

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



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

**Meeting Minutes
January 8, 2025**

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: Micari, Collins, Ewings, Graime, Krolikowski, Salmoiraghi

Absent: Bajurny, Olsen

Call to order: 7:00 PM, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes: November 13, 2024 (Krolikowski/Ewings, passed)

Presentation: Dr. Sabrina Trocchi, President and Chief Executive Officer,
Wheeler Clinic
Topic: Overview of Wheeler Programs and Services

Dr. Sabrina Trocchi introduced herself and Wheeler Health. She described some of the history of the organization including its establishment in 1968 in Plainville. Today, it has over 40 locations and more than 100 programs. Wheeler Health offers services in about 90% of the towns in Connecticut. Their mission is to provide equitable access to care with a focus on mental health services. It is one of the largest mental health and substance abuse treatment providers.

While Wheeler Health started with a focus on services to children, they have expanded to provide services to adults as well. This includes primary care. The adult patients that they handle typically also have special needs who have difficulty finding health services elsewhere.

Wheeler Health also provides a number of other services such as therapeutic group home services, behavioral services for children and teens, foster care, community justice, employment assistance, among others.

Wheeler Health also works with the police department and emergency services to provide help in critical cases.

Dr. Trocchi described Wheeler Health's new headquarters building at 1 Hope Street. Wheeler Health was originally located at 10 Main Street and 225 North Main Street, but the new building was constructed to consolidate services at one location. The new location provides a wide array of services to patients including both children and adults.

Wheeler Health has a presence in all fourteen schools in Bristol providing behavioral treatment services. Wheeler Health also operates mobile health care vehicles to provide their services in various locations.

Wheeler Health has been recognized for their work through various awards including being a top healthcare organization, a women-led organization, and recognition by the Human Rights Campaign as an LGBTQ+ leader.

Wheeler Health also ensures that it accommodates patients with disabilities, including special provisions for those who are blind or deaf.

During the presentation and afterward, Dr. Trocchi answer questions from the commissioners and members of the audience.

Presentation: Donna Crowe, Owner, Crowes Crafty Corner
Topic: Seatbelt straps with medical alerts

Donna Crowe presented her business which makes straps that can be attached to seatbelts. The purpose of these straps is to convey messages regarding physical and mental disabilities to first responders in the event of a car crash or other incidents. The straps can alert a first responder to a variety of disabilities such as deafness, blindness, autism, and so on. This is especially important if a passenger is not conscious following an incident. The straps can be customized with any message. They are sold for \$15 each.

New/Current Business

* Mary Etter, Executive Director, Bristol Adult Resource Center, will present at the February 12, 2025, meeting to discuss services provided by the Bristol Adult Resource Center.

*Chairman Micari stated that Commissioner Bajurny, who was absent at this meeting, had no updates regarding the installation of the smoke/CO detectors.

Old Business

*Jon Sahlin, ASL interpreter, led the Commission in teaching ASL signs related to winter such as “wind” and “frozen.”

Correspondence

*Chairman Micari sent a message to Damien Saunders, Connecticut Outreach & Equipment Coordinator of the Connecticut Equipment Distribution Program thanking him for the presentation that he gave at the December 11, 2024, meeting.

Public Participation

*None.

Motion to adjourn: Krolikowski/Graime, passed **Meeting adjourned:** 8:09 PM

Next meeting: February 12, 2025, at 7:00 PM
City Hall, 3rd floor meeting room 3-1

Presenter: Mary Etter, Executive Director, Bristol Adult Resource Center
Topic: Services at the Bristol Adult Resource Center

Submitted by,
Andrew Collins, Secretary