

Bristol Early Childhood Alliance

Zoom Meeting Notes

April 7, 2021 (11:00 – 12:00 p.m.)

In attendance: Meagan Adams, Maureen Eaton, Lauren Kittle, Kate Kerchaert, Donna Koser, Karen Lombardi, Shannon Michelson (UW Intern), Donna Osuch, Valerie Pelletier, Abigail Severn, Val Pelletier, Mary Alice Petrucelli-Timek and Valerie Toner

Members were invited to introduce themselves.

Community Outreach – Donna K. shared that outreach is looking different this year with many events moved to Zoom events or cancelled. Printed materials on Making Bristol Better has been distributed through the Health Committee Tasty Tuesday events held in partnership with Shoprite and to people who pick up clear masks from United Way.

Collaborating Grants:

Donna O. and Mary-Alice shared a few updates:

The Early Childhood Funder Collaborative Grant has been announced and Bristol is eligible to apply for \$35,000.00 to support staff and “shovel ready” projects. A new component to this grant was an addition of Parent Ambassadors who will be Liaisons to the Office of Early Childhood and BECA. SR Member Jennifer St. John and PTLI Alumni Chandle Benson have agreed to serve in this role for Bristol. An additional \$10,000.00 is available to local early childhood councils who plan to collaborate regionally. If Bristol can organize 3 or 4 events a year amongst the four communities that United Way serves, the grant will include a regional grant request. Clarification is needed on whether the grant will allow collaboration of the four communities or if local councils are expected to merge for the extra \$10,000.

No update on Sparkler.

Main Street Community Foundation will be opening up its General Grant Cycle. Please reach out to Kate before submitting your application.

Committee Reports:

Infant & Toddler – The committee did not meet this month. However, the committee is working on posts for Facebook for Child Abuse Prevention Month. The Parent & Child Center is holding an event at one of the local parks.

Health Committee – met yesterday. Wellness Wednesday posts continue monthly on Facebook. The committee is looking for content to post. Tasty Tuesday’s enrollment was down last month. The committee continued discussion on “community gardens in Bristol” to promote healthy eating and looking into ways to implement garden pots “Eats on the Streets” in the community where anyone can enjoy a snack. Target areas are Agape House and Brian’s Angels. The “Little Read” in April will feature a local author; Michele Kean. The book is Rio & Silas with love. Mary Alice will also implement a “Story walk” in Rockwell park as part of her Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI) project.

Transition to K. – 360 enrollments for Ready4K is down to 333 due to parents who have opted out. Mary-Alice is actively working on increasing enrollment. The Library is conducting outreach to families, there was an article in the Bristol Press. Cathy Plourde and Cecelia have created videos to help with confusion on the enrollment/health process. It’s Time to Register for Kindergarten signs have been ordered and should be displayed around the community soon.

Community Sharing:

MSCF – The Foundation will be opening up the General Grant Cycle next week. www.mainstreetfoundation.org. For those who anticipate to apply, please reach out to Kate before completing the application.

United Way - Farmers to Families events are scheduled for April 10th and April 24th. Please share the event widely. United Way still has a few adult masks if anyone is in need. Please contact Donna Osuch at dosuch@uwestcentralct.org. Tax season has been extended and the registration link for VITA has been updated to reflect the extension. Day of Caring is scheduled for May 14th. Please reach out to Donna if you have any outdoor projects you would like to sign up. Donna O. also shared information on a Thomaston Savings Bank product (Uncommon Account) for clients who are unable to open a bank account due to previous problems at another bank. The account is free regardless of the size of the balance.

for clients who may not have the best of credit. No fees for a small balance.

Mary-Alice – On April 14th the Early Childhood Alliance is having an advocacy meeting with legislatures and a Q&A with the governor. Mary Alice will send information and encouraged everyone to register.

Parent & Child Program: Groups (Empowering Fathers, etc.) are continuing with both in-person and virtual options.

WIC – currently operating via phone calls and will reassess in May to see if they will be opening the office to receive clients in person. The fruit & vegetable vouchers continue and there is a proposal for an increase. WIC also plans to continue vouchers for the Farmers Market.



Next BECA Meeting:
May 5, 2021



**Mark your calendar!
Upcoming Committee Meeting Dates – Everyone is welcome!**

Subcommittee of SRC / BECA	Meeting Location	Meeting Date
Health Committee	ZOOM	May 4 th & June 1 st at 1:00
Transition to Kindergarten	ZOOM	May 17 th & June 21 st at 3:45 p.m.
Infant & Toddler Committee & Phase II Literacy	ZOOM	May 3 rd at 1:30 p.m.