

Frontier Culture Museum Board of Trustees
Executive Committee – Lower Octagonal Barn
Draft Minutes
November 12, 2025 2 p.m.

Members Attending: John Avoli, Ned Ruby, Peggy Sheets, Paul Vames

Members Absent: Steve Lander, Katrina Callsen

Guests Attending: None

Staff Attending: Butch Smiley, Lydia Volskis

I. Call to Order and Welcome Mrs. Peggy Sheets

Board and Committee Chair Peggy Sheets called the meeting to order at 2 p.m.

II. Approve September 2025 Minutes Mrs. Sheets

As there was not a quorum, the minutes of the September meeting were not approved.

III. Agency Update Mr. Butch Smiley

Mr. Smiley reported that attendance is good, and close to the totals for last year at this time. He said that the Museum has been offering a sale price (15% off and an extended 15-month pass) on annual passes for the past three months and has sold 187 new passes. He continued that the Cider Festival attracted 927 guests and garnered about \$12,000 in revenue. He stated that next year the Museum will offer this event again and plan another event or two of this type.

Mr. Smiley continued and described the budget package the Museum has submitted to Richmond to raise classified employee salaries to close to or at the state median for each job code. He noted that the Museum is short-staffed and has difficulty retaining some positions. He described the final Quarterly Management Report/Review he and Finance Director Chase Chandler participated in recently with the Secretary of Education as positive. This will likely be the last such review with members of the current administration. The Secretary was pleased that the Museum has been able to clear all of its audit findings.

He reviewed the recent finance report, described increases in attendance at special events, increased bus tour attendance (72%+) and total attendance over 13,000 in September.

Mr. Smiley described a security incident which occurred in the Visitors Center last week when an unpleasant individual confronted a staff member and made inappropriate statements. The Museum has alerted state and local law enforcement, added some security cameras and plans more extensive trainings for staff soon.

V. **Foundation Report** Senator Emmett Hanger

VI. **Old Business** Mrs. Sheets

A. Construction and Mill update

Mr. Cliff Edwards

Mr. Smiley gave the construction report for Mr. Edwards and said that the next major step will be to relocate the Visitor Services staff and merchandise to a temporary trailer and clear out the existing Visitors center for renovation. The renovation will take about 15 months, and the building will then be used as the interpretation department headquarters. He said that the Mill is proceeding slowly but that concrete has been poured, and it is still estimated to be completed on time.

VII. **New Business** Mrs. Sheets

A. Approval of Calendar of Events 2026

Mr. Smiley reviewed the calendar of events for 2026 and those present reviewed and approved of the plans. The popular event Irish Road Bowling will return and celebrations of America's 250th will be held on or around July 4, in addition to regular events.

B. Executive Director Search

Mrs. Sheets distributed the draft Employee Work Profile and timeline for the search and asked Members to review and send their feedback to Lydia as soon as they are able. There was some discussion of the potential for the Foundation to supplement the Executive Director's salary, and how that can be accomplished. It was noted that Senator Hanger has submitted the request for this support to the Executive Committee of the Foundation. The Secretary of Education has approved our budget language to have included in the budget bill to approve this action. Mr. Avoli supported the plan to include budget language if it is needed, and said that the new Executive should be a well-rounded person who has both the ability to manage the Museum as well as conduct some fundraising and "friend-raising" as well so as to be able to collaborate regularly with the American Frontier Culture Foundation in its support of the Museum. Mr. Vames and Mr. Ruby agreed with Mr. Avoli's statement.

C. QMR

Previously discussed.

D. Holiday Updates

Mr. Smiley said that the Museum will be full closed Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day and New Year's Eve and New Year's Day, as well as some days when the Museum is open but the offices are closed.

VIII. **Closed session (if needed)** Mrs. Sheets, Committee

No closed session due to no quorum

IX. **Next Meeting** Mrs. Sheets

The next meeting date is Wednesday December 20 st 2 p.m. in the lower Octagonal Barn.

X. Adjournment

Mrs. Sheets

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.