



Lake County ROSC Meeting Minutes
Thursday, December 18, 2025
10:30 AM – 12:00 PM (Virtual Meeting)

Meeting Purpose

ROSC - A Recovery Oriented System of Care

A ROSC is a coordinated network of community-based services and supports person-centered and builds on the strengths and resilience of individuals, families, and communities to experience recovery and improved health, wellness, and quality of life for those with or at risk of substance use and/or co-occurring conditions. The central focus of a ROSC is to create an infrastructure, or “systems of care,” with the resources to effectively address the full range of substance use and/or co-occurring disorders within communities.

The purpose of this meeting is to further enhance the mission of the ROSC Council and to establish and maintain strong relationships with community and service providers. Lake County ROSC Council is a resource hub providing recovery-related education including harm reduction, medication-assisted recovery, referral, and linkage services. These resources are vital in assisting this community to become recovery-focused, friendly, and prepared to embrace those in the process of change.

Introduction of Presenter: Pastor Derrell Shepherd of Redeemers Bible Church.

Pastor Shepherd began by sharing Celebrate Recovery's mission, "Celebrate recovery exists to help people find freedom and healing from their hurts, hang-ups and habits through a relationship with Christ" and then his testimony, "I'm now living my best life". He said that he loves helping people and helping solve the problems in the hearts of others. Being a former intravenous drug user, being sent to prison four times, he knew he needed to make a change.

Pastor Shephard acknowledges work that Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous do in the lives of those that are seeking recovery, but that it was not a pathway that worked for him personally. After six years of attending NA meetings for six years and 'being clean', he still felt empty and had feelings of discontentment, he chose to make a total commitment to Jesus Christ. CR is the pathway that has proven to make a difference in his recovery. Celebrate Recovery is Christ-centered and is like the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. The 8 principles of recovery are based on the Beatitudes found in the Bible.

Pastor Shepherd has now over 33 years of living drug free, although he did choose to pick up use again after his first wife passed. He admitted that he simply lost the desire to go on and continue what God wanted. After living 26 years drug free, his first wife passed, and he admitted that he simply lost the desire to go and continue to do what God wanted. He now has over 33 years of living free. God brought him another godly wife, and they now serve as Pastors of Redeemers Bible Church.

Pastor Shephard works for the Lake County Health Department – Addictions Treatment Program (ATP) as a flex counselor. He was once a client in the same program.

Pastor Shepherd also has a street ministry that goes out to share the love of Christ in local parks and on streets heavily plagued with drug activity.

Barbara Young, facilitator of Celebrate Recovery Ministry at NIRCO in partnership with Jesus Name Church, Waukegan, Il 60085.

Barbara: “I am happy that SAMHSA has included Spirituality as part of the 8 dimensions of wellness. At every Celebrate Recovery meeting God has demonstrated His presence and faithfulness in the lives of the attendees. Because Celebrate is Christ-centered, attendees are free to share their faith. The comradery between the attendees is evident as they reach out and contact each other for encouragement.”

QUESTIONS, ANSWERS, AND FEEDBACK

Ben: “Do you have to be a Christian to attend?”

Pastor: “No, you do not. All are welcome.”

Jason stated with excitement, “This is my first introduction to Celebrate Recovery. “I was only aware of the traditional route of recovery”.

Marie W. Hall shared NIRCO reasoning for introducing Celebrate Recovery to the tri-city area. She expressed appreciation to Jesus Name Apostolic Church for allowing NIRCO to host this meeting.

Community Announcements

NIRCO’s shared upcoming events and meetings.

Recovery Education Series Grief and Recovery, December 16 and December 23, 2026.

Amanda opened the meeting allowing our LC ROSC members to share their upcoming events.

Debra Bobo (NICASA)- Shared the success of their Annual Christmas Giveaway.

Kentay Varnell (NICASA)- Not A Chance event, targeting teen gambling.

Daniel Killins (CLC)- shared that he would keep us abreast of the College of Lake County Black History events in 2026.

GROUP CHAT

Amanda asked if anyone had plans for 2026:

Pastor Shepherd- “Smitty Walks”, walks through neighborhoods seeking those in need of recovery assistance or prayer. Named in memory of his friend Greg Smith, from Waukegan’s Southside, who passed but was committed to helping the neighborhood.

Ben Rudolph- Shared that he was happy about the revamping of LC ROSC and encouraged LC ROSC to continue to grow.

LC ROSC and that in 2026 we will be connecting more with businesses and other sectors in Lake County to become better.

Have a Wonderful Holiday Seasons to all!

Next LC ROSC meeting: January 22, 2026.