

## WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS REPORT NOVEMBER 3, 2023

### City Manager

- The Punta Gorda City Council has officially established its legislative agenda for presentation at the upcoming Charlotte County Legislative Delegation meeting on Nov 20. I'm happy to share our State Legislative Priorities for the 2024 session, all of which revolve around water quality issues.

The City of Punta Gorda is seeking the Delegation's assistance in addressing a pressing concern: the presence of 1,379 septic systems within the City of Punta Gorda Utility Service area. Unfortunately, these septic systems are proving inadequate in treating water contaminants, such as nitrogen, fecal coliform, and chlorophyll-a, which are negatively impacting the quality of our water bodies. Unsuitable soils, high groundwater levels during certain seasons, and aging septic systems have allowed poorly treated sewage to seep into the groundwater, eventually reaching canals, rivers, creeks, and estuarine shorelines. This results in elevated levels of nitrogen, phosphorus, fecal microbes, and organic wastewater contaminants entering our Harbor



To combat this issue, our proposed project aims to eliminate septic systems and introduce wastewater collection and treatment services to Charlotte Park. This initiative would significantly improve water quality in Charlotte Harbor by reducing the flow of nitrogen, phosphorus, and chlorophyll into the harbor. The project entails the installation of a conventional vacuum system, alongside some enhancements to existing gravity sewer extensions, representing a cost-effective and minimally disruptive solution. I am looking forward to discussions with Charlotte Park property owners in early 2024 to discuss project specifics. We are requesting a total of \$15 million for this project, with the possibility of phasing it into multi-year funding opportunities to align with legislators' preferences.

Furthermore, we are seeking assistance from the Delegation to secure funding for the Wastewater Treatment Plant efficiency project. This project will enhance the Punta Gorda Wastewater Treatment Plant, located at 30999 Bermont Road, through various improvements and additions. These include new aeration basins, clarifiers, an additional sand filter, upgrades to the effluent pump station, and replacement of all electrical components. We are requesting \$10 million from the Delegation to support the construction costs, with the flexibility to phase the project into multi-year funding if it aligns better with legislators' preferences.

Lastly, the City of Punta Gorda is also looking for assistance in securing funding for seawall repair and replacement necessitated by the damage caused by Hurricane Ian. The hurricane led to severe seawall failures in the Punta Gorda canal system, affecting nearly 582 parcels, with over 6.5 miles in Punta Gorda Isles and three-fourths of a mile in Burnt Store Isles suffering seawall damage. Seawalls play a crucial role in preventing pollutants from coastal development and runoff, thereby improving water quality. They also mitigate coastal flooding, preventing environmental harm, pollution, and habitat disruption. We are seeking \$4,740,992 from the Delegation to cover construction costs.

We are immensely grateful for past legislative support and look forward to working together in the future to protect and enhance Florida's Harborside Hometown. With the support of our Legislators, the City of Punta Gorda can proceed with our water quality

improvement projects and address the critical seawall replacements necessitated by Hurricane Ian. *For any further inquiries, you may reach City Manager Greg Murray at [citymgr@cityofpuntagordafl.com](mailto:citymgr@cityofpuntagordafl.com) or call the general office line at (941) 575-3302.*

- **Election News** – Due to the impact of repairs related to Hurricane Ian at South County Regional Park, electors of Precincts 60.1 and 66.1 who would have reported to South County Regional Park at 670 Cooper Street, Punta Gorda, FL 33950, will instead report to the Supervisor of Elections Office at 226 Taylor Street, Punta Gorda, FL 33950, in order to vote on Election Day, Nov 7. The Supervisor of Elections Office will be open as a polling location for Precincts 60.1 and 66.1 from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m.
- **Holiday Closure** – City of Punta Gorda's offices will be closed for Veterans Day on Nov. 11. Honoring All Those Who Served in the Military [History of Veterans Day - U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs \(va.gov\)](#)
- **Hometown Halloween** – Halloween in the Historic District was a huge success! Thank you to Gettel of Charlotte County for donating candy. Special thanks to our Halloween Leadership Committee Kylee McGloin, Cassandra Price, Connie Hayes, Casey Hayes, Ashley Omelanski-Carney, Lt. Justin Davoult, Nick Falkner, Kelli Patterson, Jennifer Loadman and Brad Schuette. Thanks also to our Right of Way team members and Punta Gorda Police and Fire for providing safety services for the celebration! Thank you to retired code enforcement officer Alan McDaniel for providing DJ Services.
- **Florida Department of Transportation** – US 41/Tamiami Trail from Payne Street to Rio Villa Drive. Motorists should expect intermittent lane closures during daytime and nighttime/overnight hours while crews resurface the roadway, construct curb, gutter, and sidewalk, lanes widenings, and drainage, signage, Street Light, and signalization improvements. Motorists should expect intermittent southbound and northbound lane closures from Aqui Esta Drive to Payne Street during daytime hours from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. and during nighttime/overnight hours from 8 p.m. to 6:30 a.m. Motorists should use caution as crews work on the roadway. The expected project completion is late fall 2023.
- **City Council Meeting** – City Council met on Nov. 1 at 9 a.m. at the Military Heritage Museum. A few of the items of interest included:
  - Legislative Priorities Discussion with City Lobbyist
  - Annual Evaluation City Manager
  - Consider Vacation Rental by Owner ordinance



## 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.fishermensvillage.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://militaryheritagemuseum.org/find-upcoming-events>
- Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association, 2001 Shreve Street; for all community events and class information, visit <https://pgica.org/>.
- The Visual Arts Center events can be accessed at [Welcome to the Visual Arts Center of Punta Gorda, FL \(visualartcenter.org\)](https://www.visualartcenter.org/)
- Nov 10, Healing Field of Honor, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St, for more information please contact [aburch@csbtfl.com](mailto:aburch@csbtfl.com)
- Nov 11, Vintage Motor car show, 459 Gill St, for more information contact [leekr42@embarqmail.com](mailto:leekr42@embarqmail.com)
- Nov 18, Lighting of the Village, Fishermen's Village, 1200 W Retta Esplanade, for more information contact [kburnam@fishermensvillage.com](mailto:kburnam@fishermensvillage.com)
- Nov 18, Fall Festival, The Church of the Good Shepherd, 401 W Henry St, for more information contact [Martha.goodshepherdpg@gmail.com](mailto:Martha.goodshepherdpg@gmail.com)
- Nov 18-19, Season Opener Art & Craft Show, Gilchrist Park, 400 W Retta Esplanade, for more information contact [jessie@surfboardtables.com](mailto:jessie@surfboardtables.com)
- Nov. 29, In Stitches @ PGICA will be installing their 10th annual Hector House Holiday Yarn Bomb on Nov. 29 and removing them Jan 3.
- Dec. 1, Light up the Night, community celebration featuring music, children's activities, food and beverages and the Christmas Tree Lighting visit. <https://www.lightupthenightpg.com/> for the complete schedule.
- Dec. 1 and Dec. 2, Punta Gorda Garden Club hosts the Holly Day Home Town Tour in the Historic District visit <https://pggc.writing.io/posts/2023-holly-days> to learn more.

### Lot Mowing Program

- The City has completed mowing:
  - PGI (Bal Harbor Boulevard, Deborah Drive, Ryan Boulevard, Suzi Street, and Casey Key Drive).
  - PGI Bird Section (Almar Drive, Albatross Drive, Whippoorwill Boulevard, and Turtle Dove Boulevard).
  - Colony Point (Colony Point Drive, West Marion Avenue, Socorro and Coronado)
  - PGI (Magdalena Drive, Via Veneto, W Henry Street, Appian and Columbian Drive).
  - 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 Historic District East of 41 and the area behind Dunkin Donuts (E. Marion Avenue, E Olympia Avenue, Narranja Street, E Henry Street, and Cooper Street).
- **Planning Corner – Signs** – Residential properties are permitted up to four yard signs, four square feet in area, with no time limitations on how long the signs may be in place. Commercial properties are permitted up to four freestanding signs per acre, a maximum of 32 square feet in area, with no time limitations on how long the signs may be in place. Please keep in mind that signs are not permitted within a public right-of-way, and cannot block any vision or path of motorists, bicyclists, or pedestrians. Signs are not permitted to have any feather/flutter flags, balloons, or other windblown devices attached to the sign. Signs may be placed on any parcel with the permission of the property owner.



## Public Works

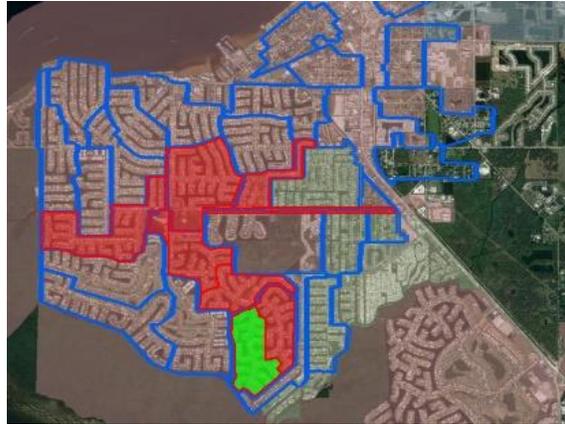
### Canal Maintenance

- **Channel Marker 3** – Please be advised that Channel Marker 3 (located across from the end of Sabal Dr. in the Pompano Cross Channel) has been damaged. The channel marker is lying mostly in the water and may be difficult to see. Crews have attached an orange buoy to locate the channel marker. Boaters are asked to be cautious in these areas until the Channel Marker can be removed and eventually replaced.
- **Canal Maintenance Production** – Canal Maintenance crews manufactured 34 seawalls, repaired seawall caps at two locations, and repaired seawalls at five locations.
- **Dockside Dredging** – Property owners that are listed on the Hurricane Ian Seawall Damage list will not be allowed to have dockside dredging performed adjacent to the seawall until the seawall has been repaired. Any dredging along the damaged seawall may cause damage.
- **Stabilizing Erosion** – Just a friendly reminder for property owners to regularly check the condition of their tarps or plastic that is protecting the eroded areas. Tarps and plastic tend to become brittle in the sun and may start falling apart. Our area is still experiencing rain events and plastic will help keep the soil in place preventing further erosion.
- **Canal Maintenance Seawall Failure Update** – Construction schedules have been updated and are posted on the Canal Maintenance website for the next six-months look ahead. There are 20 projects in Punta Gorda Isles under construction with 17 projects completed, and seven projects under construction with three completed in Burnt Store Isles.
- **Establishing sod after seawall replacement** – Placing the sod is the final phase of seawall replacement construction. As per the City ordinance, property owners are responsible for establishing the sod after it has been placed and the City will not reimburse the owners for their water usage.
- **Vessel Speeds** – Canal Maintenance is asking people to be mindful of the current situation in the canals with seawalls being damaged. City code states that the operation of vessels in the canals shall be Slow Speed Minimum Wake in the waterways within the City limits. The speed and operation in the Ponce Inlet, Pompano Inlet, Bass, and Snook Inlet are Idle Speed and No Wake. Wakes from watercraft can cause additional erosion and damage to seawalls already compromised.
- **Dock Match Program** – The Punta Gorda and Charlotte Harbor Boaters Alliance has created a program that connects boat owners who need a temporary relocation of their boats with owners that have available dock space. This information can be found at [Punta Gorda Boaters Alliance \(boat2puntagorda.org\)](http://PuntaGordaBoatersAlliance(boat2puntagorda.org)) click on the Dock Match button for information.

### Engineering

- **Swale Regrading** – The swale contractor has completed the swales on North Plum Tree, Scarlet Sage, Panarea Dr., Madrid Blvd, Tripoli, South Crete Ct., Narranja, W. Ann/Lemon St., W. McKenzie/Lemon St., E. Virginia, Rum Cay Ct, La Mancha Ct., Bayshore Ct., Casey Key / Bal Harbor and La Costa Island, Antigua Dr., and Towhee Ct. They will be watering the sod on Casey Key / Bal Harbor, La Costa Island, Antigua Dr. and Towhee Ct. for the next 30 days. They have excavated approximately 75,000 SF of material and re-sodded all areas with sod. The contractor will start Raven Ct. on Nov 6.
- **Ponce de Leon** – The contractor has been resurfacing the piles under the fishing pier. They have re-installed a portion of the handrails on the fishing pier with new stainless-steel bolts, and are waiting on the ADA railing to be delivered to install. Please take extra caution while driving through the park due to construction personnel and equipment. Please remember that this boardwalk is closed to the public while it is under construction.

- **Fiber Optic Internet Network** – The fiber optic internet provider HyperFiber has been issued permits for a portion of the construction project to install a citywide fiber optic internet network within the city right of ways. Their construction is finishing up in the “bird section” of the city. This citywide project will be under construction during the next several months as they install the network citywide. They are currently working in the areas highlighted in red below. The green area is where the work is completed and their permit has been inspected for final by the engineering department.



Additional areas are scheduled to be final in the next two weeks. The blue areas are where the installation will be taking place as the project progresses. Initially, you will see utility markings within the city right of way, followed by the directional drilling of the fiber optic conduit. Fiber optic boxes will be installed in the right of way or easement at the edge of your property. Once the installation of the underground and service points has been completed for the entire sector, crews will then return to individual locations for the restoration of sod. This will take place at the end of construction in each sector. Please be patient and allow time for the restoration. The city engineering department will be performing spot inspections during construction as well as a final inspection when restoration is complete to ensure the contractor’s restoration meets the city’s requirements. HyperFiber has provided a telephone number to call if citizens have questions or concerns about the project and installation. Please contact HyperFiber’s *Scott Jackson* at (239) 887-5379. Please use extra caution while driving through the project area due to construction personnel and equipment.

#### **Right of Way**

- **Halloween Clean up** – Crews have collected the road closure devices to keep our Halloween festivities safe in the historical district.
- **Mowing** – Crews are currently mowing in the areas of Bal Harbor, Columbia, Olympia Ave, Berry and McGregor.
- **Bridge Clean up** – We have completed the clean-up of the Richard L. Beecher Memorial Bridge.

#### **Sanitation**

- **Dumpster Replacements** – Within the City limits of Punta Gorda, the customers own their dumpsters and are responsible for maintaining and replacing them. Dumpsters shall be free of defects liable to hamper or injure a person and must promptly be replaced upon notice. The dumpster must be free of holes, rusted bottoms/sides, and inoperable wheels. The City refuse trucks service rear-



load dumpsters only and the dumpster must fit properly inside the enclosure. The dumpster lids and enclosure doors should remain closed at all times. Please contact Sanitation prior to ordering a new dumpster [Sanitation | City of Punta Gorda, FL \(punta-gorda.fl.us\)](http://Sanitation | City of Punta Gorda, FL (punta-gorda.fl.us) or (941)575-5009) or (941)575-5009.

## Police

- **VIP Program** – The Volunteers in Policing (VIP) program contributed a total of 620 hours of volunteer time to the City of Punta Gorda during the month of Sept of 2023. Our volunteers are an absolutely vital part of this police department and we appreciate them greatly! 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](mailto:vip@pgorda.us).
- **A Helping Hand** – Several members of the Punta Gorda Police Department, Fire Department, Vice Mayor Melissa Lockhart, and many of their family members spent Saturday assisting a nearby family in need with minor repairs to their home. They also cleared debris and brush that was encroaching on the home making it a potentially unsafe environment. The family was extremely appreciative. A special thank you to Charlotte County Public Works Director John Elias for assisting with scheduling yard waste removal. This was truly a team effort. Thank you to the following people and businesses who donated much needed items to help us complete this project: The Punta Gorda Home Depot – Brian Budreau, The Tamiami Tavern – Sue Randall, Gulf Coast Partnership – Angela Hogan, Creative Window Treatments – June Amara, J. Meraki Beauty Emporium – Jackie Stover, Vice Mayor Melissa Lockhart and Tiffany Clary, Councilmember Donna Peterman and John Peterman, Chief Holden Gibbs and Family, Chief Pam Davis, Fire Marshal Jen Molnar and Joe Molnar, Assistant Fire Marshal T.J. Smith, Fire Training Chief Kevin Martin, Fire Fighter John Hall and Aimee Young, Ms. Heather Shaughnessy, Punta Gorda Police Department, Mr. Skip Powell, Punta Gorda Fire Department, Ms. Kristin Parks, Punta Gorda Police Department, Ms. Teresa Carlow, Punta Gorda Finance Department, Ms. Nancy Megna, Punta Gorda City Clerk's Office, Ms. Perri Turner, Punta Gorda City Clerk's Office, Ms. Danielle Berhel, Punta Gorda Finance Department, Ms. CJ. Metcalf and Ms. Cassandra Dowd.
- **Public Safety Dispatcher Testing** – The police department conducts new hire testing continually in order to be prepared for future openings. We are currently accepting applications for the position of Public Safety Dispatcher. We will be holding a testing process in Dec. Applications must be received by Dec. 1. The exam will be held on the morning of Dec. 7, beginning at 9 a.m.
- **Internship Program** – The police department is currently accepting internship applications for the Spring Semester of 2024. 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!

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



## Open Positions

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## Fire

- **15 Year Service Award** – The fire department would like to recognize Lieutenant/Paramedic Justin Bala for earning his 15-year service award. Justin serves as a Field Training Officer (FTO), he is a captain on the marine response team and has proven to be a valuable member of the fire department in all he does. Thank you Justin for all you do for the department and for the community.



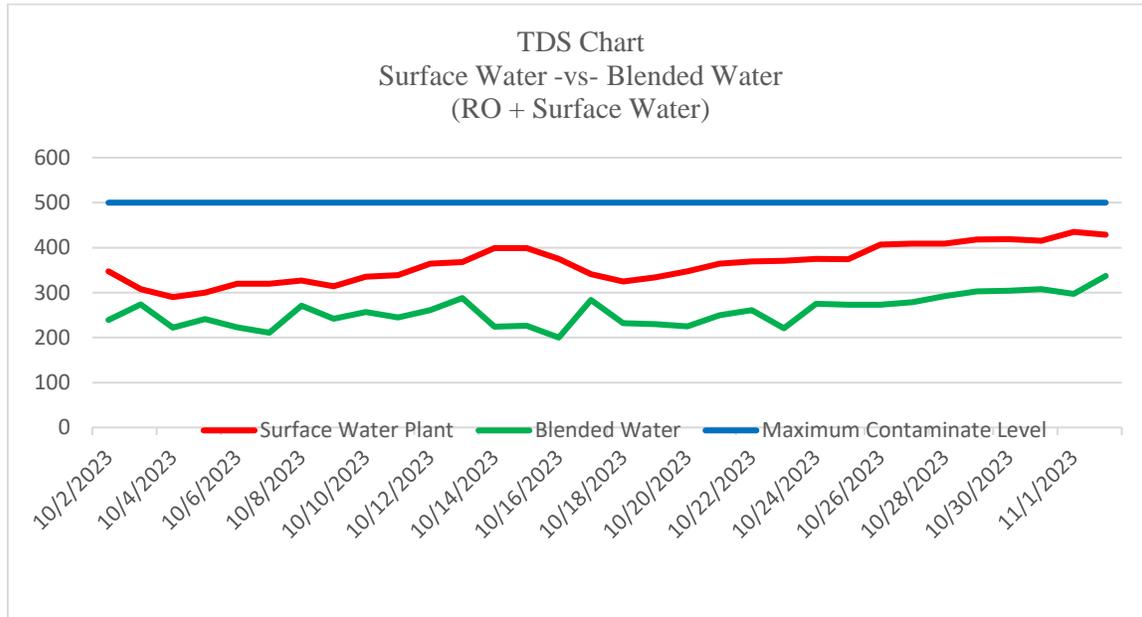
- **Change your clocks, check your batteries** – On Nov. 5 Floridians will turn their clocks back for Daylight Standard Time. Many people will use this opportunity to change their home's smoke alarm batteries as well. Because working smoke alarms are a critical element of home fire safety, Punta Gorda Fire Department and the NFPA support any and all efforts to reinforce the importance of working batteries. However, today's smoke alarms are not all designed the same, making battery messaging more nuanced. Make sure all smoke alarms have working batteries, accounting for the multiple types of smoke alarms on the market and their varying battery requirements. Smoke alarms with non-replaceable ten-year batteries are designed to remain effective for up to ten years. If the alarm chirps, warning that the battery is low, replace the entire smoke alarm right away. Smoke alarms with any other type of battery need a new battery at least once a year. If that alarm chirps, warning the battery is low, replace the battery right away. When replacing a battery, follow



manufacturer's list of batteries on the back of the alarm or manufacturer's instructions. Manufacturer's instructions are specific to the batteries (brand and model) that must be used. The smoke alarm may not work properly if a different kind of battery is used.

## Utilities

- **R.O. Plant**



## **Administration**

- **Leaks** – If you notice a water or sewer leak outside of normal business hours please call the after-hours number (941) 575-5070 or the Water Treatment Plant at (941) 639-2057.

## **Water Treatment Plant Operations**

- 56.7 MG delivered to the distribution system with a 8.1 MG daily average
- Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority Emergency Interconnect – Receiving 700 gallons per minute from the new Interconnect (Phase 1 Pipeline). Sending 1388 gallons per minute from the tank on 17 (Phase 1A Pipeline).
- Rainfall Oct. 2023 2.09” Nov. 2023 0.00”
- Hardness is a measurement of calcium and magnesium ions naturally occurring in the raw water. Currently” moderately hard” – Grains of Hardness 9 –Total hardness. 155 ppm
- TDS Nov 2 – Current 337 ppm. Low 218ppm, High 505 ppm. 13 year average 355 ppm.
- Reservoir Nov 2 – Current 5.16”, Record Low 5.01’, Record High, 5.22’ 58 Year Average 5.22”

## City Clerk

- **City of Punta Gorda 2023 General Election** – Per Florida Statute 97.055, the voter registration book will close for the Nov. 7, General Election on Oct. 10. Once the voter registration book closes, the only allowable changes to a registration for the 2023 General Election are to update a voter's name, address and signature. New voter registrations after book closing will be accepted for subsequent elections. Citizens can check their registration status at the [Charlotte County Supervisor of Elections website](#) and register to vote online through the [Florida Department of State's website](#).
  - Did you know your signature can change significantly over the years? Stop by the Supervisor of Elections' Office (226 Taylor Street, Unit 120, Punta Gorda, FL

33950) to update your signature on record. In order to be used for verification of a voter certificates, the signature update must be completed before the voter's ballot is received by the supervisor or, in the case of a provisional ballot, before the voter's ballot is cast.

- Vote-by-mail ballots began being mailed to voters with a current vote-by-mail ballot request on Sep. 28. The deadline to submit a request for a vote-by-mail ballot is 5:00 p.m. on Oct. 28. Vote-by-mail requests can be submitted in person at the Supervisor of Elections' Office, by calling the Supervisor of Elections' Office at (941) 833-5400 or by sending a written and signed request to the Charlotte County Supervisor of Elections. Requests for a vote-by-mail ballot must include the voter's name, date of birth, address and Florida driver's license or identification card number or the last four digits of the voter's social security number. Vote-by-mail requests can also be submitted online at the [Charlotte County Supervisor of Election's website](#).
- On-demand ballots became available beginning on Oct. 9, and continuing through Nov. 6. These ballots must be voted and returned immediately after they are received. In order to receive an on-demand ballot, voters must bring valid photo identification and identification including the voter's signature per [Florida Statute 101.043](#). Please see the statute for the full list of acceptable forms of identification.
- Public logic and accuracy testing of all automatic tabulation equipment is done prior to every election in order to ensure the equipment will correctly count the votes cast for all candidates, in all offices, and on all measures.
- The Canvassing Board for the City of Punta Gorda Nov. 7, General Election will meet on Oct. 30, at 9 a.m. at the Supervisor of Elections' Operations Center at 10381 Tamiami Trail, Punta Gorda, FL 33950, to certify the accuracy of the test and witness resetting and sealing of each device that passed to a pre-election state of readiness in a manner to secure its state of readiness until the polls open on Election Day.
- **Current Board and Committee Vacancies** – If you are interested in serving on a board or committee, please visit our online portal to complete an online application at <https://puntagorda.granicus.com/boards/forms/650/apply/>.
  - **Historic Preservation Advisory Board** (one regular and two alternate) – Meets the fourth Thursday at 9 a.m. in City Council Chambers. Seven-member Board with two alternate members. 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.
  - **Planning Commission** (one alternate) – Meets the fourth Monday at 2 p.m. in City Council Chambers. Seven-member Board with two alternate members. City residency required. 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.

- **General Employees' Pension Board** (one resident representative) – Meets quarterly and as called in Council Chambers. Five members – two City residents at-large, two pension plan members 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 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:
  - Happy Skin by Sarah B, 2511 Vasco Street, Unit 111