



HLM Recovery Will County Monthly ROSC Council Meeting Minutes

Date: August 26th, 2025

Time: 11:00 AM-12:00 PM

Location: Hybrid (Recovery Community Center of Joliet)

Johanna from Guardian Angel Community Services discussed their domestic violence prevention and education programs. She highlighted the lack of Spanish-speaking support and the importance of community collaboration. Guardian Angel offers a 24-hour hotline, emergency shelter, crisis intervention, counseling, legal advocacy, and prevention education. They serve all genders and ages, focusing on breaking the cycle of generational violence. The program also includes transitional housing, sexual assault services, partner abuse intervention, and foster care. Johanna emphasized the need for early education on healthy relationships and the impact of domestic violence on children. The meeting concluded with introductions and a focus on community collaboration and faith-based support.

Action Items

- Provide information on the perpetrator intervention program, including whether it is voluntary or court mandated.
- Discuss with schools the possibility of distributing Guardian Angel's information to parents, potentially through events like back-to-school fairs or parent-teacher nights.
- Explore opportunities to work with children who have experienced domestic violence, such as through a coaching and mentoring program.

Introduction and Purpose of the Meeting

- Neesha Stringfellow welcomes everyone to the HLM Recovery ROSC monthly council meeting.
- Andre McCarroll opens the meeting with a prayer, thanking God for the work of recovery.

The purpose of this joint meeting between the Will County ROSC (Recovery-Oriented System of Care) and the Domestic Violence Program is to strengthen collaboration and build coordinated supports for the Spanish-speaking community in Will County.

- Introduction of Johanna Vargas

Guardian Angel Community Services Overview

- Johanna discusses the mission of Guardian Angel to empower people to improve their lives.
- She emphasizes the community impact of domestic violence, noting it extends beyond the home and affects resources.
- Johanna highlights the importance of coordinating services to support survivors of domestic violence.
- She outlines the various relationships protected by the Illinois Domestic Violence Act, including child abuse, intimate partner violence, and human trafficking.

Causes and Forms of Domestic Violence

- Johanna clarifies that alcoholism, drugs, and mental illnesses do not cause domestic violence but can exacerbate it.
- She explains that domestic violence is a choice to exert power and control over another person.
- Johanna lists different forms of domestic violence, including physical, emotional, psychological, financial, and digital abuse.
- She shares statistics on the prevalence of partner violence among young people and the importance of educating children about healthy relationships.

Guardian Angel Programs and Services

- Johanna details the services provided by Guardian Angel, including a 24-hour confidential hotline and emergency shelter.
- She explains the crisis intervention, safety planning, individual and group counseling, and legal advocacy services.
- Johanna mentions the domestic violence education program for survivors and the medical advocacy provided to victims.
- She highlights the prevention education and community presentations aimed at raising awareness about domestic violence.

Additional Programs and Community Engagement

- Johanna introduces other programs at Guardian Angel, such as Susie's Caring Place for transitional housing and the Sexual Assault Service Center.
- She discusses the Partner Abuse Intervention Program (PAIP) for perpetrators and the Exchange Club for preventing child abuse.
- Johanna mentions the foster care program, which includes licensing and counseling for foster parents, biological parents, and children.
- She encourages the community to utilize Guardian Angel's services and provides contact information for further assistance.

Q&A Session and Community Discussion

- Speaker 4 inquiries about the voluntary nature of the Partner Abuse Intervention Program (PAIP) and its cost.
- Johanna clarifies that while most participants are court-mandated, anyone can sign up voluntarily.

- Speaker 5 shares her experience as a certified alcohol and drug counselor, noting the high prevalence of domestic abuse among her clients.
- Johanna emphasizes the importance of addressing domestic violence in schools and the need for preventative measures.

Addressing the Needs of Children and Families

- Speaker 6 asks about programs for children living in homes with domestic violence.
- Johanna explains the coaching and mentoring program for children, which is currently available in three schools.
- Speaker 7 inquiries about the criteria for the emergency shelter, and Johanna confirms that it is open to all genders and ages.
- Johanna discusses the temporary nature of the shelter and the flexibility based on individual needs and circumstances.

Community Collaboration and Faith-Based Involvement

- Speaker 9 emphasizes the importance of community collaboration and the role of the Recovery Community Organization (RCO).
- Magdalena Campos introduces new participants and highlights the need for community input and support.
- Magdalena introduces Pastor Gamaliel from the Spanish community, who discusses the role of faith-based organizations in addressing substance use and mental health issues.
- The meeting concludes with a call to action for community members to participate in surveys and share their needs and experiences.

Attendees:

Sierra Piester	Andre McCarroll	Jacqueline Ramirez
Deb Boedeker	Johanna Vargas	Jessica Wimbley
T.J. Medema	Tarcia Leak	C. Robertson
Pastor Gamaliel Aguado	Heather Drew	J. Nabors
Kathleen Burke	Ben Rudolph	Elena Rivera
Connie DeWall	Danielle Heffernan	Celeste Fonseca
Guadalupe Salinas	Sarah Grunden	Sheila M.
Luz Aranda	Danny Sourbis	Jessica Wimbley
Katherine White	Aishwarya Baiakrishna	
Paula Ekstrom	Cheryl Habeeb	
Neesha Stringfellow	Deborah Beckmann	
Magdalena Campos	Allison Thomas	
Paul Hempel	Amanda Douglas	
Gabriel Garcia	Hannah Chapman	
Officer Green	Margie Ramirez	
Detective Hudley	Morgan Kremer	