

Fairfax City's Elf Hunt for Small Business Saturday

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Small Business Saturday is this coming Saturday, Nov. 28 – and the City of Fairfax is showcasing its small businesses with a citywide Elf Hunt. But this year, instead of hiding the elf inside their stores, business owners will incorporate them into their storefront window displays.

Each participating business will have an elf and QR code displayed in their window, and the code can be scanned to verify the elf was “found.” The code also links to those businesses’ Websites and will provide ways to support them online, plus information on specials.

Residents and visitors will have from Nov. 28 through Sunday, Dec. 13, to find 10 or more elves. People doing so will have their names entered into a drawing for a chance to win one of five \$100 gift cards to the Fairfax City business of their choice.



second year. Its Office of Economic Development and Economic Development Authority are partnering on this effort with the Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce and the Old Town Fairfax Business Assn.

The City’s traditional, hard-copy Elf Hunt cards will be available for those who visit participating businesses in person, since many will be offering in-store specials for the day. These cards will list the businesses; and after each in-store visit, the business will stamp the card confirming the customer’s elf find.

The cards will be available at Fairfax City’s welcome station, this Saturday, from 10 a.m.-noon, at Old Town Square, 10415 North St. There, people may also pick up morning treats and hot cocoa and receive a free Small Business Saturday canvas tote, stickers and more.

Stressing the importance of shopping local during a time when many small businesses are hurting, Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Jennifer Rose said her organization is “happy to once again partner with Fairfax City’s Office of Economic Development to encourage patronizing our local businesses and bringing our businesses and community together.”

“Our businesses in Old Town have invested in our community and support our activities,” added Old Town Fairfax Business Assn. Executive Director Shannon Duffy, “We are here to support them; they are our champions.”

THIS IS AN OUTDOOR EVENT, but visitors who’ve been diagnosed with COVID-19, are awaiting test results or show any symptoms of the virus are asked to stay home. To ensure the health and safety of the public, the Fairfax City Economic Development Office will be implementing comprehensive COVID-19 protocols to mitigate the spread of the virus.

There’ll be temporal temperature checks upon entering a store, plus limited occupancy, and attendees are asked to wear face coverings. Hand sanitizer will be available, social distancing between patrons will be required, and the entrances and exits will be monitored for one-way traffic.

For more information about Fairfax City’s Small Business Saturday Elf Hunt, go to fairfaxcityconnected.com/elfhunt2020.

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— Old Town Fairfax Business Assn. Executive Director Shannon Duffy

“Because of the pandemic, Small Business Saturday is more important than ever,” said Assistant Economic Development Director Danette Nguyen. “While this day brings attention to the importance of shopping local, it has never been more needed.”

“Supporting small businesses is about supporting our communities,” said Nguyen. “We urge everyone to get out to shop and dine at City businesses. And when residents do that, they help ensure the survival of our City’s small business community and directly impact City neighborhoods.”

SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY is celebrated annually on the Saturday after Thanksgiving. Founded by American Express, it’s a nationwide event that began in 2010 to encourage people to patronize their local, neighborhood businesses and bring more holiday customers to them.

Fairfax City is participating for its

Fairfax Water

NOTICE OF WATER RATES AND BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING

December 10, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

At 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 10, 2020, Fairfax Water will conduct a public hearing on its Proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges. The hearing will be held in Fairfax Water’s offices at 8570 Executive Park Avenue, Fairfax, VA. The meeting will also be available online for remote attendance. For more information, visit fairfaxwater.org/meeting-schedule.

The proposed changes, to be effective April 1, 2021, include the following:

- An increase in the Availability Charge from \$4,320 to \$4,400[†].
- An increase in the Local Facilities Charge from \$18,030 to \$19,610.
- An increase in the Service Connection Charge from \$1,370 to \$1,430[†].
- An increase in the Quarterly Billing Service Charge from \$14.40 to \$14.85[†].
- An increase in the base Commodity Charge from \$3.20 to \$3.33 per 1,000 gallons of water.
- An increase in the Peak Use Charge from \$3.85 to \$3.90.
- An increase in the Turn Off / Turn On Charge from \$49 to \$50.
- An increase in the Fees for Use of Fairfax Water Fire Hydrants to include the increase in the Commodity Charge and the Peak Use Charge.
- A decrease in the Overhead Charge for Labor from 104% to 102%.
- An increase in the Installation of Sewer Use Meter Charge from \$39 to \$40.

[†]Charges reflect fees associated with a standard 5/8" residential meter. Changes in charges for larger residential and commercial meters are reflected in the Proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges.

Fairfax Water is also proposing a \$196 million budget for calendar year 2021*. Water sales are expected to provide \$168.9 million and the remaining \$27.1 million is expected from connection charges, investment income and other sources.

The major areas of operation and maintenance expense are:

| – \$1,000s – | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Category | 2020 | 2021 |
| Personal Services & Employee Benefits | \$59,083 | \$61,352 |
| Power and Utilities | 10,730 | 10,815 |
| Chemicals | 7,869 | 7,928 |
| Purchased Water | 5,014 | 8,364 |
| Supplies and Materials | 5,507 | 5,784 |
| Insurance | 1,230 | 1,100 |
| Fuel | 535 | 700 |
| Postage | 586 | 620 |
| Contractual Services | 13,779 | 14,102 |
| Professional Services | 1,336 | 1,298 |
| Other | 2,296 | 2,452 |
| Sub-Total | 107,965 | 114,515 |
| Transfer to Improvement Fund | (10,313) | (10,763) |
| Total | \$97,652 | \$103,752 |

Net revenues are expected to be appropriated as follows:

| | |
|------------------|--------------|
| Debt Payment | \$42,358,365 |
| Improvement Fund | \$11,000,000 |
| General Fund | \$38,400,000 |

* Fairfax Water’s Board will continue to monitor economic factors and review revenues and expenditures at mid-year to determine if additional action is needed.

A copy of the proposed changes can be viewed on our website at fairfaxwater.org/rates.

Those wishing to speak at this hearing (in person or remotely) or desiring a copy of the proposed changes should call Ms. Karen Barnette at 703-289-6029. Interested parties may submit written comments to PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org or mail written comments to:

Fairfax Water
Public Hearing Comments
8570 Executive Park Avenue
Fairfax, VA 22031

All written comments must be received by close of business on Wednesday, December 9, 2020, to be included in the record of the public hearing.