

EDGAR COUNTY ROSC Council

MEETING MINUTES

June 23th, 2026

5:15 PM

Paris Hospital Conference Room A and on Zoom

Attendance in-person: Nicki Hanks, Jessica Parrill, Doug Cochran, Norm Wilson, Nate Alexander, Jacqui Miller, Bill Stidham, Lori Carroll, Lisa Foster, Scott Foster, Cindy Spencer, Cory Hanks, Mary Morgan Ryan, Mariah Witmer, Michelle Creech, Johnathon Burns

Attendance on Zoom: Marlyn Frey, Kyra Graham, James Sanders, Lexanna Strader,

Spot Light Speaker: HOPE of East Central Illinois

The Edgar County ROSC Council welcomed **HOPE of East Central Illinois** as the spotlight speaker for the June Council meeting. Representative Mariah Witmer provided an overview of the organization's mission to support individuals and families affected by domestic violence through housing, advocacy, education, and crisis intervention services.

The presentation highlighted the **Power and Control Wheel**, explaining the many forms of abuse beyond physical violence, including emotional abuse, intimidation, isolation, economic abuse, coercion, and the use of children or privilege to maintain control. Council members also reviewed common **relationship red flags and green flags**, emphasizing the importance of healthy boundaries, trust, respect, and supportive relationships while recognizing warning signs such as controlling behaviors, isolation, manipulation, and threats.

HOPE shared information about its **24-hour crisis hotline**, emergency domestic violence shelter, transitional housing program, legal advocacy services, counseling, children's programs, transportation assistance, community education, referrals, and volunteer opportunities. The shelter currently accommodates **24 individuals with plans to expand to 28 beds**, offers approximately **45-day emergency stays with case management**, and provides **transitional housing for up to two years**, including rent and utility assistance while participants work toward self-sufficiency.

Additional services discussed included support during court proceedings, assistance with filing Orders of Protection, domestic violence education classes, counseling services, and youth programming such as after-school and summer activities. The organization also partners with community agencies to provide education and prevention programming throughout the region.

Recovery Month Planning Updates

School Partnerships and Activities

Mary shared exciting news that local school principals have agreed to participate in National Recovery Month by sending home a Recovery Month Fact Sheet and completing at least one recovery-focused activity within their schools. Planned activities include Vision Board projects, Chalk the Walk, Recovery Month Bulletin Boards, and Wear Purple for Recovery Day. The Family Recovery Month Fact Sheet will provide information on Recovery Month, youth protective factors, mental wellness, substance use prevention, local resources, and ways families can support healthy choices. These activities are designed to promote hope, resilience, wellness, and healthy decision-making while creating a positive and supportive school environment. Nicki expressed her sincere appreciation to Mary and the school districts for embracing this opportunity to promote recovery awareness and support students and families throughout the community.

Recovery Picnic & Wellness Walk

Nicki and Michelle provided an update on planning for the annual Recovery Picnic & Wellness Walk. The committee has selected a taco bar for the meal, with Edgar County ROSC Council providing plates, cups, and napkins. The popular tie-dye activity will return this year with supplies purchased for 50 tote bags and children's handkerchiefs. Megan Erwin and Michelle Creech have volunteered to share their recovery stories, and the committee is currently seeking a male speaker to participate in the testimony portion of the program. Scott Harrison and Gypsy Soul Revival have once again agreed to provide live music, helping create a fun and welcoming atmosphere that celebrates recovery, hope, and community. Community organizations and partners are invited to host informational tables during the event to connect with attendees and share available resources. The committee will continue securing donations, finalizing activities, and gathering supplies to ensure another successful Recovery Picnic and Wellness Walk.

Partnership with Local Tattoo Shop

The ROSC Council announced an exciting partnership with Loco Estilo Ink Tattoo Shop for a Recovery Flash Tattoo Event during National Recovery Month. Edgar County ROSC Council will host a resource table at the event, offering information on recovery support services, harm reduction, mental wellness, and other community resources. Loco Estilo Ink has generously committed to donating a percentage of the event proceeds to support Edgar County Laundry Days, helping provide free laundry services and essential resources to individuals and families throughout the community.

Recovery Hike Event

Nicki shared that planning is underway for the Recovery Hike, scheduled for **September 26, 2026, at Fox Ridge State Park**, with the event time still to be determined. Additional details will be announced once committee members and partners return from vacation and planning discussions are finalized.

FY26 Impact Report and Council successes

Nicki presented the Edgar County ROSC Council FY26 Impact Report, highlighting the significant progress made through collaboration, community engagement, and recovery-focused initiatives throughout the year. The ROS Council continued to advance its three priority projects:

development of a Hospital-Based Warm Hand-Off Program, strengthening Second Chance Employment opportunities, and expanding access to harm reduction resources and education.

Over the past year, the Council distributed **30 harm reduction kits** throughout the community and partnered with local EMS to provide **50 overdose prevention health and hygiene bags**. Initial planning meetings with Horizon Health were held to support the implementation of a Hospital-Based Warm Hand-Off Program, while recovery-focused outreach remained a priority through **15 community events** designed to reduce stigma and promote hope.

Harm reduction efforts continued to grow with the distribution of **1,058 boxes of Narcan through nine local DOPP sites**, the establishment of **three new DOPP locations**, and the delivery of **six community Narcan trainings**.

The Council also strengthened economic recovery efforts by hosting a **Second Chance Hiring Fair**, which welcomed **43 job seekers**, and launched a week-long social media campaign featuring real community stories that generated **more than 400 local engagements**. In partnership with Land of Lincoln Legal Aid, the Council hosted a **sealing and expungement clinic** attended by **20 individuals**, with **11 qualifying to move forward** with the process. The Council also hosted **12 Free Laundry Days**, completing **731 wash cycles and 783 dry cycles**, providing essential services to **222 community members**.

Additional accomplishments included establishing committees for each priority project, partnering with community organizations to host a resume-building workshop, assisting local law enforcement with **Drug Take Back Day**, resulting in the safe disposal of **175 pounds of unused medications**, and continuing weekly public educational groups led by the ROSC Council Recovery Navigator to reduce stigma and increase awareness of recovery resources.

Priority Project Updates

Hospital-Based Warm Hand-Off Program:

Nicki provided an update on the Hospital-Based Warm Hand-Off Program, sharing that productive meetings have been held with Horizon Health, the Living Room Program, and Hour House. As a result of these discussions, a dedicated committee will be formed to develop action steps and explore sustainable strategies for implementing a Warm Hand-Off Program in Edgar County. The committee will focus on strengthening partnerships, defining referral pathways, and creating a long-term model that connects individuals to treatment and recovery support services.

Second Chance Employment Initiative:

Nicki reported that the committee has decided to take a different approach to advancing Second Chance Employment efforts. Rather than immediately creating a Second Chance Employment flyer, she recently met with the Chamber of Commerce to discuss hosting a roundtable conversation with local employers. The goal is to engage additional businesses in discussions about fair chance hiring practices, reduce employment barriers for individuals in recovery, and build stronger community partnerships. The committee is excited about the potential of this collaboration and looks forward to its continued development.

Harm Reduction Expansion:

Nicki shared an update on the Harm Reduction Expansion project, noting that only three community members attended the recent community-wide Narcan training. While attendance was lower than anticipated, she emphasized the importance of continuing education and outreach efforts to increase awareness of harm reduction strategies, reduce stigma, and ensure community members have access to lifesaving resources and information.

Agency Updates

HRC (Johnathon Burns)

HRC shared updates on several upcoming programs and events, including the **Community Wellness Walk & Recovery Picnic on September 12, 2026**, in partnership with the Edgar County ROSC Council. The organization also highlighted its **Feelings Island Summer Camp** for youth receiving mental health services and announced the launch of **Respite Services on July 1** to support family caregivers. The **Living Room Program** has expanded hours to **Monday–Friday, 8:00 AM–7:00 PM**, increasing access to walk-in mental health and recovery support. Additional updates included the upcoming **Bingo for a Better Life** fundraiser, a new **Invitation to Change** support group, and expanded treatment groups serving individuals with mental health and substance use needs.

CARE (Lisa Foster)

Lisa shared that she, along with Angie Hamilton and Scott, attended the recent City Council meeting where the ordinance banning **7-OH (7-hydroxymitragynine) and kratom products** was approved. She noted that this action is a positive step toward protecting community health and increasing awareness of the risks associated with these substances.

Neighborhood Watch (Scott Foster)

A Neighborhood Watch update was provided, noting that there is nothing new to report at this time. The organization welcomed **38 new members** to its Facebook page, bringing the total online community to **3,100 members**, demonstrating continued growth and community engagement.

Narcotics Anonymous (Jaqui Miller)

Jaqui shared that **Narcotics Anonymous (NA)** continues to thrive in Edgar County. The **Friday evening meeting at 6:00 p.m. at First Baptist Church** consistently welcomes **15–18 attendees**, while the **Saturday book study** averages **11 participants**, reflecting continued growth and strong community support for individuals in recovery.

Celebrate Recovery (Cory Hanks)

Cory shared that the group has completed **Lesson 25**, concluding the current cycle of the program. The group will begin again with **Lesson 1 on July 1**, making it an excellent opportunity for new participants to join and experience the program from the beginning.

Doorway to Hope (Nate Alexander)

Doorway to Hope shared plans for its upcoming **Hope in Action Community Work Day**, inviting community members, churches, and local businesses to volunteer in beautifying and restoring the shelter. Volunteers will assist with landscaping, exterior cleanup, painting, pressure washing, and minor repairs. The organization welcomes both individuals and groups, with registration encouraged to help coordinate supplies and refreshments. Doorway to Hope expressed appreciation for the community's continued support in creating a safe and welcoming environment for those they serve.

Community Updates (Nicki Hanks)

Nicki shared that the new Edgar County ROSC Council office at **504 East Jasper Street** is coming together beautifully thanks to the generous donation of space by Doorway to Hope. She thanked **Bill Stidham** for helping furnish the office and making it a welcoming space.

The office will officially open on **July 1, 2026**, with **Open Office Hours every Thursday from 1:00–3:00 PM**. Nicki shared her excitement about this new opportunity to connect with community members and provide recovery resources and support.

Next Meeting: July 22th, 2026, 5:15 – 6:15 PM at Paris Hospital Conference Room A/Zoom.

Second Chance Employment Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: June 10, 2026

Time: 2:00–3:00 PM

Location: 502 Jasper Street, Paris, IL

Attendees: Nicki Hanks, Jessica Parrill, Lori Carroll, Andy Brandenburg

Welcome & Introductions

Nicki Hanks welcomed attendees and reviewed the purpose of the Second Chance Employment Committee. The committee discussed its ongoing efforts to increase employment opportunities for individuals in recovery and those impacted by justice involvement, while continuing to strengthen relationships with local employers and community partners.

Job Fair Recap

The committee reviewed the recent Second Chance Hiring Event and discussed overall attendance, participation, and feedback. Members agreed the event was successful and highlighted the positive partnerships that helped make it possible. Transportation was provided for seven individuals, which helped increase accessibility and attendance. The committee also discussed lessons learned and opportunities to strengthen future events.

What Went Well

Committee members shared that employer participation, community collaboration, and participant engagement were strengths of the event. The overall setup and organization were well received, and the event provided valuable connections between employers, service providers, and job seekers. Members also noted that the event helped raise awareness of second-chance employment opportunities within the community.

Areas for Improvement

The committee discussed several opportunities for improvement for future events. Members suggested increasing promotion and outreach efforts earlier in the planning process and potentially moving the event to March 2027. Alternative locations were discussed, as well as adjusting the event schedule to approximately 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and shortening the overall event duration. The committee also discussed securing tables, chairs, and other logistical needs earlier in the planning process.

Employer Engagement Discussion

The committee explored ways to increase employer participation and strengthen employer engagement efforts. Members discussed partnering with the Chamber of Commerce to distribute outreach letters and educational materials. The possibility of hosting a manufacturing employer roundtable was also discussed as a way to build relationships and better understand workforce needs. Nicki Hanks will reach out to PEDCO to explore additional partnership opportunities.

Employment Outcomes Follow-Up

The committee discussed the importance of tracking employment outcomes resulting from the job fair. Members agreed to continue following up with participating employers and attendees to determine whether any individuals secured employment opportunities. The committee will also continue collecting success stories and outcome data to help measure the impact of future events.

Second Chance Employer Resource Flyer

The committee collectively agreed to postpone the development of the Second Chance Employer Resource Flyer at this time. This decision was made to allow Nicki the opportunity to connect with the local Chamber of Commerce and explore a potential partnership. The goal is to organize a roundtable discussion with local employers to strengthen relationships, gather feedback, and better understand employer needs and perspectives regarding second chance hiring. Information and insights gained from these discussions will help ensure the resource flyer is meaningful, relevant, and beneficial to both employers and job seekers.

Other Business

Additional discussion focused on reducing stigma in employment-related messaging and ensuring that future event materials use person-centered, recovery-friendly language. Members agreed to review the language used in future promotional materials and event titles to ensure they are welcoming and inclusive. The committee also discussed scheduling a meeting with workforce development representatives and human resource professionals to explore additional collaboration opportunities.

Adjournment

The meeting concluded with a review of action items and next steps. Committee members will begin employer outreach efforts, continue gathering employment outcome data, and work on developing the Second Chance Employer Resource Flyer before the next meeting.

Next Meeting: July 8, 2026, from 2:00–3:00 p.m. at 502 E Jasper Street, Paris, Illinois