

EDGAR COUNTY ROSC MEETING MINUTES

March 26, 2024

5:15 PM

Paris Hospital Conference Room A and Zoom

Attendees: Nicki Hanks, Ambrosia Branson, Samantha McCarty, Michael Step, Kristina Drum, Amanda Thompson, Sue Sheeran, Bethany Waggoner, Doug Cochran, Vicky Dick, Keith Myers, Jonathan Burns, Norm Wilson, Michelle Creech, Lisa Foster, Cory Hanks, Lexanna Kocher, Connor Dotson, Scott Foster, Janice Watson, Camille Gordon, Phillip Dobelstein, Michelle Hibbard, Julie Pohlman, Jenna Hays, Lugene Joines, Susan Essinger, Rick Cook, Dr. Marilyn Frey, Kyra Graham, Zach George, and Bo Scott

Spotlight Agency/Program (CEFS):

We had some technical difficulties with the zoom link, so Amanda will be back at a future ROSC council meeting!

Oxford House Update:

Zach George gave us an update/follow-up from our last conversation at the ROSC council meeting. He stated that he had researched the viability of an Oxford House in Edgar County, specifically Paris, due to the community buy-in. He said there are some things he needs to start working on on his end, including setting up meetings with some of us outside of the ROSC meeting. He said he would be reaching out in the next couple of weeks and making some trips to Paris.

Jonathan mentioned that some questions have come up in outside agency meetings that he wanted to bring up to Zach. First, how does an Oxford House decide who gets to be in the house? Zach stated that they run off of referrals, whether that be treatment agencies, recovery supports in the community, or Drug Court programs. Each person who wants to live in the house has to go through an interview with the members of the home. When a home is first put up in a community, Zach or one of his staff will conduct the interview. He said the interview is a list of 23 questions they ask to get to know someone. He said that they interview for willingness. Generally, that is the key to success, Zach notes. He said that people who come from that perspective of being willing tend to do really well in the home. Jonathan asked if drug testing is a part of the structure of Oxford House. Zach stated that it is not a part of their core model but can be used as a behavioral tool. Jonathan states that he wants community members to feel comfortable with a change that is happening and wants to make it successful.

Jonathan also brought up some concerns/questions that he had heard from community members. One is that an Oxford House can be like a homeless shelter, which is not the case. Oxford House is for people who identify as having a substance use disorder and want to address it. Jonathan

said another question in another meeting was the turnaround time for someone after a relapse. So, if someone gets kicked out of an Oxford House for relapsing, do they get kicked out? Is there time they have to take away from being out of the house? Zach states that in the Oxford House manual, if there is a return to use, an expulsion is immediate, but members work on getting that person back into treatment and connecting them with the resources they may need. After 30 days, they can re-interview and let people back in before the 30 days on a case-by-case basis.

Sue asked about the resources needed to establish a home, whether they are drawn from the community or if Oxford stepped in and owned the property or resources. Zach said that they have landlords that rent them the homes. He said it depends on the community; some communities have people who step in and believe in the mission, and they want to partner with Oxford House. He said they have people they work with statewide who purchase and rent the home to Oxford House. He also said Oxford House would apply for a start-up loan through the chartering system that allows them to pay for start-up costs like furniture and house supplies. He said that it is still appreciated, though, to work with the community members for donations of these items, too. Jonathan said it sounded like we could have community investors to make things happen quicker. He said he has had some supporters approach him, saying there is financial support. Jonathan asked Zach if he knew the financial support needed to get a home. Zach said that he looked a little at some of the houses in the community on his prior visit to Paris. He said that he thinks it will be easy to secure a single-family home in our community and that we have the buy-in in Paris.

Michelle asked what rent consisted of in the home (rent, utilities, groceries, etc). Zach said that they figure it up as equal expenses shared, which is what it is called for each member in the house. Rent for the home, utilities, wifi, and basic household supplies are all figured into each member's weekly costs. Once a week, they have a house meeting where they talk about the personal and fiscal operations of the home, part of the responsibility that comes with living in an Oxford House. Each house has its checking account and checkbook. They put their shares of the equal expenses into the checking account and vote each week on paying the bills. Nobody outside of the home or outside of the landlord makes money off of the funds each person pays to live there. Zach said that he connects potential new landlords with current landlords. That way, they know the process and have a standardized lease that Oxford House draws up and has processes in place. Jonathan asked Zach if it would be beneficial or what the next steps would be for us as a group to identify potential landlords for the Oxford House. Zach said yes, that would be a great start, and he plans to spend some time in Edgar County in the near future building relationships with us.

Subcommittee Meeting Update:

Ambrosia stated that our subcommittee meets on the 3rd Monday of every month at noon via Zoom. She noted that we met on the 4th Monday of this month due to Ambrosia being sick the previous week. In our March meeting, we discussed the need for education in the community regarding different topics related to substance use disorder, which was noted by audience members at the panel event we had in February. From this, in the meeting, we discussed potential presentations, trainings, events, and a PLE panel that we want to have to provide education to the community. Ambrosia said that once the subcommittee gets the logistics of each

educational event, we will share it with the rest of the council. She also encouraged everyone to join the meeting and help plan ROSC items!

Ambrosia also mentioned that we also talked about creating a harm reduction toolkit. This will look like a book or folder of flyers containing information on what harm reduction is, what harm reduction resources or services we have here in Edgar County, and what other resources are out there. We also plan to share the flyers on social media and in the newspaper. The reasoning behind this toolkit is because, at the panel, it was brought up that someone knew about harm reduction but did not know what we had in Edgar County.

FY 24 and FY 25 Events:

Ambrosia said that in the rest of the subcommittee meeting, they discussed upcoming events for the rest of FY 24 and that it would blend into our following discussion topics. Ambrosia stated that our FY runs from July 1 to the end of June, so the end of our FY 24 will be June 30th, 2024, and FY 25 will start July 1st, 2024.

Ambrosia stated they have one or two events in the works for April. She said the ROSC is partnering with Kansas Schools to host a Hidden in Plain Sight event at a series of their baseball games. On April 27th at 9 AM, we plan to start the Hidden in Plain Sight, where we will stage the teen's bedroom inside of a 10x10 foot closed tent and hide items that drugs or paraphernalia could be hidden in. We then provide education to parents and caregivers on how to talk with teens if they find drugs or paraphernalia hidden in their room. The HIPS event will also be held at the baseball diamond in Kansas at the school! We are still looking for volunteers for the day! Ambrosia stated that we will be drawing for a gift card for people who come through the Hidden in Plain Sight. We plan to do another hip at Shiloh School at the beginning of the next school year.

Ambrosia also mentioned that we have been discussing our next Free Laundry Day with many individuals. She said we are potentially looking at April 18th, we are waiting to hear back from our sponsor. Nate and Nicki were able to transport five people, and we were busy the whole time. Ambrosia noted that they have been getting busier with people on our laundry days. Still, we also have been very diligent with keeping track of the number of people we are helping, how many washes and dryes we are doing, how many deterra pouches and boxes of Narcan we are giving out, etc. We have also been having more conversations with people on laundry days about what needs they have or see in the community to understand better the resources needed. Because of these factors, we request more volunteers for future Laundry Days. Ambrosia highlights how wonderful our current volunteers and partners, HRC, PLEs, and ROSC council members, are, but we need more! If anyone wants to volunteer, just let Ambrosia or Nicki know. We also still need to line up a sponsor for our Laundry Day after April, so we are still looking for future sponsors. Ambrosia also mentioned that in terms of sponsorship, we don't ever ask for a certain amount; we just let potential donors know how much it has been costing us on previous laundry days. We have used anywhere between \$500 and \$600 in the last several quarters. Lisa asked if we were still okay with supplies. Nicki said we are stocked on laundry soap, dryer sheets, and other supplies.

Ambrosia stated that we want to host a Recovery Window Painting Event or Project in May. She mentioned that she and Nicki went to the city council meeting in Paris last night to ask if we needed the city's permission to do this project. They stated that we would need to ask local businesses for permission to paint the windows of the building. Ambrosia said that we want this project to look like we are partnering with local organizations to paint recovery affirmations or positive recovery phrases on their windows. She said that this will show people in our community that many businesses and organizations support people in recovery and their families. Ambrosia said that we want to use this project to break down that stigma and show support for recovery in the community. She then asked council members to please let us know of any organization or business that would like their windows painted and to connect them with us. She also stated that if anyone would like to volunteer their time to paint the windows with us, we would love that! We are also getting stencils to help us out. Ambrosia said that we have talked about partnering with CARE on this project, and they have suggested reaching out to the schools and their art clubs to get the kiddos involved in the project. Nicki also has some PLEs that are wanting to come and help. Ambrosia asked the council for suggestions on people to reach out to.

The council suggested these organizations:

Prairie Press, First Mid, Library, Pearmans, HRC, D21 Designs, Restored Hope, Clothing Ministry, Ministerial Alliance, Frosted by Maddie, Tech Doc, Rides Mass Transit

Rick asked what dates we were thinking of for the painting. Ambrosia mentioned that we want to do the painting sometime in the first three weeks of May when the time will work for that organization and the painters! Rick said he would take that information to the ministerial alliance and see if any churches are interested! Michelle said to hit those local businesses that do not have to go through corporate. Ambrosia thanked council members for their input and suggestions and for getting us an outreach list.

Brainstorming Session:

Ambrosia stated that ROSC is a grant-funded program, and our NOFO will be coming out soon so we can reapply for the grant. She said we want to understand better what our council wants to do in the future, what accomplishments we can note, etc. She stated that we have some questions we want to ask and get feedback on to help us determine the path for the Edgar County ROSC in the future.

What does our ROSC council do well?

Accomplishments, achievements, etc.

- Unified Edgar County around a topic that is often difficult
- Gotten into places to talk with people who have not been receptive in the past
- Community involvement: look at the people in this room!
- Human Trafficking Training- really gotten out of our comfort zone by expanding education in other realms
- Supporting the Recovery Court program
- Brought up Safe Passage to law enforcement
- Brought a lot of awareness, kicked the door open, and made it commonplace conversation
- Have our state's attorney here!
- Bringing together our community of caring people

Ambrosia noted to council members that this is the Edgar County ROSC council, and none of these efforts and accomplishments would have been possible without the support and drive of council members, and we appreciate each of you!

What resources do we currently have that are well utilized? Examples of SUD and recovery resources are food, housing, etc.

- Free Laundry Day
- HRC and the Living Room Program
- Lake Ridge Christian Church (assistance with transportation, connecting people with resources)
- Paris Ministerial Alliance (hotel vouchers, food vouchers, etc)
- Food pantries
- Hopes and Dreams
- Clothing ministry
- New Beginnings Church
- Seeing our recovery support groups growing

Ambrosia noted to council members that, as ROSC, we do not provide a direct service; we connect people to the resources or services they may need.

What are we missing as a ROSC, and what more can we do?

- Continue to address the housing problem
- Transportation aspect
- Fundraising for a van for HRC to provide the transportation (as they can provide the person for transportation through some of their grants)
- Connecting potential landlords with Oxford House

Council members discussed the potential of using Mass Transit to address the transportation problem. Michelle noted that on April 1st, they will be cutting down their hours as they do not have enough drivers. Scott mentioned that they used to have 12 drivers who covered Edgar and Clark Counties, but they are now down to 6 drivers for both counties.

What is the stigma or misconceptions about SUD and recovery that is affecting our efforts in the community?

- The addiction is a choice and not a disease
- Even though someone is in recovery, they are still considered an addict or less than
- Harm reduction: people still think you are enabling someone to use or encouraging them

Agency Updates:

ECPHD: Lexanna stated that the Celebrate Communities Event is on May 6th from 4-7 PM at Step Station. It is for the whole community, still with a focus on women, infants, and children. Will have lots of educational booths, prizes, refreshments. Still working on planning the event, and please help in promoting the event!

Neighborhood Watch: Scott said that him and Doug are headed to the meeting in Hume at 7 PM this evening. He also said that they have about 2700 people on their social media page. They are still encouraging people to register their cameras with the sheriff's department.

HRC: Michelle stated that they are big on conducting presentations in the community, especially right now. Their IPS employment program allows for them to follow people in their services through their job and the application and hiring process. Michelle is going to be conducting a YMHFA course here on May 17th, it is a blended session with a free lunch.

CARE: Drug Take Back Day is on April 19th at Prospect Bank. CARE will have the incinerator there and will be taking back prescription medications.

Human Trafficking Training: Doug stated that he was able to go and provide a Human trafficking training for the Macoupin/Montgomery County ROSC and their law enforcement on Monday. Doug said they had a ton of questions and answers. He said that if any other ROSC council are interested, to give them Doug's name!

Next Meeting: April 23, 2024, 5:15 PM at Paris Hospital Conference Room A and Zoom

Subcommittee Meeting

March 25, 2024

Attendees: Lexanna Kocher, Nicki Hanks, Connor Dotson, Lisa Foster, Jeannie Combs, Michelle Hibbard, Natasha Freeman

- Educational Session
 - The Science Behind Addiction
 - Michelle said she has been requesting it as she has had other requests for this topic
 - Michelle said that she has a powerpoint with this information
 - Guest speakers- Jeannie mentioned
 - Michelle said that PLE or people with experience speaking
 - Putting a face to people in recovery
 - Nicki- PLE panel
 - Topic for panel?
 - How they got help or what point they decided to get help
 - Challenges, struggles, who helped them, multiple pathways
 - Lisa- explain where they turn to
 - Resources they used to find the help they needed
 - Nicki- someone from every different pathway
 - Talk Dr Frey about putting something together for us
 - If you know someone is struggling, how to start an intervention or talk to them
 - Recognizing SUD behaviors and starting those conversations
 - Lisa mentioned the intervention aspect can be hard to talk to someone
 - Be ready when they are ready
 - Signs and symptoms
 - When they are ready to be there and be willing to step in and try to help
 - Presentation
- Harm Reduction Toolkit
 - Harm reduction materials, where to get it at, needle exchange
 - Targeted groups, educate, humanize
 - Horizon Health partnership, expand to other sectors
 - Terre Haute- partnership with EMS, support person for people that experience and overdose
 - Carle clinic SUNS
 - Michelle mentioned that they have SUNS that work at the Carle Clinic that help people in addiction
- HIPS April 27th
 - Need volunteers
 - Rosecrance may have some prevention volunteers
- Laundry Day
 - Need volunteers in the future!
 - Zach- broken dryers
- Recovery Window Painting- May
 - Prairie Press
 - Pearmans Pharmacy

- Starbucks
 - Banks??
 - Bring up at council meeting
 - Reach out to hopes and dreams
 - Art clubs
 - Nicki has some PLEs that will help us
- Second Chance Employer Fair- June
 - Still looking for a location
 - Ambrosia and Nicki going to another second chance employer fair on April 11 in Moultrie/Shelby Counties
- National Overdose Awareness Day- August 31
 - Vigil- Lisa said to just do it
 - Nicki said that we could partner
 - Lisa will bring it up to CARE
 - Overdose numbers are not accurate
- Recovery Picnic- September
 - Google form asking Saturday or Sunday for Recovery Picnic
 - Honeybee Festival
- Thoughts on creating a survey to help collect data on the homeless awareness and education topic from the last meeting? Surveys could go out to ER and HR's buildings?-Jeannie
 - Said she will work on developing a survey