

Effingham County ROSC Council Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, August 18th, 2025

Time: 1:00-2:00 pm

Location: 104 Blohm Ave, Effingham & Zoom

Meeting Facilitator: Samantha Hicks

Attendees:

In person:

Carrie McKenzie (Gateway Foundation- Outreach)
Connie Brockett (PLE- family member)
Diane Depoister (CEFS Effingham County Coordinator)
Felicia Depoister (Effingham County ROSC Recovery Navigator, CPRS)
Jenn Galvan (Family Resource Center of Effingham Co)
Justin Carder (Local office administrator- IDHS Division of Family and Community Services)
Kasey Kemme (U of I Extension Office Director)
Kat O'Brien (Gateway Foundation Warm Hand-off Program @ HSHS St. Anthony's)
Keith Powell (Safe Families for Children)
Madison LeMay (Effingham Co Probation Program Manager)
Norbert Soltwedel (Effingham County Board member)
Paul Kuhns (Effingham County Sheriff)
Samantha Hicks (Effingham County ROSC Coordinator)
Stephanie Stanfield (DCFS Southern Region Child Protection)
Tommy Alsobrooks (Oxford House Outreach worker)

Zoom:

Abby Behrens (Prevent Child Abuse IL)
Abigail Kauerauf (Land of Lincoln Legal Aid)
Alex Schneider (HSHS Community Health Outreach Specialist)
Amanda Depew (IL Joining Forces Veteran Affairs)
Brittney Card (Macoupin/Montgomery County ROSC Coordinator)
Brycen McFadden (Oxford House Inc Outreach worker)
Deb Beckman (Region 4 Statewide ROSC TA)
Heather Greenwood (Southeast Illinois Area Health Education Center)
Heather Meyers (Salvation Army Outreach Coordinator)
Jenna Hays (Hour House ROSC Supervisor)
Kelly Buscher & Maria Deaconesa (Case Managers of Effingham County)
Kristin Davis (Family Guidance Center- Prevention Integration Coordinator)
Landriah Hardiek (Shelby County ROSC Coordinator)
Maggie Gouchenouer (Investigative State Case Analyst for IL State Police)

Meghan Rewers (Director of Crisis Nursery of Effingham County)
Merl M. (PLE Committee)
Nathan Nichols (CEFS Public Transit)
Nick Phillips (Effingham County Catholic Charities Outreach)
Olivia Jenkins (Hour House Prevention program facilitator)
Toby Depoister (Edgewood Full Gospel Outreach Pastor)

Minutes

Introductions

Council meeting attendees introduced themselves and the agencies they represent or explained why they were attending.

Samantha then provided an overview of ROSC for new attendees at the meeting.

FY26 Priority Projects

Samantha stated that we have 3 priority projects we will be focusing on in the upcoming years that relate to our Strategic Plan:

1. Create a volunteer system of transportation for those in recovery.

Samantha stated that the objective of this project is to create training for people interested in volunteering to transport people who need a ride to treatment or other recovery-related support. They would then go to local recovery meetings and churches to present this concept and create a volunteer list from these groups.

2. Facilitate creation of Certified Peer Recovery Specialists (CPRS)/Certified Recovery Support Specialists (CRSS) training programs and positions in Effingham County.

Samantha stated that the objective of this project is to work with organizations/schools that offer this certification to see how ROSC can support making this certification more accessible to those who want to obtain it. Then they would work with and support local agencies to create peer-to-peer positions within their agencies for the clients they serve.

3. Support the development of local recovery services for those with substance use disorder and their families.

Samantha stated that this goal is more geared towards supporting family members who are affected by addiction through a loved one. She stated there aren't any support groups or tangible resources for members of a family whose loved one is in addiction.

This goal is more fluid in what will become of this via the subcommittee.

Volunteer transportation discussion

Samantha stated that Felicia and her field a lot of calls for people needing transportation to treatment outside of the county. She stated we usually reach out to our PLE Committee and Kat O'Brien from Gateway (who is here today). **Samantha** stated that we need to create some sort of training for volunteers, including what to do if someone wants to exit the car while they're in

transport, the liabilities of transporting someone, etc. She stated that as of today, ROSC has gas gift cards to provide to volunteers for transport.

Carrie stated she works a lot with two organizations - one from Champaign and one from Charleston. Both are faith-based. She stated they'll have guidelines for training volunteers. She also stated they drive people statewide. She stated that one of the organizations funds the transport driver through the church and does up to 15 transports per month. The person is only responsible for transporting people statewide for treatment. She stated there's also another organization in Danville that uses a recovery model she sometimes uses too. Carrie will get Samantha the contact information for these organizations.

Tommy asked if Effingham has ride share. Effingham does not.

Samantha asked if **Nathan** could provide any information on CIPT services and if they'd be a good resource for this situation. **Nathan** stated CIPT does have a medical dispatcher who takes Medicaid for their on-demand response service. He stated the barrier to this is that many times these people need immediate transport. Demand response requires people to call and schedule the trip, which depends on available drivers. People needing transportation to treatment are often time-sensitive to catch them when they're ready. CIPT also has designated service times that may fall outside of the times when people need to be transported. **Nathan** stated CIPT will do whatever they can, but we really need an on-call person, which is what we're discussing.

Justin asked Nathan what the turnaround time is from the time someone makes an appointment and when it can be done on CIPT's end. **Nathan** stated it varies by county, if they're using insurance, and the time it takes insurance to get back to CIPT—usually a day or two, but it could be up to 3-4 days. This also depends on the driver's availability, so it just varies from one week to the next.

Tommy stated that another consideration of volunteer transport is to ensure the volunteer feels equipped and safe. So maybe a buddy system could be in place when transporting (having 2 people when transporting & same sex transporters). He also stated that having cameras in vehicles could help address this issue.

Merl stated he thinks local recovery meeting members would be willing to volunteer. Those meetings typically have sponsors who volunteer their time to help newcomers.

Subcommittee discussion

Samantha stated that there are A LOT of people here for this Council meeting, which is AWESOME. With that being said, there is just too much to cover in an hour with the amount of people attending (good problem to have, though)! **Felicia** stated we've been trying to fire up a subcommittee in the Edgewood/Mason area targeting family members of those affected with SUD. The next meeting for that subcommittee will be next week (August 25th @ 6:00pm) at the Mason Civic Center, in person only for now. This meeting may be changing soon, depending on a few things.

Samantha stated that ROSC will be forming subcommittees in relation to the priority projects & asked if any of these projects speak to attendees on a deeper level to get involved.

Brittney stated that as a ROSC Coordinator, we can only do so much because of our grant's red tape & the coordinator cannot make community change alone. They need their Council's help. Her Council does have subcommittees. They are tailored to different situations, and those who are in the subcommittees have delegated duties that are performed within the subcommittee to make progress on the Council's goals. They get together, sit around a table, and say, "This person needs this, who can help?" So, it's like needs are being met by one group that's focused a little more than being in one big Council meeting.

Connie stated she'd like to be part of the *family subcommittee* once it gets going. She stated she had no one to talk to in this area when she was going through her struggles with her son's addiction. People don't need to suffer alone.

Justin suggested making a Facebook group for family members affected by SUD. He said maybe this is something that could come of the family subcommittee. He stated that his neighborhood has a Facebook group where they give updates about what's happening in the neighborhood.

Samantha stated that a subcommittee could really blossom into anything. The beauty of ROSC is that there are very few "rules," so members can have creative ideas and execute them as they see fit. It comes down to having passionate people who are willing to take small action steps toward change.

Kat stated she's willing to be a part of *whatever subcommittee* is needed. She stated that during work hours would be preferred!

Nick stated he'd want to be a part of the *transportation committee*. He said he'd potentially have volunteers as well. He said Catholic Charities has a lot of clients who call for rides. He is unsure of the organization's stance on liabilities, though.

Landriah stated there is an Al-Anon Family group meeting every Tuesday night at 7pm at the Centenary Methodist Church in Effingham. That may be a good starting place for a family subcommittee.

Norbert asked if the family subcommittee would be only for PLEs (persons with lived experience). **Samantha** stated no. **Norbert** asked if it'd be like a support group for family members. **Samantha** stated no that the subcommittee would be figuring out ways to bring more resources to the area, which could be the creation of a family support group, but the committee itself is not the support group.

Samantha asked **Keith** for input on this since he works with families who oftentimes have substance use issues, which may result in neglect or abuse. He stated Safe Families for Children vets the families in which the child is being placed. They are volunteer families, usually through churches. He stated he'd be willing to be a part of the *transportation subcommittee* to help get people from point A to point B.

Samantha touched on the CPRS/CRSS positions subcommittee to see if anyone would be willing to be involved with this committee.

Tommy stated he is going through the CPRS/CRSS certification process, but he has hit some roadblocks for the classes he needs, since he completed all of the work hours and classes in FL. He stated the ICB requires a 16-hour ethics course and a 44-hour core function course that isn't

provided on its own. He stated that everything, as far as programs for this are looped together, and he doesn't want to go through all the same coursework again and pay for everything just to complete the 60 hours of coursework.

Carrie stated that SIUE has a really good program for this. She stated they're also firing up a free CRSS program soon. She has a contact she will email to Samantha.

Samantha stated she has reached out to Liesl Wingert at the SIU School of Medicine about this as well. TBD.

Samantha stated this subcommittee could figure out things like this—Tommy stated a barrier, and then the committee could figure out how to bridge this gap. Tommy also stated that obtaining this certification online is crucial. Samantha stated the committee could include university officials to help this process, as well as informing other members what is already offered at their schools and how to help other schools provide this certification program, etc.

Samantha stated that if anyone on the Council is passionate about peer-to-peer support work, then this is the subcommittee to be on!

Tommy stated he thinks it's one of the most important tools in our toolbox—lived experience is important for people to see who are currently going through rough times to see the hope and real-life people in front of them overcome similar situations that they're going through. Tommy stated he'd be willing to be a part of the *CPRS/CRSS subcommittee* as his time allows.

Samantha asked Casey if U of I has any resources for this specifically. **Casey** stated not at the U of I extension office specifically, but possibly on campus. She stated she will do some digging and get back with us.

Samantha asked if anyone on the Council knows anyone personally who does volunteer transportation in the county. She stated FISH Human Services does medical transport and is purely volunteer based. **Tommy** stated he toured the facility a week ago, and they have two vehicles for transport. **Justin** stated there are certain people to call for certain things—Karen, Suzan, and Amy S. The Council is unsure of who does what. **Samantha** will ask someone to make a call to FISH and find out.

Samantha stated she will email a Google Doc survey about the creation of the subcommittees to the Council so they can respond to see who's interested in which subcommittee.

Community Survey discussion

Samantha stated that our Community Survey will be launching soon. She has emailed the survey questions to the Council for edits or suggestions. She has received a handful of feedback, which she has incorporated into the survey. The first 10 questions are the questions the Council has come up with, and the last 10 are mandatory and must be unaltered via the state. Samantha read through the first 10 questions and asked for comments. No one had comments at this time.

Council member asked how many surveys we received responses for last year and how we distributed them. **Samantha** stated over 350 responses, and we provided paper copies, online

links to the Google Doc, and QR codes to the Google Doc. **Council** agreed that the QR code would be the easiest way for people to complete the survey.

Council member asked if there was an incentive for completing the survey. Samantha stated, no, not last year, but the floor is open for suggestions.

Council members discussed getting the survey sponsored by a local business, like Niemerg, to offer a free cookie if you complete the survey or enter in to win a prize from the company.

Justin & Casey stated they may know someone who would be willing to sponsor the survey.

Other comments:

Samantha asked for any other comments.

Sheriff Kuhns stated that if anyone knows somebody in need of Medication-Assisted Recovery (MAR), they should contact him. He oversees a MAR program in the jail and will cover the costs of someone's medications and counseling to get them started on the path of recovery. He stated they don't want anyone going without medication because they can't afford it. The only requirement is that they must be from Effingham County.

Upcoming events

- **3rd Annual Candlelight Vigil**
 - International Overdose Awareness Day
 - Sunday, August 31st @ 6:00pm @ Bliss Park, Effingham
- **September is RECOVERY MONTH!**
 - Bakery & Coffee shop purple drinks & treats
 - Joe Sippers, Fox Holler, Daylight Donuts, Human Bean, Dunkin Donuts, Panera Bread, Starbucks, Kirby Foods
 - Mortalia Tea, Loss to Addiction; Thursday, September 11th @ 6:00pm @ 110 E. Section Ave., Effingham, IL
 - S'MORE Recovery- Saturday, September 27th @ 5:00pm @ Edgewood American Legion Lake, Edgewood

Contact emails:

Effingham County ROSC Coordinator

Samantha Hicks—samanthah@hourhouserecovery.org

Effingham County ROSC Recovery Navigator, CPRS

Felicia Depoister—feliciad@hourhouserecovery.org

ROSC Program Supervisor

Jenna Hays- jennah@hourhouserecovery.org

Where to find past meeting minutes: <https://www.govst.edu/Recovery-Support/South-Central-IL-ROSC/EFCRC-ROSC-Council/>



Effingham County ROSC Facebook page



****NEXT EFFINGHAM ROSC COUNCIL MEETING****

Date: Monday, September 15th, 2025

Time: 1:00-2:00pm

Where: 104 E. Blohm Ave, Effingham & Zoom