Personal Property Tax Break

At the Sept. 12 City Council meeting, Council voted to decrease personal property bills on motor vehicles by 15 percent. This does not include the $25 registration fee per vehicle. Revised tax bills will be sent out and residents will have until Oct. 26, 2022 to pay. Personal property is primarily motor vehicles, but could also include boats and trailers.

During the FY2023 Budget process in March/April 2022, the Commissioner of the Revenue estimated a significant increase in the assessed values of used vehicles given current economic factors including a shortage of vehicles and computer chips affecting the automobile industry. Vehicles are assessed at 100% of market value using the clean trade-in method by the National Automobile Dealers Association (NADA). Vehicle values typically depreciate over time so this increase was viewed as a temporary anomaly that would correct itself.

Based on the Commissioner of the Revenue's estimates, a budgeted increase of approximately $1.8 million in personal property tax revenue was expected in the FY2023 Budget assuming no changes were made to the assessment ratio or tax rate. During budget deliberations and before City Council adopted the budget, the Commissioner of the Revenue requested that City Council not change the method or ratio of assessment since this increase was viewed as a temporary anomaly. Rather than adjust the assessment ratio or personal property tax rate, City Council reduced the real estate tax rate by an additional three cents – an approximate $1.8 million reduction in the budget to offset the expected increase in personal property taxes.

On Thursday, Aug. 18, 2022, the City of Manassas sent out personal property tax bills to those who own a motor vehicle. These bills reflected an even higher assessment than was estimated in March/April 2022 – about 15% more. The result is a total levy of approximately $2 million more than was approved in the adopted budget.

A 15 percent decrease in taxes and a due date of Oct. 26 was voted on by Council and accepted unanimously. This means that City of Manassas residents who own vehicles as described above will receive a revised tax bill with the 15% decrease on motor vehicles. Those who have paid their personal property bill will receive a credit on their account and after Oct. 26, they will receive a refund. If the credit on the account is less than $5, the resident can either leave the credit in their account to be applied to the 2023 bill, or contact the Treasurer's Office for a refund. Tax payments can be made online at www.manassasva.gov/paymybill, or by visiting 9800 Godwin Drive between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Uncovering History

A brownstone carving of Anna Portner's Valaer family crest was uncovered on an outside wall of Annaburg when the The Durable Restoration Company worked to remove paint from the house. You may have noticed the scaffolding around the 1892 house. Robert Portner had the crest placed there in honor of his wife when the house was built. He also had a Portner family crest placed on a tower, which was demolished in the 1980s. The Valaer family crest was saved when the house was converted to a nursing home by framing it and making it a feature in a hallway between the house and the east wing of the nursing home. It was covered up after the nursing home wings were demolished to preserve it.

A Moment with the Mayor

Mayor Michelle Davis-Younger

Are you seeing the leaves fall? I love this time of year. This month we are looking forward to some spooky festivities, like The Legend of Sleepy Hollow at the Hylton, cemetery tours, the Spirits of Mayfield and much more. This city just continues to amaze residents and visitors every single month with more and more activities for the entire family to enjoy.

I continue to host the "Mayor on the Move" walks that begin at Osbourn High School at 8:30 a.m. Join me until October 29th which will be the last walk until spring.

This time of year brings us full swing with our students' athletics. Please be sure to support all the teams who represent our wonderful City of Manassas and remember to watch the speed limits in those school zones!

The City Leadership Academy, which runs for five weeks with about 20 residents, has started with folks who are eager to learn how our great City of Manassas works. Thank you all for your commitment of time and dedication! It is always fun at the end when they get to be Mayor and Council and decide on a budget…I like to sit in and see that entire process…it is not so easy for sure. It really is a great learning experience!

This month, I would like to highlight and thank our Police Department for their continued commitment in ensuring our safety. These are some scary times with unprecedented events taking place, but we are very lucky to have the men and women who continuously show up for us. Thank you one and all for putting service above self again and again.

Well, that's all for now. We have a few weeks left at our Farmer's Markets so be sure to stop in and get your fresh produce, we have the best in the state! Until next month, remember, people may not always remember what you said, but they will remember how you made them feel! BE KIND!

Did you know that state and local resources are available to help first-time homebuyers, to provide mortgage relief, to help with housing repairs, to offer tax abatements, and to offer help for renters? Find out more at:

www.manassasva.gov/housing

Let us know how you think we can increase affordable home ownership in the City of Manassas and increase awareness of existing housing programs. All it takes is a few minutes to complete a survey by October 31 at:

www.manassasva.gov/housing

A new Sustainability Plan will help Manassas be kinder to the environment and help us do our part to make our city cleaner. A citizen Sustainability Task Force, experts from George Mason University, a local government group, and city staff are joining together to write the plan. The plan will help guide future policies and projects, and helps meet the Comprehensive Plan goal of becoming more environmentally conscious. Find out more at:

www.manassasva.gov/sustainability

School News

School Family Liaisons – This school year, Manassas City Public Schools welcomed Family Liaisons at each building to help connect parents/families to resources needed between home and school to further students' academic and social success. Liaisons also assist with effective home-to-school engagement and connect families to various community health and human services.

Make a Difference – Are you ready for something new? Do you like to work with children? Are you looking for a change? Consider becoming a part of the MCPS family. Full, part-time, and substitute positions are available. For more information, visit the Human Resources page on the MCPS website at:

www.mcpsva.org.

A Message from the City Manager

City Manager
W. Patrick Pate

One of the most rewarding things that I get to do each fall is recognize City employees who have been nominated by residents or other staff for efforts that go "Above & Beyond" their normal duties for the City of Manassas. That is why our most prestigious award is known as – the Above & Beyond Award. The City also recognizes staff with two other award categories, the City Beat Award and the Servant's Heart Award. It is always a pleasure to read about the things staff members have done that are considered noteworthy by their co-workers and the thoughtful letters and emails that we receive from our residents.

This year there were 123 nominations submitted with some staff members being nominated multiple times. This represents about a quarter of our staff who have been recognized for showcasing our core values of customer service and teamwork.

For 2022, our highest "Above & Beyond Award" recognized a group of employees: Greg Boken, Brewster Butler, Mark Carter, Monte Irvin, Brandon Jenkins, Ciaran Lowell, Deon McNeal, Brian Penatzer, Jason Roberts, Kevin Shrader, and Christian Torres. During the past year we emptied City Hall so it can be renovated to provide better customer service to our residents. You are probably not surprised that we had a significant number of paper documents that needed to be saved. This group worked together to scan over 500 site plans including 4144 pages from decades of site plans and files that had accumulated in the basement of City Hall. These records are important and used by many different individuals and the renovation of City Hall meant that these plans had to be saved. While keeping up with their normal duties, this team stepped up admirably to take on this huge endeavor and preserve these records in a way that they will make them easy to use for many years.

The City Beat Award this year recognized four Individuals.

Glen Martin, Traffic Control Supervisor, has for many years stepped up and managed our response to snowstorms. His nominee wrote that over the last two seasons despite almost insurmountable odds, including broken equipment and people getting COVID, Glen could be depended on to get the job done one way or another to make sure we safely dealt with each snow event.

Mike Morgan, Fleet Services Manager, was nominated four times for his and his crew's work on our City vehicles. Mike can fix just about anything and even fixed the pontoon boat for patrolling Lake Manassas this year. While parts and vehicle costs are really going up, Mike's efforts keep vehicles operational so city services can be delivered.

Darin Proctor, Building Maintenance Tech, was instrumental in getting every person, piece of equipment and filing cabinet moved to the correct location when City Hall staff were relocated. Darin never lost his patience and worked with City Staff to ease the process making sure that all staff had what they needed to serve residents in their new locations.

Master Police Officer TJ Rodriquez has most recently been assigned as a Community Vitality Officer in Georgetown South. He has hosted the "Badges for Baseball" Cal Ripken program for two years. TJ also provided two seasons of life skill lessons to children from 9 to 13 years old. He has a true passion for working with our youth to promote mental health, prevent substance abuse, bullying and more.

These are just a few examples of the outstanding work that city employees are providing for us, the residents of Manassas. I am extremely proud of the work that they do for us every day and to each of my city coworkers that are going "above and beyond" I say, Thank you!

To our city residents, I would ask if a city staff member goes above and beyond to help you with a need or if you see a city staff member doing something exceptional, please drop us a note to let us know so we can thank and recognize that staff member for what they are doing.

The City of Manassas Happenings

Find these events and more in the City of Manassas, Virginia. For more information go to **www.historicmanassas.org**.

Now - Nov. from 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. - **Manassas Farmer's Market** on Thursdays @ Harris Pavilion and Saturdays on Prince William Street.

Oct. 7 from 6 -9 p.m. - **First Friday** in Historic Downtown Manassas

Oct. 8 from 8 - 11 p.m. - **Special Occasions Band** at the Harris Pavilion

Oct. 8 at 7:30 p.m. - Manassas Chorale: **Broadway in Manassas!** at the Hylton Performing Arts Center

Oct. 14 - 15 - **The Legend of Sleepy Hollow** performed by the Manassas Ballet at the Hylton Performing Arts

Oct. 14 – 23 - Prince William Little Theater presents ***Peter and the Starcatcher*** at the Hylton Performing Arts Center

Oct. 16 at 2 p.m. - **Stories of Preservation and Progress** with Legacy Impact

Oct. 21 and 28 at 6:30 and 7:30 p.m. - **Cemetery Tours** with the Manassas Museum

Oct. 22 & 23 - Pied Piper Theatre presents ***Cats: Young Actors Edition*** at Metz Middle School

Oct. 22, 7:30 p.m. - Manassas Symphony Orchestra ***"Celebrations"*** at the Hylton Performing Arts Center

Oct. 29 from 7 - 9 p.m. - **Spirits of Mayfield Fort** with the Manassas Museum

Oct. 29 from 10 a.m. to noon - **Haunted Happenings** in Historic Downtown Manassas

Oct. 29, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. - **Old Town Manassas Holiday Crafts & Treats Fair** on the Manassas Museum Lawn

Nov. 4 - 13 - **Flags for Heroes** on the Manassas Museum Lawn

Nov. 5 - **Fall RecycleFest with Shredding** at the Manassas Transfer Station

Nov. 5 - Last day to Apply for an Absentee Ballot In-Person

Nov. 5 at 11 a.m. - **12th Annual Veterans Day Parade** in Historic Downtown

Ice Skating starts in November as the weather gets cold. Watch Facebook at facebook.com/cityofmanassas for the opening day

Nov. 26 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. - **Old Town Manassas Christmas Fair and Holiday Craft Show** on the Museum Lawn.

Dec. 2 at 5:15 p.m. - **Santa Lights Manassas** in Historic Downtown

Dec. 3 at 10 a.m. - **76th Annual Greater Manassas Christmas Parade**

City of Manassas and Manassas Public Schools

City of Manassas Council

Mayor Michelle Davis-Younger	703-895-4485
Vice Mayor Pamela J. Sebesky	571-330-5514
Theresa Coates Ellis	571-247-6729
Lynn Forkell Greene	703-291-1670
Tom Osina	571-621-4069
Ralph J. Smith	703-303-8530
Mark D. Wolfe	703-257-1702

City of Manassas School Board

Chair Suzanne W. Seaberg	571-377-7494
Vice Chair Lisa A. Stevens	571-377-7495
Christina S. Brooks	571-377-7491
Carl Hollingsworth	571-377-7493
Alex Iqbal	571-377-7490
Jill Spall	571-377-7497
Robyn Williams	571-377-7496

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www.youtube.com/user/manassascityva

To contact the City of Manassas Connection newsletter, email pprince@manassasva.gov