

# McLean County ROSC Council Meeting

*Tuesday, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 3:30 p.m. (Zoom/Virtual)*

## Attendees:

The meeting started with introductions, including council participant and agency represented (or person with lived experience—PLE).

**Dan Sokulski** (Chestnut CRSS/McLean ROSC/PLE), **Cat Hayes** (Recoverycorp), **Angelyca Adcock** (PLE/ROSC Social Media), **Joan Hartman** (McLean Human Services), **Ethan Sizemore** (Oxford House Inc.), **Bruce Lang** (Prairie Pride Coalition/LGBTQIA+), **Denise Backes** (Gateway Foundation), **Sonja Workman** (Chestnut, Community Tx Liaison), **Maresa Jordan** (CASA), **Randi Derrig** (Chestnut), **Katie Difanis** (Carle ARU-Champaign), **Bobbi Hassel** (PLE Family), **Kaitlyn Merrick** (Bridgeway), **Jeff Asmus** (Chestnut/IL Region 3 ROSC Tech Assistant – new!), **Ron Slagel** (PC Energy/Citizen), **Jenny Gonzales** (HLM Recovery 180), **Natasha** -- (Public Health Dept), **Laura Hayes** (Family/PLE), **Hassan Holcomb**, **Natasha Nunoo-Ponder**, **Tom Troe** (IL Region 3 CRSS, DHS), **Karyn Smith** (Normal Town Council)

**Today's Topic: Cat Hayes (Survey Results: McLean County Recovery Community Center)**

## Agenda:

- **Introductions** (name, agency, something cool to share with the group)
- **ROSC Updates** (Recovery Recreation, LGBTQIA+, Recruitment and Retention)
- **Breakout Groups Discussions**
  - Each group tackled one of the five objectives listed in the agenda.
  - Groups brainstorm ways to address each goal
  - Concerns and Risks
  - Specific services needed in McLean County
  - Next Steps
- **Closing Remarks and Coming Soon**

**\*\* Note:** You can watch the entire meeting replay July's ROSC Council Meeting on YouTube:

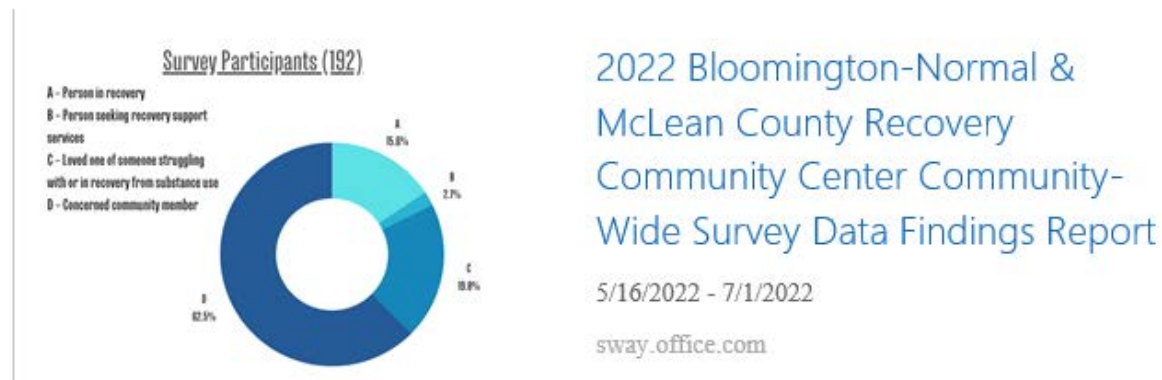
<https://youtu.be/fEhCREtL5sE>

## Today's Discussion:

- After introductions, Dan quickly level set what the McLean ROSC is in very high level terms: A community coalition of volunteers, professionals, people with lived experience (PLEs), family, and concerned citizens who are committed to providing coordinated, holistic recovery-oriented supports and services to all our community's recovery people (SUD, Mental Health, Rentry, Abuse, etc.).
- **Note:** Recovery Community Center = RCC; Person with Lived Experience = PLE
- Dan quickly turned the keys over to Cathleen ("Cat") Hayes as today's guest speaker. You can view Cat's full presentation at the following link: Please contact [mcleancountyrosc@chestnut.org](mailto:mcleancountyrosc@chestnut.org) if you have trouble opening it.
- **CREATING A PEER RECOVERY SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAM FOR MCLEAN COUNTY: A PROTOTYPE NARRATIVE. The Presentation:** <https://sway.office.com/biNpASveF0eLpJtd?ref=Link>

For their perusal:

<https://sway.office.com/biNpASveF0eLpJtd?ref=Link>



- Respondents included all types of community members—People with lived recovery experience (PLEs), recovery community and 12-step, human services agencies, family members of PLEs, concerned citizens, healthcare workers, teachers, and more.
- Cat asked the audience to please temporarily suspend their disbelief and set aside the analytical (and maybe even cynical naysaying) aspects of their mind and just imagine a center where people can come for a variety of recovery-oriented services—peer recovery support specialists, support group meetings, leisure and entertainment, fellowship and games, coffee and healthy conversation, pro-social and independent living skills, mutual aid groups, education and awareness, and potentially even clinical services. There are just ideas envisaged in the first 15 seconds. We understand there are many barriers and challenges to implementing such a facility...we also realize there are many good questions, concerns, assumptions, and hurdles that need to be discussed in greater detail, to put it mildly. The purpose of today's presentation is to help people envision what this Recovery Community Center (RCC – for lack of a consensus name yet) could potentially be. In fact, at the end of the meeting, Cat stated that the #1 takeaway she wanted people to get from the presentation was a basic understanding what are the possibilities, types of services, and what the overall community readiness is of such a project.
- To that end, Cat's results indicated about 95% of survey respondents felt the community needed and was ready for a Recovery Community Center. 80% of Families, 78% of "concerned citizens"; 90.5% of total respondents felt the services at such a center would be utilized
- Cat walked the group through an imagined "prototype" of a 501c3 non-profit RCC (i.e. Come Alive! Recovery Life Center), complete with a Board of Directors, Organizational Bylaws, Funding Sources, an Array of Services, and many other logistics commonly associated with such a project.
  - **\*NOTE TO READERS:** The ideas, internal structure, and other elements of the Come Alive! RCC are for presentation purposes only! Those decisions have not yet been made relative to any type of RCC in McLean County. They are intended to illustrate many of the variables and initiatives associated with establishing an RCC/RCO, but things like Name of the center, specific services offered, organizational structure, etc. are still to be decided and further downstream.

This is the full scope of programs and services we intend to expand to offer:

Support groups	Spiritual support
Sober social events and recreational activities	Housing assistance
Recovery resource connection and/or referrals	Help from a recovery coach
Volunteer/service opportunities	Remote/virtual peer support
Family support & programming	Transportation assistance
Health & wellness services	Life and/or recovery skills training & education
Employment and/or education assistance	Advocacy
Public education & awareness	

- During the Q&A afterwards, Cat stated that nearly 200 community members filled out the survey (~192). The consensus among attendees is this was an excellent level of engagement and is perhaps indicative of the enthusiasm in the community about a Recovery Community Center (RCC) or not.
- There have been similar recovery-oriented centers in the past (e.g. The Promises sober bar circa 2001, Recovery Center on Chestnut Street ~2011) but for different reasons they were discontinued despite consistent engagement. Both were basically 12-step oriented facilities. This typically means good participation but challenges relative to funding. Dan suggested continuing efforts to involve people in our recovery community who remember either or both facilities (and others not mentioned here) and can weigh in on lessons learned, but also on what worked well and should be considered as a part of this new center. There is also potential we lose interest early from a large contingent of our recovery community if we do not proactively involve them early in the process. Several members of A.A. have expressed interest to this writer and a couple have already attended preliminary meetings.
- Big 3 Services: Advocacy, Education and Awareness, and Peer Recovery Services.
- This is not something the ROSC can do alone. This is not something the Center for Human Services can do alone, or Chestnut, or Carle, or MCCA, Recoverycorp, etc. Nor will we be able to tackle it in monthly council meetings. This is widespread effort that requires widespread collaboration, partnerships, and ongoing discussions.
- Potential Partnerships include just about any agency or recovery-facing organization one can imagine—NAMI, Integrity Counseling, Heartland College, Chestnut, Carle, Cedar Lake Fellowship, BNAA Intergroup, and of course, the McLean ROSC just to name some. Other outreach can be done via media—tv, radio, street “jams”, etc.
- Joan Hartman stated a board/committee is being established, ideally with representation from various agencies and areas of the community, to begin the hard work of helping this project come into fruition. The first meeting will take place in August. Please contact Joan if you are interested. This seems like an excellent start to the project if we can get many motivated people involved.
- Sustainability and Future Planning: Strategic planning, credentialing of the center (CAPRSS), determine how to measure success (participants served, connections made, certified coaches, meetings attended, traffic in and out, increases in services provided, and other qual/quant data as pertinent).
- Financial Plan: How are we funded? United way, McLean County, IDHS-SUPR, John M. Scott,

- **Next Steps:** This writer surmised the following Way Forward based on today's discussions and some thoughts afterwards:
  - **Board of Directors:** Joan Hartman to set up a board for researching and planning feasibility of 501c3 RCC (this writer is speaking for Joan here; she may have other or expanded goals for this sub-committee). It's a great place to start though!
  - **Define our options:** We need more clarity as a council about what our ultimate objective is with the RCO, et al initiative, what are our realistic options, what is the feasibility analysis, high level timeline (even if it's a swag from out of the air), sustainability plan, etc.
  - **Workgroup:** Establish team of volunteers (PLEs, ROSC Council members, professionals, concerned citizens) to manage the workload, manage ongoing action plan, report back to council, undertake operational activities (e.g. focus groups), etc. Paid stipends available to PLEs; collaborate as needed with Board (above). Dissolve or do not start if Board usurps this workgroup's purpose. This could be a tactical team for the Board to put on assignments as needed too.
  - **Partnerships:** Creative strategies for partnerships.
  - **Needs Analysis:** Determine where we're weak (as a community and services we provide or make accessible), assess where unmet needs exist, and also understand what is being done well and perhaps requires less urgent attention.
  - **Outreach/Focus Groups:** This is part of the needs analysis too. Several members made comments that pointed towards holding focus groups or something similar with as much of a diversity of the recovery community as we can connect with. This ranges from new people currently in treatment and anticipating their needs to the 30+ year sober A.A. member who has vast experience plus contacts and connections within the community.
  - **Grant Research:** Individuals or small team to look at new grant opportunities, assess appropriateness for McLean ROSC purposes, and recruit or work with grant writer(s) to submit requests.
  - **Establish Credibility:** Once implemented, start with a couple services and do them well rather than casting a net a mile wide but only an inch deep. Something like that.

## Other Misc. McLean (County ROSC)

- **Save the Date: ROSC ANNUAL FUNDRAISER and PICNIC – SEPTEMBER 17<sup>TH</sup> 2022 at Anderson Park.** We hope to exceed last year's event where we raised over \$800 for local sober living rent funds. We need your help though! Any raffle baskets or worthy items you are willing to donate for us to auction off is mightily appreciated! Please contact [McLeancountyROSC@chestnut.org](mailto:McLeancountyROSC@chestnut.org) to find out more or let us know if you have any cool ideas or items to share.
- Spring 2022 McLean ROSC Newsletter and used that as the roadmap to providing various updates to the council. These are summarized below. The Summer Edition will be released next week (week of 7/25/22)...delayed two weeks due to the ROSC Family Night at Grady's feature story also being postponed by rain.



- **ROSC Softball Team** (coed, summer league started May 4<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday nights). The team finished 2-7-1, which actually looks pretty darn good considering an 0-5-1 start! We were a new team with a lot of inexperienced players, but we went out and represented the McLean ROSC with pride. Thanks to some talented subs, we were able to finish the season in style with a 14-0 slaughter rule victory in the final game! Next up...Volleyball! Contact [dasokulski@chestnut.org](mailto:dasokulski@chestnut.org) if you are interested in playing or helping organize a coed volleyball league.
  - **Extra Hats and Visors:** We have extra McLean ROSC hats and visors...also contact Dan if you'd like a free one!
- **Apparel and Promo Items:** the McLean ROSC is working with local business partners to develop new McLean ROSC apparel (light hoodies, jersey tees?) and promotional items (stress balls, magnetized bumper stickers, etc.). We hope to have these ready for dispersal by September for **the 9/17 ROSC Fundraiser Picnic at Anderson Park!**
- **ROSC Family Night at Gradys:** The July 8<sup>th</sup> (Friday) was rained out so it's rescheduled this Friday, July 22<sup>nd</sup>. At this point we are maxed out but for those of you who RSVP'd, we look forward to seeing you there. If you would like to get involved or have questions, then please contact Dan S. at [dasokulski@chestnut.org](mailto:dasokulski@chestnut.org) or 309-665-2067.
- **LGBTQIA+ Updates:** The LGBTQIA+ general recovery support group resumed back on Friday, February 18<sup>th</sup> (please contact Bruce Lang or Angi for more details on when and where). If you are interested in attending, have ideas, or would like to be involved in building up LGBTQIA+ diversity, services and expand communication within the community, then please contact Bruce Lang ([brucetlang@yahoo.com](mailto:brucetlang@yahoo.com)).
- **YouTube Channel:** We are always looking for new and interesting content for our McLean ROSC YouTube channel. Please reach out to Dan or Angelyca if you are interested in telling your story, spreading awareness about new agencies or services in the county, want to riff about a specific recovery topic, or provided education and history about substance use disorders. We offer generous stipends to people with lived experience (PLEs) who contribute to the channel. We will make it easy and can record when and where you prefer. Angelyca does all the editing so you don't have to deal with any of the technology either.
- Latest McLean ROSC YouTube Content:
  - **6/13/22: Fatherhood in Recovery (Gregory Cox)**
  - **7/5/22: What Trauma from Military Combat is REALLY Like (Del Saam)**
  - **Upcoming: Relationships Series II: Acceptance Styles** <https://youtu.be/xZ6gVBXnYN8>
  - **Upcoming: Relationships Series III: Cycle of Violence in Abusive/Addicted Relationships (**  
\*Dates subject to change
- **Background – Past RCC Discussion (May-June 2022):** Group discussions took place about a Recovery Community Center (RCC), and members were asked to share general opinions, suggestions, concerns, questions, and more relative to the feasibility of implementing and sustaining a Recovery Center in McLean County. Angi asked the group about whether or not the council felt “we” could realistically sustain an RCC.
  - The general consensus from participants who weighed in (Amy, Dan, Kimberly, Angi, Cat, Ethan, et al) is that “yes”, the community can support an RCC under the proper

circumstances. Anecdotal evidence was pointed to in the form of the Promise sober bar and similar centers that have emerged over the years. The attendance and level of interest or participation was never the issue. These facilities were mostly undone by lack of financing or consistent, reliable funding.

- Dan suggested focus groups or incentive-based interviews with existing recovery PLEs—from newcomers still in treatment to long-timers who hang out at Cedar Lake every day. People who were involved with previous sober rec centers or similar. The goal would be to gather relevant feedback and fresh ideas and new perspectives about different aspects of an RCC most desired by the people with actual lived experience.
- As stated last month, the overall objective of implementing this type of facility within the community is still very much in its conceptual and “infancy” stage. We will continue our efforts to recruit from the existing recovery community and 12-step community to help with buy-in and sound requirements-gathering as well.

#### **ROSC Workgroup & Support Meetings:**

- **The McLean County Reentry Council:** Coordinated community response to address prisoner reentry and recidivism. The council is comprised of justice-involved individuals, criminal justice officials, health, and human service providers who work together to reduce recidivism in McLean County. One of the goals of the council is to support individuals and their families who have been impacted by detention and incarceration

Meetings are open to the public and held the third Friday of each month from 1-2:00pm. Want to get involved, contact the Council President--Toy Beasley ([tbeasley@tasc.org](mailto:tbeasley@tasc.org))

- **ROSC Events Planning Committee:** This workgroup meets weekly or bi-weekly (as necessary) to envision, plan, and organize sober recreational events, fundraising, holiday parties, guest speakers, and more. We could use your help and ideas at the virtual round table!

<https://zoom.us/j/8599610938>

**When: Tuesdays at 11:00 a.m.**

**Where: Zoom Code: 859 961 0938**

*Contact Dan S. for more info or questions*

- **Next ROSC Council Meeting (McLean County):**

Date: 8/16/2022 3:30-4:30 \*the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of every month!

**Next Month we will try a HYBRID meeting (in person training + Zoom projection).** It will be at Chestnut (either Glenn Covert Bldg or Lighthouse Training Room). Bryan Hinman will be providing Narcan training and kits will be available to participants. More to come!

<https://zoom.us/j/3729798714>

Meeting ID: 372 979 8714

Phone Only: +13126266799,,3729798714# (Chicago)