



## **Coalition of Rainbow Alliances Monthly Meeting May 10, 2026**

### **Members Present and on Zoom**

Brian Sylvester President	April Poole
Lisa Cotton, Vice President	Mike Johnson
Sheila Morris, Treasurer	Bob Immel
Francine Turner, Secretary	Bert Morton
Rex Schadow Board Member	Lee Korty
Lamar Walls Board Member Absent	Sam Downs
Liv Gray, Board Member Absent	Roger Ruth
Candice Clotfelter Board Member	
Jim Barr	

Meeting called to order at 4:00 pm

Approval of minutes from April 12, 2026. Lisa made a motion to accept the minutes, Rex seconded, motion carried.

**Treasurers Report**- Sheila gave a verbal report. Lisa made a motion to accept and file for audit, Rex seconded. Motion carried.

### **Committee Reports:**

#### **Membership Committee:**

Our new committee chair, Liv Gray, couldn't be with us this evening but a meeting has been scheduled for the committee on May 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.

#### **Communications Committee:**

Brian reported the Facebook pages had 67 new followers this month bringing the total to 2,320. There were 57 posts for the month with the most popular posts being Lisa Cotton's Good as Gold announcement with 2,501, a city of Springfield job posted by Purchase with 1,951, and the Logan County Pridefest announcement with 761.

The website had 250 visits, coming through Direct, Google, and Facebook in that order. The average session is 4 minutes long with the most popular pages being the calendar and resources. The most clicks are done with the agenda and bylaws this month. We had two "What's Happening" articles posted for the month as well.

**Activities Committee:**

Lisa reported that there are no new activities being planned at the moment.

**Finance Committee:** Sheila had nothing to report at this time.

**Partners & Supporters:**

Brian reported that he and Roy Pyers have discussed a social event to collaborate with Interurban Merchant and CORAL on September 26<sup>th</sup> from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. in Williamsville. While plans are still being made, tentatively, we would have the store and the patio for the event with a performer possibly as well. Roy said they could provide free coffee while anything else could be purchased by the attendees.

Brian stated that he and Teresa Silva met with Betsy Buttrell of IDHR this past week to discuss the upcoming event they are sponsoring, Community Coffee Talk: Know Your Rights, Know Your Neighbors, that is being held at the Lincoln Library on May 20<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. CORAL will be providing the bottled water for the event. This is an opportunity for various groups and people to come together and see how we might collaborate in the future. Brian said that he will be there to staff the CORAL table but wouldn't mind some help if anyone else is available.

Brian reported that AIDS Foundation Chicago, with the Getting to Zero organization, are having a GTZ Community Conversation – Money Moves – Understanding and Defending HIV Funding in Illinois on May 14<sup>th</sup> at noon. The conversation will be on Zoom. Meg McElroy, AFC Director of Special Projects, and Timothy Jackson, AFC Senior Director of Policy and Advocacy, to break down how HIV services are funded in Illinois, what current federal conversations may mean for the future of funding, and why the Illinois state budget plays such a critical role in protecting and sustaining HIV care and prevention programs. Brian has posted the registration for this event on the website and social media. The link to register is on CORAL's website and social media.

Lisa will be meeting with representatives of two organizations this coming week to see about how CORAL can better help them. Wednesday's meeting is with Shatriya Smith who is the Executive Director of the Garvey Tubman Cultural Arts Center. Friday's meeting will be with Carol Harms, Executive Director of the Senior Services of Central Illinois, Springfield Senior Center.

**Vetting Committee:**

Michael discussed membership and eligibility to vote. According to the bylaws article, membership section 2, any person who has a history of interest, and service to the LGBTQ+ plus community can become a member by attending a meeting or event.

The status of member will be current for 12 months following attendance at any meeting or event. A member of CORAL can run for election to the Executive Board. However, to vote in the election of Executive Board members, you must have attended at least half the regular meetings since the previous annual meeting, which is six, or have been an active member over the last calendar year, or are currently a coordinator.

Proxy votes should be turned into the vetting committee two weeks prior to the election. We have 16 eligible voters today.

#### **Ritz Committee:**

Bert reported the amount invoiced for the Ritz fundraiser and expenses. There are a few invoices that still need to be paid. The good news is that the final number for the income appears to be close to what it was last year.

The Ritz committee received a proposal from the President Lincoln Hotel that might be interesting to consider as a more economical alternative to the recent venues.

There is a penciled-in date of April 10th for the Ritz for 2027. And we'll need to confirm that with Zach, get the contract cut and a check to them. When this contract is approved the date of the Ritz will be April 10th.

#### **Old Business:**

#### **Event Wrap-ups:**

#### **Bond County Pridefest:**

Brian wanted to thank those members who made the haul to Greenville to attend Bond County's first Pridefest on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Considering the difficulty they had attempting to have the event last year, Brian felt there was a good turnout with their vendors and attendees. The venue was perfect for their event and it was a beautiful day to be out.

#### **American Teenager (Nico Lang):**

Brian attended the book reading as well as Candace, April, and Leo. He wanted to let everyone know that CORAL received a shout out at the event for their attendance at so many different events with differing causes and that they represented a group of people that know how to work as a team with others. The book is an in depth look at how young trans people are surviving hate as they grow up.

#### **NAACP Event:**

No one from CORAL attended this event, but video coverage of the event posted online showed it had a good attendance.

#### **SPD Liaison Meeting:**

Lisa reported that 20 people showed up. Sara Center/5th Street Renaissance, Pride Link, and CORAL were there. Very good turnout. Patrol officer Kayla West has been assigned as the LGBTQ+ community liaison. The officer was very honest and open about answering questions. She also passed out business cards, so that members of the community can contact her. Leave a message and she will get back to you as soon as possible.

Kayla explained about the SPD Ride Along Program where a local citizen can ride along with any police officer for their shift. They usually suggest four hours as it can be tiring after that period of time. If you want to ride along with her, a 11 p.m. to 3 a.m. ride would work the best. Contact the Springfield Police Department to schedule a ride along.

### **Lincoln Veteran's Campout:**

Sam Downs reported that this event was successful, and in large part to the support provided from the CORAL organization. During the course of the campout, supporters that arrived early began to dwindle, but then a car full of CORAL members showed up. This was very encouraging for those who stayed the whole night. The event was also a financial success, raising money for the veterans.

### **Ritz Photos:**

Brian just wanted to let everyone know that the photos from the Ritz event are available. The address and PIN number are on the CORAL website and social media.

### **Springfield Pridefest:**

Brian reported the wait for booth location information will be over this Saturday for Springfield's Pridefest celebration. The map for vendors has not been released yet but based on my conversations with the Pridefest committee, it appears that we will be on the 4<sup>th</sup> street side of the Y-block. The parade will be located at the same location as last year. Brian has also purchased more merch for the event so we will have Pride flags, pens, and Progress Flag pins along with the items we already have. Brian believes he has all the setup items for the day so he will bring them. We need the following:

1. Who will be available to help with setting up that morning?
2. Who will be walking in the parade?
3. Can we get some idea as to when members might be available to staff the booth during the day?

After some discussion, CORAL members signed up for all needed booth timeslots and for marching in the parade.

### **Jacksonville Pridefest:**

Brian reported that we're all signed up for their Pridefest. They will provide the table and chairs. Last year, we were on the covered patio but we could be inside as well. Brian will bring the merch and items but want to make sure we have other members there to help. We can probably begin setup at 11:00 with the event beginning at noon and ends at 4:00 p.m.

### **Logan County Pridefest:**

Brian reminded everyone that Logan County Pridefest will be June 6<sup>th</sup> at the Downtown Lincoln Square from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m.

### **Adopt a Street Proposal:**

There was a lengthy discussion about which streets that the CORAL group would like to support for cleanup in Springfield. Eastside streets of Clearlake, between 11th and 18th were mentioned. So was 11th and Ash and/or Cook Street.

**New Business:****Pride Kick Off Party:**

Brian wanted to remind everyone that there will be a Pride Kickoff party at 5<sup>th</sup> Street Gem the night before Springfield Pridefest beginning at 7:00 and goes on till 1:00 a.m. The Brothers & Sisters group is planning on going there after dinner that night.

**5<sup>th</sup> Street Renaissance/SARA Center:**

Brian reported 5<sup>th</sup> Street will be holding their annual meeting on May 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at Erin's Pavilion. As a long-time partner with CORAL, Brian would like to see a strong contingent of CORAL members at the event to show our support.

**Pride Picnic:**

Brian stated that CORAL's annual Pride Picnic is on June 13<sup>th</sup> at Lincoln Park, Shelter #4, from 5:00 to 10:00 p.m. Set up for the event usually begins around 4:00 p.m.

**Juneteenth:**

Unfortunately, we have yet again scheduled our picnic for the same date as Juneteenth as we thought they might have it the following weekend. Brian asked whether CORAL would be a sponsor for the event and at what level. Last year, we were a \$500.00 sponsor. We have walked in the parade many years now so it is assumed that we will do this again this year. The \$500.00 sponsorship will waive that fee. However, they are not waiving the booth fee for sponsorship levels less than \$2,500.00 this year. April Poole made a motion to sponsor for \$500.00 for Juneteenth Celebration Parade, Jim Barr seconded it. Motion Carries

**SAA Paint the Street:**

Brian stated that SAA has begun accepting registrations for their Paint the Street event, which is on June 27<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. Is CORAL interested in participating again this year? The fee is the same as last year at \$40.00. A motion was made to approve the participation by Lisa, seconded by Rex. The motion passed.

**American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Community Walk:**

Brian reported that he has already registered CORAL as a team for the AFSP walk in September. He will begin pushing out involvement for the event a few months before the event takes place.

Rex made a motion that we sponsor the walk for \$1,000. Candace seconded. Motion carries.

**Elections:**

The 2026 Executive Board nominees up for election are Vice President Lisa Cotton, unopposed, Secretary Francine Turner, unopposed, Treasurer April Poole and Roger Ruth are running for treasurer.

Member-at-Large 1, Bob Immel, Member-at-Large 2, Olive Gray, Member-at-Large 4, Lamar Walls, Member-at-Large 5, Candice Clotfelder are all running unopposed.

Roger Ruth withdrew his name from the running for the Treasurer position. That made all positions uncontested.

April Poole is now in the position of Treasurer for CORAL.

Rex made a motion to accept all candidates, Candice seconded. Jim Barr abstained from voting. Lisa Cotton opposed. Motion carries.

### **Announcements, Update, and Communication from Other Organizations**

#### **CORAL Bylaws Meeting:**

The need to have a by-laws meeting in order to review and update current laws was discussed. It was scheduled for 6:30 pm at AgeLinc on May 28th.

#### **Decatur Events:**

A Women's Roller Derby event will be on June 6, 4pm-8pm. The Decatur Illinois vs the Prairieland Punishers at the Decatur Civic Center.

Lisa made a motion to close the meeting, Rex seconded. Motion Carried.

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