and Play in Paradise, Laishley Park. For more information visit <http://pedalandplayinparadise.com/>
- April 2, Strongman Competition, Laishley Park Pavilions. For more information visit <https://www.facebook.com/events/2666695273476742/>
- Apr. 9, Loveland Center 5K Run, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St., for additional information, visit [Loveland Center Ability 5K Run and 1K Fun Walk \(runsignup.com\)](http://runsignup.com)
- Apr. 9-10, Bloom and Art, Art & Craft Show, Gilchrist Park, 400 W Retta Esplanade. For more information contact blueribboneventsllc@gmail.com
- Apr. 17, The Rock Calvary Chapel Easter Outreach, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St., For more information contact rich.therockcc@gmail.com
- Apr. 30, Charlotte County Heart Walk, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St., for additional information, visit [2022 Charlotte County Heart Walk: Event Master Page - Heart Walk - American Heart Association](#)

Lot Mowing Program

- The City has completed trimming the following areas:
- Burnt Store Isles (Monaco Drive, Tripoli Boulevard, Madrid Boulevard, and Macedonia Drive).
- Burnt Store Meadows (Areas of Tamiami Trail, N. Blue Sage, S. Blue Sage, Royal Poinciana, and Gold Tree).
- Downtown and Historic District (W. Marion Avenue, W. Olympia Avenue, Shreve Street, and Harvey Street)
- The area east of 41 and the area behind Dunkin Donuts (E. Marion Avenue, E Olympia Avenue, Narranja Street, E Henry Street, and Cooper Street).

Planning

- **The Planning Corner – Land Development Regulations –** The first draft of the Land Development Regulation (Form Base Code) update project is available for review. The draft is the third part of a three-part project authorized by City Council in 2018. Land Development Regulations (LDRs) contain the specific development standards for private properties within the City and identify setbacks, building height, types of uses, and similar standards within the proposed Zoning Classifications. The LDRs also contain specific requirements for parking, landscaping, architecture, and administrative processes and procedures. The proposed changes cover only a portion of the City, including the downtown and surrounding historic neighborhoods. The first draft of the proposed changes to the LDRs/Form Based Code for Article 3 - Zoning Regulating Districts and Article 7- Architectural Provisions will be discussed at the Feb. 28 Planning Commission Meeting where public comments will be heard. The draft documents are available as part of the [Planning Commission Agenda](#) Please send any questions or comments regarding the proposed Land Development Regulation (Form Base Code) Update to the Urban Design Division at UrbanDesign@cityofpuntafordafl.com



Public Works

Administration

- **Citizens' Academy Police Department Session -** The Police Department session of 2022 Citizens' Academy was a huge success. The evening involved a presentation highlighting the resources and capabilities of the department. Participants had the opportunity to tour the different departments with an overview from each department head/employee. Everyone enjoyed the canine skills of Sadie, led by Officer Burga-MPO.



Canal Maintenance

- **Annual Canal Cleanup Day –** The PGI Islanders Sailing Club has scheduled their Annual Canal Cleanup Day for Mar. 5. If you would like to participate, need more details or have any questions, you can contact Joe Obrien at jfobrien5@comcast.net or call him at (610) 639-8131.



- **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 has completed the seawall assessment in the southerly half of Punta Gorda Isles and all of Burnt Store Isles. A total of 4,384 points were collected covering approximately 303,868 lineal feet of seawalls.
- **Seawall Replacement Projects** – Punta Gorda Isles has 44 seawall replacement projects scheduled for this fiscal year and the seawall replacement contractor has nine 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 removed 1 piece of square tubing from waterway.
 - Crews manufactured 40 (10' foot) seawall panels.
 - Crews patched/repared (29' linear feet) of seawall cap/seam.
- **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.
- **Wayfinding Signage** – Foundation bases for the proposed way finding signs have been completed. Installation of new signs will follow completion of manufacturing and concrete curing.

Police

- **Congratulations** – The Punta Gorda Police Department would like to congratulate Lieutenant David Lipker on his years of service. On Wednesday, Mayor Matthews and City Council recognized Lieutenant Lipker for his 25 years of dedicated service to the residents and visitors of the city of Punta Gorda.
- **Citizens Academy** – The Citizens Academy spent time in the police department this week receiving an overview of the department, a tour of our facility, and getting to see a display of several of our specialty teams and units.



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.

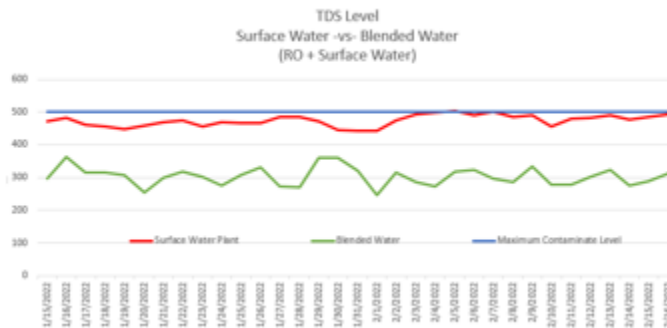
Fire

- **Dry Season** – Dry season is here and it creates an increased fire risk. The Punta Gorda Fire Department would like to share with you some safety tips with regards to fire safety during the dry season.



Utilities

- **R.O. Plant**



Water Treatment Plant Operations

- 54.9 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 Feb. 2021 1.20” Feb. 2022 0.70”

- Hardness is a measurement of calcium and magnesium ions naturally occurring in the raw water. Currently "moderately hard" – Grains of Hardness 9 ppm –Total hardness 148 ppm
- TDS Feb. 17 – Current 277 ppm, Low 261 ppm, High 661 ppm, 12 Year Avg. 474 ppm
- Reservoir Feb. 17 – Current 5.07', Record Low 4.80', Record High, 6.48' 57 Year Average 5.22'.

Wastewater Treatment

- **Maintenance** – Staff is working on painting pond pump house. Staff is in the process of emptying holding pond #1 for liner repairs to be done by contracted vendor. The City's contracted vendor continues to work on the Master Pumping Facility. Team members were able to haul and inject 140,000 gallons of bio-solids to field seven this week.
- **Operations** – The average daily flow for the past week was 2.749 million gallons for a total of 19.246 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 Mar. 14, 2022 at 9 a.m. Topics for discussion at the next meeting include term length draft language, economic development powers, ad valorem tax exemptions, historical exemptions, frequency of the Charter Review Committee, Capital Improvements by Special Assessment and the Planning Commission. 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 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 regular and 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:
 - Sister Slay, Inc. – 318 Tamiami Trail, Suite #224