

UConnPIRG Core Meeting 20-10
Monday October 28th, 2019, 7 PM
SU 310

Voting Members: Emily O'Hara (Chair), Samuel Donahue (Treasurer), Michael Katz (Secretary), Venkata Patchigolla, Ben Albee, Colleen Keller, Dylan DeMoura, Audrey Soltis, Julia Ward, Angelina Vaccarelli, Shafina Chowdhury, Natalie Seier, Leah LePage, Victor Htut, Cheyenne Tavares, Matt Trainor, Chris Brown, Kyleigh Hillerud, Elizabeth Turano, Parth Patel

Guests: Petra Favorite (UConnPIRG campus organizer), Kurt Daigle (UConnPIRG primary advisor)

- I. Meeting brought to order at 7:03pm by Emily O'Hara (Chair)
- II. Introductions
- III. Ex Officio Senator Update
 - A. Colleen Keller notes that last week was rather uneventful with a caucus and sexual harassment training, but that this week she and Ben Albee will present their legislation in support of the Mansfield net zero school initiative.
- IV. Campaign Updates
 - A. Affordable Textbooks
 1. Shafina Chowdhury recounts that at last week's table, Affordable Textbooks collected over 200 student petitions in favor of textbook price transparency. A meeting with a UConn faculty member has strengthened the possibility of support for a public statement regarding textbook price transparency on-campus. The campaign will focus upon canvassing this week.
 - B. Zero Waste
 1. Kyleigh Hillerud reiterates that Zero Waste is preparing for its "True Cost" film screening, which will take place on November 19 at 6:30 pm in the Student Union Theatre. On November 8 and 9, volunteers will visit local elementary schools and give educational presentations to first and third graders, respectively. On November 1 from 12-4 pm, there will be a mass databasing session for the over 1,000 student petitions that still must be recorded. Whoever databases the most names will receive a voucher for one small size cup of Dairy Bar ice cream, alongside their favorite meal (below \$15) from Hillerud. Hillerud distributes a signup sheet for this databasing session.
 - C. New Voters Project
 1. O'Hara (Chair) announces that Connecticut's paper voter registration deadline is tomorrow. She distributes a signup sheet for tomorrow's voter registration table - which will take place from 12-3 pm on Fairfield Way - and for October 30's pledge-to-vote tables - which will take place from 11 am-2 pm and from 4-7 pm. She notes that New Voters Project collected 77 voter pledges at today's voter registration table. She announces that there

will be phonebanking sessions conducted for the purpose of turning out the vote, for which she distributes a signup sheet.

D. 100% Renewable Energy

1. Parth Patel announces that 100% Renewable Energy will table on November 1 from 12-2 pm on Fairfield Way to educate students about the Mansfield- Fairfield Way Table on Friday to educate students about the Mansfield net zero school initiative. This would consist of two hours' worth of petitioning and of having guest speakers and Parents Advisory Committee Members advocate the initiative. The campaign hopes to have state representatives visit the table, too.
2. Albee announces that immediately following tonight's Core meeting, there will be a dormstorming session at Garrigus to promote the initiative (a maximum of five people can participate, and there is one spot remaining). The campaign will dormstorm again tomorrow night from 7-10 pm, for which Albee distributes a signup sheet. He reiterates the significance of a net zero school in Mansfield and the urgency for students to vote on its behalf.
3. Petra Favorite (UConnPIRG campus organizer) implores Core to make good use of the posters and other supplies that the Mansfield net zero school advocates have provided.

E. Hunger & Homelessness

1. Keller notes that Hunger & Homelessness is still planning its awareness week and has booked a second speaker for its November 20 "Voices on Poverty" panel. UConn's food insecurity survey has garnered 1,942 student responses so far. Keller reminds Core that on GroupMe she sent out a signup sheet for tabling, posterizing, and propmaking. She announces that there will be a propmaking session during tomorrow's campaign meeting.
2. Elizabeth Turano inquires about the ideal number of student responses to UConn's food insecurity survey.
 - a) Keller notes that there is no specific goal, but that Abhishek Gupta and Wanjiku Gatheru had a goal of 1,000 student responses to their survey.
 - b) Favorite (UConnPIRG campus organizer) notes that she and O'Hara (Chair) had a meeting with UConn Dean of Students Eleanor JB Daugherty, who expressed a desire for $\frac{1}{3}$ of UConn students to respond to the survey. Favorite (UConnPIRG campus organizer) takes this to mean about 30,000 student responses.
 - c) O'Hara (Chair) believes that the actual goal constitutes around 10,000 student responses.

V. Mid-Semester Chapter Evaluation

- A. O'Hara (Chair) notes that Core has reviewed all three legs of the tripod, which provides context for all the elements of support that UConnPIRG receives. Thus it is critical to reflect upon the organization's efficacy through the lens of the tripod. O'Hara (Chair) divides Core into three groups - facilitated by herself, Hillerud,

and Dylan DeMoura - to discuss and grade UConnPIRG's campus relations, visibility, and leadership development, respectively. One member of each group is tasked with taking notes during this discussion period.

B. Share-outs

1. Leadership Development

a) Cheyenne Tavares notes that the group awarded UConnPIRG's leadership development with a grade of B, citing the chapter's strong active leadership and tactics but weak recruitment and social bonding.

b) Natalie Seier repeats DeMoura's claim that recruitment and retention involve more than mere numbers. She suggests new member workshops in the middle of UConnPIRG's recruitment drive to train incoming members on key tactics and keep them engaged before official campaign work begins.

2. Campus Relations

a) Keller notes that the group awarded UConnPIRG's campus relations with a grade of B-, citing the high quality yet low quantity of meetings. Particularly it would be ideal to increase collaboration with UConn's cultural centers and UConn president Thomas Katsouleas.

b) O'Hara (Chair) notes that outside people appear to have a positive impression of UConnPIRG, but that the organization could know more about its peers.

3. Visibility

a) Turano notes that the group awarded UConnPIRG's visibility with a grade of A-, citing Hillerud's excellent work within this domain. She suggests that outside people receive a more well-rounded view of the organization as opposed to a campaign-centric perspective.

4. O'Hara (Chair) concludes the discussion, noting that Core members can conduct further chapter evaluation during campaign meetings and at semester's end.

VI. Writing a Campaign Proposal

A. O'Hara (Chair) leads a brief discussion about writing campaign proposals, having addressed the topic extensively during last week's Core meeting. She reminds the authors of incoming campaign proposals that they are proposing themselves to coordinate their respective campaigns, which must align with UConnPIRG's mission (although they do not need to meet all explicit criteria). She implores those interested to stay after tonight's Core meeting for more context around drafting campaign proposals. She believes that the most important expectation of a campaign coordinator is time commitment - ideally at least ten hours per week, which can constitute any kind of UConnPIRG-related activity.

1. Fellow campaign coordinators Hillerud and Keller agree with O'Hara (Chair) regarding the importance of time commitment.

2. Samuel Donahue (Treasurer) believes that proactivity and willful delegation are key.

3. Fellow campaign coordinator Patel outlines the importance of one's commitment and accountability toward themselves and others.
4. O'Hara (Chair) implores future campaign coordinators to not overcommit themselves.

VII. Business

A. Approval of 10/21/19 Minutes

1. Michael Katz (Secretary) outlines the need to approve the previous Core meeting's minutes. -
2. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve the 10/21/19 minutes.
3. Keller seconds.
4. Motion passes unanimously (*Chowdhury, Seier, Julia Ward, and Matt Trainor abstain*).

B. Food for 11/3/19 & 11/4/19 GOTV Phonebanking

1. O'Hara (Chair) reiterates that NVP will phonebank prior to Election Day on November 5. Both sessions will take place during dinnertime, so she does not wish to discourage students from volunteering by not providing food.
2. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve up to \$240 (\$120 per night) for the purchase of pizza for GOTV phonebanking on November 3 and 4.
3. Chris Brown seconds.
4. Motion passes unanimously.

C. Food for 11/11/19 Core Meeting

1. O'Hara (Chair) announces that special elections for UConnPIRG treasurer and ConnPIRG state board will take place during November 11's Core meeting, so she would like to provide food on account of the longer-than-usual meeting. The treasurer election had to be moved up to afford sufficient time for trainings/transitioning. - Election for state treasurer/state board, had to move treasurer election here to account for trainings/transition with Sam, up to \$120
2. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve up to \$120 for the purchase of pizza for November 11's Core meeting.
3. Victor Htut seconds.
4. Discussion
 - a) Venkata Patchigolla asks for an estimate regarding the length of November 11's Core meeting.
 - (1) O'Hara (Chair) estimates that the meeting will last around 1 ½ hours.
 - b) Hillerud seeks clarification regarding the restaurant from which the pizza will be purchased.
 - (1) O'Hara (Chair) suggests Sgt. Pepperoni.
5. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve up to \$120 for the purchase of Sgt. Pepperoni pizza for November 11's Core meeting.
6. Htut seconds.
7. Motion passes unanimously.

D. Textbooks Conference Meals/Rideshare for Devena Annavarjula

1. Donahue (Treasurer) announces that Affordable Textbooks co-coordinator Deevena Annavarjula will attend a textbooks conference in Phoenix.
 2. Favorite (UConnPIRG campus organizer) notes that this is an open-education conference hosted by open-education funders.
 3. Donahue (Treasurer) notes that ConnPIRG has already paid for travel expenses and that food will be provided for the entire duration (Tuesday-Friday) except for two meals. Necessary services for reimbursement are:
 - a) Two meals for up to \$25 each (\$50 total)
 - b) Two light rail train rides for \$2 each (\$4 total)
 - c) Wednesday and Thursday Uber rides for up to \$18 each (\$36 total)
 - d) Tuesday and Friday Uber rides to and from the airport for up to \$30 each (\$60 total)
 4. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve the reimbursement of up to \$150 for Annavarjula's textbooks conference meals/rideshare.
 5. Chowdhury seconds.
 6. Motion passes unanimously.
- E. Quarter Zips
1. Hillerud displays the design and cost of 8 oz (\$18 each), 9 oz (\$20.90 each), and 9.5 oz (\$22 each) quarter zips from Ad-Merica. She reasons that quarter zips exude professionalism and are suitable for the cold weather which volunteers will endure at this time of year. She would like to order 100 quarter zips for the organization's active members. She asks for Core's preference of the three options.
 2. Turano inquires about the meaning of the ounces.
 - a) Hillerud clarifies that the ounces refer to different weights.
 3. Patel asks for clarification that the 9 oz quarter zip comes in a darker gray than that of the other two options.
 - a) Hillerud affirms this, to Patel's delight.
 4. Albee wonders if UConnPIRG can afford these quarter zips considering the seemingly high sums of money that are approved to be spent during each Core meeting.
 - a) Hillerud and Donahue (Treasurer) confirm that the quarter zips remain financially attainable.
 5. Patchigolla questions whether the 9 oz quarter zip is truly the most professional-looking one, for its 3D display provides a favorable perspective in relation to those of the other two options.
 - a) Hillerud acknowledges the merit of Patchigolla's point.
 - b) Turano expresses her appreciation for the 9 oz quarter zip's dark gray color and black zipper.
 6. O'Hara (Chair) conducts a vote among the three quarter zips, and the 9 oz option wins.
 7. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve up to \$2,600 for the purchase of 100 9 oz quarter zips.
 8. Brown seconds.

9. Motion passes unanimously (*Trainor abstains*).

VIII. Announcements

- A. Turano announces that she will hold a propmaking session on October 30 at 7 pm for the Student Union Trick or Treat, with food provided. She distributes a signup sheet.
- B. O'Hara (Chair) makes a string of rapid-fire announcements:
 1. She reiterates that there will be a special election for UConnPIRG chapter treasurer and two ConnPIRG state board seats on November 11. Those who intend to run must submit their name and netID to Katz (Secretary) at uconnpirgstudents@gmail.com by November 4.
 2. She reiterates that the paper voter registration deadline is tomorrow night at 8 pm. October 31 is the online voter registration deadline, but Connecticut provides Election Day registration.
 3. She recounts today's email from Katsouleas detailing the establishment of the President's Working Group on Sustainability and the Environment. UConnPIRG would like to have a representative, so those interested in applying for a seat should reference the email or contact Jessica Gagnon (Vice Chair).
 4. She reiterates that there will be an extensive training on writing campaign proposals following tonight's Core meeting.
 5. Next week, campaign proposals will be presented on November 4 and Election Day is on November 5.

Meeting adjourned at 8:08pm

Minutes submitted by Michael Katz (Secretary)