

Communication from Lynne Matthews, Mayor  
Punta Gorda City Council District 4

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Having a little fun during the Giving Challenge,  
with the SGA students from Charlotte High School.  
Photo provided.

**Here is your Weekly Highlights Report for April 12, 2024.**  
For the complete report from the City, click [HERE](#).

**Southwest Florida Honor Flight** - Come on out to the Punta Gorda Airport on Tuesday evening, April 16 around 8:30 p.m. to help us welcome home all the veterans and their guardians. The flight is scheduled to arrive home at 8:50 p.m. and there will be hundreds of people there to greet them all as they deplane. It is a sight to behold...and don't forget your kleenex! To see the looks on the faces of the veterans as they pass by everyone cheering them on, all decked out in red, white and blue will melt your heart. Feel free to bring signs, flags and be prepared for a heartwarming welcome home celebration. For more information on how to become a guardian or a participating veteran, click [HERE](#).



**City Manager** - The City of Punta Gorda prioritizes the promotion, protection, and

enhancement of the health, safety, and well-being of its citizens. Safety encompasses various aspects such as building codes, zoning regulations, code compliance, utilities, public works, and sanitation, as well as police and fire services. Given our diverse population, which includes individuals from various cities, states and countries, there is often a lack of understanding regarding the Florida statutes governing roadways, sidewalks, and intersections.



My office recently has fielded inquiries regarding pedestrian and bicyclist safety regulations. One common concern is crosswalk safety, particularly at intersections lacking pedestrian signals. According to Florida law, pedestrians waiting to cross at such crosswalks (while standing on the sidewalk) must yield to vehicles. However, once a pedestrian has begun crossing and is within the crosswalk, vehicles must yield to them.

A frequent issue arises when drivers, seeing pedestrians waiting to cross on a sidewalk, suddenly stop to allow them to proceed, often out of a mistaken belief that they are obliged to do so or as a gesture of courtesy. While courtesy on the road is appreciated, such actions can inadvertently pose safety risks. It's important to remember that traffic laws primarily aim to ensure predictability among drivers, cyclists and pedestrians. With the exception of emergency braking, it is always essential to ensure that you plan ahead and provide enough time to signal your intention to slow or stop to those around you.

Pedestrians also bear significant responsibility in crossing crosswalks safely and legally. At crosswalks without signals, pedestrians should wait on the sidewalk and yield to oncoming traffic, crossing when it's safe. Florida law prohibits pedestrians from suddenly entering the path of a vehicle so close that the driver cannot yield. There is no easy way to determine how far away a vehicle needs to be since speed, size, and other factors affect how quickly a vehicle can safely stop. If you are not absolutely sure if the vehicle can stop safely, it is always best to let the vehicle pass and wait for the next opportunity.

Bicyclists are permitted on all Florida roadways unless explicitly prohibited. They have the right to use travel lanes when they're too narrow to safely accommodate both vehicles and bicycles. Vehicles passing cyclists must provide at least three feet of clearance. Bicycles are also allowed on sidewalks, with riders under 16 required to wear helmets. When riding on sidewalks or crossing crosswalks, cyclists must yield to pedestrians and signal audibly before passing.

Statewide, over half of traffic crashes resulting in severe or fatal injuries to pedestrians occur during dark or dusk hours. Stay alert and watch for pedestrians and bicyclists, especially at night. Always use a headlight, taillight, and reflectors when riding at night. Wearing light-colored or reflective clothing can also make you more visible during dark or dusk hours and is a proactive way to create high visibility.

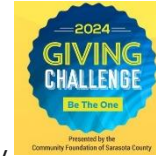
Furthermore, April is recognized as Distracted Driving Awareness Month. Engaging in conversations, texting, eating, drinking, and using navigation or entertainment systems diverts focus from driving. Let's commit to giving driving the full attention it demands. Readers may reach City Manager Greg Murray at [citymgr@cityofpuntagordafl.com](mailto:citymgr@cityofpuntagordafl.com) or by calling the main

office line at 941-575-3302.

**Welcome to Hiram's Grille at 115!** A ribbon cutting took place this week to kickoff the opening of this new local restaurant, located inside the Masonic Lodge. This is open to the public for breakfast and lunch, and the food is awesome! Stop by and check them out.



**Giving Challenge results** - There were so many wonderful organizations in our community that participated in this week's Giving Challenge event. Thanks to everyone who made donations to support your non-profit agencies, and helped many of them reach their 2024 fundraising goals. These organizations are so vital to the community, and provide great opportunities and benefits to our residents. We truly do live in a community who cares. I would like to thank the 13 agencies who participated in the Pop-Up Station at the Military Heritage Museum, and to all the museum board members, staff and volunteers who helped make it a great event! And special thanks to the students from Charlotte High School, who helped with logistics that day. As you can see from the photo at the top of this newsletter, they took their job very seriously! We have some awesome kids in this community!!



**City Council** - City Council will meet on April 17 at 9 a.m. at the Military Heritage Museum. Items of interest include:

- Fiscal year 2025 budget update
- Ponce de Leon Park regulations amendment
- Herald Court Center interior corner parking

**Swale regrading** - The swale contractor has completed Don Quixote Dr., Brazilia Ct., Darin Dr., Padre Island Dr., Casey Key Dr. and Ussepa Ct. They will be watering the sod for the next 30 days weather permitting. The contractor has begun excavating Casey Key Dr. and will be excavating approximately 3,400 SF. Once the contractor gets the new grades established they will be installing new sod at the proper elevation. They have excavated approximately 55,000 SF this fiscal year. The next street to be excavated will be Turtle Dove Circle.

**Right-of-way** -

- \* Thermo plastic directional indicators are being installed at the bike and pedestrian areas along Harborwalk.
- \* Vactor work continues around the City.
- \* Crews continue to mow throughout the City. Currently in the Marion Ave., Olympia Ave. and Cooper St. areas.
- \* Crews are continuing to patch potholes throughout the City.



\* The renovation

project at the Laisley gazebo located west of U.S. 41 has started. Crews will be placing rip rap around the northwest side of the gazebo. Please use caution in this area.

**Splash Pad** - Construction/demolition continues at the Interactive Fountain area in Laisley Park. The underground plumbing has been completed, backfilled, and has passed inspection. 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 to 4:30.



**Fiber optic internet network** - The fiber optic internet provider Hyper Fiber has been issued permits for a portion of the construction project to install a citywide fiber optic internet network within the City right-of-way. 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 when the restoration is complete to ensure the contractor's restoration meets the City's requirements. Hyper Fiber has provided a telephone number to call if citizens have questions or concerns about the project and installation. Please contact Hyper Fiber's Scott Jackson at 239-887-5379. Please use extra caution while driving through the project area due to construction personnel and equipment.

**Voting information** - This is going to be a big year for voting, from everything at the federal level for the President of the United States, to local elections at both the City and County level. Here are

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| <b>Election Days</b><br>Presidential Preference Primary Election: March 19, 2024<br>Primary Election: August 20, 2024<br>General Election: November 5, 2024  | <b>Early Voting Dates</b><br>Presidential Preference Primary Election: March 4-17, 2024<br>Primary: August 5-18, 2024<br>General: October 21-November 3, 2024  |
| <b>New Registration/Party Affiliation Change Deadline!</b><br>Florida City Election: October 10, 2023<br>Presidential Preference Primary Election: February 20, 2024<br>Primary Election: July 22, 2024<br>General Election: October 7, 2024 | <b>Vote by Mail Dates</b><br>(F.S. 101.62)<br>The initial batch of Vote by Mail ballots will be mailed out between the 40th and 33rd days prior to an election to those voters who have already requested them. Subsequent mailings will be mailed out daily as new requests are received. |

some important dates to put on your calendar in advance of the upcoming primary and general elections. Make sure you update your Vote By Mail status, as you have to do it after every general election now by Florida statute. For information, click [HERE](#).

**Licensed/unlicensed contractors** - As a reminder, all contractors who will be performing structural work on your home (roofs, pool cages, soffits, etc.) must be a contractor licensed in the State of Florida - click [HERE](#) to check on a specific company, AND they must also be registered with the City of Punta Gorda in order to be able to pull a building permit, which is required by law. You can check on the status of a contractor's registration with the City by clicking [HERE](#) and typing in the name of the company you wish to check on. Failure for a contractor to have the appropriate licensing and registration could result in a felony for the contractor. Additionally, they may not have the required insurance and liability insurances that the state requires. Please do your homework before you sign anything!

**Seawall failure update** - Crews manufactured 80 seawall panels this week. Construction schedules have been updated and are posted on the Canal Maintenance website for the next six-month look ahead. There are 44 projects in Punta Gorda Isles under construction with 69 completed, and 19 projects under construction and 15 completed in Burnt Store Isles. Maps indicating the location and classification can be found on the Canal Maintenance website - click [HERE](#).



**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 Inlets are Idle Speed and No Wake. Wakes from watercraft can cause additional erosion and damage to seawalls already compromised. And please remember that you are responsible for your wake. If your vessel causes damage to a property or another vessel, you may be subject to fines or penalties.

**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 that plastic will help keep the soil in place preventing further erosion.

**Establishing sod after seawall replacement** - Placing the sod is the final phase of seawall replacement construction. As per 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.

**Dock Match program** - The Punta Gorda Boaters Alliance (PGBA) has once again set up a program called *Dock Match*, which is to help facilitate relocation of boats that will need to be temporarily relocated from properties that had seawall failures. If you have a dock that is vacant and would like to make it available to another PGI or BSI boat owner, please click [HERE](#) to register your dock. Boat owners will have a list available to assist them in connecting with you to try and match their needs to your dock availability. I worked with the PGBA after Hurricane Irma to set this up in 2017 and it was used quite a lot by many residents. This program has been approved by the PGBA and the City of Punta Gorda.

**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 kind of dredging along the damaged seawall may cause further damage.

**Answers to some of your questions** - I receive many questions each week from residents, asking all kinds of things about Punta Gorda activities. Here are some from this week:

*I know that this project was delayed due to Ian, but could you have someone from the city give us an update on the timeline for the lock widening project between the BSI canals and Alligator Creek? Is there anything we can do to help get this project rolling?* I asked the City Manager to provide an update and here it is: Public Works met with BSI Canal Advisory Chairman Rick Daugherty this week on that project. Mr. Daugherty is a retired civil engineer and is reviewing and making recommendations for clarifying portions of the scope of work. Staff felt some portions of the scope were misinterpreted, which resulted in inflated pricing the first time it was bid. Once they have those suggestions, they will review and work with procurement to rebid the project. The intention is to get it bid (re-bid) before the end of the fiscal year (September 30 is fiscal year end).

*There is old signage and signage structure still laying out in front of the post office. It has been there since Ian. When will this eyesore be removed and why is it taking so long?* That is signage owned and maintained by FDOT and they have told us it could take as long as a year to get their signs all back up and in place. They have hundreds of them statewide. Sorry, but we don't have authority or jurisdiction to remove them.

If you ever have a question you would like answered, please email me at [lmattews@cityofpuntagordaf1.com](mailto:lmattews@cityofpuntagordaf1.com). I respond to all emails that are personally directed to me, or I will ask a staff member to respond to you. Occasionally, staff needs to respond if it is a complex answer, and sometimes it takes a few days to research various subjects. Please be patient, as we will get back with you.



Stop in to see the interactive exhibits, and check out the schedule of wonderful entertainment in the Gulf Theater. Our mission is to promote an understanding and respect for the rich military heritage of the United States and the sacrifices made by all who serve, living and deceased, emphasizing that freedom isn't free. For more information, click [HERE](#). To check out the schedule for this season's fabulous shows in the Gulf Theater - click [HERE](#).

**Would you like to be on the mailing list for the Military Heritage Museum, and receive advance notice of upcoming events?** If so, please click [HERE](#). You MUST include your name and email address in your request in order to add you to the database.

**There are a lot of great events coming up in town, so don't miss out on these:**

April 20 - Taste of the World Food & Music Festival, Laishley Park. For information, click [HERE](#).

April 20-21 - Spring Home and Garden Show, Event Center. For information, click [HERE](#).

April 27 - Strongman Competition, Laishley Park. For information, click [HERE](#).

May 3-5 - Punta Gorda Hibiscus Festival, Gilchrist Park. For information, click [HERE](#).

May 18 - Home and Hurricane Expo, Event Center. For information, click [HERE](#).

May 18 - Day of Celtic Music, Fishermen's Village. For information, click [HERE](#).

May 25-26 - Indoor Arts and Crafts Show, Event Center. For information, click [HERE](#).

June 1 - Island Vibe Music Festival, Laishley Park. For information, click [HERE](#).

June 1-2 - Punta Gorda Gun Show, Event Center. For information, click [HERE](#).

June 8-9 - Spirit Fest, Event Center. For information, click [HERE](#).

June 15 - Blues Fest, Fishermen's Village. For information, click [HERE](#).

July 4 - Fourth of July festivities, Fishermen's Village. For information, click [HERE](#).

For upcoming events and festivals from the City's website, click [HERE](#).

Punta Gorda Chamber's events page - click [HERE](#).

Charlotte County Visitors Bureau events page - click [HERE](#).

Gulf Theater at the Military Heritage Museum - click [HERE](#).

Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association - click [HERE](#).

Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center, click [HERE](#).

Visual Arts Center events, click [HERE](#).

Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce events, click [HERE](#).

Fishermen's Village events, click [HERE](#). For all Fishermen's Village event information, you must go to the calendar under Events and click on the specific listing for details.

**Police Department:**



**Bike safety** - Punta Gorda is a great place to bike, but cyclists must follow the law to ensure the safety of everyone. Bicycles can legally be operated on sidewalks and when bicycles operate on



sidewalks they have the same rights and duties as a pedestrian. However, bicycles on sidewalks must yield the right-of-way to those on foot. Bicycles who are passing a pedestrian on foot must give an audible signal before overtaking them. In addition, electric bicycles (considered bicycles under Florida law) must follow the same rules but should slow down substantially when pedestrians are walking in the area. Bicycles operated on the roadway are expected to follow the same traffic laws as any other vehicle. When riding on the roadway, remember that from a size standpoint, you are less visible than a motor vehicle. Please pay close attention to drivers around you and make sure they see you before entering an intersection or riding out into traffic. Ride defensively at all times.

**Volunteers In Policing (VIP)** - The Volunteers in Policing (VIP) program contributed a total of 724 hours of volunteer time to the City of Punta Gorda during March of 2024. Our volunteers are an absolutely vital part of this police department and we appreciate them greatly! Members of the community interested in volunteering may contact the Volunteer Staff Coordinator at 941-575-5536 or by emailing [vip@pgorda.us](mailto:vip@pgorda.us).

**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 June. Applications must be received by May 24. The written exam will be completed online between May 31 and June 7, and virtual oral board exams will be conducted via Zoom on June 18. The department is accepting applications from certified and non-certified candidates.

**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. Applications must be received by May 3. The exam will be held on the morning of May 16, beginning at 9 a.m.

**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 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).**

**Fire Department: Fire Department training** - This week's fire department training consisted of (RIT) Rapid Intervention Teams, and using our new battery-operated 9" cut-off saws. Crews worked on removing downed firefighters using webbing and different drag techniques. They also trained with our RIT bags and ensured that they could get to a victim and provide supplemental air or replace a damaged SCBA facepiece or regulator. As always, our crews knocked it out of the park. A special thanks to Lieutenant/FTO Daniel Felico for leading this module and the crews who participated and are always willing to hone their craft.





**Duckling rescue** - The fire department was able to save some little ducklings that made their way into a PGI pool this week. The homeowner called concerned because the pool was very murky as they were still dealing with storm damage repair issues.

The fire department was able to catch the ducklings and release them into the canal behind the home where momma duck was



frantically swimming around looking for her babies. Within seconds of the ducklings being placed in the canal, momma duck swam over and they were all reunited. Great job to the crew who responded, Acting Lieutenant Rhett Anderson and FF/EMT Marc Boyden.

**Planning Corner:** This coming Earth Day, April 22 at 9:30, the Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center (CHEC) will be installing vertical oyster gardens (VOGs) along the Laishley Park boardwalk. Members of the public who would like to assist in hanging the VOGs, or just want to learn more about how to install a VOG along their seawall or dock, are encouraged to attend.



Oysters create habitat for birds, fish, and crabs and improve water quality. Each oyster can filter up to 50 gallons of water a day. VOGs are made of recycled oyster shells – donated from local restaurants – that are strung along a wire in what is called an “oyster stack” and hung from underneath docks. Students at Punta Gorda Middle School made the oyster stacks that will be installed at Laishley Park. Each of the VOGs are inviting places for baby oysters – called “spats” – to cling to, eventually becoming home to hundreds of oysters and filtering billions of gallons of water over their lifetime. For more information on the CHEC’s VOG program, please visit: [Vertical Oyster Gardening \(checflorida.org\)](http://Vertical Oyster Gardening (checflorida.org)).

**Sanitation: Collection time** - As a reminder, collection times may vary based on numerous factors. Sanitation encounters problems from time to time such as trucks being down for service, staffing issues or weather conditions. In order to maintain the best level of service, we kindly remind residents to have trash, yard waste, and recycling curbside by 6 a.m. on the day of service or the night before. Staff is not always available to return the same day to collect a late put-out during these instances. Thank you for your continued cooperation.

**Tree removal** - Tree removal and lot clearing are 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 click [HERE](#). 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.

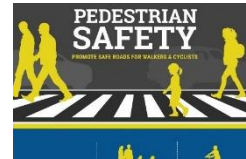
**Construction debris** - Construction debris is NOT collected by the City of Punta Gorda and must be hauled away by the owner or contractor to the Charlotte County landfill - click [HERE](#). Construction and demolition debris waste including but not limited to, steel, glass, brick, concrete or clay or asphalt roofing material, pipe, gypsum wallboard, and lumber, resulting from the construction or destruction of a structure, and includes rocks, soils, the tree remains and

vegetative matter which results from land clearing or land development operations for a construction project.

**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 a professional position in the Purchasing Agent I - Procurement Department. A skilled paraprofessional position responsible for purchasing various commodities and services for the City in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local purchasing requirement. The City of Punta Gorda has a variety of employment opportunities available learn more by clicking [HERE](#).

JOIN OUR TEAM

**Pedestrian safety** - We rarely are more vulnerable than when walking in urban areas, crossing busy streets and negotiating traffic. We all are pedestrians from time to time, so it's important to pay attention to what is going on around us. In 2021, an estimated 8,984 pedestrians died in traffic and non-traffic incidents, with 7,388 of those killed in traffic crashes on public roads, according to [Injury Facts](#).



- \* Whenever possible, walk on the sidewalk
- \* Follow the rules of the road, obeying all traffic signs and signals
- \* Cross streets at crosswalks
- \* If no crosswalk is available and your view is blocked, move to a place where you can see oncoming traffic
- \* Look left, right and left again before crossing the street, making eye contact with drivers of oncoming vehicles to make sure they see you
- \* Stay alert – avoid cell phone use and wearing earbuds
- \* Avoid alcohol and drug impairment when walking
- \* Wear bright and/or reflective clothing, and use a flashlight at night
- \* Watch for cars entering or exiting driveways or backing up in parking lots

**Head up, phone down** - Distracted walking incidents are on the rise, and everyone with a cell phone is at risk. We are losing focus on our surroundings and putting our safety at risk. The solution: Stop using phones while walking, and not just in crosswalks and intersections. Over half of distracted walking injuries occur in our own homes, proving that we need to stay aware of our surroundings whether indoors and out. Pedestrian Safety Is a Shared Responsibility.

**When driving, help keep pedestrians of all ages safe:**

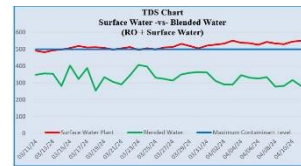
- Obey all traffic laws, especially posted speed limits in school zones
- Watch for pedestrians at all times and be extra cautious when backing up
- Yield to pedestrians in crosswalks, making eye contact to indicate that you see them
- Never pass vehicles stopped at crosswalks
- Stay alert - avoid distracted driving
- Do not drive under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs

**Administration** - The Charlotte County Emergency Management Facility (EOC) hosted our Citizens Academy on April 12. The EOC shared with the attendees their levels of activation of the Emergency Operations in conjunction with the City. Attendees participated in tours of the building and left with a better understanding of the facility's function. Our attendees will be presented with their certificates of completion of our program at the City Council meeting on April 17. The 2025 Citizens Academy applications for enrollment will open in October 2024 - click [HERE](#).

**Rebuild Florida** - Florida Commerce has programs available to assist with housing repair and replacement necessitated by Hurricane Ian. Learn more by clicking [HERE](#).

**Lot mowing** - The lot mowing cycle is complete. The City will begin a new mowing cycle on April 22.

**Groundwater RO plant update** - Maximum total dissolved solids (TDS) allowable is 500 without a waiver. Our numbers are consistently way below the maximum allowable level with the R.O. Plant water in service.



**Welcome to new or transferred businesses in the City this**

**week:** Community United Services Inc, 650 Mary Street; Swanberg Vacation Rental, 2211 Palm Tree Drive; Harborside Coffee and Creamery, 1200 W. Retta Esplanade.

**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 now available for the 2024 election cycle. The packet can be viewed on the City Clerk page of the City 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.

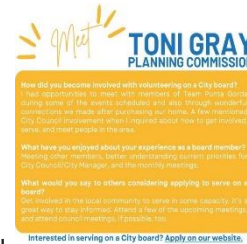
\* Filed candidates will be listed on the website upon submission of Form DS-DE 9.

**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 to update yours during regular business hours.

**Vote By Mail** - 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 - click [HERE](#).

**Board and committee vacancies: Volunteers needed** - Vacancies currently exist on the Building Board, Code Enforcement Board, Historic Preservation Advisory Board, Donation Review Committee, Utility Advisory Board, Burnt Store Isles Canal Advisory Committee and Punta Gorda Housing Authority. If you are interested in applying for any position, please contact the City Clerk's office at 941-575-3369 or [pgclerk@cityofpuntagordafl.com](mailto:pgclerk@cityofpuntagordafl.com). You must complete an [Appointment Information Form](#) along with a resume and submit to the City Clerk's Office either in person to City Hall at 326 W. Marion Ave., or to email address above.



If you ever have a question you would like answered, please email me at [lmattthews@cityofpuntagordafl.com](mailto:lmattthews@cityofpuntagordafl.com). I respond to all emails that are personally directed to me, as long as the questions are not related to an upcoming public hearing. Elected officials are not permitted to discuss issues or offer opinions on items that will come before us for a vote. If I don't have the answers to your questions, I will get it for you.

Thanks for staying in touch with what's happening in Punta Gorda. I hope that you find this newsletter informative. If you would like to share it with others, please feel free to do so. If you know anyone else who may want to receive this, please have them email me their name, email address and zip code, and I'll be happy to add them to the distribution list. Also, if you change your email address, please let me know it is changed so you can continue to receive the newsletter - go to the bottom of the newsletter and "Update your preferences" to keep it current.

**A note to readers of this newsletter** - If you or your email server report my newsletter as having spammy content, it sends a message to Mail Chimp that you have not accepted receipt of the newsletter and it will automatically remove you from my subscriber list. Most of the time, this is unintentional. However if you somehow find you stop receiving it each week, this is the reason. Once you are removed from the database, you stop receiving it permanently. If I see that this happens, I will attempt one time to send you an email and let you know you need to accept a resubscribe request in order to get back into the database. Also, a few of my readers have experienced periodic problems with not receiving this newsletter. It seems that some of the virus prevention programs send the newsletter to spam from time to time, especially if the newsletter is lengthy. Please ensure you have the sending email address in your address book, which is [upstateone@comcast.net](mailto:upstateone@comcast.net). And if you suddenly stop receiving this, please be sure to check your spam folder. I never delete anyone from the subscriber list unless I am asked to do so. Apologies for any inconvenience.

If at any time, you would like to get in touch to ask a question, feel free to contact me.

**Lynne R. Matthews**

**Mayor, City of Punta Gorda**

**Punta Gorda City Council District 4**

[lmattews@cityofpuntagordafl.com](mailto:lmattews@cityofpuntagordafl.com)

and on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/lynnematthewspgcitycouncil/>



Florida's Harborside Hometown