Front Royal Economic Development Authority Meeting
"Business Development Board"
Monday, December 2, 2024 @ 12:00pm
Town Hall – East Conference Room

View meeting online LIVE at https://www.frontroyalva.com/673/Town-Hall-Live

New Business • Existing Business • Workforce • Infrastructure • Asset Development

1. Roll Call – *Hillary Wilfong*

2. *Approval of Minutes - *I move that FREDA approve the Regular Meeting minutes of November 4, 2024.*

3. Old Business
    a. Existing Business Survey Update- *Lizi Lewis Director of Community Development and Tourism*
    b. Retail Recruitment Update- *Lizi Lewis Director of Community Development and Tourism*

4. New Business
    a. Local Officials FOIA Training- Presented by the Virginia Freedom of Information Advisory Council

5. Open Discussion – *Rick Novak, Chairman*

6. Next Meeting – Monday, January 6, 2025 @ 12:00pm

7. Adjourn

**Action Item – requires board vote*

FRONT ROYAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (FREDA) MEETING MINUTES
Monday, November 4, 2024 at 12:00pm
Town Hall Upstairs Conference Room

The following minutes are a summary of items on the agenda.
This meeting may be viewed in its entirety by accessing the video of the same date online via the Town's website at www.frontroyalva.com.

ROLL CALL PRESENT: Chairman Richard M. Novak
Vice Chairman Nicolas Bass
Treasurer Thomas Eshelman
Director Robert Elliott
Director Aiden Miller
Director Frank Stankiewicz

ABSENT: Director David Gedney

SUPPORT STAFF PRESENT: Director of Community Development and Tourism Elizabeth Lewis
Executive Administrative Assistant Hillary Wilfong, Secretary

Approval of Minutes
Director Gedney motioned to approve the minutes from the regular meeting on September 9, 2024. Director Eshleman seconded the motion.
Roll Call Vote:

- **Yes:** Novak, Bass, Eshleman, Elliott, Miller
- **No:** N/A
- **Absent:** Gedney
- **Abstain:** Stankiewicz

New Business
Downtown Front Royal, Inc Presentation

Ellen Aders, President of Downtown Front Royal, Inc., thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak and provided a brief history of the organization. She explained that the Board was initially established in 2007, and after she moved to the area in 2010, she developed an interest in joining. Although she didn't become involved until 2022, she then led the efforts to reinstate the Board, obtain 501(c)(3) status, apply for grants and sponsorships, and re-establish a new board in 2023. The current structure includes 8 voting seats and 3 non-voting seats, with key focus areas in Economic Vitality, Events and Promotion, Design, and Organizational Structure.

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Ms. Aders emphasized that while tourism intersects with their goals, the Board's main objectives are downtown preservation and fostering economic growth within the historic district. She shared their vision: *"To create a downtown for the community that captures the vibrancy and passion of the historic district."* This is supported by their mission: *"Through collaboration with community partners, Downtown Front Royal, Inc. is strengthening our Front Royal and Warren County community through preservation and economic growth in our downtown historic district."*

Looking ahead, Ms. Aders discussed plans to expand community support through a "Friends of Downtown Front Royal, Inc." program, which will not be membership-based. Additionally, she shared that their next major project, "Mobilizing Main Street," is a two-year initiative funded by the Community Vitality Grant from Virginia Main Street. Ms. Aders shared that she feels the Downtown Front Royal Inc. will likely benefit from working with FREDA and vice -versa.

The Board expressed gratitude for Ms. Aders' hard work and commitment to Downtown Front Royal and thanked her for her dedication.

Local Officials FOIA Training

Ms. Lewis reminded the Board members about the requirement to complete COIA and FOIA training. An in-person FOIA training session is scheduled for the next meeting at 12:30 pm, with an estimated duration of one hour.

Old Business

Existing Business Survey Update

Ms. Lewis presented the finalized mailer for the survey, which was well-received by the Board. Director Elliott suggested offering a raffle or incentive for survey completion; Ms. Lewis will consult the Town Attorney on this suggestion.

Retail Recruitment Proposal

Ms. Lewis updated the Board on the retail recruitment efforts, noting that the Town Council has approved the Retail Strategies contract. The contract submission is in progress, though the timeline remains uncertain. Ms. Lewis clarified that only one year will be funded at a time.

- Director Eshleman asked whether the proposal would need Town Council approval.
- Ms. Lewis explained that, per Town Policy and procurement policies, until the Board has its own EIN number, legal counsel, and bank account, all purchases require Council approval.

Open Discussion

Director Bass inquired about the potential dissolution of the Warren County Economic Development Authority (EDA). Chairman Novak shared insights from a recent Chamber of Commerce event, mentioning presentations by Rob McDougal and Joe Petty. Current uncertainties exist regarding the EDA's future, but Chairman Novak expressed hope that any funds would be reinvested into the community if the Warren County EDA dissolves.

Director Eshleman raised concerns over the delay in receiving FREDA's budgeted funds and emphasized the challenge of operating without financial certainty. He also questioned the lack of finding legal counsel and inquired about using the Town Attorney; Mr. Eshleman spoke with the Town Attorney, Mr. Sonnet who denied not wanting to assist FREDA. Ms. Lewis will follow up on these issues.

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Next Meeting
The next scheduled meeting is Monday, December 2nd at Noon.

Adjournment
Chairman Novak called for a motion to adjourn at 12:36 PM. Director Bass moved to adjourn, seconded by Director Stankiewicz. The meeting was adjourned.

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