



**NEW LENOX SAFE COMMUNITY COALITION  
MEETING 25-01  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2025  
(MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM VIDEOCONFERENCE)**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Dan Martin called the meeting of the New Lenox Safe Community Coalition to order at approximately 10:33am. Everyone in attendance introduced themselves, including which organizations (if applicable) they represent.

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Daniel Martin / Village of New Lenox, Sherry Coe / Guardian Angel Community Services, Magdalena Campos / Joliet Township Township and HERO, Neesha Stringfellow / HLM Recovery, Cheryl Habeeb / NAMI Will-Grundy County, Nicole Suhm / Crisis Center for South Suburbia, Gloria Bloodsaw / Gateway Foundation, Jim Mihalovich / Top Driver, Shmir Corzine / Abraxas Woodridge Interventions, Joan Stefka / Will County Health Department, Lori Keho / Suncloud Health, William Byerley / New Lenox Emergency Services, Diannaha Thompson / CNNSSA Meals on Wheels, Amirrah Abou-Youssef / Family Violence Coordinating Council 12 Judicial District, Gina Kenny / Bicycle Safety Advocate, Marisa Tomich / New Lenox Fire Protection District, Paul Hempel / Recovery Centers of America, Olga Viano / New Lenox Community Park District, Allison Thomas / Rosecrance Health Network, DeMarcus Wilfong / Sam's Club, Michelle Knierim / Uniquely You Behavioral Health, Ariel Ruttenberg / New Lenox Police Department, Gia Washington / Sertoma Star Services, Patrice Martin / Lightways Hospice and Serious Illness Care, Michelle Augoustatos / Edward Hines Jr. VA Hospital, Courtney Garfield / Will County Sheriff's Office & Will County Substance Abuse Coalition, Ausra Tauginaite / Joliet Jr. College, Marie Goulet / NLSA #122, Jen Vujosevic / Lincoln-Way Community High School District 210, Gloria Bodnar / Older Adults Falls Prevention Task Group and Suicide Prevention and Awareness Task Group, Erik Hoffer / Northern Illinois Fire Sprinkler Advisory Board, Alexciana Castaneda / Will County Sheriff's Department, Sheree Stillwell / WCSAPC - Faith Based Sector, Marianne Bithos / NAMI South Suburbs, Daneen Taylor / Linden Oaks Behavioral Health, Marta Keane / Will County Green, Rocky Dellamano / Rocky Dellamano / COUNTRY Financial, Marie Kress / The Mental Wellness Center of Manhattan, Jackie Prebe / Families Anonymous & Braidwood Coalition, Aishwayra Balakrishna / Will County Health Department, Vickie Dance / Illinois Poison Center, Carol Michalski / ServPro, Rachel Evans / The Living Room – Division of Trinity Services, Inc., James Budrick / Will County Health Department, Joe Enzenberger / Dryer Vent Wizard of Will County, Heather Drew / Recovery Community Center of Joliet, Erin Ward / Will County Emergency Management Agency, Megan Lynch / Silver Cross Hospital, Jenny Guiney / Guardian Angel Community Services, and LeShae Hudson / Joliet Township Government.

## **APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 20, 2024 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the November 20, 2024 Meeting, held via Zoom Videoconference, had been made available to the members prior to the meeting. Gloria Bodnar made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Marie Kress. After no further discussion, the motion carried and the minutes were approved.

## **GUEST SPEAKER – MAGDALENA CAMPOS**

Maggie shared a story of one of her first memories, as a 5-year-old child, of seeing acts of domestic violence between her parents. Maggie also shared that she grew up around gangs, drugs and violence. Her teenage years were very chaotic and included acts of domestic violence against her. Maggie shared some stories of things that happened to her growing up, including becoming pregnant and giving birth to her son at 19. Maggie endured both physical and verbal abuse, perhaps because she didn't recognize it for what it was.

Maggie shared that she lost her husband in a car accident 15 years ago, which is when her opioid addiction took over her life.

Maggie advised that when she entered a 12-step program, due to drugs and alcohol, that's when she started to realize that she needed to take steps to improve her life. She acknowledged that there things inside of her that needed to be fixed and only she could do it.

Now, as a victim advocate, Maggie is able to help others because she's lived through domestic violence, drug addiction, alcoholism and experience several deaths in her family.

Maggie's presentation was very powerful and received a great deal of thanks and appreciation from those in attendance. Everyone empathized with Maggie due to the challenges that she's faced, while also expressing appreciation for her in becoming a victim advocate. Thank you, Maggie, and keep up the great work!

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Remembering Laura Regis, Chair of the Older Adults Falls Prevention Task Group**

Dan Martin recognized Laura Regis, noting all of the wonderful things that she did for our Coalition for many years. Laura Chaired the Older Adults Falls Prevention Task Group, was a Master "A Matter of Balance" Trainer, a "Fit and Strong" instructor, one of the founders of "Seniors with Sole" and played an extremely important role in the "One Fall Can Change It All" event. Laura was very active with New Lenox VFW Post 9545, a member of the Lincoln-Way Area Women's Business Association and very active in our community.

Dan advised that something is in the works to honor Laura at this year's "One Fall Can Change It All" event – more information to come.

Dan also asked to keep Laura's husband in everyone's thoughts as he is going through a difficult time.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Task Group Reports**

### **Domestic Violence Prevention Task Group**

This report was given by Ariel Ruttenberg.

#### ***“Teen Dating Violence: What Trusted Adults Should Know”***

This event will be held on Tuesday, February 25, 2025 from 7:00pm to 8:30pm via Zoom Videoconference. The speakers will be: Alicia Guerrero (mother of Briana Valle whose teenage daughter was killed in a domestic-related incident in Romeoville), Jenny Guiney, Groundwork Community Outreach Supervisor, Guardian Angel Community Services (who will lead a general discussion on teen dating violence and services offered) and Marie Goulet, LCSW and Lead Social Worker for New Lenox School District #122 (who will provide a school perspective on resources, policies, social media, etc...).

Ariel went into greater detail about what each of the speakers would be discussing.

#### **Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month – February, 2025**

*“Teen Dating Violence: What Trusted Adults Should Know”* will be held in support of Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month.

#### **Sexual Assault Awareness Month – April, 2025**

#### **Domestic Violence Awareness Month – October, 2025**

Ariel discussed the types of events that the group may offer in support of these National campaigns.

### **Substance Use Prevention Task Group**

This report was given by Allison Thomas.

#### **Kratom – Continued Discussion**

After another lengthy discussion, it was decided that we will address Kratom by-way-of public education rather than regulation. Several task group members expressed an interest in providing presentations at upcoming events. In addition, Kratom may be added as a topic for this group’s signature event, *“Your Light Still Shines.”* Allison took the time to discuss what led the group to move towards education, rather than regulation.

#### **Reported Use of Most Drugs Among Adolescents Remained Low in 2024 – NIH Study**

<https://nida.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/2024/12/reported-use-of-most-drugs-among-adolescents-remained-low-in-2024>

#### ***“Zyn and Nicotine Pouches: What Local Tobacco Officials Need to Know” - NACCHO Zoom Presentation***

This was a presentation that was shared with Substance Use Prevention Task Group members.

#### **DEA Presentation**

Greg Czackowski from the DEA will be speaking about Substance Use Disorder and will share what the DEA is doing to stop the opioid epidemic. Weather permitting, Greg will bring the Chicago Office’s new *“One Pill Can Kill”* vehicle. In addition, K-9 Officer Candace Guidry, New Lenox Police Department, will also do a demonstration with her K-9 partner “Harlie.” Dominica Dybas, Diversion Program Specialist, DEA Chicago Field Division, will stand-up an informational table and

will bring a “swag bag” as a giveaway. Jan Dombrowski, Executive Director, HERO, will stand-up an informational table and will have items from the “*Hidden in Plain Sight*” trailer on display.

### ***“Teen Substance Use: What’s New and What’s Hidden in Plain Sight”***

This presentation will be held via Zoom Videoconference from 7:00pm to 8:30pm on Monday, March 31, 2025. HERO will provide a panel of speakers who will *tentatively* discuss what substances are trending (including Kratom), legislative updates, fentanyl risks, overview of the HERO organization and new props / items that have been added to the “*Hidden in Plain Sight*” trailer.

### **Narcan Training**

The next Narcan training will be held via Zoom Videoconference from 7:00pm to 8:30pm on Monday, February 24, 2025. Distribution of the Narcan Nasal Spray Kits for those who attended the training, will be on Thursday, February 27, 2025 from 5:00pm to 7:00pm at the New Lenox Village Hall.

### ***“Your Light Still Shines”***

The Task Group had a very preliminary discussion regarding “*Your Light Still Shines.*” A date, time, location and format for this event needs to be discussed. It will be a goal to establish a Planning Team by the March Task Group Meeting so that planning for this event can proceed.

### **Motor Vehicle / Traffic Safety Task Group**

This report was given by Joe Enzenberger.

### ***“Teen Driver? What Every Parent Should Know”***

This presentation was held via Zoom on Wednesday, November 20, 2024 from 7:00pm to 8:00pm. Our presenters were Margaret Pearson / Illinois Secretary of State’s Office, John Karales / Lincoln-Way Community High School District 210, Jason Helbling / Lincoln-Way Community High School District 210, Jim Mihalovich / Top Driver, and Rocky Dellamano / Rocky Dellamano COUNTRY Financial. Approximately 200 people registered through Eventbrite.

### **Rules of the Road Review Course – Offered by the Illinois Secretary of State’s Office**

This course was held from 10:00am to 12:00pm on Thursday, November 21, 2024 in the Community Room at the New Lenox Village Hall. This was the LAST TIME this course will be offered by the Illinois Secretary of State’s Office. Approximately 30 citizens, mostly older adults, attended.

### **Suicide Prevention and Awareness Task Group**

This report was given by Olga Viano.

### ***“safeTALK”***

This class was held from 8:30am to 12:30pm on Monday, November 18, 2024 in the Community Room at the New Lenox Village Hall. This class was taught by Sertoma Star Services. Thirty-four people registered via Eventbrite and approximately 20 attended.

### ***VA S.A.V.E. Training***

This class was held via Zoom videoconference from 7:00pm to 8:00pm on Tuesday, December 10, 2024. Michelle Augoustatos, Community Engagement and Partnerships Coordinator, Edward Hines Jr. VA Hospital provided the presentation. Seventy-eight people registered via Eventbrite and approximately 50 attended.

***“The Grief Experience – How to Cope \*or\* The Grief Experience – How to Support Someone Who Is Grieving”***

Patrice Martin, Director of Grief Support, Lightways Hospice and Serious Illness Care, has offered to do one or both of these presentations. Both of these presentations can be done in person or via Zoom. A decision will be made as to which presentation to offer as well as date, time, location (or via Zoom).

***“Mental Health 101: Tips and Tricks for a Healthy Mind”***

This class will be held from 6:00pm to 7:30pm on Thursday, March 20, 2025, in the Community Room at the New Lenox Village Hall. This class will be taught by Marie Goulet, NLS #122.

***“Question, Persuade, Refer” (QPR)***

This class will be held from 7:00pm to 8:30pm on Thursday, April 3, 2025, in the Community Room at the New Lenox Village Hall. This class will be taught by Sertoma Star Services.

***“RELAX: 5 Tips to Master Anxiety”***

This presentation will be given from 7:00pm to 8:00pm on Thursday, April 10, 2025, in the Community Room at the New Lenox Village Hall. Dr. Mike Mecozzi will be the presenter.

***“Mental Health First Aid” (MHFA) – Adult Version***

This class will be held from 8:30am to 4:30pm on Wednesday, May 21, 2025, in the Community Room at the New Lenox Village Hall. This class will be taught by Sertoma Star Services.

***“Applied Suicide Intervention Skills” (ASIST)***

This class will be held from 8:30am to 4:30pm on Wednesday, June 18, 2025 and Thursday, June 19, 2025, in the Community Room at the New Lenox Village Hall. This class will be taught by Sertoma Star Services.

***“Out of Darkness Walk” (American Foundation for Suicide Prevention)***

Marie Kress led our team last year (September 28, 2024) at the Kankakee County Walk, which was held at Riverside Healthcare in Bourbonnais, IL. No date is available for 2025 at this time, but it will likely be around the same time (September). Who is interested in being on Marie’s team this year?

***“A Pathway to Hope and Healing”***

World Suicide Prevention Week is September 7-13<sup>th</sup> this year. World Suicide Prevention Day is September 10<sup>th</sup>. “A Pathway to Hope and Healing” is typically held around this time of year in support of this campaign. A date, time, format and location need to be chosen and a Planning Team will be assembled as well.

***“Mental Health First Aid” (MHFA) – Youth Version***

This class will be held from 8:30am to 4:00pm on Tuesday, October 7, 2025, in the Community Room at the New Lenox Village Hall. This class will be taught by Sertoma Star Services.

***Dr. Mike Mecozzi (NEW) Presentation***

This presentation will be given from 7:00pm to 8:00pm (*tentatively*) on Tuesday, October 21, 2025, in the Community Room at the New Lenox Village Hall.

***“safeTALK”***

This class will be held from 9:00am to 1:00pm on Wednesday, November 19, 2025, in the Community Room at the New Lenox Village Hall. This class will be taught by Sertoma Star Services.

## **Emergency Preparedness Task Group**

This report was given by Dan Martin.

### **New Lenox Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and New Lenox Search and Rescue (SAR) Update.**

Dan spoke about CERT training, meetings and community events that have occurred since the last meeting. Dan also spoke about training, meetings and activations that have occurred since the last meeting.

#### ***“Stop the Bleed”***

Our *Stop the Bleed* Instructors taught a class for the Plainfield Emergency Management Agency, at their facility in Plainfield, on Wednesday, January 15, 2025 from 6:30pm to 8:00pm. Approximately 20 EMA personnel were in attendance. Dan mentioned that we have an outstanding group of instructors.

#### **Severe Weather Preparedness Training / Health and Safety Expo / Touch-a-Truck**

This event will be held on Wednesday, April 2, 2025 from 5:00pm to 9:00pm at Lincoln-Way WEST High School. At the request of the National Weather Service, this year’s presentation will be on Severe Weather Preparedness, rather than Severe Weather Spotter Training.

#### ***“Stop the Bleed”***

*“Stop the Bleed”* will be held on Wednesday, April 9, 2025 from 7:00pm to 8:30pm in the Community Room at the New Lenox Village Hall. At the request of the National Weather Service, they would like this

#### ***“Home Safety and Personal Defense” by Joe Malone***

This class will be held on Tuesday, April 29, 2025 from 7:00pm to 8:30pm in the Community Room at the New Lenox Village Hall.

#### ***“Stop the Bleed”***

*“Stop the Bleed”* will be held on Tuesday, July 29, 2025 from 7:00pm to 8:30pm in the Community Room at the New Lenox Village Hall.

#### **CERT Class #21**

CERT Class #21 will be held in September and October, 2025. The class will be on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6:30pm to 8:30pm in the Community Room at the New Lenox Village Hall. The first class will be on September 9<sup>th</sup> and the last class will be on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Final Exercise (Disaster Simulation) and Graduation will be held on Saturday, October 4<sup>th</sup>.

#### ***“Stop the Bleed”***

*“Stop the Bleed”* will be held on Wednesday, October 8, 2025 from 7:00pm to 8:30pm in the Community Room at the New Lenox Village Hall.

#### ***“Surviving an Active Shooter Encounter” by Joe Malone***

This class will be held on Thursday, October 16, 2025 from 7:00pm to 8:30pm in the Community Room at the New Lenox Village Hall.

## **Older Adults Fall Prevention Task Group**

This report was given by Dan Martin.

### ***“A Matter of Balance” Coach Refresher Training***

Our annual training for MOB Coaches will be held from 9:30am to 12:00pm on Wednesday, February 26, 2025 in the Community Room at the Village Hall. Linda Bunting and Gloria Bodnar will lead this training. A luncheon will immediately follow for all volunteer MOB Coaches.

### ***“A Matter of Balance” NEW Coach Class***

A MOB NEW Coach Class will be held on Tuesday, February 11, 2025 and Wednesday, February 12, 2025 from 1:00pm to 4:30pm (each day). Currently, THREE individuals have volunteered to take the training, which will be taught by Linda Bunting and Gloria Bodnar.

### ***“A Matter of Balance” Class #56***

The Community Room at the New Lenox Village Hall has been reserved on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9:30am to 11:30am in April. The first class would meet on Monday, April 7<sup>th</sup> and the last class would meet on Wednesday, April 30<sup>th</sup>. Dan Martin and Gloria Bodnar will be coaching this class.

### ***“A Matter of Balance” Class #57***

Dominic Ricobene from the New Lenox Public Library is checking to see if Class #57 can be held in their Community Room. The request is for a Tuesday and Thursday class, 9:30am to 11:30am, starting on April 29<sup>th</sup> and ending on May 22<sup>nd</sup>. Linda Bunting and Kathy Beaudry have offered to coach this class.

### ***“Fit and Strong!” Class #11***

TENTATIVELY, “Fit and Strong!” Class #11 will be held at the Spencer Campus in the Summer of 2025. The class will be held Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9:30am to 11:00am. The first class would be held on Monday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> and the last class would be Friday, July 25<sup>th</sup>.

### ***“Seniors With Sole”***

TENTATIVELY, “Seniors With Sole” will be held in the New Lenox Commons in the Summer of 2025. The program will meet on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 8:30am to 9:30am. The first session would be held on Tuesday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> and the last session would be held on Thursday, July 24<sup>th</sup>.

### ***“One Fall Can Change It All”***

A date, time and location (New Lenox VFW Post 9545) need to be selected for this year’s event. Dan Martin will follow-up with Linda Paschall from the VFW to secure a date.

### ***“A Matter of Balance” Class #58***

The Community Room at the New Lenox Village Hall has been reserved on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9:30am to 11:30am in October. The first class would meet on Monday, October 6<sup>th</sup> and the last class would meet on Wednesday, October 29<sup>th</sup>.

### ***“A Matter of Balance” Class #59***

We are currently seeking a location for this class to be held.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS / ORGANIZATION UPDATES**

Dan Martin / Village of New Lenox – thanked everyone for their contributions, noting that our coalition’s work IS making a difference in people’s lives.

Marta Keane / Will County Green - Will County partners with Cities, Townships and Libraries on a variety of collection programs including Rechargeable Battery Recycling, Fire Extinguisher, Traditional Recycling Drop-Off and small electronic collections. Email Marta at [mkeane@willcountygreen.com](mailto:mkeane@willcountygreen.com) if you are interested in being a host site.

Marie Kress / The Mental Wellness Center of Manhattan - Thank-you to Rosecrance for offering a FREE CEU event on March 14th for Recreation and Dialectical Behavioral Therapy.

Lori Kehoe / SunCloud Health – Lori is hosting an Open House for our Naperville Suncloud Health location to highlight our new Adolescent Program ages 12-18. Feb. 26<sup>th</sup> from 4-6pm. Lori will share the flyer with Dan to send out to the group.

Gloria Bloodsaw / Gateway Foundation - Lake Villa location is offering a detox program for people with insurance, without insurance or on Medicaid. Their Chicago and Springfield locations also offer this.

Gateway Foundation is looking for a clinician at their Joliet location.

Gloria is hosting a networking event on February 21<sup>st</sup> from 11am to 2pm. It will be held at a Mexican restaurant and will feature tacos. Gloria will send the flyer to Dan to pass along to the group.

Gloria Bodnar – Anyone interested in taking the “A Matter of Balance” NEW Coach class please let Dan know. Gloria advised that we are always looking for people to assist.

Magdalena Campos / Joliet Township Government – they will be hosting a blood drive on February 4<sup>th</sup> from 1pm to 6pm. Please email Maggie for additional information.

DeMarcus Wilfong / Sam’s Club – explained the process for requesting donations. The event has to be in the range of the zip code range. Dan thanked DeMarcus for coming out to New Lenox Safe Community Coalition events. DeMarcus’ support has included bringing out water, sports drinks and snacks for attendees of our events.

## **NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next bi-monthly meeting of the New Lenox Safe Community Coalition will be on **Wednesday, March 26, 2025 / 10:30am, at Gatto’s Italian Restaurant.**

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 11:38am.

### ***New Lenox Safe Community Coalition Mission Statement***

***“Through a collaborative process, the New Lenox Safe Community Coalition will improve the health, safety and quality of life for residents and visitors through injury analysis and the implementation of programs designed to increase safety and prevent injuries.”***