

Sangamon County R.O.S.C.

Monthly R.O.S.C Council Meeting

January 23, 2024 9:00am-10:00am

Zoom Meeting, Family Guidance Center

Meeting Minutes

Chair: Fran Ingram

Co-Chair: Kourtney Renfro

Recorder: Kourtney Renfro

Stakeholders and Community Members in Attendance:

Fran Ingram-ROSC
Julie Pohlman-ROSC Region 4 TA
Kourtney Renfro-ROSC
Whitney Devine-ROSC
Calvin Miller-Pastor BYO Church
Joan Stevens-Thome-IDPH
Julie Benson-Nonprofit "Helping the Homeless in Springfield"
Elizabeth Raleigh-SIU
Hank Boehme-ROSC
Kathy Batte-Freeman-UIS
Josh Sabo-Heartland Continuum of Care
Michael Thomas-Express Personnel
Quonie Barney-Faith Coalition of the Common Good
Valerie Gueto-
Jamie Riedle-Heartland Continuum of Care

Meeting Called to Order: Fran Ingram called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

Today's meeting was our first hybrid meeting held at the Salvation Army at 1600 Clearlake in Springfield, Illinois. Our guest speaker was Julie Benson that has a nonprofit here in Springfield, Illinois called "Helping the Homeless in Springfield."

We started the meeting by Julie Benson introducing herself and explaining details about her nonprofit. Julie stated that this year is her 8th anniversary. She accepts donations for everything from sleeping bags, hats, gloves, blankets, hygiene products, etc. She reported her greatest need is hygiene products for women. When out assisting the unhoused she dresses casually wearing logo attire about her nonprofit, which includes her phone number. She stated the unhoused remembers her phone number. She takes calls 7 days a week at all hours of the day. She has gotten calls from the jail, and from others that are in a crisis. Through her donations she has been able to get hotels for those that are in need of shelter due to bad weather and the shelters being full. She is also a payee for 20 clients that are on SSDI. Making sure that the rent and utilities are paid, and transfers money to their debit cards. She will not give clients cash but will give gift cards, vouchers for food, and bus passes for transportation. She has provided transportation for persons to go back home via train or bus. She does do investigative work before providing funds to go back home to connect with family. She is a small agency so she needs to budget wisely. She does not get state funded money, it is all donated. Julie sees herself as a volunteer and encourages people to get help with professionals, and the shelters. Services offered at the shelters provide showers, laundry, hygiene and meals but they also have connections with caseworkers to get their needs met.

She also has a small business of sober living homes. As a private contractor she collects rent, pay utilities, provides free Wi-Fi, and laundry facilities at the homes. She brings in donated food from various restaurants and community agencies. She runs her homes on a non-conventional basis. She does not require mandatory meetings or drug testing. That means there is limited funding but prefers it that way. She stated that her residents are all individual people, she will drug test and evict as needed for the safety of the home. She reminds the clients that it is a sober living house, not a hotel. She currently has 19 people in her homes with no empty beds. She has some that has been with her for quite some time. Leases renew every 30 days. Her residents are comfortable. Some garden and another decorates the porch at Christmas.

Outreach Subcommittee: The Outreach Committee has been going to the Washington Street Mission Shelter to provide individuals resources and recovery options. The MAR van is there on Monday mornings. One of the committee members provided free haircuts at the mission. The committee has been working on accomplishing goals for the strategic plan. Committee

members have been working on pursuing resources for the urban, veteran, and family members for those with substance use challenges. Outreach has been actively working with Family Guidance Center residents that are on recovery. They have provided transportation to get state identification (ID), birth certificates, and social security cards all of which are needed when seeking employment. Transportation has also included doctor, dental, and eye appointments just to name a few. Their efforts are recognized and appreciated.

Recovery in Action Subcommittee: The committee hosted a game night in January at Stella's Café. The ones that participated said they had a good time. The movie night is fast approaching. It is scheduled for February 9th at BYO church located at 2450 Taylor Ave in Springfield, IL. The "Anonymous People" is the featured film. The doors will open at 5:30 pm and the movie will start at 6:00 pm. There is free admission to the movie with hotdogs, popcorn, and drinks provided. The skating event has been planned for March 17th at Skateland South located at 1500 Knights Recreation Drive in Springfield, IL. This is a free family event with admission, skate rental, pizza, and drink all provided. For those that will not be skating, table games will be available. The event will be from 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm.

Interfaith in Action Subcommittee: The spokesperson for the Interfaith in Action committee was not available for the meeting. There was no Interfaith in Action meeting this month.

Other Business:

Calvin Miller the Pastor of BYO church shared there is a church service "Acts 29" that has been started at the Washington Street Mission on Monday nights at 5:30 pm. There is food served and clothing give away during that time as well. There is a church service and breakfast provided at the Mission on Saturday mornings at 8:00 am. He mentioned that the Mission is also in need of women hygiene products and under garments. All donations are welcome. The Washington Street Mission is located at 408 N. 4th Street in Springfield, IL.

He shared how we need to continue to be catalysis of rainbows to those who are seeking to get off the streets. Some are really comfortable on the streets but others really want a change. They need to be trained in a trade, or something that they can get off of the street and out of shelters. He is looking into transitional housing to train those that are interested. Training would consist of teaching trades, how to cook, and how to take care of themselves. He stated, "All of this is in the works but it takes people and places.

Presently there is work being done to get funding for the Recovery Café Community (RCO). The application is ready and the budget has been prepared. In the meantime we are working on

fund raising activities to try and raise money for the RCO. The Art Contest flyer (attached) and application has been generated. The flyer and application will be available at the movie as a start. Flyer has been sent to print at the printing company. Flyers and applications will be available at Family Guidance Center, or can be mailed/emailed to the participants. Volunteers are needed to support this endeavor.

New Business: Committee members were asked if they had any new business or needs that fulfilled in within their agencies. All declined.

We will be going over the strategic plan and the membership protocols, to amend or approve at the next council meeting. I will also include on the agenda, a few questions for the council to look over for a discussion on how we can make our council stronger.

Adjournment: All participants were thanked for attending the meeting. Meeting was adjourned at 10:00 am.

Next meeting: February 27, 2024 at 9:00 am, will be hybrid at the Salvation Army at 1600 Clearlake Ave in Springfield, IL.