

# EDGAR COUNTY ROSC MEETING MINUTES

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May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024

5:15 PM

Paris Hospital Conference Room A and Zoom

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**Attendees:** Carrie McKinzie, Julie Pohlman, Judy Benton, Kristina Drum, Keith Myers, Ambrosia Branson, Vicky Foster, Norm Wilson, Abby Parrish, Amanda Thompson, Cindy Spencer, Bethany Wagoner, Dr. Marilyn Frey, Leanna Morgan, Lisa Foster, Scott Foster, Lisa Ellis, Doug Cochran, Janice Watson, Michelle Creech, Jonathan Burns, Kristin Davis, Connor Dotson, Lexanna Kocher, Kim Ross, Vicky Dick, Camille Gordon, Bo Scott, Michelle Hibbard, and Susan Essinger

**Edgar County ROSC Coordinator:**

Ambrosia let the council know that the Hour House is still hiring for an Edgar County ROSC Coordinator. If they know of anyone that may be interested, please connect them with Ambrosia, Nicki, or Karen and they can only apply online on Indeed.

**Spotlight Agency/Program (EIU CCR&R):**

Ambrosia introduced Vicky with EIU Child Care Resource & Referral as the Spotlight Speaker. Vicky stated that she is the Infant Toddler Child Care Specialist with EIU CCR&R. She said the EIU CCR&R is located at Eastern Illinois University but is not exactly a part of Eastern just housed there. She said they are trying to be more visible in the communities they serve. Vicky states that EIU CCR&R is a part of the Illinois Network of Childcare Resource and Referral Agencies, which has 16 delivery areas in the state. They are a part of the Childcare Aware Program, a national program that provides childcare and high-quality situations for children across the country. She also stated that they are funded by DHS, and for FY 24, they were awarded over \$9 million for their program.

Vicky stated that their service area covers Clark, Coles, Cumberland, Edgar, Moultrie, and Shelby counties. She said that Clark and Edgar are the hardest counties for them to reach. They see that in these counties, they have to be invited to come in, and getting into those places seems to be quite tricky. The EIU CCR&R's mission is to assist families in accessing affordable, quality child care and promote and support child care providers' professional development to enhance quality child care in our community.

She then went into detail about their Child Care Assistance Program. She stated that it is an assistance program for Illinois residents with children under the age of 13 whose income is

below 225% of the federal poverty line. Some of the requirements to be eligible are: individuals have to be employed or going to school, initial activity search for three months to find childcare and to find employment, parents who are deployed by the military, they may be transitioning from DCFS intact family services, experiencing homelessness, parenting youths in DCFS care. Vicky then went into detail regarding the income guidelines and provider rates; if you have any questions, you can contact her!

Vicky then explained the role of the license-exempt health and safety coach. She stated that this individual helps license-exempt non-relative providers and license-exempt centers/staff complete the required training for the Child Care Assistance Program. These trainings include CPR and first aid, mandated reporter, and child development, health, and safety basics. This role has funding for certain items like fire extinguishers, carbon monoxide detectors, etc., for homes that may need them. She also provides monitoring visits to meet minimal environmental standards.

She explained that they have a lot of referrals. They have a DCFS licensed and exempt programs database in all six counties they serve. They inform families to seek high-quality childcare but must advise them on which ones. She said that they can give the family a customized list based on the child's needs, but they cannot guarantee they will have openings. There is also the Illinois Cares for Kids website, where families can look for childcare lists in their counties.

Vicky also said that they have a Provider Services person who provides information and support for those entering the childcare field. They do a lot of technical support on early childhood topics. They also offer information on State of Illinois grants and funding opportunities. She also said they have lots of professional development available. They have early childhood training, usually about 30-75 trainings a year, and you do not have to be a childcare provider to participate. She stated that most of them are open to the public. She said they are always doing training to keep providers engaged and updated. She also mentioned that they have reimbursement for training, conferences, etc.

Vicky stated that they aim to hit specific goals by the State of Illinois: universal access for all children to high-quality programs and services, prioritizing children with high needs and families that are hard to reach, and all children entering school are healthy and ready to learn, a holistic approach to family and children needs, and ensuring the family engagement and partnership is integrated and embedded in all early childhood programs and services. She said that they try to connect families with available resources through their office.

She also mentioned that ExceleRate Illinois is the standard by which they are trying to increase quality for children in the State. They use a consistent set of standards in four domains: Teaching and learning, family and community engagement, leadership and management, and qualifications and continuing education. She said that they do a collaboration with Life Links through

Caregiver Connections to provide an Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant. She said they have one consultant and just recently hired another. She said that essentially this role provides assistance and education to caregivers on recognizing the social and emotional needs for the children in their care. This goes birth-5 years old and goes to the provider that is having issues.

Vicky stated that she is the Infant Toddler Child Care Specialist and her goal is to increase quality care for infants, toddlers, and two-year olds with a focus on at-risk children first. She teaches them social and emotional skills. She also stated that they have a Higher Education Navigator. She helps people in the childcare workforce acquire degrees and credentials. She has knowledge of the Illinois Higher Education facilities that offer Early Childhood Programs. She also promotes that ISAC ECACE scholarship. Vicky then shared the contact information for their services/program:

Parent/Provider Services (Core)

217-581-6698 or 800-545-7439

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

217-581-7081 or 800-643-1026

Vicky then opened it up to the council for questions. Someone asked if they worked in the schools? Vicky stated they have not been able to get into the schools, but are hoping to in the future. Jonathan asked what the biggest barrier was for people wanting to be providers? Vicky said that there are just a lot of requirements, especially education. A lot of people don't really know that there is an early childhood route.

### **Oxford House Update:**

Jonathan said that he tried contacting Zach again today but was unable to get through to him. He said it is pretty discouraging. He said he doesn't know what the update is. Jonathan stated that there are other structures out there, and maybe we need to look at that. Ambrosia said that perhaps we can do that as a council moving forward and look into other options. Jonathan mentioned that Keith may have some connections in Terre Haute. Keith stated that there are homes like Odyssey Houses in Terre Haute and Oxford Houses. Jonathan said it would be helpful to learn about and have some of them talk to us. Keith said he could reach out, and Ambrosia told him to invite them on the 4th Tuesday to the Edgar County ROSC Meeting! Bo said that she has had several members from different recovery homes in Terre Haute who have been trying to get a recovery home in Paris but have hit some roadblocks. Ambrosia told Bo to connect them with the ROSC council!

### **Recap on May:**

Ambrosia apologized to the council for any communication delays in the past month; things have been crazy, she said! She wanted to start by updating the ROSC council on the number of Narcan boxes given out at the display sites in April, which was 100! We distributed more boxes in April than any other previous month. She also let council members know she did have extra physical copies of the Narcan brochure with the list of display sites on the entrance table for anyone who wanted a copy. Ambrosia also stated that in May, she was able to do a ROSC presentation at HRC for the Chamber of Commerce Young Leaders Presentation. AND... we finished window

painting! She thanked all of the volunteers and organizations that let us paint their windows for the event to show recovery is possible in the community and that we have so many people who support people in recovery. Ambrosia then showed council members that the newsletter contained pictures of the windows that were painted. She said that Nicki also got a lot of great feedback about the windows from people in the community, and those quotes are noted in the newsletter.

Ambrosia also mentioned that the Hidden in Plain Sight scheduled in Kansas was canceled due to weather. She explained that it had been rescheduled for June 7th at Shriner's BBQ Weekend. It will be held from 4-8 PM at the Fairgrounds. She let council members know we are still seeking volunteers for the evening. She mentioned that for those interested in volunteering, Nicki is thinking about doing a mock one on the 5th or 6th if anyone wants to practice before the day of. Ambrosia also mentioned that we also did another podcast episode! She explained we could do it with one of our council members, Jess. The episode's purpose was for Jess to discuss her recovery experience in the same community she once used. She says it is about a 13-minute episode and on many streaming platforms!

Ambrosia said the last thing she had on the recap list was to discuss Free Laundry Days. She said that at the Laundry Day on May 16th, the sponsor for the event was Dimond Bros Insurance. She said we started with \$400 in funds for the day and were able to do 82 wash cycles and 65 dry cycles, help 31 people, gave out 12 boxes of Narcan 6 deterra pouches, Lake Ridge transported 3 people, and we were able to give out a homelessness survey from Jeannie Combs to several people! After discussing it with several council members, Ambrosia also said she needed the council's advice. She stated that when we started laundry days, we used however much an agency would sponsor; then, we decided to put a cap on donations of about \$350 to be more consistent. After this past laundry day, we had discussions with several council members about not capping it off as we were running into situations where we did not have enough funds to finish drying people's clothes. Ambrosia said one of the council members wanted it to be brought up in the council meeting, so she asked for everyone's thoughts moving forward. She asked if we needed to have a council member have set funds aside in case we run into this problem again? Jonathan said he trusts our judgment regarding having additional funds set aside with a council member if additional funds are needed. Dr. Frey said she wants additional funds to ensure we can cover everyone. The next Laundry Day is June 13, and the sponsor is the Paris First United Methodist Church Men's Ministry.

#### **Subcommittee Meeting Update:**

Ambrosia said that in the meeting we talked about the Recovery Picnic and things we wanted to see such as activities, having a band, the food, etc. Ambrosia said that if anyone is interested in helping plan events to please join the subcommittee meeting!

#### **Accomplishment Sheet for EdCRC:**

Ambrosia said that another thing they are working on is an accomplishment sheet. She explained that they created one of these last year that explained all of the great things the ROSC did in their first year. She stated that we are wanting to create another list to show the great things the ROSC did in year 2 in Edgar County! She opened it up to council members to name a few of the great things the ROSC has accomplished. Here are several things the council members stated:

*Free Laundry Days, assistance with Human Trafficking trainings, Narcan distribution in the community, increased ROSC council member, educational groups in the community, panel event*

Ambrosia said that she will let council members think on it and if they have any more accomplishments to add to the list they can reach out to her, Nicki, or Karen!

**FY 25 Events, Ideas, Projects:**

Ambrosia said that Nicki and herself created this list of potential events, projects and trainings based on one-on-one conversations with council members, some of conversations in subcommittee meetings, and other things we have heard in the community. She said the document is month by month, and each month contains a variety of different events, social media things, projects, or trainings that were put together into this document. Ambrosia states she wants the council's feedback, things to add, things to take away, etc. Ambrosia started out explaining the month of July that we considered doing another free movie night in the summer. She also said in July we were thinking about doing a FB live on "The Faces of Recovery" where we have people in Recovery in Edgar County and we have them jump on FB Live once a week and give their testimony. Ambrosia also mentioned another podcast episode for July.

For August she said they tentatively put in a panel event and a Hidden in Plain Sight. She asked council members potential topics for the panel. She said to think about topics our community needs educated on or thinks that would be interesting. For September, Ambrosia said they have the Recovery Picnic planned and a podcast. In October she said that we planned to participate in Trunk or Treat/Scare on the Square, doing a presentation with Michelle Hibbard from Rosecrance on the Science Behind Addiction, and participating in Red Ribbon Week in the schools. Lisa backed us up to August, as CARE is putting on a Candlelight Vigil on August 31 which is National Overdose Awareness Day. She said her and Nicki have been working on it and to reach out if they want to be involved in the planning process!

Ambrosia opened it back up to the council and asked their thoughts so far on the tentative events. No one spoke up so she moved to November tentative events. Ambrosia stated that for November they are planning to do a Free Skate Night, for one of Nicki's educational groups make cards to give out to the elderly at the nursing homes, give out homeless bags for Homelessness Awareness Month, and do a Person 1<sup>st</sup> Language Training that we could do at businesses. She also said they put for a podcast episode in November and to do a 30 day gratitude challenge where we have council members volunteer each day in November and putting what they are grateful for on our social media. Ambrosia said that if council members came up with anymore ideas, to please send them as this is not Nicki or Ambrosia's ROSC, but the Edgar County ROSC.

**Agency Updates:**

***ECPHD:*** Lexanna said their Celebrate Community event went fairly well!

***Neighborhood Watch:*** Scott passed out Neighborhood Watch brochures that members created from Hume to hand out with the city utility bills for people in the town. He goes over the brochure, details about how the program works, some of the things they look for! They have the sheriff's department number on there and it has a spot where they can write things down. He has

passed this information onto Chrisman too, and its just neat that they have came up with idea. Ambrosia asked Scott to share the brochures with her and she can send out to the council!

**Recovery Court:** Nothing really new to report, Norm said!

**HRC:** Jonathan said they are handing out hygiene bags they received in their Living Room Program (LRP). He said they also recently received a bunch of donated socks from a local church for the LRP. He said that backpacks are a need they do have there for the homeless. Ambrosia asked if drawstrings bags could be used? Jonathan said yes, and Ambrosia said she will see if we have any extras with the ROSC. Michelle also added that the Recovery Support team was able to go two Friday's in May to Stagecoach Coffee in Paris and pass out 200 green mental health awareness ribbons and information and at Marshall Walmart they were able to pass out 100 ribbons! They were also able to put mental health awareness ribbons, she said she is also able to give a person first language training in Clark County soon too!

**CARE:** Ambrosia said that she believed Angie said the bylaws have been looked over by the attorney and approved!

**Soup Kitchen:** Vicky said that they were meeting with the pastor at the First Baptist Church to use their facility for the Soup Kitchen. They have submitted their documentation for their 501c3, their bylaws are done and their strategic plan is done. She said she spoke with the Health Department about what they need to do and they are going to St. Benedict in Terre Haute to view their soup kitchen and do a tour. Ambrosia said they are so happy and excited with the progress they are making with the soup kitchen!

**Next Meeting:** June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024, 5:15 PM at Paris Hospital Conference Room A and Zoom

### **Subcommittee Meeting 5.23.24**

- Attendees: Ambrosia Branson, Lexanna Kocher, Jeannie Combs, Kyra Graham, Connor Dotson, Nicki Hanks, Michelle Hibbard, Alyssa Labry
- Hidden in Plain Sight
  - Ambrosia let members know ROSC is doing a Hidden in Plain Sight at Shriner's weekend.
    - June 7<sup>th</sup> from 4-8 PM: Shriner's Weekend at the fairgrounds
    - We are still looking volunteers
    - Nicki wanted those volunteering to meet for a mock or run-through, essentially to go over materials and read them to each other
      - June 5 or 6 for the mock, please reach out to Nicki if you plan to volunteer and want to set this up
- Recovery Picnic
  - We have set the date as September 15<sup>th</sup> from 1-3 PM.

- Ambrosia spoke with Chris Redman about reserving the West Lake Park for the picnic, and got it reserved!
  - Ambrosia listed off previous donors from last year
    - Arby's, Auto Zone, BAR Screen Printing & Designs, Bridgett's Spa and Gifts, Burger King, CARE Coalition, Car Quest, Circle K, Dairy Queen, Dalbey Designs, Diana's Custom Gifts, Edgar County Public Health Department, First Farmer's Bank, Frosted by Maddie, Gypsy Soul Revival, Horizon Health, Hour House, House of Brisket, HRC, KBG Deli, Krista's Crafty Creations, Kurly Q, Lake Ridge Christian Church, McAllisters, Moonlight Entertainment IL, Monical's Pizza, Neal Tire, The Old Glass Shop LLC, On the Tracks, Prairie Farms, Reynolds Photography, Sage and Prim, Solei Body Salon, Stagecoach, Strange Crafts, Subway, Sweet Country Rhoads, The Fizz, The Legion, The Little Red Reading Wagon, Walmart, Wendy's (last year sponsors)
    - She asked for council members to think about sponsors we could add to this list and reach out to for the second annual picnic.
  - Members discussed potential options for the following categories for the picnic:
    - FOOD
      - Pulled pork
      - Chips
      - Cookies
      - Hot dogs
    - DJ
      - Michelle's Creech's daughter band
    - ACTIVITIES
      - Yard games (bags, tic tac to, connect four), coloring station/craft station
      - PERK program providing a game
      - Foam Homies
      - Splash park
      - Selfie station- Nicki ask April
    - PRIZES
      - HRC
    - SPEAKERS
      - Family member and maybe another PLE
- Candlelight Vigil
  - Lisa and Nicki had a great first meeting to discuss the candlelight vigil they are planning
  - It will be on August 31 as that is National Overdose Awareness Day
- Future Events
  - Ambrosia went through a list of potential events that her and Nicki wrote down based on conversations with council members

- Members on the meeting liked the idea of another panel
- Survey
  - Ambrosia asked Jeannie to talk a little about the survey she created
  - She said the goal is to figure out where we are lacking resources and bring awareness of homelessness and resources we have to offer
  - Figure out what the community needs are
  - Ambrosia mentioned that they gave some of the surveys out at the laundry days and got some responses!