



CITY OF FAIRFAX ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING AGENDA
Wednesday September 3, 2025 6:00pm
In Person at Economic Development Offices

10306 Eaton Place, Training Room 115 AB, Fairfax, VA 22030

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| 1. Call to Order | Chair Hermann |
| a. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. | |
| 2. Adoption of September Meeting Agenda [VOTE] | Commissioners |
| a. Secretary Cho motions. | |
| b. Commissioner Feenstra seconds. | |
| c. Passes unanimously. | |
| 3. Adoption of July Meeting Minutes [VOTE] | Commissioners |
| a. Secretary Cho motions. | |
| b. Treasurer McGruder seconds. | |
| c. Passes unanimously. | |
| 4. Convene Closed Session to Discuss Personnel Matters w/ Legal Counsel [VOTE] | Commissioners |
| a. Closed session convened at 6:03 p.m. | |
| 5. Reconvene Regular Meeting [VOTE] | Commissioners |
| a. The meeting reconvened at 6:26 p.m. | |
| 6. Appointment of the Interim CEO/ Executive Director [VOTE] | Commissioners |
| a. The Authority considered a resolution to appoint Matthew Easley as Interim President and Chief Executive Officer of the Fairfax City Economic Development Authority and to establish the scope and limits of his duties. Upon motion made and seconded, the Authority voted unanimously to adopt the resolution | |
| 7. Introduction and Re-adoption of the City of Fairfax Economic Development Authority Procurement Policy [VOTE] | |
| a. Discussed the reintroduction and re-adoption of the procurement policy. It was noted that there were no changes to the existing policy, which maintains the \$50,000 threshold for goods and services. The action taken was purely procedural to renew the policy for the current fiscal year. Following discussion, a motion was made and seconded to adopt the Small Purchase Procedures Policy effective September 27, 2023. The motion passed unanimously. | |

8. Introduction and Re-adoption of the Remote Participation Policy **[VOTE]** Commissioners

- a. It was reported that the last update occurred in Fiscal Year 2025, which set a limit of two absences per commissioner per calendar year. Commissioners discussed the requirements for written requests and votes at the start of meetings to allow participation remotely. A motion was made and seconded to adopt the Fairfax City Economic Development Authority Remote Participation Policy, pursuant to Virginia Code § 2.2-3708.3. The motion was passed unanimously.

9. Introduction and Re-adoption of the All-Virtual Meeting Policy **[VOTE]** Commissioners

- a. No changes had been made since the previous fiscal year, and the provisions continue to limit usage to special circumstances. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Authority voted unanimously to adopt the policy pursuant to Virginia Code § 2.2-3708.3 and the Virginia Freedom of Information Act.

10. Business Investment Update on Economic Impacts of AI in the Workforce (15 mins w/ Q&A) Johnathan Aberman

- a. Guest speaker Jonathan Aberman created a presentation on the economic impacts of artificial intelligence (AI) on the workforce and regional development. Mr. Aberman discussed the transformative nature of AI, highlighting both the risks and opportunities for the Washington, D.C. region.
- b. He emphasized that the region is currently experiencing one of the most significant AI-driven economic transitions in the world, noting that many of the decisions influencing this transformation are being made outside of the region. He observed that while Silicon Valley often views government and consulting services with skepticism, the D.C. region possesses unique assets including world-class universities, a strong base of data scientists, and extensive government expertise.
- c. Mr. Aberman explained that while AI can generate efficiencies, it does not substitute for human creativity and reasoning. He cautioned against over-reliance on AI models, citing concerns about homogenization of information and limited returns on large-scale AI investments to date. He urged the Authority to consider AI as an enduring factor in economic development and to explore opportunities in industries such as consulting, robotics, space, and precision medicine.
- d. The presentation concluded with a discussion on the importance of workforce development, particularly the need to prepare young people for careers that integrate AI tools with higher-order thinking. Commissioners engaged in a question-and-answer session with Mr. Aberman on topics including consulting industry adaptation, the role of education, and workforce impacts.

11. NOVA Labs Presentation (15 mins w/ Q&A)

Pat Marstall

- a. Pat Marstall, President of Nova Labs, a nonprofit makerspace organization located in Fairfax City, provided an overview of Nova Labs' mission to foster self-sufficiency, hands-on learning, and STEM education through access to specialized tools and facilities.
- b. He reported that Nova Labs has experienced significant growth since relocating to Fairfax City, including a membership increase of nearly 80 percent over four years. There were recent investments in facility improvements, including the installation of a large-scale dust collection system, which will allow the organization to secure its permanent occupancy permit.
- c. Mr. Marstall also highlighted Nova Labs' education and community programs, including summer camps, after-school Maker School programs, robotics initiatives, and workforce development training. He explained that these programs provide students with opportunities to gain practical skills in fields such as blacksmithing, woodworking, welding, and CNC machining. Nova Labs has also partnered with Fairfax County Public Schools to give high school students access to advanced tools and equipment for academic and extracurricular projects. The Commissioners commended Nova Labs for its contributions to workforce development and community engagement in Fairfax City.

12. Mason Enterprise Center- Fairfax (15 mins w/ Q&A)

Center Director Hill

- a. Reported that the summer months had been particularly strong, with July yielding significant growth. Two artificial intelligence companies recently joined the center, including Acure AI, which is led by a George Mason University faculty member. Another AI firm, originally connected to the MEC several years prior, re-engaged and has since leased three offices with plans for expansion.
- b. In addition, an existing business tenant expanded by adding staff and interns, demonstrating the center's ongoing role in fostering entrepreneurship and growth. Center Director Hill noted that many new tenants had been referred by external contacts, underscoring MEC's reputation within the community. Commissioners expressed their appreciation for the positive momentum and the strong partnerships being developed with the university and regional stakeholders.

13. Finance and Operations Update (15 mins w/ Q&A)

Assistant Director Easley

- a. GMU Community Sponsorship Execution and related initiatives

- i. Shared the execution of a community sponsorship agreement with George Mason University on August 15. The sponsorship will expand visibility through events and student engagement activities. Planned initiatives include providing business consulting services to local firms, conducting international market research in Korea, and supporting the expansion of the DEPOT program in partnership with the Mason Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship.
- b. FY25 Annual Report
 - i. Noted that work is underway on the department's third annual report, which will highlight accomplishments from Fiscal Year 2025. Commissioners were advised that the report will be completed and published later in the fall.
- c. Banking Services RFP
 - i. The Authority was informed that the banking services request for proposals (RFP) was posted on the Virginia procurement system. The closing date for submissions is November 17, 2025. Staff will review responses and make recommendations to the Authority following the evaluation process.
- d. Tourism Branding RFP
 - i. Updated the Authority on the tourism branding RFP, which is in the preliminary stages of development. Once completed, the branding RFP will be followed by a separate tourism website RFP.
- e. FY25 Audit Progress
 - i. Explained audit activities with Cherry Bekaert remain on schedule. Staff were commended for their work in completing the first and second audits and for maintaining a smooth process for the current year's review.
- f. FY25 Treasurer Report Treasurer McGruder
 - i. Treasurer reviewed current financial statements and confirmed that the Authority's accounts remain in good standing. Commissioners acknowledged the report.
- g. FY25 Rollover Proposal for consideration
 - i. Approximately 19 percent of the budget will roll over into Fiscal Year 2026. Staff recommended reallocation of these funds across program areas, with emphasis on strengthening the Economic Opportunity Fund to support ongoing and planned initiatives. Commissioners discussed the proposal and agreed it would be considered for adoption at a future meeting.

14. New Business

Commissioners

- a. Commissioners highlighted the success of Layerd Coffee, which has seen significant customer demand since opening, as well as other nearby establishments contributing to revitalization of the area. Commissioners also inquired about the status of a proposed banner installation across Main Street, which staff confirmed is being coordinated with Public Works and the Authority's Special Projects Manager.
- b. It was further noted that Fairfax County's transient occupancy tax increase will take effect on October 1, 2025, raising the County's rate to 9 percent. The City's rate will remain at 7 percent, creating the potential opportunity for a future adjustment.

15. Public Comment (5 mins)

Public

- a. Bill Pitchford- SmarterGrowth
 - i. Welcomed Assistant Director Easley as Interim Executive Director and expressed support for the City's progress on trail connectivity. He noted that the reconstructed Pikes Park and trail improvements along Arlington Boulevard provide important links to activity centers such as Trevi Circle. He also commended the start of construction on the Government Center Parkway extension, which he believes will foster multimodal transportation connections between the Camp Washington and Fairfax Circle Activity Centers

16. Adjourn

Chair Hermann

- a. Meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

*****Next Meeting: October 1, 2025*****
6 pm, 10300 Eaton Pl. Fairfax, Virginia 22030
Subject to Change. Please Check gofairfaxcity.com for more information.