

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS REPORT

June 7, 2024

City Manager

- The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration predicts an 85% chance of “above-normal” hurricane activity in 2024. As we approach the rainy and hurricane seasons, it’s crucial for residents and city workers to prioritize hurricane preparedness. The city undertakes numerous measures in advance to safeguard assets and ensure rapid response and recovery from any storm. Similarly, residents need to take proactive steps to prepare for the 2024 hurricane season.

For many, this may be the first time preparing for a potential storm in Punta Gorda. Others may recall the devastation caused by hurricanes Charley, Irma, Ian, and Idalia, which impacted the city, homes, and businesses. The memories of these past storms serve as a reminder of the importance of being well-prepared. Simple preparations made well in advance can make a significant difference.

Share your contact information with neighbors and close friends to maintain communication after a storm. Community support can be invaluable in the aftermath of a hurricane. Install storm shutters and keep trees and shrubs trimmed to minimize damage. Prepare a weatherproof box containing essential documents such as insurance policies, contractor contacts, bank account details, investment accounts, and utility company information. Ensure you have sunblock, insect repellent, a first aid kit, and tire plug kits on hand. Stock up on bleach, extra cleaning supplies, garbage bags, toilet paper, and paper towels. Fill your grill’s propane tanks for cooking during power outages, and have bottled water and non-perishable food for each household member, including pets.

If evacuation becomes necessary, have a plan for where you will go and what you will need to bring. Designate an emergency meeting place and route in advance. Avoid last-minute preparations as gas stations often have long lines when a storm is imminent, and shelters fill up quickly. Keeping your car’s gas tank full and having cash on hand is also recommended during hurricane season. Ensure you have enough prescription medications and consider any special needs for elderly family members or those with disabilities. Having a list of emergency contacts and a battery-operated radio for updates can also be crucial.



The city website offers a variety of printable publications to assist residents with their preparations. Visit <https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/residents/emergency-preparedness> for resources. These resources can guide you through creating a comprehensive emergency plan. While on the site, sign up for Alert Punta Gorda to receive notifications of weather or other emergencies. Alerts can be sent to your home or business phone, mobile phone, email, or text message based on your preferences. If you've moved recently, update your Alert Punta Gorda subscription to ensure you receive timely information.

The State of Florida provides a Home Hardening Sales Tax Exemption through June 30, allowing residents to purchase impact-resistant windows, doors, and garage doors without paying sales tax. Additionally, a Sales Tax Holiday for Disaster Preparedness is ongoing through June 14, exempting many items that aid in hurricane preparedness. This is an excellent opportunity to invest in items that can protect your home and family.

As we enter this season dominated by weather concerns, prepare for the worst and hope for the best. The heightened hurricane activity forecast underscores the need for readiness. We know all too well the havoc a hurricane can wreak. A little preparation now will make managing hurricane precautions and impacts easier as the season progresses. Taking these steps will help ensure that you, your family, and your community are better equipped to handle whatever comes our way. Stay safe and stay prepared. *For further inquiries, contact City Manager Greg Murray at citymgr@cityofpuntafordafl.com or call the main office at (941) 575-3302.*

Human Resources

- **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. Currently hiring for the following professional position:
 - **Utility Engineer – Utilities.** A professional position responsible for Utilities Engineering and providing technical engineering services for City utilities construction and improvement projects.
 - **Utilities Maintenance Worker III – Water Treatment Plant.** A skilled laborer position responsible for maintenance and repair of water treatment plant equipment and systems. Perform plumbing repairs, construction and maintenance of treatment facilities and grounds.
 - **Senior Accountant – Finance** - A professional position responsible for applying the principles of accounting to analyze financial information and prepare financial reports by compiling information, preparing profit and loss statements, and utilizing appropriate accounting control procedures.
 - **Permit Technician – Building** - A clerical position responsible for accepting and processing applications for building permits, issuing permits, and collecting and accounting for payments and fees collected by the Building Division.



The City of Punta Gorda has a variety of employment opportunities available learn more at <https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/.../employment.com>

- **Vehicle Safety Reminder** - Every vehicle should have an emergency supply kit in the trunk. Kits should be checked every six months, and expired items should be replaced regularly. Vehicle emergency supply kits should include the following:
 - A properly inflated spare tire, wheel wrench and tripod jack
 - Jumper cables
 - Tool kit and/or a multipurpose utility tool
 - Flashlight and extra batteries
 - Reflective triangles and brightly colored cloth to make your vehicle more visible
 - Compass
 - First aid kit with gauze, tape, bandages, antibiotic ointment, aspirin, a blanket, nonlatex gloves, scissors, hydrocortisone, thermometer, tweezers and instant cold compress
 - Nonperishable, high-energy foods, such as unsalted nuts, dried fruits and hard candy
 - Drinking water
 - Reflective vest in case you need to walk to get help
 - Car charger for your cell phone
 - Fire extinguisher
 - Duct tape
 - Rain poncho
 - Snow brush
 - Shovel
 - Windshield washer fluid
 - Warm clothing
 - Cat litter for traction
 - Blankets
- It's also a good idea to keep family and emergency phone numbers, including your auto insurance provider and a towing company, in your phone.



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 \(visualartcenter.org\)](http://www.visualartcenter.org)
- [June 29, Freedom Festival, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit Street, for more information contact jerrycleffi001@gmail.com](http://www.visualartcenter.org)

Lot Mowing Program

- The City will begin a new mowing cycle on June 17, weather permitting.

- **Planning Corner** – The Florida Planning and Zoning Association (FPZA) has awarded the *City of Punta Gorda Comprehensive Plan 2045* the Outstanding Plan Award at their 2024 Annual Conference. A contingent from the City, including Mayor Matthews and representatives from TEAM Punta Gorda and project consultant Dover, Kohl and Partners Town Planners, accepted this award at the Conference at Sunseeker Resort on June 7. The FPZA Awards recognize outstanding land development and public/private sector planning statewide. For several decades, the awards program has been the centerpiece of FPZA’s acknowledgment and promotion of best practices in planning throughout the state of Florida. This award establishes the *City of Punta Gorda Comprehensive Plan 2045* as a model planning document to be emulated by other Florida municipalities undergoing the comprehensive plan update process. The City is honored by this recognition and distinction because of the tremendous efforts by our community, elected officials, staff, and consultants that went into this document’s completion. Five years in the making, Punta Gorda’s *Comprehensive Plan 2045* is truly representative of a comprehensive plan in terms of the scope of the document and the community-driven processes that forged its creation.



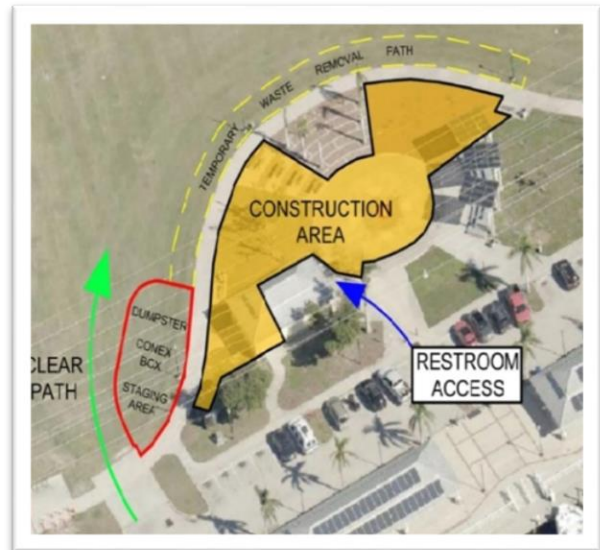
Public Works

- **Canal Maintenance Production** – Crews filled depressions at 8 locations and removed an 8-foot piling from the canal on Kiwi Ct. Crews manufactured 72 seawall panels.
- **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. Utilizing plastic during a rain event 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 77 projects completed, and seven projects under construction with 19 completed in Burnt Store Isles. Hurricane Ian Related Seawall Failures | City of Punta Gorda, FL (punta-gorda.fl.us)
- **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) click on the Dock Match button for information.

Engineering

- **The swale contractor** - Has completed Don Quixote Dr., Brazilia Ct., Darin Dr., Padre Island Dr., Casey Key Dr. (SW), Ussepa Ct., Casey Key Dr. (SE) Turtle Dove Cir which have been finalized and turned over to the homeowner. The contractor will be watering the sod for the next 30 days weather permitting at Sea Horse Ct., Sea Fan Dr., and Grebe Dr. The contractor has begun to excavate Orange St., W. McKenzie St., Lemon St., and McGregor St. this week and will be excavating approximately 12,000 SF. Once they have the grades established, new sod will be installed. The swale contractor has excavated approximately 73,000 SF this fiscal year.
- **Laisley Splash Pad** - Construction continues at the Interactive Fountain area in Laisley Park. This work includes rehabilitation and upgrades to the splash pad/play area. The shade structure support columns are being erected, and electrical work is beginning. Please use extra caution while driving or walking through the park due to construction personnel and equipment.

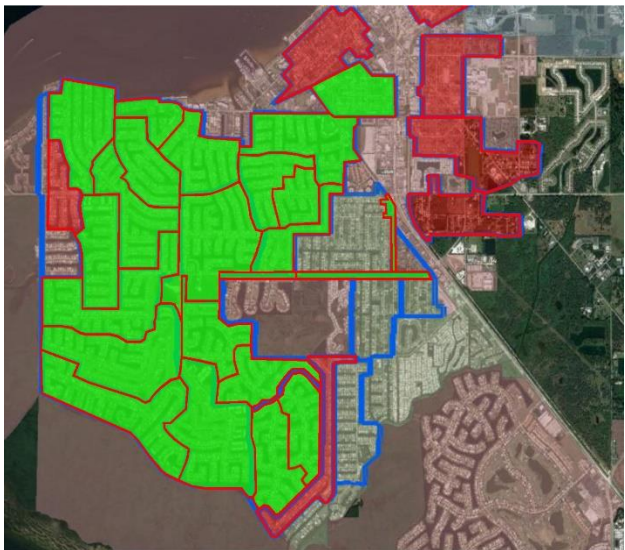


To the highest extent possible the restroom facilities will remain open to the public. The access to the restrooms will be from the marina side of the building. There will be periodic temporary sidewalk closures immediately adjacent to the construction area as required for public safety. The construction area will be closed to the public at all times during this period. The enhanced fountain area is scheduled to reopen in late 2024. 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.



- **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 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 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

- Crews have completed sidearm mowing at the Water Plant and along Cooper St.
- Crews finished the tree trimming at the Water Plant at Washington Loop near the dam.
- Vactor work continues on Airport Rd and Cooper St.
- Replaced 13 damaged car stops at Laishley Park.
- Signage and striping have been completed at the Herald Court Parking Garage.



Sanitation

- **Commercial Properties Dumpster**

Guidelines – Please follow the guidelines listed below to ensure proper service:

- Do not block the dumpster or dumpster enclosure with vehicles or trash.
 - Maintain a five-foot clearance around the dumpster free of trash and debris at all times.
 - All trash must be placed properly inside trash bags and the trash bags placed inside the dumpster.
 - Do not place loose trash or trash bags on the dumpster enclosure floor. The property owner is responsible for keeping the area clean. City staff is responsible for emptying the dumpster only.
 - Construction debris and hazardous waste are strictly prohibited from being placed inside the dumpster.
- **Commercial Trash Dumpster Safety** – For your safety and the safety of the sanitation staff, please do not approach the refuse truck while the dumpster is being emptied. Wait until the dumpster is placed properly on the ground and the area surrounding the dumpster is safe to approach staff. Please do not toss garbage into the dumpster or refuse truck while the dumpster is being emptied. The debris may become airborne and cause injury to the sanitation staff.

Police

- **New Volunteer Patrol Boat** – The Police Department’s new Carolina Skiff is almost ready for the water. The boat is being sent out for the lights and electronics to be installed and should be seen on the water soon. This boat is primarily meant for use by the Marine Volunteers and will spend most of its time in the canal systems of Punta Gorda Isles and Burnt Store Isles.
- **2024 Public Safety Summer Youth Academy** - The Police Department looks forward to participating in the Public Safety Summer Youth Academy next week from June 10 – June 14. The Academy is open to kids from 10 to 14 years of age. Academy cadets get a chance to see some of what our first responders do daily in the performance of their duties. We hope the exposure leads to a new generation interested in a career in Public Safety.

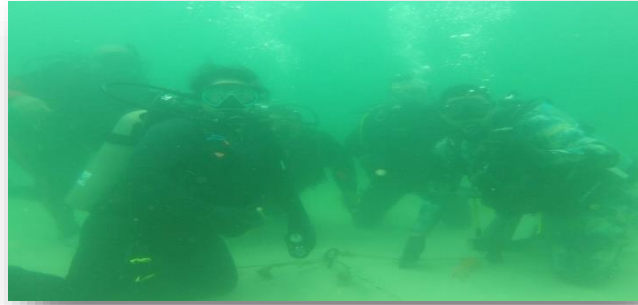


OPEN POSITIONS

- **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 April. Applications must be received by July 12. The written exam will be completed online between July 19, and July 26, and virtual oral board exams will be conducted via Zoom on Aug., 6. The department is accepting applications from certified and non-certified candidates.
- **Public Safety Dispatcher Testing** – The police department continually conducts new hire testing to prepare for future openings. Currently, the department is accepting applications for the position of Public Safety Dispatcher. The exam will be held virtually between June 14, and June 21. Applications must be received by June 7.
- **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 or contact our Employee Development Coordinator at (941) 575-5571 or by email at employeedevelopment@pgorda.us.

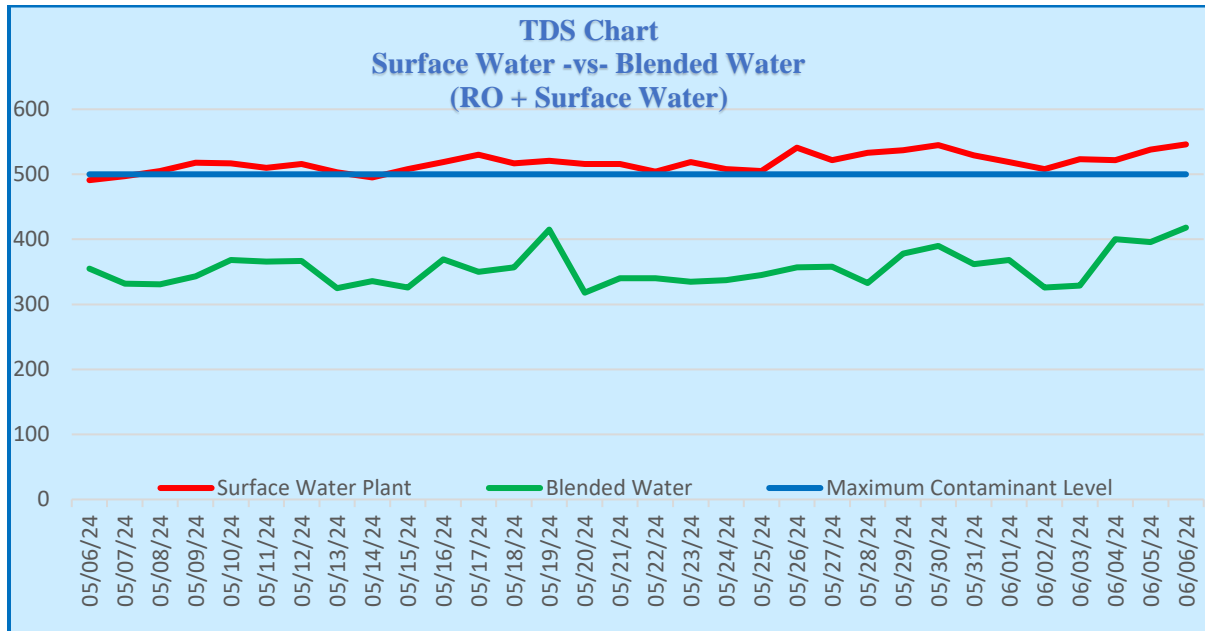
Fire

Underwater Dive Skills - This week fire crews were sharpening their underwater dive skills at Lake Denton. Our Dive Master Firefighter Josh Roebuck took several of our new rescue divers out in the open water to work on some essential survival skills. They worked on emergency surfacing techniques, assisting a panicked diver on the surface and finally rescuing an unconscious diver underwater. Working on these emergency skills in a controlled environment is priceless when our divers are put in real-life situations with lives on the line. So proud of the dedication our firefighters put in to be great.



Utilities

RO + 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**
- **56.9 MG** delivered to the distribution system during the last seven days with **8.1 MG** daily average.

- Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority Emergency Interconnect – Receiving 1350 gallons per minute from the new Interconnect (Phase 1 Pipeline). Sending 700 gallons per minute from the tank on 17 (Phase 1A Pipeline).
- Rainfall June 2023 – 5.55” June 2024 – 0.2”
- Hardness is a measurement of calcium and magnesium ions naturally occurring in the raw water. Currently "hard" – Grains of Hardness 10 –Total hardness 172 ppm
- TDS June 6 – Current 418 ppm. Low – 300 ppm, High 581 ppm, 14-year average 444 ppm.
- Reservoir June 6 – Current 4.78', Record Low 4.36', Record High, 6.60" 58 Year Average 5.23"

Lawn Watering

- **Phase I Water Shortage** – The Southwest Florida Water Management District's (District) Governing Board declared a [Phase I Water Shortage](#) for the District's central and southern regions, which include Charlotte, DeSoto, Hardee, Highlands, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas and Sarasota counties. The primary purpose for a Phase I water shortage is to alert the public that watering restrictions could be forthcoming. The order also requires local utilities to review and implement procedures for enforcing year-round water conservation measures and water shortage restrictions, including reporting enforcement activity to the District. A Phase I water shortage order does not change allowable watering schedules, however it does prohibit "wasteful and unnecessary" water use. [Water Restrictions | City of Punta Gorda, FL](#)
- **Lawn Watering Schedule/Times** – Lawn watering is limited to twice per week (if needed) by property address. Before 10 a.m. or after 4 p.m. Hand watering and micro-irrigation of plants (other than lawns) can be done on any day and at any time using a shut-off nozzle on their hose, so water isn't wasted.

Irrigation Basics

Save water and money by making sure your irrigation controller is set to water wisely. Check local watering restrictions for irrigation start times and watering days.

- ▶ **Irrigation Start Time:** Only one start time is needed to initiate watering for all irrigation zones. Set a start time before 8 a.m. or after 6 p.m.
- ▶ **Irrigation Run Time:** This is how long each zone in your irrigation system will run. Check with your local UF/IFAS Extension office for run time recommendations.
- ▶ **Irrigation Schedule:** Your system should be scheduled to only water on your designated watering days and only if needed.

For more info visit: <https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/residents/code-compliance/water-restrictions>

Water 101
Southwest Florida
Water Management District

Lawn Watering Schedule Table

Addresses	Current Watering Day	May Also Water
Ending in 0 and 1	Monday	Thursday
Ending in 2 and 3	Tuesday	Friday
Ending in 4 and 5	Wednesday	Saturday
Ending in 6 and 7	Thursday	Sunday
Ending in 8 and 9	Friday	Tuesday
Addresses that end with a letter instead of a number will water on:	Friday	Tuesday

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 Nov., 5, if there are two candidates for one district. A primary election will take place on Aug., 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.
- The qualifying period wherein candidates collect signatures in their petition packets will begin at noon on, June 10, and will end at noon on, June 14. At the end of the qualifying period, the candidates who have obtained the requisite number of verified signatures will be announced [on the City's website](#).
- 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.
- 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](#).

City Clerk

• **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 puntagorda.granicus.com/boards/forms/650/apply/.

- **Building Board** (one consumer advocate, one contractor, and one alternate) – Meets the fourth Tues., 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** (three regular and one alternate) – Meets the fourth Wed., 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 Thurs., of Jan., April, July and Oct., 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** (two alternate) – Meets the fourth Thurs., 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.
- **Planning Commission** (one regular) – Meets the fourth Mon., 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.
- **Utility Advisory Board** – (two regular) Meets the fourth Mon., 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.
- **New Businesses**
 - Constantine Vacation Rental, 1324 Aqui Esta Drive
 - Dorn Vacation Rental, 1088 Messina Drive