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Amanda Killen to lead Frederick County's economic development efforts

Star staff report
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Amanda Killen

Amanda Killen has been selected as the new director of the Frederick County Economic Development Authority (EDA), the county announced Tuesday.

She begins her role Sept. 1.

Killen will lead the county's economic development efforts, "working with businesses and community partners to support a strong and sustainable local economy," the release states.

She succeeds Patrick Barker, who headed the EDA for nearly 25 years. He stepped down in March when the county sought a change in direction. He is now Warren County's economic development director.

Killen was selected from a pool of 40 applicants from across the U.S.

She is from Tazewell, Virginia, and has worked as an independent contractor for the last six years serving multiple towns and counties, according to information provided by Frederick County. In addition to her consulting work, she most recently served as the New Economy Program Coordinator for Appalachian Voices. She also previously served as the Executive Director of the Tazewell County Chamber of Commerce, and Executive Director of Tazewell Today, where she implemented transformative strategies and obtained the Virginia Main Street designation.

"Killen brings deep, wide-ranging experience in community and economic development to the role," the release states. "Throughout her career, she has served as a Chamber of Commerce Director, Main Street Director, and Director of Community Development, and has worked as a grant writer and consultant on revitalization and economic development projects for communities across the country through her private consulting practice. Having built and run several businesses of her own, she has firsthand insight into the challenges and opportunities local entrepreneurs face."

She also has "extensive experience leveraging public-private partnerships along with state and federal economic development programs, and is skilled at identifying grant opportunities, incentives, and funding mechanisms to support both existing businesses and new investment. She believes in building collaborative, layered partnerships between local government, nonprofits, private organizations, and the community itself, driving sustainable growth while keeping citizens and stakeholders informed and engaged throughout the process."

"I'll be leveraging every available resource: funding, technical assistance, and strategic partnerships, to support the businesses already here in Frederick County and to attract new investment to the region," Killen stated. "But growth only means something if it's done right, and I'm committed to doing it in a way that protects what makes this community special, while preserving the integrity and character that make Frederick County home. I want every business here, large or small, to feel supported and valued, and I can't wait to meet and visit each and every one of them."

She is committed to "fostering economic development that supports and values every business in Frederick County while preserving the integrity and character that make the county a great place to live, work, and grow," the release states.

Frederick County Board of Supervisors Chairman John Jewell said, "We're excited to have Amanda step into this role. Her strong background and sincere commitment to community make her an excellent fit to help guide Frederick County's economic development efforts."

Added County Administrator Mike Bollhoefer, "Amanda understands that economic development is about people and partnerships. Her broad experience will help her work effectively with County departments, the EDA Board, businesses, and community partners."

Killen's annual salary will be \$180,000.

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