Front Royal Economic Development Authority Regular Meeting
"Business Development Board"
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

Monday, October 6, 2025 12:00 PM

1. Roll Call– *Hillary Wilfong*
2. *Approval of Minutes - *I move that FREDA approves the Regular Meeting minutes of September 8, 2025.*

3. Ongoing Business-
    - New Business
        - Business Blueprint Brochure
    - Existing Business
    - Workforce
    - Infrastructure
    - Asset Development
4. New Business
5. Open Discussion
6. Adjourn

Next Regular Meeting – Monday, November 3rd @ 12:00pm

FRONT ROYAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (FREDA) MEETING MINUTES
Monday, September 8th 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
Director Thomas Eshelman
Director Robert Elliott
Director Aiden Miller
Director Frank Stankiewicz
Director David Gedney

ABSENT: Vice Chairman Nicholas Bass

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

Motion to amend the agenda and add approval of minutes made by Director Eshleman and seconded by Director Miller.

Approval of Minutes
Director Eshleman moved to approve the minutes of August 4th regular meeting and the August 18th work session. The motion was seconded by Director Gedney.

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

The motion passed.

Ongoing Business
New Business- Brochure
Ms. Lewis presented a draft of the updated *New Business Blueprint Guide*. The Board responded positively, noting the design, color-coded map, and overall user-friendly format. Director Miller identified minor grammatical edits and will provide them directly to Ms. Lewis. The Board discussed potential additions to ensure the guide includes a broad range of helpful businesses and organizations. Chairman Novak suggested printing a limited number of copies for distribution to local businesses and organizations, inviting their feedback and identifying any omissions.

Ms. Lewis explained that the brochure is the first phase of the project, with the second phase involving publication on the Town's website and sharing the resource with Town Council. Board members expressed their support and enthusiasm for the initiative.

Existing Business,

Ms. Lewis reported that she would be presenting to Town Council later that evening to provide an update on the Board's accomplishments and on Retail Strategies' progress. Director Eshleman asked about the status of the Retail Strategies contract. Mr. Petty explained that the contract was signed on December 17, 2024, as a one-year agreement.

Chairman Novak emphasized the importance of presenting Council not only with completed work but also with future initiatives, such as a parking study. Ms. Lewis confirmed that Planning and Zoning is beginning a transportation study in the Historic District, and the Board could provide support or participate in that effort. Director Stankiewicz agreed that a parking study would provide benefits to both businesses and residents.

Workforce

Worlds of Work

Ms. Lewis reminded the Board that the regional *Worlds of Work* career expo will take place on October 2, 2025. The event introduces eighth-grade students to a variety of career opportunities and brings together businesses, educators, and economic development partners from across the region.

Ms. Lewis stated that she plans to attend primarily in an observational role this year, with the goal of adding value to the Town's participation in future events. Director Stankiewicz volunteered to assist and expressed interest in hosting a table for his business.

Infrastructure

Director Eshleman raised concerns about the VDOT South Street SMART Scale project, noting that the proposed design may negatively affect existing businesses and did not account for anticipated development behind the shopping center on South Street. Mr. Petty advised that construction is not scheduled to begin until 2028.

Director Eshleman requested that either VDOT or the Town's Director of Public Works attend a future meeting to provide a presentation on the project. Mr. Petty agreed to try and coordinate this request.

Asset Development

Ms. Lewis reported that she received the quarterly update from Retail Strategies, noting that the Town is now in the third quarter of its first year under contract. Retail Strategies has engaged in multiple conversations on behalf of Front Royal with prospective businesses, including fifteen quick-service restaurants, five full-service restaurants, five home goods and furniture stores, three hotels, three pet supply stores, three beauty services and salons, two automotive service providers, two footcare providers, two dental offices, one craft store, and one fast-casual restaurant. She reminded the Board that these remain preliminary discussions, though additional details can be shared privately with members.

Director Eshleman expressed interest in tracking whether prospective businesses choose to locate within the Town or in the surrounding corridor, as businesses outside Town limits provide less direct benefit. Ms. Lewis responded that Retail Strategies is primarily focusing on South Street, which serves as a major corridor within Town. Director Miller asked whether progress updates could be disclosed, and Ms. Lewis agreed to request this from Retail Strategies and share future deliverables with the Board.

Director Eshleman inquired whether water and sewer rates are lower for commercial properties within Town than in the corridor. Mr. Petty confirmed that they are, explaining that under Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) agreements, legal industrial users in the corridor pay approximately double the Town's rate. Director Eshleman noted this advantage should be highlighted and communicated to Retail Strategies as a potential selling point. Director Miller requested a copy of the Town's contract with Retail Strategies, and Director Elliott suggested the Board begin discussing renewal as the contract approaches its conclusion. Ms. Lewis will request a formal check-in from Retail Strategies to assist in this discussion.

Open Discussion
No open discussion.

Next Meetings

- Regular Board Meeting: Monday, October 6, 2025, at 12:00 PM

Adjournment
Director Miller moved to adjourn the meeting at 12;58 PM. The motion was seconded by Director Stankiewicz and passed unanimously.