Front Royal Economic Development Authority Meeting
"Business Development Board"

Monday, April 7, 2025 @ 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 approves the Regular Meeting minutes of March 3, 2025.*

3. Existing Business
    a. Retail Strategies Update- *Lizi Lewis Director of Community Development and Tourism*
    b. Parking Signage Update - *Lizi Lewis Director of Community Development and Tourism*

4. New Business
    a. Energy Services Update- *Carey Saffelle Director of Energy Services*

5. Open Discussion – *Rick Novak, Chairman*

6. Next Meeting – Monday, May 5, 2025 @ 12:00pm

7. Adjourn

**Action Item – requires board vote*

FRONT ROYAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (FREDA) MEETING MINUTES
Monday, March 3rd 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
Director Robert Elliott
Director Frank Stankiewicz
Director David Gedney
Director Aiden Miller

ABSENT: Director Thomas Eshleman

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

Approval of Minutes
Director Bass motioned to approve the minutes from the regular meeting on February 4, 2025. The motion was seconded by Director Gedney.

Roll Call Vote:
- **Yes:** Novak, Bass, Elliott, Stankiewicz, Gedney, Miller
- **No:** None
- **Absent:** Eshleman
- **Abstain:**

Town Attorney Update
Town Attorney George Sonnet provided an update regarding House Bill No. 1842, which amends and reenacts Section 15.2-4905 of the Code of Virginia. The bill states that as of July 1, 2025, the Town of Front Royal Industrial Development Authority will no longer be allowed to conduct business in Warren County, though it may continue operating within the Town. The Board acknowledged the update and noted that while there are no current plans to conduct business in the County, they recognize the limitation that will take effect in July.

Old Business
Retail Strategies: Retail Recruitment Update
Ms. Lewis updated the Board on Retail Strategies. She met with the portfolio manager on February 18 and, on February 19, coordinated a site analysis meeting with Planning and Zoning Director Lauren Kopishke. They are now working on a discovery plan. In approximately three weeks, Retail Strategies will

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provide a report and seek the Board's input on goals and future business opportunities. A market guide is expected to be available by the end of next week. Ms. Lewis will arrange a Zoom meeting between the Board and Retail Strategies as the process progresses and will continue to provide updates.

New Business

Program Introduction: People Inc.

The Board welcomed Leslie Currle, a business lender and advisor from People Incorporated of Virginia. Ms. Currle introduced the organization, which offers approximately 30 services focused on economic development and community assistance. These services are designed to provide a "hand up, not a handout" across multiple regions, including Greater Prince William, Northern Piedmont, Northern Shenandoah, and Southwest Virginia.

Ms. Currle specializes in small business development and provides low-cost loans for start-ups, retention, and expansion. People Inc. also offers business training and technical assistance, leveraging a network of partnerships and resources.

Director Miller inquired about their funding sources, to which Ms. Currle responded that funding is obtained through state, local, and private sources. Ms. Lewis asked how referrals could be made to People Inc., and Ms. Currle advised that individuals can contact her directly. If she is unavailable, she will ensure they are connected with the appropriate resources. The Board thanked Ms. Currle for her presentation and valuable insights.

Ongoing Items Update

Energy Services Update

Ms. Lewis informed the Board that Carey Saffelle, Director of Energy Services, will attend the April meeting to provide a presentation and answer any questions.

2019 Parking Study

Ms. Lewis recently distributed the 2019 Parking Study to the Board. While the Board appreciated the information, they agreed that the study is outdated and not particularly useful. Chairman Novak inquired about the cost of conducting a new study. Ms. Lewis will follow up on the potential cost and check with the Northern Shenandoah Regional Commission, which conducted the previous study.

As a short-term solution, the Board discussed improving signage for available parking, particularly on Jackson Street, which is underutilized. Ms. Lewis agreed and will coordinate with the necessary staff to explore this option.

Open Discussion

- Director Stankiewicz attended a meeting at Blue Ridge Technical Center and shared a flyer for a hiring event at Warren County High School on April 29, 2025. This event will allow businesses to recruit interns and showcase various trades available in Front Royal. Director Stankiewicz offered to share contact information with anyone interested in participating and suggested inviting Blue Ridge Technical Center representative Ms. Walton to a future meeting.
- Chairman Novak shared an article from the *Northern Virginia Daily* about the Mike Rowe Works Foundation, which provides funding for trade schools and students pursuing careers in the trades. Director Miller noted that he has experience assisting with grants and offered to help in any capacity.

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Next Meeting
The next FREDA meeting is scheduled for **Monday, April 7, 2025, at 12:00 PM**.

Adjournment
Chairman Novak called for a motion to adjourn at 12:57 PM. Director Stankiewicz moved to adjourn, and Director Bass seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

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