

UConnPIRG Core Meeting Minutes 18-09
Monday October 30, 2017, 7 PM
SU 325

Voting Members: Casey Lambert (Chapter Chair), Walter Dodson (Vice Chair), Alex Pawlak (Treasurer), Emily O'Hara (Secretary), Matt Talley, Justin Kaiser, Kelly Flanagan, Bob Hannan, Noah O'Connor, Michael Garnett, Nate Aroian, Tori Zane, Isabel Umland, Chad Shroeder, Dylan DeMoura, Andrew Frosti, Michael Katz, Vincent Cajigas, Antonio Cajigas, Aaron Golab, Kharl Reynado, Ian Beattie, Kyleigh Hillerud

Non-voting Members:

Guests: Arielle Mizrahi (Campus Organizer), Sasha Richardson (Advisor)

Meeting called to order at 7:03 PM by Chair Casey Lambert

- I. Introductions
- II. Campaign Updates
 - a. Democracy—Noah O'Connor
 - i. USG passed a bill defending the Citizens Election Program. CEP also was saved in the budget.
 - ii. McMahon 12-3 PM table on Wednesday and Friday
 - iii. Matt Byanyima: Raising visibility about ranked choice voting
 - b. Textbooks—Kharl Reynado
 - i. Textbook props available in the library
 - ii. 2-3 PM prop-making in the office
 - iii. Photo petition table from 5-7 in a dining hall (TBA)
 - c. Save the Bees—Emily O'Hara
 - i. Successful service project run on Friday at Spring Valley Student Farm, will be running another one this Friday (11/3) from 4-6 PM
 - ii. Table this week, time and date TBD
 - d. 100% Renewable Energy—Walter Dodson
 - i. Next Wednesday, November 8th 7 PM at Chem A203: Film screening of *An Inconvenient Sequel*. Will be followed up by a panel discussion of 3 professors.
 - e. Hunger and Homelessness—Bob Hannan
 - i. H&H Awareness week, the week before Thanksgiving. Car fill-up, movie screening, tables
 - f. Stop Styrofoam—Justin Kaiser
 - i. Table collected 264 petitions: 650 total for the semester
 - ii. This week: Call-in week of action to get Dunkin to realize that students care about the issue
 - iii. Sign up for tables throughout this week
- III. 100% Rally Update—Arielle
 - a. Members of the campaign met up with members of the Sierra Club regarding hosting a rally in February. The representative, Martha, asked students to sign a petition opposing a pipeline being applied for by Eversource
- IV. Rebranding—Kharl Reynado
 - a. Call happened yesterday regarding PIRG rebranding. Name will be changed and there is a timeline of when it will be launched. There was a national call of leaders from each state nitpicking through the final draft

UConnPIRG Core Meeting Minutes 18-09

Monday October 30, 2017, 7 PM

SU 325

- b. Report on timeline: Soft launch will be occurring in January before continuing with rolling out the name by August of 2018
 - i. Walter Dodson: Input from students from across the country. Students across the nation generally shared the same opinions
 - ii. Emily O'Hara: Agrees. Excited.
- V. Quarterly Bill—Alex Pawlak
 - a. \$146.42
 - i. Comprised of charges, payroll, previous timecard charges
 - ii. Alex motions to approve the bill
 - 1. Ian seconds
 - 2. Passes unanimously
 - b. Save the Bees—Emily O'Hara
 - i. Students on the Save the Bees campaign had fundraised on October 11, 2017 to donate money to pollinator efforts at Spring Valley Student Farms. The students deposited the money into the Hunger and Homelessness #61 account, informing the manager of the farm that a check would be given to the farm. The farm was going to use the check to purchase pollinator-friendly shrubs. However, when a student went to pick up the shrubs for the farm, the purveyor informed the student that the farm had not yet paid for them. The student then paid for the shrubs himself out of pocket. Because of a miscommunication, we'd like to pay for the shrubs as a reimbursement to the student, which came to a total of approximately \$56
 - 1. Emily motions to reimburse Sam Donahue for up to \$60 for bee-friendly pollinators purchased for
 - a. Andrew seconds
 - b. Walter abstains because he was not in the room for the introduction of the business
 - c. Excluding Walter's abstention, the vote passes unanimously
 - ii. The campaign has been discussing purchasing stickers to promote visibility for the majority of the semester.
 - 1. Emily motions to purchase Save the Bees stickers up to \$140
 - a. Alex seconds
 - b. Passes unanimously
 - c. The 100% campaign needs to get posters printed for their upcoming film screening of An Inconvenient Sequel. The estimated cost of printing 200 posters is \$75 through the UConn document production services.
 - 1. Casey motions to purchase the printing of posters, with a limit of \$100.
 - a. Isabel seconds
 - b. Passes unanimously
 - d. The hunger and homelessness campaign needs custom designed T-shirts for the upcoming Hunger and Homelessness awareness week. Estimated cost of 36 T-shirts at \$9.59 each, plus shipping and tax, is \$396.99.
 - 1. Walter motions to purchase the T-shirts with a limit of up to \$400.

UConnPIRG Core Meeting Minutes 18-09

Monday October 30, 2017, 7 PM

SU 325

- a. Alex seconds
- b. Passes unanimously

VI. Organizational History—Kharl Reynado

- a. College campuses are historically political hotbeds (ex: opposing the Vietnam War). After the 1970's, it was obvious that students were a decision-making body and were the leading force for social change movements at the time. Ex: freedom marches, counter protests, etc. Students were making change on a number of issues. This is where the PIRG structure comes from. Students should have authority in their lives, but in a lot of situations, they don't. PIRG functions as a vehicle for students to make a difference on a number of issues.
 - i. In the present day, students work on a number of issues and make tangible change happen. At CALPIRG, California banned plastic grocery bags as a result of the influence from students at those chapters. At last year's New Voters Project, students registered other students to vote. This happens every year on college campuses and starts a habit to vote that will hopefully be for life. In 2016, Student PIRGs helped to register nearly 40,000 students to vote. Students, at the most basic level, are working for students, especially on the textbooks campaign that has saved students so much money.

VII. Organizational Structure—Walter Dodson

- a. At the top of the structure is the State Board. In CT, there is a 10-person student board, with 3 chapters in CT, and a proportional distribution. UConn gets 6 seats, while UConn Hartford and Trinity College get 2 seats each. This also exists in other states, dependent upon the number of chapters in each state.
 - i. Within that board, there is an Executive Board: State Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary. These boards push the statewide goals for the organization. UConnPIRG is part of a greater organization, known as ConnPIRG. The chapters ultimately direct the state boards.
 - 1. Below the State Board is the Organizing Director (OD), who reports to the State Board. For MA/CT, there is Sam Gibb. The OD advises the State Board on how to effectively serve. Sam provides project packets and informs the students, among other things. The Assistant Organizing Director is Shawna Upton
 - a. Below the OD is the Campus Organizer; Arielle is the Campus Organizer at UConn. These organizers help to direct the campaigns at each chapter. Students have ideas, yet don't know how to execute them. The Campus Organizer is trained and has a wealth of knowledge to learn more about how to be strategic on their campaigns/projects. We can also provide trainings/advice for other groups
 - ii. On the national level, there are national staff/advocates/fellows who work in the Public Interest Network, which we are a part of. We have national advocates on Clean Energy, Textbooks, etc.
 - iii. Our contract lobbyist, Jim Leahy, works with us to advise us in which way we should move as a statewide organization. He also advises us on how to act as a chapter. He also works with our State Director.

UConnPIRG Core Meeting Minutes 18-09

Monday October 30, 2017, 7 PM

SU 325

- b. The campus chapters drive the goals behind what the state board chooses, which in turn affect change on their own campuses. The campus chapters really direct the state board. At the end of the day, everyone on the state board comes from a chapter.
- c. Questions
 - i. Nate Aroian: How do we move up this not-so-linear ladder?
 1. Walter: Recruitment→ Volunteer→ Hourly Coordinator→ Event Coordinator→ Tactical Coordinator→ Campaign Coordinator.
Allows you to have an overall view of what you're trying to do in a campaign. There is no direct route really, it's flexible.
 2. Ban the Bottle was started by an Environmental Studies major who was not a part of PIRG and felt that this was an important issue. She wrote her own proposal and ran a campaign under PIRG. Casey took over the campaign as a sophomore. This paved the way for other campaigns. We ran it because we had a history. It became one of our most visual campaign
 3. Emily will be stepping down from the state and chapter levels as Secretary in a few weeks, so any students interested should begin to consider before the special election.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM by Chair Casey Lambert

Minutes submitted by Emily O'Hara