

FIRST COMMUNITY BANCSHARES INC /NV/

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Registration No. 333-156365

PROSPECTUS

**FIRST COMMUNITY BANCSHARES, INC.
FIXED RATE CUMULATIVE PERPETUAL PREFERRED STOCK, SERIES A
WARRANT TO PURCHASE 176,546 SHARES OF COMMON STOCK
176,546 SHARES OF COMMON STOCK**

This prospectus relates to the potential resale from time to time by selling securityholders of some or all of the shares of our Fixed Rate Cumulative Perpetual Preferred Stock, Series A, or the series A preferred stock, a warrant to purchase 176,546 shares of our common stock, or the warrant, and any shares of our common stock issuable from time to time upon exercise of the warrant. In this prospectus, we refer to the shares of series A preferred stock, the warrant and the shares of common stock issuable upon exercise of the warrant, collectively, as the securities. The series A preferred stock and the warrant were originally issued by us pursuant to the Letter Agreement dated November 21, 2008, and the related Securities Purchase Agreement – Standard Terms, between us and the United States Department of the Treasury, which we refer to as the initial selling securityholder, in a transaction exempt from the registration requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the Securities Act.

The initial selling securityholder and its successors, including transferees, which we collectively refer to as the selling securityholders, may offer the securities from time to time directly or through underwriters, broker-dealers or agents and in one or more public or private transactions and at fixed prices, prevailing market prices, at prices related to prevailing market prices or at negotiated prices. If these securities are sold through underwriters, broker-dealers or agents, the selling securityholders will be responsible for underwriting discounts or commissions or agents commissions.

We will not receive any proceeds from the sale of the securities by the selling securityholders.

Neither the series A preferred stock nor the warrant is listed on an exchange. Unless requested by the initial selling securityholder, we do not intend to list the series A preferred stock on any exchange. We do not intend to list the warrant on any exchange.

Our common stock is traded on the Nasdaq Global Select Market under the symbol FCBC. On February 5, 2009, the closing price of our common stock on the Nasdaq Global Select Market was \$16.44 per share. You are urged to obtain current market quotations of our common stock.

Investing in our securities involves a high degree of risk. See Risk Factors beginning on page 2.

Our principal executive offices are located at One Community Place, Bluefield, Virginia 24605 and our telephone number is (276) 326-9000. Our Internet address is <http://www.fcbinc.com>.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or passed upon the adequacy or accuracy of this prospectus. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

These securities are not savings accounts, deposits or other obligations of any bank and are not insured or guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or any other governmental agency.

The date of this prospectus is February 6, 2009.

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ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a registration statement we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or the SEC, using a shelf registration process. Under this shelf registration process, the selling securityholders may, from time to time, offer and sell, in one or more offerings, the securities described in this prospectus.

We may provide a prospectus supplement containing specific information about the terms of a particular offering by the selling securityholders. The prospectus supplement may add, update or change information in this prospectus. If the information in this prospectus is inconsistent with a prospectus supplement, you should rely on the information in that prospectus supplement. You should read both this prospectus and, if applicable, any prospectus supplement. See [Where You Can Find More Information](#) for more information.

In this prospectus, First Community, we, our, ours, and us refer to First Community Bancshares, Inc., which is a financial holding company headquartered in Bluefield, Virginia, and its subsidiaries on a consolidated basis, unless the context otherwise requires. References to First Community Bank mean First Community Bank, National Association, which is our principal banking subsidiary.

FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference contain statements that are considered forward looking statements within the meaning of United States securities laws. In addition, First Community and its management may make other written or oral communications from time to time that contain forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements, including statements about industry trends, management's future expectations and other matters that do not relate strictly to historical facts, are based on assumptions by management, and are often identified by such forward-looking terminology as expect, look, believe, anticipate, estimate, seek, may, target, and goal or similar statements or variations of such terms. Forward-looking statements may include, among other things, statements about First Community's confidence in its strategies and its expectations about financial performance, market growth, market and regulatory trends and developments, acquisitions and divestitures, new technologies, services and opportunities and earnings.

Forward-looking statements are subject to various risks and uncertainties, which change over time, are based on management's expectations and assumptions at the time the statements are made, and are not guarantees of future results. Management's expectations and assumptions, and the continued validity of the forward-looking statements, are subject to change due to a broad range of factors affecting the national and global economies, the equity, debt, currency and other financial markets, as well as factors specific to First Community and its subsidiaries, including First Community Bank.

Actual outcomes and results may differ materially from what is expressed in our forward-looking statements and from our historical financial results due to the factors discussed elsewhere in this prospectus or disclosed in our other SEC filings. Forward-looking statements should not be relied upon as representing our expectations or beliefs as of any date subsequent to the time this prospectus is filed with the SEC. First Community undertakes no obligation to revise the forward-looking statements contained in this prospectus to reflect events after the time it is filed with the SEC. The factors discussed herein are not intended to be a complete summary of all risks and uncertainties that may affect our businesses. Though we strive to monitor and mitigate risk, we cannot anticipate all potential economic, operational and financial developments that may adversely impact our operations and our financial results.

Forward-looking statements should not be viewed as predictions, and should not be the primary basis upon which investors evaluate First Community. Any investor in First Community should consider all risks and uncertainties disclosed in our SEC filings described below under the heading "Where You Can Find More Information," all of which are accessible on the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>.

ABOUT FIRST COMMUNITY BANCSHARES, INC.

We are a financial holding company incorporated under the laws of the State of Nevada and serve as the holding company for First Community Bank, a national banking association, that conducts commercial banking operations within the states of Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina and Tennessee. In addition, the First Community Bank maintains a loan production office in South Carolina. We also own Greenpoint Insurance Group, Inc., a full-service insurance agency, and Investment Planning Consultants, an investment advisory firm. First Community Bank conducts its banking operations through 59 locations and is regulated by The Office of the Comptroller of the Currency. Our principal executive offices are located at One Community Place, Bluefield, Virginia 24605 and our telephone number is (276) 326-9000.

RISK FACTORS

An investment in our securities involves significant risks. You should carefully consider the risks and uncertainties and the risk factors set forth in the documents and reports filed with the SEC that are incorporated by reference into this prospectus, as well as any risks described in any applicable prospectus supplement, before you make an investment decision regarding the securities. Additional risks and uncertainties not presently known to us or that we currently deem immaterial may also affect our business operations.

USE OF PROCEEDS

We will not receive any proceeds from any sale of the securities by the selling securityholders.

RATIOS OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES AND PREFERRED DIVIDENDS

No shares of our senior preferred stock, or any other class of preferred stock, were outstanding during the years ended December 31, 2007, 2006, 2005, 2004 and 2003, or during the nine months ended September 30, 2008, and we did not pay preferred stock dividends during these periods. Consequently, the ratios of earnings to fixed charges and preferred dividends are the same as the ratios of earnings to fixed charges for the same periods listed above. The ratios of earnings to fixed charges for the nine months ended September 30, 2008 and the years ended December 31, 2007, 2006, 2005, 2004 and 2003 are as follows:

Consolidated Ratios of Earnings to Fixed Charges

	Nine months ended September 30, 2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Excluding interest on deposits	1.69x	1.70x	1.83x	2.01x	2.31x	2.42x
Including interest on deposits	2.98x	2.99x	3.71x	4.02x	5.10x	6.64x

Note: The ratio of earnings to fixed charges is calculated by adding income before income taxes plus fixed charges and dividing that sum by fixed charges.

DESCRIPTION OF SERIES A PREFERRED STOCK

The following is a brief description of the terms of the series A preferred stock that may be resold by the selling securityholders. This summary does not purport to be complete in all respects. This description is subject to and qualified in its entirety by reference to our articles of incorporation, as amended, including the amended and restated certificate of designations with respect to the series A preferred stock, copies of which have been filed with the SEC and are also available upon request from us.

General

Under our articles of incorporation, as amended, we have authority to issue up to 1.0 million shares of preferred stock, par value \$1.00 per share. Of such number of shares of preferred stock authorized, 41,500 shares have been designated as series A preferred stock, all of which shares of series A preferred stock were issued to the initial selling securityholder in a transaction exempt from the registration requirements of the Securities Act. No other shares of preferred stock are issued and outstanding as of the date hereof.

Dividends Payable On Shares of Series A Preferred Stock

Holders of shares of series A preferred stock are entitled to receive if, as and when declared by our board of directors or a duly authorized committee of the board, out of assets legally available for payment, cumulative cash dividends at a rate per annum of 5% per share on a liquidation preference of \$1,000 per share of series A preferred stock with respect to each dividend period from November 21, 2008 to, but excluding, February 15, 2014. From and after February 15, 2014, holders of shares of series A preferred stock are entitled to receive cumulative cash dividends at a rate per annum of 9% per share on a liquidation preference of \$1,000 per share of series A preferred stock with respect to each dividend period thereafter.

Dividends are payable quarterly in arrears on each February 15, May 15, August 15 and November 15, each a dividend payment date, starting with February 15, 2009. If any dividend payment date is not a business day, then the next business day will be the applicable dividend payment date, and no additional dividends will accrue as a result of the applicable postponement of the dividend payment date. Dividends payable during any dividend period are computed on the basis of a 360-day year consisting of twelve 30-day months. Dividends payable with respect to the series A preferred stock are payable to holders of record of shares of series A preferred stock on the date that is 15 calendar days immediately preceding the applicable dividend payment date or such other record date as the board of directors or any duly authorized committee of the board determines, so long as such record date is not more than 60 nor less than 10 days prior to the applicable dividend payment date.

If we determine not to pay any dividend or a full dividend with respect to the series A preferred stock, we are required to provide written notice to the holders of shares of series A preferred stock prior to the applicable dividend payment date.

We are subject to various regulatory policies and requirements relating to the payment of dividends, including requirements to maintain adequate capital above regulatory minimums. The Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, or the Federal Reserve Board, is authorized to determine, under certain circumstances relating to the financial condition of a bank holding company, such as us, that the payment of dividends would be an unsafe or unsound practice and to prohibit payment thereof. In addition, we are subject to Nevada state laws relating to the payment of dividends.

We depend on dividends, distributions and other payments from our banking subsidiary, First Community Bank, to fund dividend payments on our common and preferred stock. Federal banking laws limit the amount of dividends or other capital distributions that a national banking association, such as First Community Bank, may pay.

Priority of Dividends

With respect to the payment of dividends and the amounts to be paid upon liquidation, the series A preferred stock will rank:

senior to our common stock and all other equity securities designated as ranking junior to the series A preferred stock; and

at least equally with all other equity securities designated as ranking on a parity with the series A preferred stock, or parity stock, with respect to the payment of dividends and distribution of assets upon any liquidation, dissolution or winding-up of First Community.

So long as any shares of series A preferred stock remain outstanding, unless all accrued and unpaid dividends for all prior dividend periods have been paid or are contemporaneously declared and paid in full, no dividend whatsoever shall be paid or declared on First Community's common stock or other junior stock, other than a dividend payable solely in common stock. We and our subsidiaries also may not purchase, redeem or otherwise acquire for consideration any shares of our common stock or other junior stock unless we have paid in full all accrued dividends on the series A preferred stock for all prior dividend periods, other than:

purchases, redemptions or other acquisitions of our common stock or other junior stock in connection with the administration of our employee benefit plans in the ordinary course of business pursuant to a publicly announced repurchase plan up to the increase in diluted shares outstanding resulting from the grant, vesting or exercise of equity-based compensation;

purchases or other acquisitions by broker-dealer subsidiaries of First Community solely for the purpose of market-making, stabilization or customer facilitation transactions in junior stock or parity stock in the ordinary course of its business;

purchases or other acquisitions by broker-dealer subsidiaries of First Community for resale pursuant to an offering by First Community of our stock that is underwritten by the related broker-dealer subsidiary;

any dividends or distributions of rights or junior stock in connection with any shareholders' rights plan or repurchases of rights pursuant to any shareholders' rights plan;

acquisition of record ownership of junior stock or parity stock for the beneficial ownership of any other person who is not First Community or a subsidiary of First Community, including as trustee or custodian; and

the exchange or conversion of junior stock for or into other junior stock or of parity stock for or into other parity stock or junior stock but only to the extent that such acquisition is required pursuant to binding contractual agreements entered into before November 21, 2008 or any subsequent agreement for the accelerated exercise, settlement or exchange thereof for common stock.

If we repurchase shares of series A preferred stock from a holder other than the initial selling securityholder, we must offer to repurchase a ratable portion of the series A preferred stock then held by the initial selling securityholder.

On any dividend payment date for which full dividends are not paid, or declared and funds set aside therefor, on the series A preferred stock and any other parity stock, all dividends paid or declared for payment on that dividend payment date (or, with respect to parity stock with a different dividend payment date, on the applicable dividend date therefor falling within the dividend period and related to the dividend payment date for the series A preferred stock), with respect to the series A preferred stock and any other parity stock shall be declared ratably among the holders of any such shares who have the right to receive dividends, in proportion to the respective amounts of the undeclared and unpaid dividends relating to the dividend period.

Subject to the foregoing, such dividends (payable in cash, stock or otherwise) as may be determined by our board of directors (or a duly authorized committee of the board) may be declared and paid on our common stock and any other stock ranking equally with or junior to the series A preferred stock from time to time out of any funds legally available for such payment, and the series A preferred stock shall not be entitled to participate in any such dividend.

Redemption

The series A preferred stock may not be redeemed prior to February 15, 2012 unless we have received aggregate gross proceeds from one or more qualified equity offerings (as described below) equal to \$10,375,000, which equals 25% of the aggregate liquidation amount of the series A preferred stock on the date of issuance. In such a case, we may redeem the series A preferred stock, subject to the approval of the Federal Reserve Board in whole or in part, upon notice as described below, up to a maximum amount equal to the aggregate net cash proceeds received by us from such qualified equity offerings. A qualified equity offering is a sale and issuance for cash by us, to persons other than First Community or its subsidiaries after November 21, 2008, of shares of perpetual preferred stock, common stock or a combination thereof, that in each case qualify as tier 1 capital of First Community at the time of issuance under the applicable risk-based capital guidelines of the Federal Reserve Board. Qualified equity offerings do not include issuances made in connection with acquisitions, issuances of trust preferred securities and issuances of common stock and/or perpetual preferred stock made pursuant to agreements or arrangements entered into, or pursuant to financing plans that were publicly announced, on or prior to October 13, 2008.

After February 15, 2012, the series A preferred stock may be redeemed at any time, subject to the approval of the Federal Reserve Board, in whole or in part, subject to notice as described below.

In any redemption, the redemption price is an amount equal to the per share liquidation amount plus accrued and unpaid dividends to but excluding the date of redemption.

The series A preferred stock will not be subject to any mandatory redemption, sinking fund or similar provisions. Holders of shares of series A preferred stock have no right to require the redemption or repurchase of the series A preferred stock. Our board of directors, or a duly authorized committee of the board of directors, have full power and authority to prescribe the terms and conditions upon which the series A preferred stock will be redeemed from time to time, subject to the provisions of the amended and restated certificate of designations.

If fewer than all of the outstanding shares of series A preferred stock are to be redeemed, the shares to be redeemed will be selected either *pro rata* from the holders of record of shares of series A preferred stock in proportion to the number of shares held by those holders or in such other manner as our board of directors, or a committee of the board of directors, may determine to be fair and equitable.

We will mail notice of any redemption of series A preferred stock by first class mail, postage prepaid, addressed to the holders of record of the shares of series A preferred stock to be redeemed at their respective last addresses appearing on our books. This mailing will be at least 30 days and not more than 60 days before the date fixed for redemption. Any notice mailed or otherwise given as described in this paragraph will be conclusively presumed to have been duly given, whether or not the holder receives the notice, and failure duly to give the notice by mail or otherwise, or any defect in the notice or in the mailing or provision of the notice, to any holder of series A preferred stock designated for redemption will not affect the redemption of any other series A preferred stock. Each notice of redemption will set forth the applicable redemption date, the redemption price, the place where shares of series A preferred stock are to be redeemed, and the number of shares of series A preferred stock to be redeemed (and, if less than all shares of series A preferred stock held by the applicable holder, the number of shares to be redeemed from the holder).

Shares of series A preferred stock that are redeemed, repurchased or otherwise acquired by us will revert to authorized but unissued shares of our preferred stock.

Liquidation Rights

In the event that we voluntarily or involuntarily liquidate, dissolve or wind up our affairs, holders of series A preferred stock will be entitled to receive an amount per share, referred to as the total liquidation amount, equal to the fixed liquidation preference of \$1,000 per share, plus any accrued and unpaid dividends, whether or not declared, to the date of payment. Holders of the series A preferred stock will be entitled to receive the total liquidation amount out of our assets that are available for distribution to shareholders, after payment or provision for payment of our debts and other liabilities but before any distribution of assets is made to holders of our common stock or any other shares ranking, as to that distribution, junior to the series A preferred stock.

If our assets are not sufficient to pay the total liquidation amount in full to all holders of series A preferred stock and all holders of any shares of outstanding parity stock, the amounts paid to the holders of series A preferred stock and other shares of parity stock will be paid *pro rata* in accordance with the respective total liquidation amount for those holders. If the total liquidation amount per share of series A preferred stock has been paid in full to all holders of series A preferred stock and other shares of parity stock, the holders of our common stock or any other shares ranking, as to such distribution, junior to the series A preferred stock will be entitled to receive all of our remaining assets according to their respective rights and preferences.

For purposes of the liquidation rights, neither the sale, conveyance, exchange or transfer of all or substantially all of our property and assets, nor the consolidation or merger by us with or into any other corporation or by another corporation with or into us, will constitute a liquidation, dissolution or winding-up of our affairs.

Voting Rights

Except as indicated below or otherwise required by law, the holders of series A preferred stock will not have any voting rights.

Election of Two Directors upon Non-Payment of Dividends. If the dividends on the series A preferred stock have not been paid for an aggregate of six quarterly dividend periods or more (whether or not consecutive), the authorized number of directors then constituting our board of directors will be increased by two. Holders of series A preferred stock, together with the holders of any outstanding parity stock with like voting rights, referred to as voting parity stock, voting as a single class, will be entitled to elect the two additional members of our board of directors, referred to as the preferred stock directors, at the next annual meeting (or at a special meeting called for the purpose of electing the preferred stock directors prior to the next annual meeting) and at each subsequent annual meeting until all accrued and unpaid dividends for all past dividend periods have been paid in full. Upon payment in full of all accrued and unpaid dividends, the right to elect preferred stock directors will terminate, subject to revesting in the event that dividends on the series A preferred are not paid for an aggregate of six quarterly dividend payments. The election of any preferred stock director is subject to the qualification that the election would not cause us to violate the corporate governance requirement of the Nasdaq Global Select Market (or any other exchange on which our securities may be listed) that listed companies must have a majority of independent directors.

Upon the termination of the right of the holders of series A preferred stock and voting parity stock to vote for preferred stock directors, the individuals serving as preferred stock directors will immediately cease to be qualified as directors, their term of office shall terminate immediately and the number of authorized directors of First Community will be reduced by the number of preferred stock directors that the holders of series A preferred stock and voting parity stock had been entitled to elect. The holders of a majority of shares of series A preferred stock and voting parity stock, voting as a class, may remove any preferred stock director, with or without cause, and the holders of a majority of the shares series A preferred stock and voting parity stock, voting as a class, may fill any vacancy created by the removal of a preferred stock director. If the office of a preferred stock director becomes vacant for any other reason, the remaining preferred stock director may choose a successor to fill such vacancy for the remainder of the unexpired term.

Other Voting Rights. So long as any shares of series A preferred stock are outstanding, in addition to any other vote or consent of shareholders required by law or by our articles of incorporation, as amended, the vote or consent of the holders of at least 66 2/3% of the shares of series A preferred stock at the time outstanding, voting separately as a single class, given in person or by proxy, either in writing without a meeting or by vote at any meeting called for the purpose, shall be necessary for effecting or validating:

any amendment or alteration of the amended and restated certificate designations for the series A preferred stock or our articles of incorporation, as amended, to authorize or create or increase the authorized amount of, or any issuance of, any shares of, or any securities convertible into or exchangeable or exercisable for shares of, any class or series of capital stock ranking senior to the series A preferred stock with respect to payment of dividends and/or distribution of assets on any liquidation, dissolution or winding up of First Community;

any amendment, alteration or repeal of any provision of the amended and restated certificate designations for the series A preferred stock or our articles of incorporation, as amended, so as to adversely affect the rights, preferences, privileges or voting powers of the series A preferred stock; or

any consummation of a binding share exchange or reclassification involving the series A preferred stock or of a merger or consolidation of First Community with another entity, unless the shares of series A preferred stock remain outstanding following any such transaction or, if First Community is not the surviving entity, are converted into or exchanged for preference securities and such remaining outstanding shares of series A preferred stock or preference securities have rights, references, privileges and voting powers that are not materially less favorable than the rights, preferences, privileges or voting powers of the series A preferred stock, taken as a whole.

To the extent of the voting rights of the series A preferred stock, each holder of series A preferred stock will have one vote for each \$1,000 of liquidation preference to which such holder's shares of series A preferred stock are entitled.

The foregoing voting provisions will not apply if, at or prior to the time when the vote or consent would otherwise be required, all outstanding shares of series A preferred stock have been redeemed or called for redemption upon proper notice and sufficient funds have been set aside by us for the benefit of the holders of series A preferred stock to effect the redemption.

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANT TO PURCHASE COMMON STOCK

The following is a brief description of the terms of the warrant that may be resold by the selling securityholders. This summary does not purport to be complete in all respects. This description is subject to and qualified in its entirety by reference to the warrant, a copy of which has been filed with the SEC and is also available upon request from us.

Shares of Common Stock Subject to the Warrant

The warrant is initially exercisable for 176,546 shares of our common stock. If we complete one or more qualified equity offerings on or prior to December 31, 2009 that result in our receipt of aggregate gross proceeds of not less than \$41.5 million, which is equal to 100% of the aggregate liquidation preference of the series A preferred stock, the number of shares of common stock underlying the warrant then held by the selling securityholders will be reduced by 50% to 88,273 shares. The number of shares subject to the warrant are subject to the further adjustments described below under the heading "Adjustments to the Warrant."

Exercise of the Warrant

The initial exercise price applicable to the warrant is \$35.26 per share of common stock for which the warrant may be exercised. The warrant may be exercised at any time on or before November 21, 2018 by surrender of the warrant and a completed notice of exercise attached as an annex to the warrant and the payment of the exercise price for the shares of common stock for which the warrant is being exercised. The exercise price may be paid either by the withholding by First Community of such number of shares of common stock issuable upon exercise of the warrant equal to the value of the aggregate exercise price of the warrant determined by reference to the market price of our common stock on the trading day on which the warrant is exercised or, if agreed to by us and the warrant holder, by the payment of cash equal to the aggregate exercise price. The exercise price applicable to the warrant is subject to the further adjustments described below under the heading "Adjustments to the Warrant."

Upon exercise of the warrant, certificates for the shares of common stock issuable upon exercise will be issued to the warrant holder. We will not issue fractional shares upon any exercise of the warrant. Instead, the warrant holder will be entitled to a cash payment equal to the market price of our common stock on the last day preceding the exercise of the warrant (less the pro-rated exercise price of the warrant) for any fractional shares that would have otherwise been issuable upon exercise of the warrant. We will at all times reserve the aggregate number of shares of our common stock for which the warrant may be exercised. We have listed the shares of common stock issuable upon exercise of the warrant with the Nasdaq Global Select Market.

Rights as a Shareholder

The warrant holder shall have no rights or privileges of the holders of our common stock, including any voting rights, until (and then only to the extent) the warrant has been exercised.

Transferability

The initial selling securityholder may not transfer a portion of the warrant with respect to more than 88,273 shares of common stock until the earlier of the date on which First Community has received aggregate gross proceeds from a qualified equity offering of at least \$41.5 million and December 31, 2009. The warrant, and all rights under the warrant, are otherwise transferable.

Adjustments to the Warrant

Adjustments in Connection with Stock Splits, Subdivisions, Reclassifications and Combinations. The number of shares for which the warrant may be exercised and the exercise price applicable to the warrant will be proportionately adjusted in the event we pay dividends or make distributions of our common stock, subdivide, combine or reclassify outstanding shares of our common stock.

Anti-dilution Adjustment. Until the earlier of November 21, 2011 and the date the initial selling securityholder no longer holds the warrant (and other than in certain permitted transactions described below), if we issue any shares of common stock (or securities convertible or exercisable into common stock) for less than 90% of the market price of the common stock on the last trading day prior to pricing such shares, then the number of shares of common stock into which the warrant is exercisable and the exercise price will be adjusted. Permitted transactions include issuances:

as consideration for or to fund the acquisition of businesses and/or related assets;

in connection with employee benefit plans and compensation related arrangements in the ordinary course and consistent with past practice approved by our board of directors;

in connection with public or broadly marketed offerings and sales of common stock or convertible securities for cash conducted by us or our affiliates pursuant to registration under the Securities Act, or Rule 144A thereunder on a basis consistent with capital-raising transactions by comparable financial institutions (but do not include other private transactions); and

in connection with the exercise of preemptive rights on terms existing as of November 21, 2008.

Other Distributions. If we declare any dividends or distributions other than our historical, ordinary cash dividends, the exercise price of the warrant will be adjusted to reflect such distribution.

Certain Repurchases. If we affect a *pro rata* repurchase of common stock both the number of shares issuable upon exercise of the warrant and the exercise price will be adjusted.

Business Combinations. In the event of a merger, consolidation or similar transaction involving First Community and requiring shareholder approval, the warrant holder's right to receive shares of our common stock upon exercise of the warrant shall be converted into the right to exercise the warrant for the consideration that would have been payable to the warrant holder with respect to the shares of common stock for which the warrant may be exercised, as if the warrant had been exercised prior to such merger, consolidation or similar transaction.

DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK

General

The following is a brief description of our common stock that may be resold by the selling securityholders. This summary does not purport to be complete in all respects. This description is subject to and qualified in its entirety by reference to our articles of incorporation, as amended, a copy of which has been filed with the SEC and is also available upon request from us.

We have 25,000,000 shares of authorized common stock, \$1.00 par value per share, of which 11,567,449 shares were outstanding as of February 5, 2009.

Each share of our common stock is entitled to one vote on all matters submitted to a vote at any meeting of stockholders. Holders of our common stock are entitled to receive dividends as may be declared by our board of directors out of funds legally available therefore and, upon liquidation, to receive pro rata our assets, if any, available for distribution after the payment of creditors and the preferences of series A preferred stock, and any other class or series of preferred stock outstanding at the time of liquidation. Holders of our common stock have no preemptive rights to subscribe for any additional securities of any class that we may issue, nor any conversion, redemption or sinking fund rights. Holders of our common stock have the right to cumulate votes in the election of directors. The rights and privileges of holders of our common stock are subject to any preferences that our board of directors may set for any series of our preferred stock that we may issue in the future. We pay dividends on our common stock only if we have paid or provided for all dividends on our outstanding series of preferred stock, for the then current period and, in the case of any cumulative preferred stock, all prior periods.

Our series A preferred stock has, and any other series of preferred stock upon issuance will have, preference over our common stock with respect to the payment of dividends and the distribution of assets in the event of our liquidation or dissolution. Our preferred stock also has such other preferences as currently, or as may be, fixed by our board of directors.

Holders of our common stock are entitled to one vote for each share that they hold and are vested with all of the voting power except as our board of directors has provided, or may provide in the future, with respect to preferred stock or any other class or series of preferred stock that the board of directors may hereafter authorize. Shares of our common stock are not redeemable, and have no subscription, conversion or preemptive rights.

Our common stock is listed on the Nasdaq Global Select Market. Holders of our common stock are not, and will not be, subject to any liability as stockholders.

Transactions with Interested Persons

Under the Nevada Revised Statutes, or NRS, a transaction with First Community (i) in which a First Community director or officer has a direct or indirect interest, or (ii) involving another corporation, firm or association in which one or more of First Community's directors or officers are directors or officers of the corporation, firm or association or have a financial interest in the corporation firm or association, is not void or voidable solely because of the director's or officer's interest or common role in the transaction if any one of the following circumstances exists:

the fact of the common directorship, office or financial interest is known to the board of directors or a committee of the board of directors and a majority of disinterested directors on the board of directors (or on the committee) authorized, approved or ratified the transaction;

the fact of the common directorship, office or financial interest is known to the stockholders and disinterested stockholders holding a majority of the shares held by disinterested stockholders authorized, approved or ratified the transaction;

the fact of the common directorship, office or financial interest is not known to the director or officer at the time the transaction is brought to the board of directors for action; or

the transaction was fair to First Community at the time it is authorized or approved.

Control Share Acquisition Provisions

Nevada law contains provisions that, under certain circumstances, would preclude an acquirer of the shares of a Nevada corporation who crosses one of three voting thresholds (20%, 33 1/3% or 50%) from obtaining voting rights with respect to such shares unless the disinterested holders of a majority of the shares of First Community held by disinterested stockholders votes to accord voting power to such shares. The statute provides that, if authorized by the articles of incorporation or bylaws in effect on the 10th day following the acquisition of the controlling interest by an acquiring person, First Community may call for redemption of not less than all of the control shares at the average price paid for the control shares if the acquirer has not complied with certain procedural requirements or if the control shares are not accorded full voting rights by the stockholders.

Combinations with Interested Stockholders

Under the NRS, except under certain circumstances, a corporation is not permitted to engage in a business combination with any interested stockholder for a period of three years following the date such stockholder became an interested stockholder. An interested stockholder is a person or entity who owns 10% or more of the outstanding shares of voting stock. Nevada permits a corporation to opt out of the application of these business combination provisions by so providing in the articles of incorporation. First Community opted out of the application of these business combination provisions in its articles of incorporation, as amended. Instead, First Community's articles of incorporation, as amended, require the approval of holders of more than 85% of First Community's outstanding shares entitled to vote thereon for any of the following transactions between First Community and any individual, firm, corporation or other entity (or any affiliate of any of the foregoing) that directly or indirectly beneficially owns 15% or more of First Community's outstanding shares of stock entitled to vote for the election of directors:

any merger or consolidation of First Community or any subsidiary of First Community with or into the firm, corporation or other entity;

any sale, lease, exchange, transfer or other disposition (whether in a single transaction or a series of related transactions) to or with the individual, firm, corporation or other entity of any assets of First Community or any subsidiary of First Community when such assets have an aggregate fair market value of \$5,000,000 or more;

the issuance or transfer to or with the individual, firm, corporation or other entity by First Community or any subsidiary of First Community of any equity securities of First Community or any subsidiary of First Community where any such equity securities have an aggregate fair market value of \$5,000,000 or more;

the adoption of any plan or proposal for the liquidation or dissolution of First Community; or

any agreement, contract or other arrangement providing for any of the foregoing.

Restrictions on Ownership

The Bank Holding Company Act requires any bank holding company, as defined in the Bank Holding Company Act, to obtain the approval of the Federal Reserve Board prior to the acquisition of 5% or more of our common stock. Any person, other than a bank holding company, is required to obtain prior approval of the Federal Reserve Board to acquire 10% or more of our common stock under the Change in Bank Control Act. Any holder of 25% or more of our common stock, or a holder of 5% or more if such holder otherwise exercises a controlling influence over us, is subject to regulation as a bank holding company under the Bank Holding Company Act.

Transfer Agent and Registrar

The transfer agent and registrar for our common stock is BNY Mellon Shareholder Services.

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

The selling securityholders and their successors, including their transferees, may sell the securities directly to purchasers or through underwriters, broker-dealers or agents, who may receive compensation in the form of discounts, concessions or commissions from the selling securityholders or the purchasers of the securities. These discounts, concessions or commissions as to any particular underwriter, broker-dealer or agent may be in excess of those customary in the types of transactions involved.

The securities may be sold in one or more transactions at fixed prices, at prevailing market prices at the time of sale, at varying prices determined at the time of sale or at negotiated prices. These sales may be affected in transactions, which may involve crosses or block transactions:

on any national securities exchange or quotation service on which the preferred stock or the common stock may be listed or quoted at the time of sale, including, as of the date of this prospectus, the Nasdaq Global Select Market in the case of the common stock;

in the over-the-counter market;

in transactions otherwise than on these exchanges or services or in the over-the-counter market; or

through the writing of options, whether the options are listed on an options exchange or otherwise.

In addition, any securities that qualify for sale pursuant to Rule 144 under the Securities Act may be sold under Rule 144 rather than pursuant to this prospectus.

In connection with the sale of the securities or otherwise, the selling securityholders may enter into hedging transactions with broker-dealers, which may in turn engage in short sales of the common stock issuable upon exercise of the warrant in the course of hedging the positions they assume. The selling securityholders may also sell short the common stock issuable upon exercise of the warrant and deliver common stock to close out short positions, or loan or pledge the series A preferred stock or the common stock issuable upon exercise of the warrant to broker-dealers that in turn may sell these securities.

The aggregate proceeds to the selling securityholders from the sale of the securities will be the purchase price of the securities less discounts and commissions, if any.

In effecting sales, broker-dealers or agents engaged by the selling securityholders may arrange for other broker-dealers to participate. Broker-dealers or agents may receive commissions, discounts or concessions from the selling securityholders in amounts to be negotiated immediately prior to the sale.

In offering the securities covered by this prospectus, the selling securityholders and any broker-dealers who execute sales for the selling securityholders may be deemed to be underwriters within the meaning of Section 2(a)(11) of the Securities Act in connection with such sales. Any profits realized by the selling securityholders and the compensation of any broker-dealer may be deemed to be underwriting discounts and commissions. Selling securityholders who are underwriters within the meaning of Section 2(a)(11) of the Securities Act will be subject to the prospectus delivery requirements of the Securities Act and may be subject to certain statutory and regulatory liabilities, including liabilities imposed pursuant to Sections 11, 12 and 17 of the Securities Act and Rule 10b-5 under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, or the Exchange Act.

In order to comply with the securities laws of certain states, if applicable, the securities must be sold in such jurisdictions only through registered or licensed brokers or dealers. In addition, in certain states the securities may not be sold unless they have been registered or qualified for sale in the applicable state or an exemption from the registration or qualification requirement is available and is complied with.

The anti-manipulation rules of Regulation M under the Exchange Act may apply to sales of securities pursuant to this prospectus and to the activities of the selling securityholders. In addition, we will make copies of this prospectus available to the selling securityholders for the purpose of satisfying the prospectus delivery requirements of the Securities Act, which may include delivery through the facilities of the Nasdaq Global Select Market pursuant to Rule 153 under the Securities Act.

At the time a particular offer of securities is made, if required, a prospectus supplement will set forth the number and type of securities being offered and the terms of the offering, including the name of any underwriter, dealer or agent, the purchase price paid by any underwriter, any discount, commission and other item constituting compensation, any discount, commission or concession allowed or reallocated or paid to any dealer, and the proposed selling price to the public.

Neither the series A preferred stock nor the warrant is listed on an exchange. Unless requested by the initial selling securityholder, we do not intend to list the series A preferred stock on any exchange. We do not intend to list the warrant on any exchange. No assurance can be given as to the liquidity of the trading market, if any, for the series A preferred stock.

We have agreed to indemnify the selling securityholders against certain liabilities, including certain liabilities under the Securities Act. We have also agreed, among other things, to bear substantially all expenses (other than underwriting discounts and selling commissions) in connection with the registration and sale of the securities covered by this prospectus.

SELLING SECURITYHOLDERS

On November 21, 2008, we issued the securities covered by this prospectus to the United States Department of the Treasury, which is the initial selling securityholder under this prospectus, in a transaction exempt from the registration requirements of the Securities Act. The initial selling securityholder, or its successors, including transferees, may from time to time offer and sell, pursuant to this prospectus or a supplement to this prospectus, any or all of the securities they own. The securities to be offered under this prospectus for the account of the selling securityholders are:

41,500 shares of series A preferred stock, representing beneficial ownership of 100% of the shares of series A preferred stock outstanding on the date of this prospectus;

a warrant to purchase 176,546 shares of our common stock, representing beneficial ownership of approximately 1.5% of our common stock as of February 5, 2009; and

176,546 shares of our common stock issuable upon exercise of the warrant, which shares, if issued, would represent ownership of approximately 1.5% of our common stock as of February 5, 2009.

For purposes of this prospectus, we have assumed that, after completion of the offering covered by this prospectus, none of the securities covered by this prospectus will be held by the selling securityholders.

Beneficial ownership is determined in accordance with the rules of the SEC and includes voting or investment power with respect to the securities. To our knowledge, the initial selling securityholder has sole voting and investment power with respect to the securities.

We do not know when or in what amounts the selling securityholders may offer the securities for sale. The selling securityholders might not sell any or all of the securities offered by this prospectus. Because the selling securityholders may offer all or some of the securities pursuant to this offering, and because currently no sale of any of the securities is subject to any agreements, arrangements or understandings, we cannot estimate the number of the securities that will be held by the selling securityholders after completion of the offering.

Other than with respect to the acquisition of the securities, the initial selling securityholder has not had a material relationship with us.

Information about the selling securityholders may change over time and changed information will be set forth in supplements to this prospectus if and when necessary.

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the series A preferred stock, the warrant and the common stock offered hereby will be passed upon for us by Patton Boggs LLP.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements incorporated in this prospectus by reference from our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the two years in the period ended December 31, 2007, and the effectiveness of our internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2007, have been audited by Dixon Hughes PLLC, independent registered public accounting firm, and the consolidated financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2005 have been audited by Ernst & Young LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, as stated in their respective reports, which are incorporated herein by reference, and have been so incorporated in reliance upon such reports of such firms given upon their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. Our SEC filings are available to the public over the Internet at the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>. Copies of certain information filed by us with the SEC are also available on our website at <http://www.fcbinc.com>. Our website is not a part of this prospectus. You may also read and copy any document we file at the SEC's public reference room, 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the operation of the public reference room.

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference information we file with it, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to other documents. The information incorporated by reference is considered to be a part of this prospectus, and information that we file later with the SEC will automatically update and supersede this information. In all cases, you should rely on the later information over different information included in this prospectus.

We incorporate by reference the documents listed below and all future filings we make with the SEC under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act, prior to the termination of the offering, except to the extent that any information contained in such filings is deemed furnished in accordance with SEC rules:

Our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2007, filed on March 13, 2008.

Our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2008, filed on May 12, 2008, our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended June 30, 2008, filed on August 11, 2008, and our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended September 30, 2008, filed on November 10, 2008.

Our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed on February 25, 2008; February 20, 2008; February 26, 2008; May 27, 2008; May 30, 2008; June 4, 2008; July 31, 2008; August 5, 2008; August 26, 2008, September 26, 2008, October 30, 2008, November 3, 2008, November 14, 2008, and November 24, 2008, December 16, 2008, December 22, 2008, January 5, 2009, and January 16, 2009,

The description of our common stock contained in our Form 8-A as filed with the SEC pursuant to Sections 12(b) and 12(g) of the Exchange Act, on May 20, 1991.

You may request a copy of these filings, at no cost, by writing or telephoning us at the following address:

First Community Bancshares, Inc.
One Community Place
Bluefield, Virginia 24605-0989
Attention: Robert L. Schumacher,
General Counsel
(276) 326-9000

You should rely only on the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus. We have not authorized anyone else to provide you with additional or different information.