



Youth and Community Services Commission

Wednesday, June 10, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

Bristol Parks, Recreation, Youth and Community Services – 51 High Street, Bristol CT 06010

1. Call to Order

Chair Matthew Gotowala called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

a. Pledge of Allegiance

b. Attendance

Members Present:

Matthew Gotowala, Chair
Deborah Ahl, Vice Chair
Cecilia Garay, Commissioner
Richard Kilby, Commissioner
Jonathan Lukasiewicz, Commissioner
Antonio Chatfield, Commissioner
RJ Motel, Commissioner
Donna Osuch, Commissioner
Ellen Zoppo-Sassu, Mayor
Steven Seymour, City Council Liaison
Stephen Bynum, Youth and Community Services Supervisor
Dr. Joshua Medeiros, Superintendent of Bristol Parks, Recreation, Youth and Community Services
Jeffrey Arduini, Community Services Coordinator
Ashante Malone, Youth and Family Coordinator
Raven Cody, Youth and Family Coordinator
Deedra Willingham, B.E.S.T Project Coordinator

Absent:

Ryan Broderick, Commissioner

2. Public Participation

Nothing to report.

3. Approval of Minutes

a. Approval of Minutes - April 8, 2026 - Youth Commission Regular Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Made by Commissioner Chatfield to Approve the April 8, 2026, Youth Commissioner Regular Meeting Minutes.
Seconded by Commissioner Motel; all in favor; motion carried.

4. Supervisor's Report

a. Supervisor's Report

Youth and Community Supervisor Stephen Bynum presented the Supervisor's Report. Supervisor Bynum provided updates on the number of intakes, families and clients receiving services and referrals. Community Service Coordinator Jeffrey Arduini is currently serving 90 active clients and provided updates on the Parent and Child Program. Discussion followed.

b. Project Aware End of the Year Staff Report

Youth and Family Coordinators Ashante Malone and Raven Cody presented the Project Aware End of the Year Staff Report. his included updates on several completed programs, such as Girls With a Purpose and Empower Hour, as well as upcoming events, including the 9th Annual Mayor's Back-to-School Pencil Hunt, which will be held in collaboration with the Bristol Board of Education on August 19, 2026, at Muzzy Field. Discussion followed.

c. Upcoming Summer Programming

Youth and Family Coordinators Ashante Malone and Raven Cody presented the Upcoming Summer Programming. Discussion followed.

d. B.E.S.T Update

B.E.S.T Project Coordinator Deedra Willingham presented the B.E.S.T Updates. Coordinator Willingham thanked the commission for their support, as the B.E.S.T Coordinator position was approved a Full-Time position. Coordinator Willingham also presented the information regarding the CADCA Conference in July. Coordinator Willingham also thanked City Council Member Steven Seymour for the use of his studio and resources for the Youth Coalition Podcast. Discussion followed.

e. Youth Diversion Team

Youth and Community Supervisor Stephen Bynum presented the Youth Diversion Team updates. Discussion followed.

f. Year to Date Financials

Youth and Community Supervisor Stephen Bynum presented the Year-to-Date Financials. Discussion followed.

5. Youth Report

Commissioner Motel and Commissioner Chatfield presented the Youth Report, where they shared the first episode of the Youth Coalition Podcast with the commission. Discussion followed.

6. New Business

a. CADCA Training

Nothing to report as this was discussed during the B.E.S.T Update.

b. By Commissioners

Nothing to report.

7. Old Business

a. Youth and Prevention Leaders Awards Review/Discussion

Chair Matthew Gotowala presented the Review and Discussion of the Youth and Prevention Leadership Awards. Chair Gotowala thanked everyone for their help that evening with their flexibility due to the location change, and would like to revisit the application prior to next year's event. Discussion followed.

b. By Commissioners

Mayor Ellen Zoppo-Sassu shared some kind words about the role Youth and Community Services played during a recent case that required collaboration with other departments within the city.

Commissioner Lukaiewicz inquired about the "Be the Solution, Not the Pollution" Campaign. Superintendent Medeiros shared that Bristol Parks, Recreation, Youth and Community Services had launched the Green Team, in efforts to help spread awareness about littering as well as community clean-up opportunities. Discussion followed.

City Council Liaison Steve Seymour presented updates from the Ordinance Committee on the new Vape Ordinance. Discussion followed.

8. Adjournment

MOTION: Made by Commissioner Motel to adjourn at 7:01 p.m.
Seconded by Commissioner Chatfield; all in favor; motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amaris Estrada
Recording Secretary
Youth and Community Services Commission