



FRONT ROYAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (FREDA) MEETING MINUTES

Monday, March 2, 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 Aiden Miller
Director Robert Elliott
Director Thomas Eshelman
Director David Gedney

ABSENT:

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

Approval of Minutes

Director Miller moved to approve the minutes of the February 2, 2026, meeting. Director Gedney seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

- **Yes:** Novak, Miller, Elliot, Eshelman, Gedney
- **No:** None
- **Absent:** None
- **Abstain:** None

The motion carried.

Retail Strategies

Ms. Lewis reported that she, Director Miller, and Vice Mayor Veitenthal are scheduled to participate in their monthly update call with Retail Strategies next Monday. She noted that Retail Strategies is currently attending a trade show where they are representing Front Royal, as they do at all such events.

Director Miller provided a recap of the most recent conference call, describing it as productive and highlighting Retail Strategies' strong communication efforts. He noted that they are actively evaluating land and real estate opportunities to meet Front Royal's needs and have expressed interest in collaborating with local experts. Director Miller invited Board members to share any questions or topics for inclusion in future discussions with Retail Strategies.

The Board discussed the possibility of inviting Retail Strategies to provide a mid-year update or presentation. Ms. Lewis stated she would coordinate this effort.

New Business

Ms. Lewis discussed the upcoming Annual Employer Expo Hiring Fair and requested input on which Warren County employers should be encouraged to participate. The Board suggested outreach to organizations such as the Smithsonian, National Park Service, and Air Serv.

Workforce

Ms. Lewis requested input on outreach for the Annual Employer Expo Hiring Fair. The Board suggested employers included the Smithsonian, National Park Service, and Air Serv.

Infrastructure

Chairman Novak initiated discussion regarding the pre-pandemic parking study and whether there are plans to conduct an updated study.

Mr. Petty advised that the Planning and Zoning Department is currently undertaking a transportation study, which will include an evaluation of parking—particularly in the downtown area—to address both current needs and future growth. He noted that the study is expected to be completed within the calendar year.

Director Eshelman contributed to the discussion by referencing parking garage developments in other localities and the benefits they have experienced.

Open Discussion

Chairman Novak reported that he attended a “Coffee and Conversation” event featuring Ryan Hall, Director of Shenandoah Valley Capital Funds. He noted that the organization provides microloans and financial support to entrepreneurs and small business owners.

Chairman Novak also shared his attendance at a Town and County leadership Economic Development Authority brainstorming session, which included the Mayor and other County leaders. He stated that discussions primarily focused on strengthening the local tax base.

Ms. Lewis highlighted services offered through People Inc., including Capital Coaching programs that provide small businesses with guidance on loans, as well as workshops, training, and coaching opportunities.

Ms. Lewis announced the Front Royal Tourism Summit scheduled for April 7, 2026, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The event will convene tourism stakeholders to review current efforts and identify priorities for 2026 and invited the Board to attend.

Next Meeting

The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for April 6, 2026, at 12:00 p.m.

Adjournment

Director Miller moved to adjourn at 12:27 p.m. Director Gedney seconded the motion. Motion carried.