

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA
FORT MYERS DIVISION**

NAPLES PRIDE,

Plaintiff,

Case No. 2:25-cv-00291

v.

CITY OF NAPLES, *et al.*,

Defendants.

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DECLARATION OF SHAWN DESEAR

I, Shawn Desear, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, declare as follows:

1. I was born and raised in Naples, Florida. I have lived in Florida my whole life, and still call Naples home.
2. I have served on Naples Pride's Board of Directors since 2018.
3. I am a professional drag artist, performing under the stage name Lisa Renee. I have been a drag performer for over 20 years. I regularly perform in Naples, throughout Southwest Florida, and across Florida in St. Petersburg, Pensacola, Tampa, Ft. Lauderdale, Miami, and Jacksonville.
4. My drag performances are fun and funny. Above all, they are a source of entertainment, and a way for me to express myself artistically and connect with my

audience. Through drag, I strive to send a message of inclusion and acceptance, particularly for the LGBTQ+ community.

5. To me, drag challenges gender stereotypes, and my drag persona allows me to embody a theatrical and highly visible gender presentation that feels authentic to me, but does not necessarily correspond to my everyday gender presentation or my birth sex. To that end, the drag persona I created—Lisa Renee—is an over-the-top, big, glamorous woman. Lisa wears large wigs and costumes like gowns and dresses and uses padding and a chest plate to create an exaggerated figure.

6. I enjoy interacting with audience members both in and out of drag to observe their varied reactions to my personality and mannerisms. As a more effeminate man, I sometimes feel more accepted when I am in drag than when I am not.

7. I have never incorporated nudity into my performances, and always cater my outfits to the venue where I am performing.

8. For over a decade, I have also organized and produced drag performances and drag-related events, including drag bingo, drag brunch, comedy shows, and Pride festivals.

9. Since 2017, I have coordinated and booked all entertainment for Naples Pride's Pridefest, including drag performers. As Lisa Renee, I have also performed at Pridefest every year since the festival began.

10. Before I even book drag performers for Pridefest, I inform them that their performance must be family-friendly, and the audience will include attendees of all

ages. I inform prospective performers that nudity is strictly prohibited, and that they must not expose any private areas of their bodies. If a performer does not agree to these conditions, I will not book them for Pridefest.

11. About a month prior to the event, I remind performers that their bodies must be covered, they cannot use swear words or other vulgar language, and that their performances cannot include anything that might be deemed sexual.

12. At Pridefest itself, I monitor performers' costumes and acts to make sure they adhere to these standards. If not, I will intervene. For example, in or around 2018, I saw a performer backstage wearing an outfit that had transparent mesh fabric, which I thought some audience members might consider too revealing. I asked the performer to change, but when she didn't have another outfit, I informed her that she could not perform.

13. Around 2022, I noticed increased opposition to drag around Naples and across Florida. In response to protests against drag performers, certain venues where I regularly hosted or performed decided to cancel drag-related events, like the comedy night I used to host. Unfortunately, I have lost work due to this surge in opposition.

14. That same opposition has affected Naples Pride and its annual Pridefest. I understand that beginning in 2023, the City of Naples forced Naples Pride to hold the Pridefest's drag performance indoors in a smaller, seated venue, rather than on the outdoor stage in Cambier Park at the center of Pridefest. I also understand that the City of Naples has required Naples Pride to hold the Pridefest drag performance indoors again this upcoming year and to limit attendees to those over eighteen.

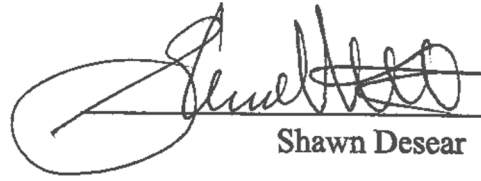
15. The Norris Center, where the drag performance has been held in the past and is scheduled to be held this year, can only accommodate about 200 people at a time. In contrast, when the drag performances at Pridefest in previous years were on the mainstage, several thousand attendees could all enjoy the show together.

16. I feel that holding the Pridefest drag show outdoors is an opportunity to show pride in, and support for, the LGBTQ+ community in Naples and advocate for more acceptance, including of me personally. That message is more effective outdoors, with thousands of people attending, than indoors, with no more than 200 people attending and an age-restricted audience. When the performance is forced indoors and restricted to adult observers—as if it were something dirty, explicit, or shameful, which it is not—the performance’s message of pride, support, and acceptance is undermined.

17. When I book drag performers for Pridefest, a major consideration for prospective performers is whether they will be in a small venue or able to perform to a large audience. When Naples Pride has held past Pridefest drag performances outdoors, I was able to book notable talent from major cities like Miami and Ft. Lauderdale who provide a unique perspective through their drag performances and star-power to the event. By contrast, when the performance has been held in a small indoor venue, I have been unable to book such performers. If the performance this year is forced indoors again, that will likely continue to be the case.

Dated: April 11, 2025

Naples, Florida



Shawn Desear