



C.O.R.A.L. Monthly Meeting Minutes from December 12, 2023

Present: Brian Sylvester- President, Lisa Cotton – Vice President, April Poole- Treasurer
Jenna Broom – Member at large, Shelly Vaughan – Member at large, David Yankee –
Member at Large, Jim Barr – Ex Officio, Rex Schadow, Lee Korty, Mike Johnson, Rob
Weiss, Candice Clodfelter, Bert Morton, Harry Carlsen,

The meeting was called to order at 5:00pm

Minutes were reviewed from November 12, 2023. Motion to approve minutes was made by Lisa and seconded by Jenna. Minutes approved.

Treasury report – April submitted printed copies. April went over expenditures and balance as of December 10, 2023, Lisa made motion to accept and file for audit. Rex seconded. Motion Passed.

Committee Reports

Membership – Brian reported that CORAL received two new volunteer applications this past month and both have been contacted. One has set up a phone conversation to discuss how they might get involved. There has been great feedback for the upcoming membership orientation presentation and Brian will be scheduling a preview in January after the holiday season is over.

Social Media – Brian reported Facebook group had 70 posts and comments and was viewed 2,163 times this past month. There were 14 new members added, bringing the total to 810. The most popular posts were the announcement of Intricate Minds Youth group with 360 views, the UIS post for a student with 341, and the Thanksgiving dinner with 258.

The Facebook page had 61 posts and comments and was viewed 1,263 times this month. There were 8 new members added, bringing the total to 839. The most popular posts were the Thanksgiving Dinner at 277, the announcement of the Ritz theme at 217, and the pricing for the Ritz at 214.

The website had 153 visits this month with 121 considered new or coming thru Google, which was used 85% of the time for the month. The most popular pages are the about page, the events page, and the calendar in that order.

Activities- Lisa reported that there were no activities for this month. All efforts were directed to Thanksgiving and the Annual Christmas get together.

Finance- April reported the committee has not met but will be meeting in January 2024 to prepare the upcoming year's budgets.

Partners and Supporters - Brian stated that Speak Out Illinois, based in Peoria, has reached out to CORAL to work together on a project which will be covered later in the agenda. Brian reported that Illinois Eagle is in the process of converting to a 501(c)3 and may be looking to CORAL for some assistance in the future.

Brian also requested that the Executive Council stick around for a brief meeting to discuss another partnership that he would like to have discussed before any movement is made on the subject.

Ritz Committee – Bert stated that next meeting is for Thursday December 14, 2023 at 5:30 pm at Agelink. All letters for advertisers, sponsors and table captains have been completed and will be mailed tomorrow. We need to do outreach to Governor’s Office, Departments of Human Rights, Public Health and others with invitation letters. Brian added that Daisy Janes, a downtown store has an LGBTQ section. Brian is going to reach out to them as a possible sponsor.

April made motion to accept all reports. Lisa seconded. Motion passed.

Old Business

Thanksgiving – The dinner was successful with 88 persons in attendance. Brian suggested that we need to bring more hot plates next year since those attendees at end of line received cold food. Rob took the donated can goods to Fifth Street Renaissance and placed them in their food pantries. All food was gone by the following week.

World Aids Day – Rob reported the keynote speaker was Director Sameer Vohra MD, JD, MA of the Illinois Department of Public Health. There were 30 persons present. CORAL, Fifth Street Renaissance, Church of the Brethren and MCC Metropolitan Community Church were present a co-sponsors.

Holiday Lights Parade - Jenna reported that there were 43 entries. The Jaycees did an excellent job on the Christmas Parade Float for Santa and Mrs. Claus.

Acorn Equality Breakfast - CORAL had 2 tables at event this year and has had a table at the event for the last 14 years. Acorn Breakfast is 24 years old. Over \$36,000.00 in scholarships were awarded and \$60,500.00 was raised for following years. This was their highest year so far.

Trans Day of Remembrance – Brian reported that he and Candice were asked to announce the names of those trans individuals that were killed in the past year at the event held at the Phoenix Center on 11/20/23. It was a very somber event this year with many attendees getting emotional during the proceedings.

Holiday Dinners – April reported there were 215 meals prepared this Thanksgiving. Cold prep the night before was done in about an hour. There were 5 trays of hot dishes left. April received two thank you letters and a check for \$100.00 dollars from a 99-year-old man.

Hockey Team – Rex reported that the hockey game that CORAL will be attending will be February 24, 2024 Saturday at 7 pm at the Nelson Center in Lincoln Park.

Brothers and Sisters Christmas Party – Lisa stated they we have 33 persons confirmed. There are 2 empty slots, but all orders must be in by 5 Pm on December 11, 2024. The party is for December 16, 2023 at 6:30 pm at Boccardi’s

Illinois Times – Brian reported the book of lists is out, and CORAL is listed as a community service center at the number one position.

Out Safe Directive – Brian stated that Carolyn Austin, of AgeLinc/PrideLinc, has been given a grant to create a program to address violence committed against the older LGBTQ community from Doris Turner. They have had two meetings on the program. Shelley Vaughn will be added to the group soon.

New Business

Time Change – Lisa Made motion to change the start time of the future meetings from 5PM to 3 PM. After some discussion, Rex amended the proposal to 4:00 p.m. A vote was taken and 5 were for the change and 5 were opposed. Brian, as president, voted to approve new time change.

Rural Harmony – Brian reported their Web site has been updated to include CORAL. Past, current, and future studies will be added to the website. The current study on cervical cancer for lesbians and trans males is hoping to find some members of the trans community who may be willing to participate in the study as well as an educational video to be produced.

Doris Turner Holiday Party – Brian reported that Doris Turner will be having a Holiday Party at 725 North Garnd from 5 to 7 pm on December 21, 2023. Bring can goods to be given to food pantry.

Holiday Meals – April reported that 200 plus meals will be prepared for Christmas Dinners to be held at Chatham Methodist Church in Chatham. The following requests were made;

- 5 Jars of applesauce 40 oz jars – Brian
- 5 dozen cookies – Bert and Lee
- 5 dozen cookies – Shelly
- 2 Jars of apple sauce sugar free 40 oz – Rex
- 5 dozen rolls – Mike
- 5 dozen rolls – Harry
- 4 dozen sugar free cookies - ????????

Drop off Friday December 22nd 10 am until 4 pm

Cold Prep – Saturday December 23rd at 9 AM (Bert, Lee)

Delivery Christmas December 25th 9:15 am (Rex, Mike)

Sweatshirts / Jerseys - April reported we need to order a minimum of 12. Quarter Zip pullovers with embroidering sizes to 4x and cost \$35. 00 but sell for \$40.00. Sweatshirts are screen printed and hooded with sizes up to 4x. Cost for sweatshirt is \$25.00 and sell for \$32.00. April made motion to pursue this and get twelve persons to buy. David seconded and motion passed. Brian will place it on the Web.

Announcements:

LGBTIQ Resource Fair – Brian reported that Speak Out Illinois reached out to CORAL to participated in this event at Lincoln Library on April 20, 2024. There will be up to 10 vendors. Free lunch will be served to vendors. More information will be coming as the event gets closer.

Poor Persons Campaign – Rob reported attending an afternoon seminar with First Presbyterian Church and other entities who are requesting groups to march on state capitols on March 2, 2024 to address poverty. CORAL is being asked to participate.

Lisa made motion to participate Mike seconded and motion passed.

Q&A United – Rob reported that Tim Halworth of First Presbyterian will be taking the lead for this group. April stated that there was concern about Grace Lutheran leading this group or being the fiduciary as they are not a LGBTQ affirming church.

UIS Normal Heart – The play will be held on March 20, 21, 23 and 24, 2024 and will conflict with the Ritz event on March 23rd. Rob reported that he has been asked to assist with the educational component of the event. Information co-sponsors are Phoenix Center, 5th Street Renaissance and CORAL, if we choose to participate.

Trips Out-of-State – David reported that he would like to investigate whether there might be any interest in the community for LGBTQ events out-of-state. He thought that it might be possible for CORAL and the Phoenix Center to bring their member base together for these trips.

Lucky Horseshoes – Harry mentioned that CORAL should begin thinking about Pride Night at the Lucky Horseshoes. They also have a fund raiser for Dinner on the Diamonds to be announced later.

Animal Protective League (APL) – Lisa made motion to add \$100.00 to the amount set aside for APL for a total of \$200.00 to donate for Christmas. Rex seconded and the motion carried.

Shirts – Jim made the statement that Marty has donated two of his CORAL shirts back to CORAL to be given away to anyone that can wear a 2x.

Harry made motion to adjourn, Rex seconded, Meeting adjourned at 6:20 pm