

**Radford University/Radford City Joint Commission  
Minutes**

**The Hub on East Main Street  
March 10, 2026 @ 8:45 am**

Attendees: Kellie Artip, Kelsi Jones, Angela Joyner, Bethany Usher, Jerry Holdaway, Kim Repass, Melissa Skelton, Nichole Hair, Ben Bondurant, Eric Plummer. David Perryman, Lisa Ghidotti and Todd Meredith appeared via Zoom.

The meeting agenda is created by the Commission members and designed to create an opportunity to discuss collaborative initiatives, learn about specific topics and/or areas of interest, and develop relevant action plans as needed.

**I. Welcome**

The meeting was opened by Co-chairs, Angela Joyner and Kellie Artrip, who welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introductions were made around the room.

**II. Integrative Framework**

Angela Joyner explained that the group would revisit the integrative framework developed the previous year. The objective for this meeting was to walk through the framework line-by-line, identify what has changed over the past year, and highlight any missing items or new priorities that should be incorporated.

**ACTION ITEM: Circulate the integrative framework for review, and all participants will provide edits and additions by April 7 - Angela Joyner**

**Challenges and Opportunities**

The group reviewed the list of challenges and opportunities currently affecting the Radford community. Economic, housing and community challenges were discussed.

Participants reviewed several opportunities that could benefit Radford. These included an increased interest in small-town living following the pandemic, growing demand for lifelong learning opportunities, and rising activity in healthcare, technology, and entrepreneurship sectors. Funding opportunities through federal and state partnerships were highlighted as

potentially advantageous for collaborative city–university work. The group also recognized significant potential in outdoor recreation and tourism, particularly given assets such as the New River, regional trail systems, outdoor event venues, and natural recreation areas.

### **Economic Development**

The group discussed economic development initiatives, focusing on the potential creation of a collaborative innovation district and expanded workforce development pathways. Participants emphasized the importance of increasing the presence of the Small Business Development Center in Radford, enhancing co-working and entrepreneurial supports, and expanding accelerator and incubator programming. The group reviewed the success of grants that fund student interns for local businesses and noted ongoing marketing efforts at West Commerce Park. A subgroup is actively developing a retail strategy study. Participants agreed that public access to small-business services could be expanded through clearer online information and improved walk-in pathways. The group shared anecdotes about local business challenges and successes.

### **Community Vibrancy**

The discussion moved to community vibrancy initiatives, with updates on East Main Street improvements, including bump-outs, signage updates, building facade improvements, and ongoing arts and entertainment programming at various venues.

### **Public Safety and Community Engagement**

Participants stressed the importance of explicitly integrating public safety and community engagement into the vibrancy goals. The group highlighted the work of City of Radford and Radford University Police Departments. Each department holds CLEA accreditation and it was recommended to promote this achievement more broadly, particularly during orientation for students and communications with parents.

### **Outdoor Recreation & Tourism**

The group discussed outdoor recreation priorities and tourism initiatives. A proposed river recreation corridor, outfitter incubator, and new

academic partnerships were central topics. Plans are also underway for an Adventure Works summit.

The conversation expanded to include local racing events such the New River Trail events. The Wilderness Road Ride will take place on May 23, 2026, at Vista Park in Radford. Participants discussed logistical needs, including transportation support for bicycles used by visiting groups. [35th Annual Wilderness Road Ride Gran Fondo Online Registration](#)

### **Member Updates:**

The university provided updates on several ongoing academic-community collaborations, including storefront revitalization work, certification center development, AI-supported marketing initiatives, a study on the unhoused population, and planning for the WICKED festival with community judges. [Wicked Festival](#)

RAD Talks will take place on March 24, 2026, at the public library featuring Sarah Capello and Max Gerkowski, and April 14, 2026, at Glencoe featuring Geoffrey Pollick and Sharon Rogers-Hepburn. Both events will begin at 7:00 p.m. [RAD-Talks-with-Sarah-Capello-and-Max-Yurkofsky \(1\).png](#)

The group examined the challenges faced by home-based businesses transitioning to brick-and-mortar locations. Despite these challenges, several new tenants were noted, including Millennial Fabrics, a CPA firm, Raymond James, a financial advisor, David Stephens Plumbing and Electrical, Inc., and several technology firms, all of which were seen as positive indicators of CoWorks and entrepreneurship demands.

### **III. Members:**

#### **City Representatives**

- Kellie Artrip – Radford City Council Member
- Todd Meredith – City Manager
- Jerry Holdaway – Radford City Chief of Police
- Sarah Turpin – Executive Director, Radford Chamber of Commerce
- Kim Repass – Director of Economic Development & Director of Tourism

- Melissa Skelton – Director of Planning and Zoning
- Ben Bondurant - Real Estate Rep and Developer
- Kelsi Jones – Owner of BT’s Restaurant
- William Ratcliffe – Radford City Council Member - East Ward

### **University Representatives**

- Susan Trageser - Vice President for Student Affairs
- Angela Joyner – Vice President for Economic Development and Corporate Education
- Bethany Usher – Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Rob Hoover – Vice President for Finance and Administration
- Eric Plummer – Chief of Police for Radford University
- Lisa Ghidotti – Assistant Vice President for Government Relations and Strategic Initiatives
- Nichole Hair – Director of Economic Development and Community Engagement
- David Perryman – Associate Vice President for Strategic Communications
- Derek Neal – Radford Foundation
- Mady Cheney – Guest

### **Calendar updates**

- Radford City Council – March 9 @ 7 pm
- Radford City Council – March 23 @ 7 pm
- IT Summit – March 31 – 5 pm – 8 pm – the HUB @ Radford University
- Traditions Week – April 6 – 9, 2026 – [Traditions | Radford University](#)
- Myths and Moonlight Concert – March 11 – Radford University-Davis Performance Hall-Covington Center
- Farmers’ Markets – March 11 and April 1 – Hurlburt Student Center, 11 am – 3 pm
- RAD Talks – March 24 @ 7 pm (public library) and April 14 @ 7 pm (Glencoe Museum)
- Radford Chamber Business Over Breakfast – April 1 @ 8 – 9:30 am – Radford Coffee Company

- Little Shop of Horrors – March 31, April 2 – 4<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 pm and April 5 @ 2 pm – Artis Center, Main Stage Theatre
- Just in Time Career Fair – April 16 – 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm – Student Recreation and Wellness Center