

Daniel A. Micari, Commissioner, Chairperson
Barbara Bajurny, Commissioner
Andrew Collins, Commissioner, Secretary
Gloria Ewings, Commissioner
Ruth Ann Graime, Commissioner
Joseph Krolkowski, Commissioner
Jacqueline Olsen, City Council Liaison
Diane Salmoiraghi, Commissioner



**Commission for Persons with Disabilities
Bristol, CT 06010**

**Meeting Agenda
May 8, 2024**

7:00 PM – City Hall, 3rd Floor Meeting Room 3-1 and Virtual Format

Our Mission

To promote inclusion and improve the quality of life for people in Bristol with a disability, by providing a network of partnerships with local resources that foster self-sufficiency, dignity, and respect.

Reasonable Accommodation Statement

The Bristol Commission for Persons with Disabilities is committed to equal access to, and participation in, all meetings and Commission-sponsored programs and events. Individuals who require an accommodation in order to fully participate, including physical access, communication assistance, or other special need, should contact Daniel A. Micari at damicari@yahoo.com, at least seven business days prior to the scheduled meeting, program, or event.

Present:

Absent:

Call to order

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes: April 10, 2024

Presentation: Scott Heth, Executive Director of the Environmental Learning Centers of Connecticut
Topic: Harry C. Barnes Memorial Nature Center - Programs, Updates and Nature Trail News

New/Current Business

*Tentative speakers for June and beyond

*Update regarding Substitute House Bill No. 5241 – *An Act Establishing a Bureau Coordinating Services for Deaf, Hard of Hearing or Deafblind Persons*

Old Business

*Lesson on American Sign Language

Correspondence

*From Chairman Micari to Christina Benvenuto, Bristol Health:

Dear Christina:

On behalf of the Bristol Commission for Persons with Disabilities, I thank you for your informative presentation at last evening's Commission Meeting. The information which you shared about Bristol Health programs, including Bristol Hospital's efforts and initiatives to increase awareness and to accommodate the healthcare needs of individuals who are deaf, deaf blind and blind, demonstrated Bristol Health's commitment to providing equal access to vital health services to all members of our community.

We look forward to working your department and collaborating with Bristol Health in the future.

Sincerely,

Dan Micari, Chair

Bristol commission for Persons with Disabilities

*From Chairman Micari to Nancy Plasczynski and Andy Adams, Bristol Health:

Dear Nancy and Andy:

Thank you very much for accompanying Christina at Wednesday night's meeting of the Bristol Commission for Persons with Disabilities.

Your support of the many Bristol Health initiatives ,which focus upon equal access for individuals with disabilities is greatly appreciated.

We look forward to a continued working relationship with you and Bristol Health, in support of our Commission's Mission.

Sincerely,

Dan Micari, Chair

Bristol Commssion for Persons with Disabilities

*From Chairman Micari to Leslie Warren, CoSignCt and Luisa Gasco-Soboleski, President of the Connecticut Association of the Deaf:

Dear Ms. Warren and Ms. Soboleski:

On behalf of the Bristol Commission for Persons with Disabilities, thank you for your recent presentations at our April Commission meeting.

Ms. Warren, as CEO of CoSignCT, you provided an important overview of the history of deaf services in Connecticut, including the state's establishment of a Commission to coordinate deaf services in 1974. You also discussed the challenges involving access to certified sign language interpreters, a problem which began in the 1990's and which continues today. You also discussed various day- to- day situations which deaf individuals encounter in the community, especially in health care situations, when an interpreter may not be available. You also emphasized the

importance of certified sign language interpreters, who adhere to a strict code of ethics, which is so vital in hospital and health care circumstances and other communication encounters.

Ms. Gasco-Soboleski, thank you for sharing your life-long experiences as a member of the deaf community, including your professional experience as a teacher at the American School for the Deaf. You explained the importance of deaf services for children, and that language development and acquisition during the first five years of a child's life is critical.

You also discussed the shortcomings of video remote technology (VRI), an alternative to live interpreting, which is frequently used in medical /healthcare settings.

You reviewed and discussed deaf services in Connecticut prior to 2016, after which time the state agency responsible for these important services was abolished due to funding restraints, which led to the erosion of many deaf services.

You offered encouraging news that you and other members of the deaf community, have been advocating for and working with the Connecticut General Assembly, to establish a state agency and stronger laws which will provide for a broad spectrum of services for members of the deaf community. You will keep us apprised of the Bill's status.

Sincerely,

*Daniel A. Micari, Chair
Bristol Commission for Persons with Disabilities*

Public Participation

Motion to adjourn:

Meeting adjourned:

Next meeting: June 12, 2024 at 7:00 PM

City Hall, 3rd Floor Meeting Room 3-1

Presentation: TBD

Submitted by,

Andrew Collins, Secretary

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://bristolct->

[gov.zoom.us/j/88512009314?pwd=cDdReHV2VWt3eVE2SnYySFhMeWtvdz09](https://bristolct-gov.zoom.us/j/88512009314?pwd=cDdReHV2VWt3eVE2SnYySFhMeWtvdz09)

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