



Kane County ROSC Council Meeting Minutes- June 2026

Date: May 22, 2026

Time: Convened at approximately 12:00 PM / Adjourned at approximately 4:00 PM

Meeting Title: May Kane County ROSC Council Meeting

Location: Mutual Ground (Hybrid meeting: in-person at Mutual Ground facility and virtual participation via Zoom)

Facilitator: Annette Villarreal, Kane County ROSC Coordinator

I. Call to Order & Opening Remarks

Annette Villarreal, Kane County ROSC Coordinator, called the meeting to order at approximately 12:00 PM. She welcomed all attendees, both in-person and on Zoom. Ms. Villarreal acknowledged that this was the first Kane County ROSC Council meeting held without Jarrett Burton (DuPage County ROSC Coordinator) physically present, as he participated virtually. She noted with appreciation that the in-person room was composed primarily of women, fostering a warm and collaborative atmosphere.

In recognition of May as Mental Health Month, Ms. Villarreal opened with data from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA):

- In 2024, an estimated **21.2 million adults** in the United States had co-occurring substance misuse and mental health conditions.
- Of these individuals, only **14.5%** received integrated treatment for both conditions.
- More than 40% received mental health treatment only, with no substance misuse treatment, and a significant portion received no services at all.

Ms. Villarreal emphasized that these statistics underscore the importance of the ROSC Council's work and the value of whole-person care models such as those provided by Mutual Ground. She noted that substance misuse and mental health are deeply interconnected, reinforcing the need for integrated, accessible services within a Recovery Oriented System of Care.

II. Icebreaker & Introductions

A round of introductions was conducted. Each attendee shared their name, affiliation, and a personal "mental health break" activity. Responses included:

- Watching television (no-brainer TV)



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- Painting
- Walking a dog (or a neighbor's dog)
- Listening to music while walking
- Napping
- Crossword puzzles (Mondays only – *New York Times*)
- Journaling
- Baking and subsequent exercise
- Prioritizing sleep as a wellness gift
- Reading comic books (revisiting childhood favorites)
- Playing piano
- Reading (both Kindle and physical books)
- Spending time outdoors, listening to birds and watching flowers
- Puzzling
- Short guided meditations

Virtual Participant – Jarrett Burton (DuPage County ROSC Coordinator): Mr. Burton shared his appreciation for the in-person team and expressed pride in their work. He noted that his personal mental health break involves reading comic books, particularly titles he could not afford as a child. He also supports Kane County ROSC as part of his regional role.

Virtual Participant – Ben Rudolph (ROSC Region 2 Technical Assistant): Mr. Rudolph shared that playing piano provides his mental health respite. He affirmed his role in supporting ROSC regionally, including strategic planning, deliverables, and site visits to support programs, referrals, and overall system development.

Additional virtual participant – Andrea (AIDS Mobile Crisis Response Team, CRSS in long-term recovery): Ms. Andrea shared that she engages in short, guided meditations for mental health.

Ms. Villarreal encouraged all attendees to be intentional about using their identified wellness techniques, noting that knowing about self-care is different from practicing it consistently.



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III. Guest Presentation: Mutual Ground – Whole-Person Care Services

Ms. Villarreal introduced Mutual Ground as a model agency integrating domestic violence services, emergency shelter, substance misuse treatment, and mental health counseling. She noted that the organization treats the whole person and that the ROSC Council was fortunate to learn directly from those doing the work. She framed Mutual Ground as an exemplary partner within Kane County's Recovery Oriented System of Care.

A. Substance Use Treatment Services – Tammy Johnson, Substance Use Treatment Manager

Ms. Johnson provided a comprehensive overview of services offered by the Substance Use Department:

Service Category	Specific Offerings
Levels of Care	Outpatient and intensive outpatient for adults and adolescents
Counseling Modalities	Group and individual counseling
Specialized Programs	Anger management classes, integrated treatment for co-occurring disorders, mental health evaluations, DUI evaluations and treatment
Psychiatric Support	Local psychiatrist visits twice monthly for clients with co-occurring disorders
Outreach	Full-time outreach counselor stationed 40 hours/week at Hesed House to serve unhoused population
Referral Partnerships	DCFS, Secretary of State, probation, parole, Iris



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Service Category	Specific Offerings
Community Support	AA meetings held on-site twice weekly
Insurance & Fees	Medicaid and most MCOs accepted; no private insurance. Sliding fee scale available client turned away for inability to pay. Billing specialist assists uninsured clients with Medicaid enrollment.
Operating Hours	Monday–Thursday, 9:00 AM – 9:00 PM; Friday, 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Website	mutualground.org

Discussion Highlights:

- **Trauma-informed care:** Ms. Johnson explained that substance use is often a symptom of deeper trauma. Treatment is client-centered and trauma-informed, addressing root causes rather than just symptoms.
- **Co-occurring disorders:** The majority of individuals with addiction have an underlying mental health issue. Treating both simultaneously improves outcomes, regardless of which condition preceded the other.
- **Building trust:** Trust begins with the first phone call. Warm reception, clear communication about expectations, and walking clients through every step alleviates the fear of the unknown.
- **Question from the floor regarding nicotine cessation:** Mutual Ground does not currently offer nicotine or vaping cessation services. A business card was exchanged for potential future collaboration. A Kane County Health Department representative offered to share information about existing cessation resources.
- **Personal testimony from Ms. Villarreal:** Ms. Villarreal shared her own lived experience with co-occurring conditions, affirming the value of integrated services and predictable, consistent support within a recovery-oriented system.



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Upcoming Event – Walk of Hope: Saturday, May 30, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM at Wabansi State Park. Free, family-friendly event featuring vendors, activities, and opportunities to learn more about Mutual Ground.

Personal announcement: Ms. Johnson shared that she will be driving to New Orleans to be married on Wednesday, May 27. The ROSC Council extended its congratulations and well wishes.

B. Domestic & Sexual Violence Services – Tina Blakeley, Prevention Manager

Ms. Blakeley presented on Mutual Ground's domestic and sexual violence programs.

Residential Services:

- 32-bed facility, including cribs for infants and young children
- Serves individuals who have experienced domestic or sexual violence
- Primary goal: safety

Legal & Medical Advocacy:

- Offices in Kane and Kendall County courthouses to assist with orders of protection and legal navigation
- Hospital response advocates at Delnor, Mercy, Rush Aurora, and Yorkville hospitals
- Advocates support victims through forensic exams (rape kits) and ensure awareness of available services

Volunteer Training:

- 60-hour training program for direct-service advocates
- Prepare volunteers to respond to hospital calls and work directly with survivors of sexual violence

Counseling Services:

- Individual counseling for adults and adolescents
- School-based and in-residence options

Summer Camp:

- Serves children ages 5–12 who are connected to Mutual Ground services



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- Runs all summer long

Prevention Education:

- Delivers Erin's Law and "Too Good for Drugs" curricula in East Aurora, West Aurora, and Batavia schools
- Reaches over 60,000 students annually

Types of Abuse Addressed:

- Physical, verbal, emotional, sexual, financial, religious, and technology abuse
- Technology abuse was identified as a rapidly growing concern, particularly among youth

Key Discussion Points:

- **Disclosure and trust:** Survivors often disclose gradually as they feel safe and consistent support. Full disclosure may never occur; this is understood as a coping and survival mechanism. Ms. Villarreal shared her own experience of disclosing slowly over time.
- **Capacity:** The shelter is at approximately 90% capacity on average. When full, staff coordinate with domestic violence and sexual violence hotlines to find alternative placements. The ROSC Council never places individuals on the street without support.
- **Substance use in shelter:** While active use that endangers children may require alternative placement, Mutual Ground works with clients to find appropriate programs rather than discharging them unsupported. Intoxicated individuals are not turned away upon arrival.
- **Victim-centered policy:** Mutual Ground does not work with offenders. Anger management is offered, but Partner Abuse Intervention Programs (PAIP) are not. The distinction was clarified: anger management addresses general anger dysregulation (e.g., road rage, workplace frustration), while domestic violence intervention addresses power and control dynamics. Ms. Blakeley likened power and control to an addiction.



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Wins & hope:

- Ms. Blakeley: Increased disclosures from youth, who feel empowered to come forward after school-based prevention programs. Even difficult cases represent wins because survivors trusted advocates enough to speak.
- Ms. Johnson: Seeing clients progress through treatment, successful discharges, and running into former clients who are thriving. Planting seeds that may bloom in future attempts at recovery. Counselors consider making a client cry a good session, as it indicates vulnerability and emotional release.

Question from Jarrett Burton (DuPage County ROSC Coordinator): Mr. Burton asked about services for individuals on both sides of domestic violence, specifically those court-ordered for anger management or partner abuse intervention. Ms. Blakeley clarified that Mutual Ground is victim-centered and does not work with offenders, but noted that other agencies (e.g., Safe Passages, Family Counseling Services, Elgin Community Crisis) offer PAIP programs.

IV. Recovery Corps Van & Donations Update

Presented by: Nene Velasquez, Project Coordinator, Serenity House

Recent Donations:

- Received by the Glen Ellen Police Department
- Items included: toiletries, deodorants, toothbrushes, soap, body wash, wipes

Ongoing Needs:

- Body wipes for unhoused individuals
- Men's pants
- Women's clothing

Sunday Van Route:

- **Time:** 1:00 – 2:00 PM
- **Location:** Aurora Animal Shelter parking lot (near Hesed House)
- **Activities:** Hot meals distributed; donations accepted



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- **Intentional placement:** The location includes a fenced dog run, making it accessible for individuals with pets

Operational Context:

- The van serves unhoused individuals throughout DuPage and Kane Counties
- The van goes out twice weekly
- Team drivers and volunteers are essential to operations

Acknowledgment: Ms. Villarreal thanked Nene Velasquez, Kelsey Chavez, Linny, and all drivers and team members for their hard work supporting recovery-oriented outreach.

V. Stigma Reduction Campaign – "Language Matters"

Ms. Villarreal introduced a strategic initiative focused on reducing stigma through person-first language. She noted that this has been a strategic priority for the current fiscal year within the Kane County ROSC and that she envisions a Council-supported campaign (e.g., social media, videos, signage, testimonials).

Examples of language shifts provided:

Instead of	Use
Addict	Person with a substance use condition
Clean / Dirty (test results)	Negative / Positive
Abuse (of substances)	Misuse

Personal reflection from Ms. Villarreal: She shared that even she, as someone with lived experience and professional training, has caught herself using stigmatizing language. She emphasized that words are powerful and can either stigmatize or heal. She referenced a recent panel on stigma reduction where she received a document with these language shifts, which opened her eyes to unintentionally stigmatizing language.



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Call to action: ROSC Council members were invited to submit ideas for the stigma campaign via email to Ms. Villarreal or Mr. Burton. No formal working group was established to respect members' time. Suggestions could include:

- Holding up signs with alternative language
- Short video interviews asking community members which words they find stigmatizing
- Social media campaigns featuring lived experience voices

VI. Closing Reflection & ROSC Council Action Items

Ms. Villarreal posed two questions for council members to consider and submit via email or in writing before the next meeting:

1. **What is the single biggest gap for people with co-occurring substance misuse and mental health conditions in Kane County within the current Recovery Oriented System of Care?**
2. **What is one small action the Kane County ROSC Council could take in the next 60 to 90 days to begin closing that gap? (Other than a media campaign.)**

Resource / Event

Details

Gambling Addiction Webinar
(Kane County Health
Department)

Recording available. Presenter noted Illinois has 49,000 slot machines with more coming. The link is available on the Kane County Health Department website under Programs and Services > Health Matters Educational Events.

Aging & Mental Health Webinar
(Kane County Health
Department)

Friday, May 29, 9:00 – 11:00 AM. Focuses on mental health challenges for older adults (65+). Free registration available.



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Resource / Event	Details
988 Yard Signs	Available for distribution to promote mental health crisis line awareness. Ms. Villarreal offered to transport signs for interested ROSC Council members.
Transportation Resources Postcards (Michelle Meyer, Kane County Health Department)	QR code linking to free and low-cost transportation options in Kane County. Available at Elgin and Aurora health department offices. Identified as addressing one of the biggest barriers to care.
Drop-in Harm Reduction Services (Kane County ROSC)	Tuesdays, 12:00 – 2:00 PM, 825 West State Street. Free harm reduction materials available.
Re-entry Fellowship Program (Kane County ROSC)	Tuesdays, 12:00 – 2:00 PM (bilingual services for men and women); Thursdays, 5:00 – 7:00 PM (Geneva office).
Virtual Narcan Training	Second Tuesday of each month, 12:30 PM, via Geneva office.
Expungement Workshop (Westside Justice Center)	Saturday, May 23, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM at Santory Library. For individuals needing record clearance services.

Members were invited to jot down responses on paper before leaving or to email their thoughts to Ms. Villarreal.

VII. Community Resources & Announcements

VIII. Adjournment

Ms. Villarreal thanked all attendees for their participation, both in-person and virtual. She reminded everyone to be intentional about taking mental health breaks and giving themselves the gift of wellness, especially during Mental Health Month.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:00 PM.



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Next steps: Meeting invitations for next month's Kane County ROSC Council meeting will be sent via email. Members are encouraged to submit their responses to the two closing reflection questions and any ideas for the stigma reduction campaign.

Attendance

In-Person Attendees

Name	Affiliation
Annette Villarreal	Kane County ROSC Coordinator
Tina Blakeley	Mutual Ground – Prevention Manager
Tamara (Tammy) Johnson	Mutual Ground – Substance Use Treatment Manager
Tina Coral	Kane County Health Department – Health Promotions Manager
Elizabeth Nunes	Kane County Health Department – Violence Prevention Specialist
Sharon Cabrera	Kane County Health Department – Substance Use Prevention Specialist
Lily Peterson	Kane County Health Department – Tobacco and Nicotine Prevention Team
Michelle Meyer	Kane County Health Department – Assistant Director of Community Health
Alex Brower	DuPage ROSC / Serenity House – Recovery Coach
Kelsey Chavez	Recovery Corp – Project Coordinator (serving at Serenity House)



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Name	Affiliation
Marcy Milberg	Northwestern Medicine – Community Health Institute
Sarah Mendoza	Kane County Health Department – Fatality Review Program Manager
Jessica Mino	The Conservation Foundation – Kane/Kendall County Program Director
Andrea Hasko Marx	AIDs Mobile Crisis Response Team – CRSS (long-term recovery)
Juanita Velasquez	Recovery Corp.

Virtual Attendees

Name	Affiliation
Jarrett Burton	DuPage County ROSC Coordinator
Ben Rudolph	ROSC Region 2 – Technical Assistant
Joe O'Connor	Serenity House