

**UConnPIRG Core Meeting**  
Tuesday September 8th 2015 at 7:09PM  
Student Union Room 410

**Attendance:**

Voting Members: Adedoyin Ladoja, Saman Azimi, Lian Kish, Ariana Javidi, Gabriella Pagliuca, Matt Rowe  
Late: Toyin Akinnusotu, Jordyn Styczynski

Non-Voting Members: Primitiva Gradante, Abby Katz, Alex Redmond  
Late: Viara Radoulova

Guests: Gina DeVivo Brassaw, Donna Farvard

**Meeting called to order at 7:09 PM by acting chair Saman Azimi.**

**I. Resignation:** Saman then stated that UConnPIRG Chair Katie McLeese resigned through email on the evening of Sunday September 6th 2015. Per the UConnPIRG Bylaws when a resignation is called before Core, the resignation takes effect immediately after Core, however because Katie McLeese was not present at the beginning or entirety of this meeting former Chair Saman Azimi conducted the meeting. No questions asked. Discussion ended at 7:11PM

Toyin Akinnusotu and Jordyn Styczynski arrived at 7:11PM.

**II. Intros:** At the beginning of every UConnPIRG Core meeting it is a custom to ask upon the attendance of the meeting to state their name, class at UConn, and campaign they are working on, if applicable, along with an answer to the posed intro question. The intro question for this meeting, asked by Saman Azimi, was, "If you had to choose a show to be a star of which show would it be?" All persons in attendance answered said question with gusto. Discussion ended at 7:16PM

**III. Updates**

**A. Campaign Updates**

**Textbooks-** Presented by the Textbooks Campaign Coordinator Toyin Akinnusotu. Last semester the Textbooks campaign advocated for and helped pass through the legislature HB 6117, an act concerning the use of digital open-source textbooks in higher education. HB 6117 effectively established an open-source textbook consortium allowing students to be assigned free textbooks available online through UConn. The bill also allows the state and UConn to award grants to professors to write their own textbooks to be available to the open-source textbook consortium. The goal for the Fall 2015 semester is to advocate that professors switch from using for-profit textbooks to applying for grants to write their own textbooks that will be available to the consortium.

**Solar-** Presented by the Solar Campaign Coordinator Jordyn Styczynski. The goal of the solar campaign this semester is to show UConn President Susan Herbst that UConn students what their university to become 20% solar powered by 2025. The campaign will achieve this goal by tabling to gather photo petitions, endorsements from other student organizations across campus, and ultimately a USG resolution.

**Disposable Water Bottle Ban-** Presented by Disposable Water Bottle Ban Campaign Coordinator Ariana Javidi. The goal of this campaign is to remove the UConn brand of disposable water bottles from campus and possibly the Dasani brand as well.

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**Hunger and Homelessness-** Presented by the Hunger and Homelessness Campaign Coordinator Adedoyin Ladoja. The goal of this campaign is to continue UConnPIRG's work in helping fix the problems related to hunger and homelessness. This involves continuing the partnership established with the Holy Family shelter in Willimantic, raising \$5,000 to go to Holy Family so they can continue their work, and partner with the Center for Career Development and other organizations on campus to help people suffering from hunger and homelessness gain job and independent living skills so that they can leave poverty behind. The Hunger and Homelessness Campaign has meetings on Mondays, 5-6PM.

**Antibiotics-** Presented by the UConnPIRG Campus Organizer Donna Farvard. Last semester this campaign was successful in helping to convince McDonalds to stop using human antibiotics in their chicken production by 2017. The goal of the antibiotics campaign this semester is to continue to push food companies that sell large quantities of meat to stop the use of human antibiotics in raising their livestock particularly Subway. This will involve 4,000 students signing a giant 10ft prop sub to be mailed to Subway headquarters, gathering photo petitions, media hits and lots of tabling. There will be a prop making session from 11AM to 3PM on Wednesday in Student Union Room 214 and a table on Fairfield way from 11AM to 3PM on Thursday.

**Social Media-** Presented by the Social Media Campaign Coordinator Lian Kish. The goal of this campaign is to update and manage UConnPIRG's social media presence. This includes presence on Facebook, Twitter, Tublr, and Instagram. Campaign Coordinators will contact Lian with information to be posted via email.

No questions asked. Discussion ended at 7:31.

Viara arrived at 7:31 because someone phone banking told her that core was at 7:30.

**B. Chapter Updates-**

**Recruitment Drive-** Presented by Donna Farvard. There was a goal to collect 1140 interest cards, thus far there have been 720 collected. Thus far, from these cards, more people have wanted to volunteer, more people are showing up to volunteer events and committing to coming to another event. The goal of having 11% of every class respond to a class rap jumped to 12%. Donna suggested that we continue to schedule more class raps per day along with tabling 5 hours a day so that we reach our interest card goal. Phone banking this semester was better than last spring with 66% percent of people called say yes to volunteer over a goal of 50%, 85 new people have volunteered over a goal of 70 at this point, 62% of people who say that they will actually show up do over a goal of 50%. Donna suggested that the chapter should continue to do more to build leadership. Thus far only 10 people have taken leadership. No questions asked. Discussion ended at 7:36

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**Kickoff Meeting-** Presented by Saman Azimi. Saman reported that the Kickoff meeting will still happen on Wednesday September 16th at 7:00 in Student Union Room 304. Local State representative Gregg Haddad and State Senator Mae Flexer will attend. No questions asked. Discussion ended at 7:38.

Saman then opened up the floor for discussion regarding the recruitment drive and posed the questions of what went well and what could have went better thus far particularly asking new volunteers. Alex Redmond said that he thought the majority of volunteers liked the volunteer events and thought they were fun. Abby Katz said that when volunteering at Toyin's Textbooks table she felt odd approaching people from the table. Primatria suggested playing music at the table to attract people. Discussion paused at 7:42.

At 7:42 Viara apologized because she felt lost coming into the meeting. Saman gave a brief recap of the meeting thus far and post Viara with the intro question which she answered. Discussion ended at 7:43PM.

Discussion on the recruitment drive continued at 7:43PM. Toyin said he liked the idea of music and encouraged big signs but did not know if there were any university policy against either. Jordyn suggested better training and for hourly coordinators to suggest tips to volunteers when needed. Primativa suggested giving volunteers tabling pens in hand so that volunteers would not have to walk back to the table to get a pen. Lian suggested creating a facebook event for volunteer events. Addy stated that she reached out to RA's to send Kickoff information out and ask people personally to attend along with hanging flyers in dorms. Discussion ended at 7:52.

### **C. Statewide Updates**

**Statewide Conference-** UConnPIRG is part of a network of other chapters of PIRG (Public Interest Research Groups) across the nation. We directly work with to other ConnPIRG Chapter, UConnPIRG Hartford, and ConnPIRG at Trinity, and multiple chapter's part of the Massachusetts chapter of PIRG called MASSPIRG. UConnPIRG will be hosting an overnight conference with chapters from ConnPIRG and MASSPIRG attending the 26th and the 27th of September. Jordyn asked where the students coming from other schools would be staying. Saman stated, "We'll find out!"

### **Reimbursements-**

Saman presented the following reimbursements:

- \$31.90 to be paid to the UConn Co-op for two (2) black ink cartridges purchased August 12th 2015.

- \$12.58 to be paid to the UConn Co-op for two (2) large boxes of chalk purchased on September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

- **Sum:** \$44.48 to the UConn Co-op.

Saman Azimi made the motion to pay out the above stated reimbursements. Jordyn Styczynski seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following results:

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Yes- Adedoyin Ladoja, Saman Azimi, Lian Kish, Ariana Javidi, Gabriella Pagliuca, Matt Roe, Toyin Akinnusotu, Jordyn Styczynski

No- 0

Abstentions- Saman Azimi

Christian stated that from now on any UConnPIRG member or attendant of a future UConnPIRG Core meeting who is requesting a reimbursement instead of abstaining from the vote on their specific reimbursement, should recuse them self from the meeting, and leave the room until the vote on their specific reimbursement is made. This is to prevent a conflict-of-interest situation where an individual member is influencing the core to make a decision in their favor. If the recording Secretary or the acting chair of the meeting, which for UConnPIRG is usually the President, is requesting a reimbursement, they also must recuse themselves and leave the room, however a temporary recording Secretary or temporary chair must be avoided to record or facilitate the voting of the reimbursement.

**Volunteer Activities for the upcoming week-**

**Phonebanking- Every Night 6pm-9pm**

**Propmaking- Wednesday 9/9 11am-3pm**

**Table- Thursday 9/10 11am-3pm**

Saman adjourned the meeting at 8:01

Submitted by,  
Christian Allyn  
UConnPIRG Secretary