



## WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS REPORT

MARCH 8, 2024

### City Manager

- The administration and elected representatives of Punta Gorda prioritize maintaining open communication channels and promptly addressing inquiries from residents and visitors. In February alone, the City Manager's Office handled over 100 inquiries on various topics, including outside storage, the Comprehensive Plan, building permits, utility billing, lawn maintenance, traffic concerns, drainage, water, sanitation, and road repairs. Notably, this figure excludes the numerous inquiries addressed directly by City Council members.

The city also publishes several resources to provide information to residents. The city website is a comprehensive resource with information regarding every city department. Access this robust tool at [www.cityofpuntagordfl.com](http://www.cityofpuntagordfl.com). The search box at the top of the website allows for easy information accessibility. The city also publishes a local printed guide to the City of Punta Gorda services entitled Welcome to Punta Gorda Life. Residents can find the brochure at local businesses, the City Manager's Office, the Punta Gorda Airport, and by request by calling (941) 575-3394.



The City Manager's Office creates and publishes a Weekly Highlights Report each Friday as a consistent source of information about the City. This report conveys significant interest items or projects underway by the departments and items of interest throughout the preceding week. To receive the information, sign up for Enotifications at <https://bit.ly/3gZnDHB>. In addition, the Action Register lists ongoing tasks or projects, with target dates for completion and comments that provide a progress report. It is published on the city website every Thursday. Additionally, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram frequently share information and pictures that capture the beauty of Punta Gorda.

The City of Punta Gorda also can communicate with residents via text. The service is called Text My Gov, and it uses a mobile phone's regular text messaging service to quickly find links, documents, or text that answer their questions. No app download is needed. It allows our residents and visitors to report code violations or issues with city infrastructure twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. A picture can also be submitted when reporting a problem or violation, and the service sends the information immediately to city staff to resolve the issue. Text "hi" to (941) 347-0747 to use the service. In addition, answers to common questions are available 24/7 through website searches and preprogrammed responses. Don't have an immediate answer? The question will go to a designated mailbox to ensure you get a timely response. Text My Gov system has logged 4,592 messages since launching this service in early 2021.

Emergency notifications are increasingly crucial as we reach the height of hurricane season. If you haven't signed up for emergency notifications yet, I encourage you to take advantage of this free service, Alert Punta Gorda. The service provides emergency and weather information to those who have registered. To sign up, visit <https://bit.ly/2U9HYOm>. The system is configured to allow for specific types of notifications. Please note that you will receive frequent notifications if you sign up for lightning alerts.

Finally, Punta Gorda Developments is a quarterly newsletter update on commercial and multifamily developments. If you would like to receive these updates, call the City Manager's Office at (941) 575-3302 and provide your email to one of our staff members.

- **Downtown Farmers Market Saturday** – The farmers market will be relocating from in front of the court house to Herald Ct. between the parking garage entrance and US 41 North due to early voting. There will be no access to the parking garage from US 41 North at Herald court. Detour signs will route traffic to the parking garage entrance. Staff will be providing maintenance of traffic for the craft fair that will be set up on Sullivan St. this weekend.

## Human Resources

- **Time to Change the Clocks** – The Daylight Saving's time change is a good time to review your spring safety checklist. Daylight Saving Time begins every year on the second Sunday in March. We "lose" an hour when the clocks are set forward (except in Hawaii and most of Arizona), and for many, that means a tired couple of days as our bodies adjust. The consequences of fatigue can be serious, so plan accordingly. Daylight Saving Time, which in 2024 begins Mar. 10, means it's also a good time to review your spring safety checklist.



- **Smoke Alarms** - Three out of every five home fire deaths result from fires in homes with no smoke alarms, according to the National Fire Protection Association. Test your smoke alarms every month and replace the battery at least once a year. If the alarm makes a "chirping" sound, replace the battery immediately. Smoke alarms should be in every bedroom and in the common areas on each floor of a home. Mount them at least 10 feet from the stove to reduce false alarms, less than 12 inches from the ceiling and away from windows, doors and ducts.
- **Carbon Monoxide Detectors** - Anything that burns fuel can potentially become a source of carbon monoxide, an invisible, odorless gas that can kill. CO alarms should be installed in a central location outside each bedroom and on every level of the home. The safety tips for CO detectors mirror those of smoke alarms: change the batteries, test them and interconnect them, if possible. Also, make sure vents for your gas appliances (fireplace, dryer, stove and furnace) are free and clear of snow or debris.
- **Open Positions** – The City of Punta Gorda offers a very generous benefit package to include medical, dental, vision, life insurance, and a defined contribution retirement plan with matching contributions. Instrument Technician for the Wastewater Treatment Plant is a highly skilled technical position responsible for the installation, maintenance, calibration, and repair of electronic instruments and automatic process control equipment in a water or wastewater treatment plant or distribution remote facilities. Utility Engineer is a professional position responsible for Utilities Engineering and providing technical engineering services for City utilities construction and improvement projects. The City of Punta Gorda has a variety of employment opportunities available learn more at <https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/.../employment>



## 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.charlottecountychamber.org/events/calendar>
- Military Heritage Museum events can be accessed at [Upcoming Events – Military Heritage Museum](#)
- 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 \(visualartcenter.org\)](#)
- Mar. 26, Punta Gorda Garden Club's 2024 Flower Show. To be presented at the Isles Yacht Club, 1780 W. Marion Ave, Punta Gorda, from 1 to 3 pm. The show titled "Name That Tune" will take inspiration from the rich heritage of American popular song. For information please visit [Punta Gorda Garden Club, Inc. - Writing.io \(pggc.org\)](#) or call Betsy Foster, (941) 661-9733

### Lot Mowing Program

- The City has completed mowing the following areas on Mar. 2.
  - 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 Drive, and Coronado Drive).
  - PGI (Magdalena Drive, Via Veneto, W Henry Street, Appian Drive, and Columbian Drive).
  - Burnt Store Isles (Monaco Dr, Tripoli Blvd, Madrid Blvd, and Macedonia Dr).
  - Burnt Store Meadows (Areas of Tamiami Trl, N. Blue Sage, S. Blue Sage, Royal Poinciana, and Gold Tree).
  - Downtown and Historic District (W. Marion Ave., W. Olympia Ave., Shreve St., and Harvey St.)
  - The Historic District East of 41 and the area behind Dunkin Donuts (E. Marion Ave., E Olympia Ave., Narranja St., E Henry St., and Cooper St.).

- **Planning Corner** – On Feb. 28 and 29, City staff attended the Coastal and Heartland National Estuary Partnership's (CHNEP) 2024 Southwest Florida Climate Summit. Presenters at this two-day conference were experts from industry, academia, and government with information and ideas on building increased resiliency in Central and Southwest Florida. With 900 new residents moving to Florida each day, educational opportunities such as this are becoming more important. Hurricanes Ian and Idalia have demonstrated how the attitudes and behavior of government, residents, and businesses must change to prioritize funding for projects that build resilient infrastructure and storm water systems, reduce flooding, and minimize property damage. There were many discussions concerning the importance of planning, training personnel, prioritizing projects with the community, using accurate modeling, and developing emergency procedures. However, a common theme emerged regarding best resiliency practices for both organizations and individuals. Cooperation, good-faith actions, and mutual-aid agreements are hallmarks of the most effective resilience plans. Speakers also covered the role of mangroves in protecting the coastline and flood reduction. For more information on the summit, please visit: [2024 Southwest Florida Climate Summit | Live CHNEP Website](#).



## Public Works

### Administration

- **Citizens Academy Utilities Session** – Utilities hosted their session of 2024 Citizens' Academy. Participants were provided with an overview of the Utilities division. Departmental managers of Waste Water Collection, Waste Water Treatment Plant, and Water Distribution provided information surrounding their department's processes.

### Canal Maintenance

- **Canal Maintenance Production** – Canal Maintenance crews manufactured 64 seawall panels and recovered navigational hazards from the canals. Depressions were filled and the annual seawall assessment is nearing completion.
- **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 26 projects in Punta Gorda Isles under construction with 28 projects completed, and five projects under construction with 10 completed in Burnt Store Isles. [Hurricane Ian Related Seawall Failures | City of Punta Gorda, FL \(punta-gorda.fl.us\)](https://www.punta-gorda.fl.us/Hurricane-Ian-Related-Seawall-Failures)
- **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 \(boat2puntagorda.org\)](https://boat2puntagorda.org) click on the Dock Match button for information.

### Engineering

- **Swale Regrading** – The swale contractor has begun to excavate Don Quixote Dr. and will be excavating approximately 4,200 SF and installing new sod at the proper elevation. They have excavated approximately 32,000 SF this fiscal year. The next street to be excavated will be Brazilia Ct.
- **ADA Interior Signage and Wayfindings** – The contractor has begun to install the ADA signs at the Fire Stations II and III, and at the Cooper St Recreation Center.



- **Splash Pad** – Construction/demolition continues at the Interactive Fountain area in Laishley Park. This work includes rehabilitation and upgrades to the splash pad/play area. The removal of the existing tank has been completed. Please use extra caution while driving or walking through the park due to construction personnel and equipment. To the highest extent possible the restroom facilities will remain open to the public. The access to the restrooms will be from the marina side of the building. There will be periodic temporary sidewalk closures immediately adjacent to the construction area as required for public safety. The construction area will be closed to the public at all times during this period. The enhanced fountain area is scheduled to reopen in May 2024.



- **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. This 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 areas are 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 several weeks. The blue areas are where installation will take 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 on 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

- **Hurricane Ian FDOT lighting Repairs US41 and US 17** – The following is an update provided by FDOT on their efforts to repair damaged street lighting from Hurricane Ian. After the storm hit, the damage assessment phase was undertaken for all of the Department's infrastructure. This was quite extensive for lighting, as there was damage in nine of the 12 Counties in District 1 involving approximately 1,000 poles. After the damage assessment phase, FDOT prepared extensive documentation to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to determine the amount of the repairs that would be eligible for federal reimbursement and secured funding. Design plans were prepared to prescribe the repairs for the aforementioned damage. A Districtwide construction contract was put out to bid, awarded, and executed. FDOT is currently in the Material Acquisition phase. They are finalizing some of the details between the Designer and Contractor to make sure the materials ordered are accurate. They anticipate placing an order in the next 1-2 weeks. Due to issues in the supply chain, it may take up to 30 weeks or more to procure all materials to perform

the repairs. The primary issue at this point is material availability, not manpower. Once materials are procured, the construction phase will begin. Our contract length is 350 days to complete the damage in all 9 Counties.

- **Updates** – The 180 ft of drainage pipe maintenance repair near Breakers Ct. will be completed by the end week. Crews have completed the repair on the catch basin at the end of Coldeway Dr. Crews are trimming trees on Allen St due to low-hanging branches.

## **Sanitation**

- **As a friendly reminder, the items listed below are not part of your regular service.**

### **Construction Debris**

- Construction debris and demolition debris will not be collected by the City crews. Disposal of the material should be arranged by the contractor or the homeowner doing the work.
  - Including, but not limited to; roofing material, glass, brick, concrete, wood and lumber, steel, asphalt, pipe, drywall, etc. It also includes, tree remains or vegetative matter which results from land clearing or land development operations for a construction project.
- **Household Hazardous Waste** – Items such as antifreeze, batteries, cleaners/polishers, flares, gasoline/kerosene, pesticides/ herbicides, pool chemicals, mercury, motor oil, used oil filters, paint, stains and varnishes, are considered Household Hazardous Waste.
- **Tree Removal** – Tree removal and lot clearing is NOT a part of your regular service. If you have a whole tree removed you must first contact Urban Design to obtain a permit (941) 575-3372 or [Tree Removal Permit Request | City of Punta Gorda, FL \(punta-gorda.fl.us\)](https://www.punta-gorda.fl.us/Tree-Removal-Permit-Request). The company that removes the tree or the property owner is responsible for hauling away the remains. The City does not collect whole tree remains or lot clearing remains.
  - Including, but not limited to; rocks, soils, root balls, stumps, tree remains, etc.
- **Whole House Cleanouts** – The City does not collect large bulk quantity of items from a whole house clean outs, renovations, remodels, ejections, etc.
  - A roll-off dumpster may be required, the City does not rent, sell or service roll off dumpsters. Please contact Zoning & Code Compliance for permits, prior to renting a dumpster (941)575-3352.
- **Mid-County Mini-Transfer & Recycling Facility** – The items above may be taken to this FREE facility. Charlotte County Residents must provide proof of residency – a valid driver's license, utility or tax bill will be accepted. It is located at 19765 Kenilworth Blvd in Murdock (Port Charlotte). It is open Tuesday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. All unloading must be completed by 4 p.m., no exceptions. For more information on this facility, or a complete list of items accepted, please call the Charlotte County Solid Waste Services at (941) 764-4360 or visit [Mini-Transfer & Recycling Facilities | Charlotte County, FL \(charlottecountyfl.gov\)](https://www.charlottecountyfl.gov/Mini-Transfer-&-Recycling-Facilities).

## **Police**

- **Guns and Hoses Pickleball Match** – The Police Department faced off against the Fire Department in the Rally Round 4 Prevention Pickleball Tournament benefiting Drug-Free Charlotte County. Officer Jessie Richards, Detective Taylor Smith, Corporal Cody Smith, and Officer Jedadiah Nowak represented PGPD well and helped raise money for a good cause.



- **Police Officer Testing** – The Punta Gorda Police Department is currently accepting applications for the position of Police Officer. A virtual testing process will take place in Apr. Applications must be received by Mar. 29. The written exam will be completed online between Apr. 5, and Apr. 12, and virtual oral board exams will be conducted via Zoom on Apr. 23. The department is accepting applications from certified and non-certified candidates.
- **Public Safety Dispatcher Testing** – The police department will be conducting new hire testing continually to be prepared for future openings. Currently, the department is accepting applications for the position of Public Safety Dispatcher. The exam will be held on the morning of May 16, beginning at 9 a.m. Applications must be received by May 3.
- **Internship Program** - The police department is currently accepting internship applications for the Summer 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 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).**



## Fire

- **Fire Department New Hires and Training** – This week the Fire Department welcomed three new hires to our team. They hit the ground running as they participated in several multi-company drills with our on-duty crews at the training facility working on search and rescue drills, mayday procedures, and removing a patient from a commercial building. They also participated in the final day of our working on proper tools, packaging patients, and communications. Finally, our dive master Josh Roebuck accompanied several of our firefighters in an open-water dive certification class at Lake Denton. Unbelievable work by all of our staff this week improving their skills and providing excellent service to our residents.



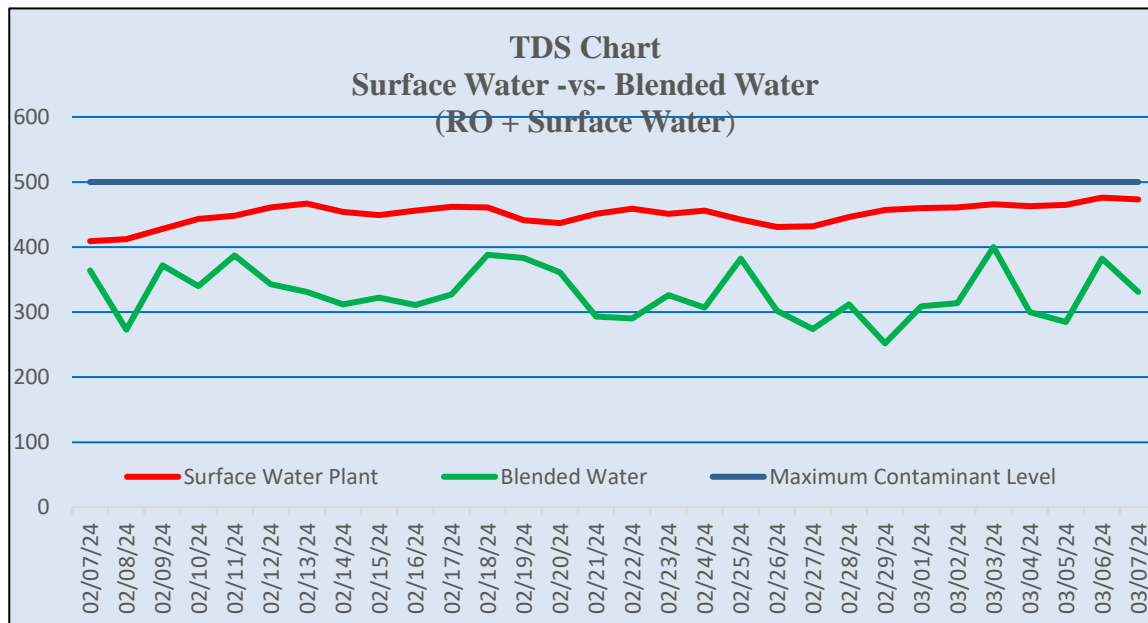
department's extrication training safely approaching vehicle accidents, stabilization techniques, handling





## Utilities

- **R.O. + Surface Water**



## **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**

- 50 MG delivered to the distribution system during the last seven days with a 7.1 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 700 gallons per minute from the tank on 17 (Phase 1A Pipeline).
- Rainfall Mar. 2023 0.48" Mar. 2024 – 0.54"
- Hardness is a measurement of calcium and magnesium ions naturally occurring in the raw water. Currently "hard" – Grains of Hardness 9 –Total hardness 164 ppm
- TDS Mar. 6 – Current 331 ppm. Low 301 ppm, High 655 ppm. 13 year average 458 ppm.
- Reservoir Mar. 6 – Current 5.17', Record Low 4.95', Record High, 5.86' 58 Year Average 5.19'

## City Clerk

- **2024 Election Cycle** – The seats for Districts 1, 2, and 4 are scheduled for election this year. A general election will take place on November 5, if there are two candidates for one district. A primary election will take place on August 20, if we have three or more candidates for one district. The two candidates receiving the most votes would proceed on to the general election. Candidate packets are available for the 2024 election cycle. The packet can be viewed [on the City's website](#). Bound copies are available to interested parties who make an appointment with the City Clerk's Office to review the materials contained in the packet and to complete an acknowledgement of their receipt. Filed candidates will be listed on the website upon submission of Form DS-DE 9.
- **Update Signature** – Did you know your signature can change over the years? Ensure the Charlotte County Supervisor of Elections has an up-to-date record of your signature on file for the upcoming election. Stop by their office at 226 Taylor Street, Punta Gorda, Florida, 33982, to update yours during regular business hours.
- **Vote By Mile** – In order to vote by mail, you must have a valid request on file with the Supervisor of Elections Office. Requests for vote-by-mail ballots can be made in person, by calling (941)833-5400, or by visiting the [Supervisor of Elections website](#).



## Current Board and Committee Vacancies

- **Building Board** (one contractor and one consumer advocate) – Meets the fourth Tuesday at 9 a.m. in Council Chambers. Seven-member board with two alternate members. Three-year terms – maximum of three terms OR partial term plus two more terms. Reviews enforcement of all codes related to construction standards and acts as condemnation board in matters of violation of minimum standards. Hears alleged complaints against contractors.
- **Code Enforcement Board** (One alternate) – Meets the fourth Wednesday at 9 a.m. in Council Chambers. Seven-member board with two alternate members. Three-year terms - maximum of three terms OR partial term plus two more terms. Financial disclosure required. Hears and decides alleged violations of the City Code of Ordinances.
- **Donation Review Committee** (one historic non-profit representative) – Meets at 10 a.m. in City Council Chambers on the fourth Thursday of January, April, July and October, or as needed, immediately following the meeting of the Historic Preservation Advisory Board. Charged with review of all non-monetary gift donation proposals/letters of intent received by the City, in accordance with the review process and established criteria identified in the Non-Monetary Donation Policy. Makes recommendations to the City Council for the acceptance or rejection of non-monetary gift donations.
- **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 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.
- **Utility Advisory Board** – (two regular) Meets the fourth Monday at 9 a.m. in City Council Chambers. Seven-member board. Three-year terms – maximum of three terms. Makes recommendations to City Council with regard to revisions to the utility construction standards, alleged billing discrepancies, and review of utility drawings and specifications.  
If you are interested in serving on a board or committee, visit our online portal to complete an online application at <https://puntagorda.granicus.com/boards/forms/650/apply/>.

## 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:
  - D's Trees and Landscaping LLC, 512 East Marion Avenue
  - Valerie's House, 233 East McKenzie Street
  - TLC Home and Pet, 1748 Boca Raton Court