

Lake County ROSC Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, October 25, 2025

Time: 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Meeting Type: Virtual

Topic: “*Compassion Without Judgment: Creating Inclusive Recovery Spaces in Faith-Based Organizations*”

ROSC Overview

A **Recovery Oriented System of Care (ROSC)** is a coordinated network of community-based services and supports that is person-centered and builds on the strengths and resilience of individuals, families, and communities. The goal is to support recovery and improve health, wellness, and quality of life for individuals with or at risk of substance use and/or co-occurring conditions.

The central focus of ROSC is to build an infrastructure — a *system of care* — that effectively addresses the full range of substance use and co-occurring disorders within the community.

Meeting Purpose

This meeting was held to strengthen relationships with the faith-based community by providing recovery-related education and resources to help faith organizations become recovery-focused, recovery-friendly, and equipped to embrace individuals in the process of change.

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Amanda Douglass, LC ROSC Coordinator, opened the meeting by reaffirming the council’s focus on building systems of care that provide resources to communities impacted by substance use, co-occurring disorders, and related challenges.

NIRCO–LC ROSC continues to create platforms for individuals with *Personal Life Experience (PLE)* to share, support, and strengthen their recovery journeys.

Presenter Introduction

Presenter: Associate Pastor Barbara Waller, First Baptist Church, Waukegan

Topic: “*Compassion Without Judgment: Creating Inclusive Recovery Spaces in Faith-Based Organizations*”

Amanda introduced Pastor Waller, acknowledging her impactful work and dedication to empowering the next generation through faith and recovery advocacy.

Presentation Summary

Amanda Douglass provided background on the intersection of faith and recovery, highlighting historical efforts from the 1800s addressing alcoholism and the evolution of the church recovery movement.

She shared insights on the **Recovery Church Movement**, including its origins in Florida, where individuals in recovery formed their own faith-based communities. This initiative focuses on training and coaching within recovery circles and encourages the development of “Recovery Certified” faith-based organizations, supported by the **TEECH Foundation** (Dr. Karen White).

Teech Foundation | Community Training Through Innovation

Key Points from Pastor Barbara Waller

- **Community Engagement & Compassion:**
Pastor Waller emphasized viewing substance use issues through a lens of compassion rather than judgment. Her goal is to foster education and understanding among health professionals, community leaders, and faith groups.
- **Church Mission:**
The **First Baptist Church of Waukegan**, established in 1950 and celebrating its 180th anniversary in 2026, has long been committed to supporting recovery in the community. Its mission is to “heal the world with the love of God.”
- **Inclusivity and Diversity:**
Pastor Waller shared her experiences working with diverse language and cultural groups, reinforcing the church’s commitment to inclusivity and understanding.
- **Challenges and Growth:**
 - Encouraging participation from individuals hesitant to engage due to stigma or fear.
 - Overcoming miscommunication and fear within the congregation by fostering open dialogue.
 - Adapting during COVID-19 to maintain connection while prioritizing health and safety.
- **Programs and Impact:**
The church expanded services to include child care, tutoring, and mentoring. Many children once served by these programs have grown into active community members. The church continues to host four recovery groups, with one reestablishing participation post-COVID.

Pastor Waller closed by emphasizing the importance of building trust, nurturing compassion, and creating spaces where all feel welcomed and safe to share their stories.

Discussion & Q&A

Q1 – Ms. Jenkins:

What kind of resistance have you encountered between faith and recovery within the church?

A1 – Pastor Waller:

Initial hesitancy often stemmed from fear and lack of shared understanding. However, as open conversations began, fear subsided, and trust developed. Engagement reduced segregation and strengthened unity within the community.

Community Updates & Announcements

- **Lesheena Jenkins:**
Shared that NIRCO and local faith-based organizations serve different areas of Lake County throughout the week. Recovery enrollment is held Tuesday nights at NIRCO.
- **Andrea Taylor:**
Announced a **November 6** collaboration with the Legacy Foundation focusing on driver's license reinstatement assistance.
- **Karina Alvarez:**
Introduced a new **health case management program** for individuals with opioid use disorders and encouraged partnerships for community outreach.
- **Andrew Tschida:**
Invited attendees to a **Substance Use Symposium** on **November 10, 11 a.m.–1 p.m.**, at the College of Lake County.
- **Debra Bobo:**
Shared an outreach story supporting a senior man experiencing homelessness and severe medical issues. The team continues to support his care journey.
- **Sharon Huiett:**
Reported that NIRCO has assessed **56 individuals** for financial risk-taking (gambling) and continues offering support.
- **Ryan:**
Is engaging with Lake County townships to raise awareness about SNAP and resource shortages; plans to set up community resource booths.
- **Dr. Muriel Adams:**
Invited collaboration with programs focused on community wisdom and development initiatives.
- **Marie Washington:**
Announced a **Music Therapy Workshop** beginning **November 7, 5–6 p.m.** (4-week series) at **202 S. Genesee**, focusing on songwriting, poetry, and musical expression.

- **Harold Stuckey:**
Shared an upcoming **podium discussion on substance use during pregnancy** on **December 19**.
 - **Ben Rudolph:**
Emphasized the goal of connecting individuals with the right resources to help them thrive.
 - **Bruce Johnson:**
Acknowledged the challenges ahead and emphasized the importance of collaboration and unity in community recovery efforts.
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Closing Remarks

Amanda Douglass thanked Pastor Waller for her inspiring presentation and all attendees for their ongoing dedication to recovery and community support.

Next Meeting:

 **Thursday, November 19, 2025**

 **10:30 a.m.**