

Weekly Highlights Report Apr. 15, 2022

City Manager

- **City Manager Column** – This year, the City of Punta Gorda has earned the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for its budget. The award represents a significant achievement by the City. It reflects the commitment of the City and staff to meeting the highest principles of governmental budgeting. To receive the budget award, the City had to satisfy nationally recognized guidelines for effective budget presentation. These guidelines are designed to assess how well an entity's budget serves as a policy document, a financial plan, an operations guide, and a communications device. Budget documents must be rated "proficient" in all four categories and the fourteen mandatory criteria within those categories to receive the award.



According to the GFOA, "Award recipients have pioneered efforts to improve the quality of budgeting and provide an excellent example for other governments throughout North America. Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) advances excellence in government finance by providing best practices, professional development, resources, and practical research for more than 21,000 members and the communities they serve." The City has earned this recognition every year since 1985.

The Finance Department's staff takes special care to create a transparent budget with clear policy goals and utilize the strategic plan as a strong policy framework. The Finance Department was also rated as outstanding in demonstrating the status and descriptions of the financial policies. The evaluators found that the budget includes a very good discussion about long-range financial plans for the operating budget, including forecasts, trends, or other data reflective of the City operating budgets for at least three years beyond the budget period. Also earning an outstanding rating were the performance information and metrics directly related to the strategic goals. The GFAO evaluators found the budget to be an outstanding policy plan and operations guide.

Other comments by the evaluators include that short-and-long term planning is emphasized throughout the planning process. The Mayor, City Council, and City Manager have developed a short and long-term strategic management plan. The policy guidelines are clearly defined throughout the Budget Presentation. Policy initiatives are identified at the organization-wide level and organizational unit level. The evolution of the policy plan enhances service delivery while managing the resources available. The Elected Officials and Management have carefully evaluated the policy and financial priorities. This advancement will lead the City into the future with confidence and assurance of sound operational planning and prudent financial management.

As the FY2022 budget is developed section by section, the opportunity for feedback and public comments is provided at the City Council meetings. Extended outreach will take place in May. There will be public meetings for the Canal Advisory Committee budgets. Burnt Store Isles public meeting will be held at Twin Isles Country Club on May 2, 2022, at 5:30 p.m. The Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association will host the Punta Gorda Isles meeting on May 12, 2022, at 5:30 p.m.

Our budget is driven by 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. I want to thank our elected officials and city staff for their efforts that have resulted in receiving the GFAO Distinguished Budget Presentation Award. I look forward to the continued discussions throughout the FY2022 budget process. *Readers may reach City Manager Greg Murray at citymgr@cityofpuntagordafl.com or by calling (941) 575-3302.*

- **Florida Power and Light (FPL)/Comcast Update** – Since Mar. 1, FPL has pulled 62 double poles. There are currently another 60 ready to be pulled, and 171 that still have attachments on them that need to have wires removed before old poles can be pulled. They have fixed leaning poles at Gettel Automotive on Tamiami Trail and the leaning pole between 2250 and 2290 W. Marion is soon to be replaced. The pole at 2090 Aqwi Esta has been fixed. The pole at 5300 Almar has an attachment on it that is service to a City lift station. The lift station wires will need to be moved before FPL can pull that pole. We will connect our City supervisor with them to coordinate this, as there will need to be a disconnect and reconnect for a new pole when it is installed. 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.
- **City Council Meeting** – City Council will meet on Apr. 20 at 9:00 a.m. in Council Chambers at the Historic City Hall. Items of interest include:
 - Article 3 of Land Development Regulation Review
 - Local Black History Mural Refresh
 - Park Hours Ordinance
 - Best Tasting Drinking Water Award City of Punta Gorda Utilities Department

The meeting is live streamed at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-Qo-k4PpXWo4IJQah6_Kqw.

- **Promote Punta Gorda Small Business Spotlight features Beyond Transformation** – Location of Business 2511 Vasco St #119. Phone Number (858) 531-0132

Products and Services offered –

We are a natural wellness center focused on providing healthy options for healing. Yoga, Meditation and Counseling our expertise is to provide support and services available to all. Mind- Laura is a LMHC and Certified Hypnotherapist focused on the release of trauma, grief, anxiety and depression. Body- Sandra is a certified yoga and meditation instructor focused in releasing stress, trauma and limited movement, building physical practices that align mind and body. Spirit- energy healing is an ancient modality that improves the connection between each sense of the self. Sound Therapy, Yoga Nidra, and Energy Work are alternative solutions that enhance the work done through traditional practices and provides strategies for balancing your knowledge of self-discovery.

What makes your business special?

We collaborate with others, promoting each person and organizations gifts. Offering novel and fun ways to work through traditionally difficult life issues, we are not in the "fix you model" of care. We are focused on helping people eliminate limiting beliefs and practices, finding wisdom and growth for the inside.



How does your business help the community?

Offering free services to organizations, individuals and families, donations ensure we can offer our programs to all who are looking for support.

What facts are important for customers to know about your business?

Licensed, certified and professional, we are new to Punta Gorda but have over 20 years' experience in our modalities. If you want to find fun and novel ways to work through problems, we provide a collaborative and holistic approach to personal and leadership practices that are available to enhance your knowledge and experience, applicable to your work or personal lifestyle.

Any fun facts you would like to share about your business?

We meet the first Saturday of the month for a donation based energy group. If you're interested in connecting with like-minded light workers and healers, this group is for you. Sound Bath and Yoga Nidra are natural ways to find rest, relaxation and healing. We offer in house and remote events to explore your potential, wisdom and internal journey, contact us to learn more.

Why is the City of Punta Gorda a great place to do business?

Amazing natural resources, a community focused on giving back and individuals who want to make a difference, our decision to leave corporate executive positions and start a business in Punta Gorda has been a journey. The beautiful landscape allows us the opportunity to connect with neighbors and nature in a community environment. This City felt like home the moment we arrived, and we want to make a difference here, bringing a "Sedona like" sense of exploration within the personal self-discovery space, that is unlike any other.

Urban Design

Upcoming Events

- Going on now until Jul. 1, CHNEP 2023 Nature Calendar Photo Contest. For more information visit <https://www.chnep.org/calendar-photo-contest>.
- 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.charlottecountyhamber.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/>.
- 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.
- Apr. 17, The Rock Calvary Chapel Easter Outreach, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St., For more information contact rich.therockcc@gmail.com
- Apr. 24, Punta Gorda Symphony Celebrates Judy Garland Centennial, 75 Taylor St., for more information visit <https://www.pgsymphony.org>.
- April 22-24, Paddle the Gulf BioBlitz Volunteer Event, using the iNaturalist app to record and report biodiversity data while paddling your local waterway! For more information visit <https://www.chnep.org/monthly-volunteer-events>.
- Apr. 30, Charlotte County Heart Walk, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St., more information at https://www.heart.org/site/TR?fr_id=6422&pg=informational&type=fr_informational&sid=10202022 Charlotte County Heart Walk: Event Master Page - Heart Walk - American Heart Association

- Apr. 30-May 2, Hibiscus Festival, Gilchrist Park, 400 W Retta Esplanade, contact teresadesguin@iheartmedia.com or visit <https://thehibiscusfestival.com/> for more information.
- May 7, Bands, Brews, & BBQ, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St, For more information contact jerry@smugglers.com
- May 7, Girls on the Run of SWFL, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St, For additional information, visit Charlotte County 5K Detail | GOTR Southwest Florida (gotrswfl.org)
- May 7, Mental Health Walk, Gilchrist Park, 400 W Retta Esplanade, For more information contact kpomerville@cbhcfl.org
- May 13-15, Punta Gorda Seafood & Music Festival, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St., For more information contact events@paragonartfest.com
- May 26 –May 31, Healing Field of Honor, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St, For more information visit <https://www.facebook.com/PGHFOH>.

Lot Mowing Program

The City has started mowing and edging the following areas:

- The Historic Area East of 41 and the area behind Dunkin Donuts (E. Marion Avenue, E Olympia Avenue, Narranja Street, E Henry Street, and Cooper Street).
- Downtown and Historic District (W. Marion Avenue, W. Olympia Avenue, Shreve Street, Harvey Street)
- PGI (Magdalena Drive, Via Veneto, W Henry Street, Appian Drive, and Columbian Drive).
- Colony Point (Colony Point Drive, West Marion Avenue, Socorro and Coronado Drive).
- PGI (Bal Harbor Boulevard, Deborah and Casey Key Drive, Ryan Boulevard, Suzi Street)
- PGI Bird Section (Almar Drive, Albatross Drive, Whippoorwill Boulevard, and Turtle Dove Boulevard).
- Burnt Store Isles (Monaco and Macedonia Drive, Tripoli and Madrid Boulevard)
- Burnt Store Meadows (Areas of Tamiami Trail, N. Blue Sage, S. Blue Sage, Royal Poinciana, and Gold Tree).

Planning Corner

- **The Planning Corner – Land Development Regulations** – City Land Development Regulations (LDRs) contain the specific development standards for private properties within the City. Things like setbacks, building height, types of uses, and similar standards are set forth in various Zoning Classifications ranging from Environmental Preserve to City Center. The LDRs also contain specific requirements for parking, landscaping, architecture, and administrative processes and procedures. The proposed amendments will cover only a small portion of the City, including the downtown and surrounding historic neighborhoods. The first draft of the proposed changes to the LDRs/Form Based Code include:



- Article 2 - Purpose and Intent
- Article 4 - Uses permitted with conditions
- Article 5 - Planned Developments
- Article 6 - Application of regulations
- Article 8 - Standards of general applicability
- Article 9 - Streets
- Article 10 - Parking and loading,
- Article 11 - Sign standards
- Article 12 - Landscaping standards
- Article 13 - Events
- Article 15 - Review authorities
- Article 16 - Application review and approval requirements
- Article 17 - Non-Conformities
- Article 19 - Definitions

Staff will present the above Article changes at the Apr. 25 Planning Commission Meeting. Public comments will be heard. The draft documents are available as part of the [Planning Commission Agenda package](#). 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

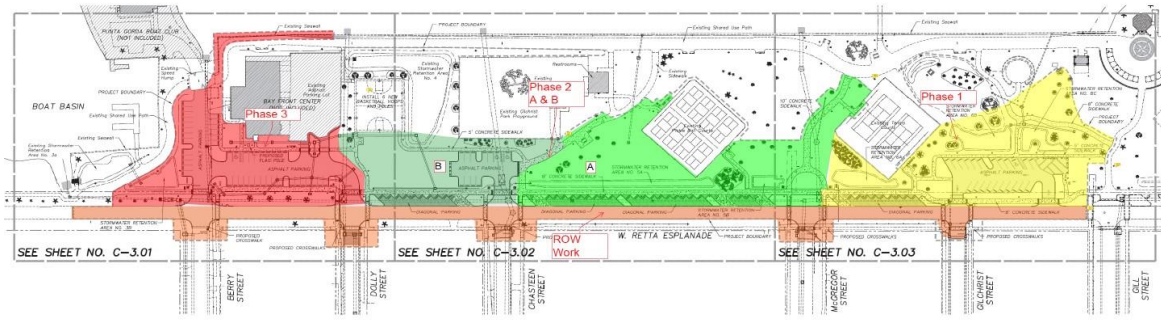
Canal Maintenance

- **Seawall Replacement** – Punta Gorda Isles has 44 seawall replacement projects scheduled for the fiscal year 2021/2022, and the seawall replacement contractor has 12 projects under construction and has completed ten projects. Burnt Store Isles has eight seawall replacement projects scheduled for the fiscal year 2021/2022, and the seawall replacement contractor has five projects under construction at this time and has completed two projects. 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 four locations.
 - Crews patched/repared (5.5) seawall caps/seams.
 - Crews manufactured (60) 10'ft of 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 may bump planned projects to the following year).
- **Canal Maintenance Budget Workshops** – The proposed budgets for the fiscal year 2023 will be discussed at the Canal Advisory Committee meetings. Punta Gorda Isles will meet on Apr. 18 at 1:30 p.m. in City Council Chambers. The public is invited and will have an opportunity to speak.
- **Canal Maintenance Assessment Fees Public Meetings** – Learn about the seawall history, its current condition and replacement program; special projects scheduled in your Canal Maintenance district; and new assessment fees being considered.
 - **Burnt Store Isles** – Public meeting will be held at Twin Isles Country Club located at 301 Madrid Blvd. Punta Gorda. The meeting date is May 2 and starts at 5:30 p.m.
 - **Punta Gorda Isles** – The Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association (PGICA) is sponsoring the Punta Gorda Isles public meeting. The meeting date is May 12, and starts at 5:30 p.m. PGICA is located at 2001 Shreve St. Punta Gorda.

Engineering

- **Boca Grande Drainage Improvement project** – Revised 90% design plans are in final review by City staff. Once received, the engineering of record will submit the plans to the Southwest Florida Water Management District for Environmental Resource Permitting review. Staff attended the Southwest Florida Water Management District Cooperative Funding Initiative grant funding presentation and recommendation meeting at the Sarasota Board of County Commission meeting. The project by consent moved to the next step. It is anticipated to receive grant funds in the fiscal year 2023 for \$283,863 from Southwest Florida Water Management District Cooperative Funding Initiative. Staff continues to work with the engineer of record on the scope of work for the Rebuild Florida Grant request.
- **Harborwalk parking and upland improvements** – Phase one construction is well underway. Landscape, parking lot demolition, and hauling of materials continue. Some palm trees have been removed from the park for this project. Many of these trees were showing signs of decay and rot. The project includes planting additional trees, including two Oak, four Mahogany, 16 Royal Palms, and three Sabal Palms. Harborwalk Phase one added 55 trees to the park. A survey is scheduled to occur within the next two weeks. Silt fence and erosion control protective measures are in place. A snow fence has been installed to delineate pedestrians away from the project limits for public safety. Travelers may experience temporary delays. Maintenance of traffic signage is in place with intermittent flagging operations to be encountered. Pedestrians and travelers are requested to use caution while traveling or walking around the project limits.

PHASING PLAN



- **Wayfinding Signage** — Sign installations are tentatively scheduled for the first week of May.
- **City Wide Drainage Swale Regrading** — Swale work on Padre Island is underway. The contractor has regraded approximately another 4000 SF and will install the sod this week. There is an additional 4000 SF to be regraded for the completion of Padre Island. Bal Harbor has been completed for the stakeout for regrading, and work will begin on May 2. Elevations have been shot in, and grade stakes have been installed on Sandpiper. The contractor will start regrading the swales on May 9.

Right of Way

- **Reflective Tape** — The Right of Way department continues to place reflective tape on the bollards around the City to improve visibility. The area from Fishermen's Village along the MURT to Shreve St has been completed. The following section will be completed down the MURT from Shreve St. to US 41 southbound.

Fire

- **Training** — The fire department conducted pump training as part of the department's new hire training program. When an employee is hired on at the fire department they must undergo a one year probationary period where they are tasked to complete a training book that's broken into five phases. These five phases encompass everything from fire and medical emergencies to tools, area familiarization and driver training.
- **Hazardous Materials** — The Punta Gorda Fire Department is authorized to accept hazardous materials in the form of medications and needle/syringes ONLY. We ask that residents do not bring flares, batteries, containers of any type of acid or petroleum products, etc. to the fire station(s). These types of items should go the County Mini Transfer and Recycling Station. If you are unsure of disposal methods, please call the Charlotte County Solid Waste Division at (941) 764-4360, visit their website at <https://www.charlottecountyfl.gov/departments/public-works/solid-waste/recycling-facilities.stml> or call the Fire Department Administrative Office at (941) 575-5529.



Police

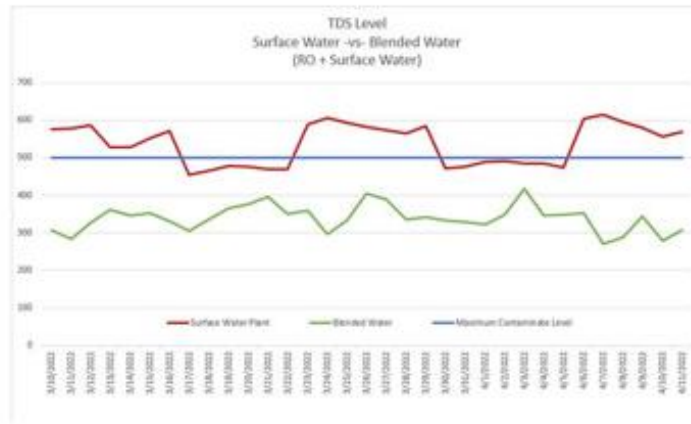
- **National Telecommunicators Week** – This week is National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week, where we recognize the unseen heroes of public safety. Please help us in thanking the awesome men and women of our Communications Section! Thank you for all that you do!
- **Away from Home Program** – The Away from Home Program is an invaluable courtesy service offered by the Punta Gorda Police Department to its residents. The primary purpose of the Away from Home Program is to offer vacationing, seasonal, and year-round residents the reassurance that if a problem exists at their property such as suspicious activity, utility emergencies, or other emergency conditions, the resident or their designated key holder can be contacted expeditiously. Members of the Punta Gorda Police Department's Volunteers on Patrol may also conduct periodic House Checks on your home while you are away and immediately notify you or your designee of any problems or concerns at your residence. Participants can provide contact information for themselves or a key holder which will enable the Police Department to more quickly remedy emergency situations. It is important to note that the Away from Home Program is not intended, or designed, to replace home security systems or other security services. Rather, it is a courtesy service designed to further protect your home and enhance the Police Department's ability to rapidly respond to, and remedy, an emergency at the homes of our residents. Residents can sign up for the Away from Home Program by visiting www.PuntaGordaPolice.com.
- **Public Safety Dispatcher Testing** – Public Safety Dispatchers handle 911 and administrative calls and all dispatching for the Punta Gorda Police Department and Punta Gorda Fire Department. To be a Public Safety Dispatcher you must be at least 18 years of age, be a citizen of the United States, have graduated from high school (or GED), have good communications skills, have strong computer and data entry skills, be able to multi-talk in a fast paced environment and work well with others, and successfully complete the hiring process including new hire testing, background investigation, psychological exam, and drug screen. We will be testing for the position of Public Safety Dispatcher on May 12 from 9 a.m. until 12 p.m. at the Punta Gorda Public Safety Complex, located at 1410 Tamiami Trail, Punta Gorda, Florida 33950.

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. The written exam will be completed online anytime between Jun. 1, and Jun. 9, with virtual oral board exams conducted via Zoom on Jun. 20, and Jun. 21. We are currently only accepting applications from candidates who are currently law enforcement certified or Equivalency of Training eligible.
- **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 Mar. 4. **To apply for employment or for more information, please visit www.pgpdjobs.com or call (941) 575-5571 employeevelopment@pgorda.us.**
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.

Utilities

- **R.O. Plant**



Water Treatment Plant Operations

- 57.6 MG delivered to the distribution system with a 8.2 MG daily average
- Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority Emergency Interconnect – Receiving 1600 gallons per minute from the new Interconnect (Phase 1 Pipeline). Sending 1250 gallons per minute from the tank on 17 (Phase 1A Pipeline).
- Rainfall Mar. 2021 .30" Mar. 2022 0.50" April 2021 3.03" April 2022 .70"
- Hardness is a measurement of calcium and magnesium ions naturally occurring in the raw water. Currently "moderately hard" – Grains of Hardness 7 ppm – Total hardness 128 ppm
- TDS Apr. 14 – Current 276 ppm, Low 276 ppm, High 604 ppm, 12 Year Avg. 491 ppm
- Reservoir Apr. 14 – Current 5.00', Record Low 4.82', Record High, 5.83' 57 Year Average 5.13'.

Wastewater Treatment

- **Maintenance** – Team members were able to haul and inject 245,000 gallons of bio-solids to field seven this week.
- **Operations** – The average daily flow for the past week was 2.88 million gallons for a total of 20.14 million gallons of wastewater being treated this week.

City Clerk

- **Candidate Packets Now Available** – Candidate packets for the 2022 City General Election are now available through the City Clerk's Office, City Hall, 117 Herald Court Unit 211. The 2022 General Election will take place on Nov. 8 and will include City Council Districts 1, 2 and 4. Councilmembers serve a two (2) year term and are elected at-large. Only opposed candidate races will appear on the ballot. If more than two candidates seek election for any one district seat, a primary election must be held on Aug. 23 (11 weeks prior to the General Election). Qualifying for the 2022 General Election cycle begins Jun. 13 at noon and ends on Jun. 17 at noon. For information or questions regarding qualifying, please contact Karen Smith, City Clerk, at (941) 575-3369 or email pgclerk@cityofpuntafordafl.com. Questions regarding voter registration, vote-by-mail ballots or precinct and polling information should be directed to the Charlotte County Supervisor of Elections Office at (941) 833-5400. Candidate forms can also be obtained online from the City's website at <https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us> as well as from the Division of Elections website at <https://dos.myflorida.com/elections>.

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.
- **Planning Commission** – (two alternate) Planning Commission - Meets the 4th Monday at 2 p.m. in City Council Chambers. Must be City resident. Seven member board with two alternate members. Three year terms – maximum of three terms. Makes recommendations to City Council with regard to amending, extending or adding to the comprehensive plan for the physical development of the City, platting or subdividing land within the City and adopting and amending a zoning ordinance.

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:
 - Cruisin Tikis, 33Tamiami Trail (dock space)