

**Coalition of Rainbow Alliances Monthly Meeting August 13, 2023**

Members Present

Brian Sylvester President Bert Morton Lee Korty

Lisa Cotton Vice President Harry Carlsen Rex Schadow

Lori Carlsen Secretary Sheila Morris Rob Weis

April Poole Treasurer Candice Clotfelter Sam Downs

Shelley Vaughn Board member at large Mike Johnson

Jenna Broom Board member at large

Jim Barr

Meeting called to order at 4:04pm

Approval of minutes from July 9, 2023- April made a motion to accept the minutes, Rex seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**Treasurers Report**- see printed copies. April went over the financial reports. Lisa made a motion to receive and file for audit treasurers report. Rex seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**Executive Board Meeting**- The board met on 7/30/23 at AgeLinc and had the pleasure of a guest as Cody Mussin of the SPD joined us. Unfortunately, Ken Scarlette was unable to come. Office Mussin explained some of his duties on the force and how they work with the LGBTQ community. The agenda included discussion of several pending projects and activities coming up in the future. One such event is the Ritz 2024. The chairs for this committee have asked that anyone interested in joining the committee please let them know. And, consideration for the theme has begun as well. Officer Mussin provided an idea with his suggestion of “You can’t have community without unity.” Another suggestion was Unity Through Community. CORAL’s strategic goals were discussed and it was decided that we should concentrate on active membership and additional fundraisers.

During the discussion of memberships, it was suggested that all executive board members should be a part of this committee and be active in the recruitment of bringing on new members. Other ideas were to break down the online membership base and call each member, design a new member orientation session to be delivered frequently, and to create an online member survey. As for the fundraisers, suggestions included trivia nights, celebrity bartending, and the resurrecting of the Salo Barn Dance, perhaps using Pole Barn Chic’s new venue. Finally, considering all of our new executive members, we have begun work on also creating an orientation that can be provided to any and all new executive members as well.

**Committee Reports**

**Membership**

 We have seen eight new volunteer forms come through the website and all have received an invite to discuss how they can get involved. As was stated previously, the committee will be working towards a new member orientation program that we can use for those interested in getting more involved. In preliminary discussions, the orientation might be given on a bi-weekly basis if needed. This program would include the how one can get and stay involved as well as a description of each of the committees and how they work with the organization. Email from possible new member – A.B. Hello Brian This is A.B. from Pride Night at the Horseshoes game and then from Saucy Rice. Thank you so much for inviting me over again! I just wanted to reach out and start a channel of communication. Thank you for your openness and kindness. It has truly blown me away. I also wanted to apologize for being reserved last night when you invited me to the table last night. I have a hard time being open around a lot of new people and I apricated your patience with me last night. Best, A B Pronouns: She/Her

**Social Media**

The Facebook page has 34 new followers for a total of 794 members. The most popular postings for the last month was our announcement of the YMCA with 2,231 reaches, our support for the Trans community at 265, and our support post for the YMCA at 230. The Facebook group has 23 new followers for a total of 781. The most popular postings were the LevitAMP Concert announcement at 1,238 reaches, our BCBS food drive at 1,169 and our support for the YMCA at 1,001.

The website saw visits of 215 and new visitors at 161. Most traffic is coming via Google, Facebook, and direct entry. We saw an increase in the number of pages visited per session and the time spent viewing the site also increased to 8 minutes. This past month we also used the site’s email campaign feature for the first time to announce our food drive event and ask our members if they preferred receiving email announcements. Our site allows us 200 free emails per month and we sent out 138 for this event. We received five responses from the campaign with all of them liking the idea. Our current plan with the website is no longer available and our annual dues will be coming up this November. Wix has not told us what our plan will be when it comes due but the old dues were $174.00 annually. They were recently offering a 50% off deal which expired in 24 hours so we’re hopeful another deal will be made before this expires. If not, the annual dues will be $384.00

**Activities**

 Lisa reported that there are no new activities at this time. Lori stated she would set up another APL event. Jenna suggested an outing to the local hockey team as a future event. Jim suggested the Decatur Roller Derby. April stated that Habitat for Humanity is in need of painters. She will contact them to set up a date. Rob suggested we create a plan for doing future events. Jenna motioned to table suggestions and send to the activities committee, Rob seconded. Motion carried.

**Finance**

April reported that the Finance Committee will be setting up a meeting in the next few weeks. She would like committee members to send availability dates and times September 5th thru the 8th.

**Partners & Supporters**

The Thanksgiving dinner has been submitted to the Illinois Times for publication on their calendar. Date will be November 18th at the Pavilion in Lincoln Park. Candice suggested we add the event to the Illinois Eagle also. Brian will send to Illinois Eagle. Lou Bart, YMCA; Lingling Liu, Memorial Hospital; Dre Duvendack, UIS; and Rainbow Café have reached out to us with involvement opportunities. Jeremie Bailey, Audio Video Tech for the mayor and who was present at the concert, sent an email to us with pictures from Pridefest. He would like to be considered for our next Ritz. RuralHarmony has dissolved their local organization and decided to combine it with their Southern Illinois group. Of the members from the old local group, PrideLinc, Phoenix Center and CORAL will remain as representatives on the advisory board. April made a motion to accept committee reports, Rex seconded. Motion carried.

**Old Business**

Blue Cross Blue Sheild food drive- April reported the event was a great success. We received 300 boxes of fresh produce to distribute, instead of the 200 boxes that were ordered. Alderman Larry Rockford and guests were there to help out directing traffic lines, Alderwoman Lekisha Purchase also attended and delivered food boxes to neighborhoods and elder apartments. April stated she would like to do a farmers market with BXBS at one of our events, possibly Juneteenth.

Transgender concerns response for YMCA accusations. Brian felt we were not prepared, nor did we know what to do. - We saw our faith community come forward to help We need better communications with our partners so we’re all on the same page he believes, many of our partners were looking to us for direction. Harry made a motion to form a Rapid Response Team/Committee to bring concerns/response to the board for direction, Jim seconded. Motion carried.

April made a motion that we should write a letter of appreciation to Ald. Jennifer Natoriano, Ald. Erin Connley, and the Springfield Police Department for their support and keeping everyone safe.

LevitAMP concert wrap up- Brian reported the evening went great there were 1,800 people in attendance. Jenna stated it was a lot of fun. Concerts are done for the year. April stated she would like CORAL to check into doing the Community Row event next year.

Decatur Illinois Pridefest- Jim reported the event will be held on September 9, 2023 at the Fairview Park Pavilion from 11am to 8pm. They would like groups doing info tables to be there from 11am-4pm. There will be a Drag show, Voice of pride singing competition. After the event there will be Pride after dark at a separate location.

Jaycees check- Jenna asked what should they do with the check, destroy it , or apply it to next years sponsorship. April made a motion that they should apply it to next year, Jenna seconded. Motion carried.

**New Business**

UIS Involvement Expo- will be held August 30, 2023 at 4pm. CORAL will be there. Bert will order 500 Buck Slips for the event.

Harm Reduction Kits with the Phoenix Center- will be held on August 22, 2023 at 6pm at the Lawrence location.

Out of the Darkness Walk- will be held October 14, 2023 at the UIS Campus.

Lucky Horseshoes Shoetoberfest- will be held October 14, 2023

PCASA Golf Outing- will be held on October 7, 2023 in Jacksonville. Jim made a motion that CORAL does the $250.00 closest to the pin sponsorship, Rex seconded. April added to the motion that CORAL also do the hole $100.00 sponsorship. Rex seconded. Motion for $350.00 total sponsorships carried.

Motherland Gardens Grand Opening- will be held August 26, 2023 9am-6pm. CORAL will advertise the event on their website and Facebook page.

Aids Memorial- Lee stated that the park district does not maintain the memorial. He asked for volunteers to assist with pulling weeds from between bricks. Rob set the date of August 21, 2023 at 6pm for cleanup.

April stated she sent Facebook invites for the laying of Paula Harris brick at the Aids Memorial. It will be on August 27, 2023 at 5pm. Cake and Ice Cream will be provided.

Jenna made a motion to adjourn, Rex seconded, Motion carried meeting adjourned at 5:35pm.