

## Effingham County ROSC Council Meeting Minutes

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**Date:** Monday, April 20th, 2026

**Time:** 1:00-2:00 pm

**Location:** 104 Blohm Ave, Effingham & Zoom

**Meeting Facilitator:** Samantha Hicks

**Attendees:**

**In person:**

Beth Wise (ECHD, Family Connections & Family Resource Center Supervisor)

Justin Carter (IDHS Office Administrator, Olney location)

Norbert Soltwedel (Effingham County Board member)

Paul Kuhns (Effingham County Sheriff)

Samantha Hicks (Effingham County ROSC Council Coordinator)

Stephanie Jackson (HSHS Medical Group, APRN, MAR provider)

Stephanie Mercer (Effingham County ROSC Council Recovery Navigator)

**Zoom:**

Caleb Nehring (Aetna Community Outreach Coordinator)

Carrie McKinzie (Professional Relations Manager, Gateway Foundation)

David Alvarez (Technical Assistance Specialist, Opioid Learning and Response Collaborative, Prevention First)

Heather Curtis (Richland County Health Department, Richland County ROSC)

Heather Greenwood (Southeast Illinois Area Health Education Center at Wabash General Hospital, team lead for the Partners for Progress Deflection Initiative)

Keith Powell (Safe Families for Children)

Kelly Buscher (Effingham County Case Management, Effingham Public Library)

Regina McKinney (SAFE Director of Prevention)

## Minutes

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### **Introductions**

Council meeting attendees introduced themselves and the agencies they represent or explained why they were attending this meeting. Samantha explained the mission of the ROSC Council since there were new members at this meeting.

### **Committee Updates**

**Samantha H.** states that the Road to Recovery committee has passed along the risk and liabilities document along with the transportation waivers (volunteer and participant) to Hour House legal. She stated she is waiting to hear back from Hour House legal to make sure the documents are good to go.

**Stephanie J.** asked what the waivers entailed—**Samantha** pulled documents up and briefly went over them. Samantha stated she will email this whole document out to the Council.

**Stephanie J.** also stated it would be good if this could evolve to other recovery services such as MAR appointments, meetings, etc. **Samantha** stated this project could expand to those types of recovery activities as well. **Sheriff** stated his MAR program would have a need for that. **Heather C.** stated she is glad the topic of liability has come up because it's been the topic of discussion at their ROSC meetings in Richland County.

**Keith P.** stated the Healing Families committee is finding our niche. He stated we are making progress in identifying a more focused goal so it can be measurable, specific, and attainable. **Samantha** stated an Al-Anon member attended the last meeting to answer questions the committee came up with to ask. She stated she sent out the responses to these questions the Council last week. She stated Al-Anon family group is for the family member who is affected by alcoholism. She stated the program teaches the family member how to take care of themselves, rather than the person affected by SUD. She stated the Al-Anon member stated that oftentimes, the family member is addicted to the "addict." Al-Anon gives family members the tools to live and take care of themselves. **Samantha** asked that anyone on this call who works directly with families who experience SUD (e.g. grandparents raising grandchildren, a parent of a child who is using, etc.) to please consider joining the committee & to reach out to her to get the Zoom link & committee meeting dates/times.

### **Successes Discussion**

**Samantha** stated she emailed the Council to be thinking about successes in the last month or so that relate to our ROSC Council mission and vision. She asked if anyone had successes to share.

**Stephanie J.** stated after the MAR panel event in February, she received 5 new patients. She started with 3, and is up to 10-15 now. She stated she is passionate about MAR and is finding holes in the work, such as, what happens during relapse—how do we intervene? She stated relapse leaves a person feeling like they're starting from scratch and like they've lost all their resources. She stated she's received a lot of referrals from Mattoon and Charleston. **Norbert** asked if her referrals are coming from the ER. **Stephanie** stated no, that's something that needs to be worked on internally with HSHS. She stated she receives referrals from word-of-mouth mostly, treatment centers, Sheriff, and maybe a platform called provider connect. She states her caseload is mostly people with opioid use disorder, some are alcohol, and a couple are meth. She stated she likes to use the Sublocade injection because it eliminates the client relying on a supply of medication and the action of hand to mouth. She stated relying on medication at certain times of the day is also like when client would have been using substances—their lives revolved around when they would use substances. So, the monthly injection helps break that cycle. She stated Medicaid is really good about paying for MAR; private insurance is pretty do-able too, but Medicare is where the client has to pay close to \$400 up front.

**Stephanie M.** stated she had a local pastor reach out to her about a woman who is living with her daughter, a lot of legal issues, medical issues, and about to be evicted from their apartment. She had to get into a living situation within 3 days or she was going to be violating parole. Stephanie reached out to Tommy and was able to get the woman set up with an

interview with Oxford House in Mt. Vernon. She got her resources and is currently there and doing well.

**Samantha H.** stated she keeps a log of successes—she went over them:

A man that moved from TX to Newton reached out for a meeting list in the Olney area. She was able to reach out to Heather C. at the Richland Co. Health Department for a meeting list to pass along; there was an email that was forwarded out to several organizations about an unhoused 19-year-old. She gave the person the Effingham County Case Manager info, housing resource list, and ROSC resource guide. She also suggested Oxford House. Samantha followed up with the case workers and he stated “it sounds like he got what he needed.” Samantha stated oftentimes we don’t see the fruits of our labor in this line of work; A man on Clay Co Probation called for DUI hours and stated he’s been on the waiting list at Heartland for 5 months and was needing help getting in somewhere else that accepts Medicaid. Samantha referred him to Hour House. She followed up and he stated he has an assessment appointment that Monday scheduled. He stated “I finally feel like I’m getting some help.”; Someone reached out to get more information on Celebrate Recoveries. Samantha gave them the info for the Journey Church (currently the only CR in Effingham County), Crossroads, and Edgewood Full Gospel.

**Kelly** stated her and Maria got one of their clients in contact with Tommy to get into the Oxford House. She stated she also gave Samantha’s and Stephanie’s contact information to a lady from the First Presbyterian Church seeking help for her adult son.

**Heather G.** stated that Partners for Progress Deflection initiative has gotten a lot of officer led referrals which is great! She stated there is already a success story from the linkage.

**Tommy** stated as of today, there are 29 beds in recovery homes for men and women in Effingham County—something that did not exist at this time last year.

### **Other comments**

**Norbert** the Effingham County board has opioid settlement funds and is asking organizations to come forward to apply. He stated past recipients have been Hour House, the Health Department, and the Sheriff’s office.

**Sheriff** stated he is still looking for MAR candidates—the Sheriff’s office will pay for their treatment.

The topic of polysubstance came up in regards MAR treatment. It was stated that is unlikely someone is using only one substance and can be treated for opioid use disorder with MAR treatments. **Stephanie M.** stated meth is likely to be contaminated with another substance, such as fentanyl.

### **Upcoming events to attend**

**Samantha** asked for upcoming events the ROSC could attend.

**Caleb** stated that if anyone is having any events that they want Aetna to attend, sponsor, or support to reach out to him. He said he's scheduling out into June at this point. He mentioned a farmer's market pop-up that he does quarterly where they get to spend roughly \$500-700 on fresh produce to give away to promote nutrition. He stated his next one is with the Boys and Girls Club in Alton.

**Lauren** stated the Clay County round up is happening May 7<sup>th</sup> from 3-6pm at Charlie Brown Park and it is huge, probably 400-500 people attend.

**Beth** stated the Artisan Fair, Dietrich Parade, Beecher City Cornfest, 4<sup>th</sup> of July parades.

**Regina** stated May 3<sup>rd</sup> @ Christ Church in Effingham, there is education on online grooming and statistics event. SAFE has partnered up with the state's attorney's office and local detectives. They're expecting about 400 people. People are welcome to set up tables. SAFE is also having a fundraising event called Purses with Purpose at the Winery on May 7<sup>th</sup>.

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### Upcoming events

- **Recovery Roll Bowl: Tuesday, April 28<sup>th</sup>, 5-7pm; Silver Dollar Lanes in Effingham;** *participating agencies so far:*
  - Crisis Nursery
  - Family Resource Center & Effingham County Connections
  - Safe Families for Children
  - SAFE
  - Catholic Charities
  - CIPT
- **Tails & Trails: Friday, May 15<sup>th</sup> @ 9am; wanting mental health agencies & animals shelters to be a part of the event @ Ballard Nature Center, Altamont**
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual S.U.R.E. (Substance Use Resource & Education) Symposium: August 11<sup>th</sup>** from 9am-4pm @ Oil Belt Christian Service Camp, Flora
- **4<sup>th</sup> Annual Candlelight Vigil: August 31<sup>st</sup>, 6:30-8:00pm; Bliss Park, Effingham**
- **Invisible Victims: Drug-Endangered Children & Human Trafficking Training: September 24<sup>th</sup>** from 9am-12pm @ Clay County Health Department, Flora

### **\*\*NEXT ROSC COUNCIL MEETING\*\***

**Date: Monday, May 18th, 2025 @ 1:00-2:00PM**

**Where: 104 E. Blohm Ave, Effingham & Zoom**

**Contact emails:**

**ROSC Council Coordinator:** Samantha Hicks; [samanthah@hourhouserecovery.org](mailto:samanthah@hourhouserecovery.org)

**ROSC Council Recovery Navigator:** Stephanie Mercer; [stephanieme@hourhouserecovery.org](mailto:stephanieme@hourhouserecovery.org)

**ROSC Program Supervisor:** Jenna Hays; [jennah@hourhouserecovery.org](mailto: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 Council Facebook page

