**POLITICAL CAMPAIGN SPEECH**

**FOR**

**SHAUNE HOTCHKISS**

Hello everyone. I want to thank all of you for joining me here today, As we look forward... to the future, I think we can all agree that in order to carve a space and find a place for everyone... for all citizens and neighbors, it is urgent.... imperative... that we become involved in the working of our government.... as individuals, and as a united, committed, and engaged community. As a member of the Punta Gorda City Council, I intend to protect, defend, and promote the best of our great city. While I may be standing in front of you as an individual, make no mistake... I am a representative for all... I truly believe that no one lives in a vacuum... no one functions alone... and no one can claim that anything worthwhile was ever accomplished solo... it takes a team... thank goodness!!! ... and I envision **ALL** of **US**, coming together, to build and sustain an enriched and supportive environment for **EVERYONE**.

It’s been said that, “The need for connection and community is as fundamental as the need for the basics in life: air... water... food...”. I am pretty sure that we can all understand that the success and health of a city... and it’s neighborhoods... depends almost solely on the overall symbiotic functioning and interaction of each aspect of our lives.... our merchants can’t be successful if we’re not... our corporate infrastructure won’t thrive if we don’t actively engage... our children will be challenged to build strong, insightful, compassionate, engaged foundations if we don’t show them the way... we must lead by example, and we must identify and accomplish our goals as a cohesive team, each bringing our civic pride and our personal passions and presence to form an interdependent, mindful environment for our city.

Envisioning our goals requires commitment, common sense, and determination. Accomplishing our goals... identifying and establishing what works and what needs to work better, takes focus, research, dedication, and vision... the vision and wherewithal that can only be achieved through working together as a united team... filled with diverse observations yet committed to the common goal of strengthening and maintaining the best quality of life that Punta Gorda might possibly offer.

We are **ALL** invested in our city.... this is our **home**... this is where we live, eat, shop, and learn. This is where we need to feel safe and productive, and it’s where we have invested civic pride... it’s where we honor the past history and build on that in order to leave an even greater legacy for our children and theirs yet to be born. To live here, in Punta Gorda means so much to us and I intend to be the voice for all of us. In order to express our collective commitment, I will need all of you to work with me... to be the eyes on (**Name a common busy street in the area**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_... to be the ears at events like (**Name a popular community function**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and to encourage the sense of security we all share when we know that our first responders have the best support systems and equipment available to be able to care for all of us.

As an active, engaged, proud member of this community, I have **IDEAS** ... (**If you want to make a joke, you can say)** You didn’t think I would be up here if I didn’t, **DID YOU**??? (**And wait for the laugh**). Whether I’m engaging with clients in my real estate profession, socializing with friends and family in one of the great local venues, or doing my chores in my neighborhood, I realize the necessity to live in a community that recognizes and includes all of us, and, of course, as a functioning, involved community member. I, like everyone else, can identify areas and situations that can use improvement. **NOW** is our time. **NOW** is the time to address those issues and **DO** something. **NOW** is the time to:

* Protect, preserve, and enhance property values and to support Workforce Housing to accommodate our growing neighborhoods
* Defend and enhance the history of Punta Gorda.... to foster historic preservation and insure the future of the landmarks that continue to be symbols of our civic pride
* Build active symbols of **COMMUNITY**... to focus on projects that bring us together and promote a sense of connection... green spaces... cultural initiatives... designated walkable and multifunctional marketplaces

We have **MANY** ideas.... and I am certain that together we can explore and incorporate many more with the intention of making Punta Gorda the best of all possible places to live, learn, work, and thrive. I envision a city that responds to the issues, includes all citizens, and supports the well being of all that live here. I envision a greater Punta Gorda, one that respects the past, works in the present, and strengthens the environment... and future... for **ALL OF US**. I look forward to working with you.... representing you... and continuing to build on our considerable, wonderful foundations. Thank you all!!