

UConnPIRG Core Meeting 20-12
Monday November 11th, 2019, 7 PM
SU 310

Voting Members: Emily O'Hara (Chair), Jessica Gagnon (Vice Chair), Samuel Donahue (Treasurer), Michael Katz (Secretary), Andrew Mayano, Shafina Chowdhury, Gino Giansanti, Natalie Seier, Cheyenne Tavares, Victor Htut, Dylan DeMoura, Julia Ward, Angelina Vaccarelli, Kyleigh Hillerud, Parth Patel, Venkata Patchigolla, Chris Brown, Chad Schroeder, Peyton Marie DeLorenzo Pease, Colleen Keller, Erin McConnell, Ben Albee, Elizabeth Turano, Leah LePage, Rachel Cormier

Guests: Kurt Daigle (UConnPIRG primary advisor)

- I. Meeting brought to order at 7:02pm by Emily O'Hara (Chair)
- II. Introductions
- III. Ex Officio Senator Update
 - A. Colleen Keller recounts last week's senator training during caucus and outlines the busy week ahead, listing several statements of position to be endorsed at the next meeting.
- IV. Campaign Updates
 - A. Affordable Textbooks
 1. Erin McConnell distributes a signup sheet for those interested in faculty canvassing. She and Shafina Chowdhury want professors to sign their petition in support of open textbooks and cheaper course materials for students. McConnell calls upon Core to contact professors, and she reiterates an upcoming faculty luncheon.
 - B. Zero Waste
 1. Kyleigh Hillerud reiterates the upcoming film screening.
 2. Dylan DeMoura clarifies that the "True Cost" film screening will take place on November 19 at 6:30 pm in the Student Union Theatre. Important pre-event initiatives include postering and contacting professors about the possibility of providing extra credit to students in attendance. There will be a sustainable product giveaway table outside the film screening.
 - C. New Voters Project
 1. O'Hara (Chair) recaps Election Day, which saw relatively high voter turnout in Mansfield for a municipal election. She and Cheyenne Tavares will depart tomorrow for the Students Learn Students Vote Coalition summit and provide social media updates.
 - D. 100% Renewable Energy
 1. Ben Albee announces the passage of Mansfield's net-zero school referendum, which garners mass applause.
 2. Parth Patel announces that the campaign will hold an awareness event on November 20 from 5-6 pm, where it will discuss the UConn Office of Sustainability's 2018 carbon emissions report and brainstorm

collaboratively. The campaign hopes to have guest speakers and catering for this event. seeking guest speakers.

3. O'Hara (Chair) recognizes each member of the campaign by name for their contributions to the Mansfield net-zero school referendum's passage.

E. Hunger & Homelessness

1. Keller reiterates her upcoming awareness week. She outlines the campaign's November 14 film screening for "A Family of Many Nations" (which will have an event page on Facebook soon), November 18 poverty simulation, and November 20 "Voices on Poverty" panel (which will have guest speakers and catering), each of which will take place at 7 pm. The campaign will also receive its shirts on November 18.

V. Spring 2020 Statewide Lead Campaign Proposals

- A. O'Hara (Chair) provides an overview, announcing that Core will decide whether the state board should propose Zero Waste or NVP as the statewide lead campaign.
- B. Hillerud notes that this only serves as a recommendation, with state board members having the final say.
- C. O'Hara (Chair) outlines the constitutional guidelines for a lead campaign before allowing the proposals to be made.
- D. DeMoura proposes Zero Waste as ConnPIRG's Spring 2020 lead campaign. He notes that it has the greatest potential to make change, citing its role in Connecticut's enactment of a statewide plastic bag ban in 2021. The campaign is also well-positioned for legislative action on a statewide foam ban, as the Connecticut General Assembly will be in session and the legislation has bipartisan support. The campaign will collaborate with other local environmental groups and high school students and reach out to local legislators through such means as letters-to-the-editor and social media. Ultimately, UConnPIRG and other statewide chapters must pool resources to get the statewide foam ban enacted.
- E. Victor Htut and Tavares propose New Voters Project as ConnPIRG's Spring 2020 lead campaign. Htut notes that they want to establish the campaign statewide and develop leaders. He cites this year's unusually high voter turnout this year and highlights the importance of maintaining such momentum heading into August 2020's statewide primaries. Because students may not feel educated enough to vote, the campaign would like to inform them on such matters as filing absentee ballots and Congress's bicameral breakdown. Tavares reiterates Htut's main points, adding that students should feel empowered to vote. Htut would like to work with ConnPIRG's Trinity chapter to develop a well-formed strategy. He also notes that New Voters Project has a solid membership base that can be strengthened.
- F. O'Hara (Chair) implores Core to apply the campaign selection criteria within both a chapterwide and statewide context before initiating a Q&A session.
- G. Hillerud inquires about New Voters Project's ability to remain nonpartisan given the state's focus upon the Democratic presidential primary. Htut claims that the campaign will focus upon voter education, providing access to nonpartisan

resources and information. Tavares notes that the campaign will provide such information to everyone, even to those disinterested in the Democratic primary.

- H. O'Hara (Chair) suggests that the campaign consider other elections that will take place during primary season.
 - I. Keller asks about the urgency of each campaign acquiring extra resources. DeMoura reiterates Zero Waste's big legislative push while noting that UConnPIRG's campus organizer must schedule meetings and strategize with interns to become effective lobbyists and that the campaign must ensure professionalism and have all necessary resources. Htut cites New Voters Project's extensive needs for visibility, tabling hours, and documentation certifiers, especially considering the likely high volume of new voter registrations. Tavares adds that campuswide institutionalization and automatic voter registration are key long-term goals.
DeMoura, Htut, and Tavares grab a slice of pizza - delivered by Rachel Cormier for all of Core - and exit the room. Samuel Donahue (Treasurer), Cormier, and Gagnon (Vice Chair) also exit the room at 7:36 pm.
 - J. O'Hara (Chair) calls upon Core to grab a slice of pizza before initiating closed-door discussion.
*Donahue (Treasurer) reenters the room at 7:41 pm.
Cormier and Gagnon (Vice Chair) reenter the room at 7:45 pm, carrying another box of pizza.
DeMoura, Htut, and Tavares reenter the room at 7:53 pm.*
 - K. Core votes to determine its preference for Spring 2020's statewide lead campaign. Gagnon (Vice Chair) and Michael Katz (Secretary) collect and count the votes.
 - L. By a 15-5 vote, Zero Waste is recommended as ConnPIRG's Spring 2020 lead campaign (*O'Hara (Chair), Gagnon (Vice Chair), Donahue (Treasurer), Hillerud, and Cormier abstain*).
 - M. Donahue (Treasurer) notes that those who take pizza tonight must record their name & netID. He distributes a signup sheet.
- VI. Spring 2020 UConnPIRG Treasurer Election
- A. O'Hara (Chair) briefs Core on UConnPIRG's general election procedure, which involves, in order: nominations, speeches, discussion, voting, tally, and announcement of the winner. She provides a constitutional overview of the treasurer's role and notes that tonight's electee must attend three training sessions before assuming their new role. She then outlines the nomination and voting processes more explicitly and announces that she will abstain from the vote to act as a tiebreaker if necessary.
 - B. Gagnon (Vice Chair) announces that if current treasurer's assistant Cormier is elected as treasurer, then said treasurer's assistant position will become open for letters of intent. These should be sent to Petra Favorite (UConnPIRG campus organizer), who will de-identify them before the executive board reviews them and makes its decision.
 - C. O'Hara (Chair) clarifies that the treasurer position goes into effect in Spring 2020.
 - D. Gagnon (Vice Chair) nominates Cormier, who accepts.
 - E. Gagnon (Vice Chair) nominates Chowdhury, who accepts.

- F. DeMoura nominates Htut, who declines.
 - G. Cormier cites her admiration of UConnPIRG’s community and societal impact, alongside her background as an economics major minoring in accounting and as Donahue (Treasurer)’s assistant this semester. She has created a standard operating procedure booklet and co-created an assisted purchasing guide with Donahue (Treasurer) to assist future chapter treasurers, and she plans to create more resources in this vein. Although she has had difficulty attending executive board meetings this semester on account of her part-time status and off-campus residence, she will make herself available for meetings and contact when necessary.
 - H. Chowdhury, acknowledging Cormier’s merits for the treasurer position, concedes her nomination.
 - I. Donahue (Treasurer) asks Cormier what she would do differently as treasurer, to which she responds that she would clean up the UConnPIRG office.
 - J. Venkata Patchigolla asks what year Cormier is within an academic context, to which she notes that she is technically a junior, but will be a “super senior” next year.
 - K. Chris Brown inquires about Cormier’s availability, to which she responds that she will ensure her schedule aligns with those of her fellow executive board officers. She hopes that the necessity of meetings also being geared around her schedule will benefit her, but she is willing to be flexible regardless.
 - L. Donahue (Treasurer) asks Cormier about her first-week priorities. She claims that she would begin training the new treasurer’s assistant, outlining the standard operating procedure and preparing for an efficient semester of fulfilling purchase orders.
 - M. O’Hara (Chair) motions to confirm Cormier’s appointment as Spring 2020 UConnPIRG treasurer by unanimous consent.
 - N. Motion passes unanimously.
 - O. O’Hara (Chair) and Gagnon (Vice Chair) reiterate that letters of intent are now open for the treasurer’s assistant position, and that these should be sent to Favorite (UConnPIRG campus organizer) at pfavorite@connpirgstudents.org by November 18 at 5:59 pm.
 - P. Donahue (Treasurer) notes that those interested can consult him or Cormier with any questions.
- VII. Spring 2020 ConnPIRG Board Representative Election
- A. Hillerud explains that ConnPIRG has an eight-member board, with six representatives from UConn Storrs and two from Trinity. She outlines the duties of the board representatives, who must attend November 17’s state board meeting if elected tonight.
 - B. Donahue (Treasurer) clarifies that his state board treasurer seat will be open for next semester.
 - C. Keller implores those interested to run for a seat, noting that being on the state board is rewarding and an effective way to gain knowledge of the chapter.
 - D. Gagnon (Vice Chair) notes that state board members are also well-positioned to set up regional retreats.

- E. O'Hara (Chair) reflects that her unsuccessful first campaign for a state board seat provided a valuable learning experience.
- F. Hillerud notes that while only two seats are open tonight, all six will be open in Spring 2020. She expresses a desire to facilitate communication with Trinity's representatives.
- G. Hillerud nominates Htut, who accepts.
- H. Hillerud nominates Angelina Vaccarelli, who accepts.
- I. O'Hara (Chair) nominates Tavares, who accepts.
- J. Gagnon (Vice Chair) nominates Patchigolla, who accepts.
- K. Patchigolla nominates Patel, who accepts.
- L. Hillerud nominates Chad Schroeder, who accepts.
- M. Hillerud nominates DeMoura, who declines.
- N. Hillerud nominates Cormier, who declines.
- O. Chowdury nominates McConnell, who declines.
- P. Katz (Secretary) nominates himself.
- Q. Brown nominates himself.
- R. DeMoura nominates Natalie Seier, who accepts.
- S. DeMoura nominates Julia Ward, who accepts.
McConnell and Leah LePage exit at 8:18 pm.
Chowdhury exits at 8:19 pm.
- T. Htut notes his recruitment on the semester's first day and his participation in the Fall 2019 recruitment drive. He has been a constant presence and highly active member since then. As a New Voters Project co-coordinator next semester, he would like to work with other statewide chapters on voter education.
- U. Vaccarelli expresses her interest in state board conversations, citing the importance of a statewide impact and her interest in ConnPIRG's statewide chapter expansion.
- V. Tavares cites her active membership and constant presence, beginning this semester as New Voters Project's social media intern and continuing next semester as a co-coordinator for the campaign. She expresses her immense appreciation of and dedication to the chapter, and wishes to focus upon chapter expansion, inclusivity, and leadership development.
- W. Patchigolla, through his experience on the 100% Renewable Energy campaign, has realized the need for a statewide focus. On account of not being a campaign coordinator or executive board officer next semester, he believes that he can commit ample time to the state board. He would push for state legislation and lobbying efforts, citing the feedback that he can provide from his lobbying experiences with UConnPIRG and in Washington, D.C.
- X. Patel cites his experience as 100% Renewable Energy's campaign coordinator, noting his in-depth understanding of the state board and organization overall. He would like to focus upon legislation and work on regional retreats, which provide key retention and training opportunities. He hopes to make trainings more focused and interactive and implement more bonding activities, with a UConnPIRG-focused retreat also perhaps in the works.

- Y. Schroeder cites his experience as UConnPIRG's social chair this semester, alongside his initial experience on the 100% Renewable Energy campaign and immediate election to the state board as a temporary replacement for a former member. He recounts his extensive experience of looking through Connecticut General Assembly bills and distinguishing the ones of UConnPIRG's interest from the rest. He has also examined UConnPIRG's funding system and attended many regional retreats, where he has gained insight into other chapters' perspectives. He hopes to establish more statewide chapters as well.
- Z. Katz (Secretary) cites his breadth of organizational knowledge and experience, alongside his specialization in organized communication and overall reliability and dedication to the chapter. He hopes to voice his ambitious and creative ideas on the state board regarding general improvements to statewide chapters and voting accessibility, with the added benefit of positioning himself well for post-graduation opportunities. He assures Core - particularly the newer members of the organization - that he will prioritize students' concerns and desires, and he emphasizes his ability to represent himself and UConnPIRG professionally and effectively.
- AA. Brown notes his start this semester as a transfer student. His role as New Voters Project's campus action coordinator has informed him of the campaign's prominence in state board discussions. He cites his background in business law and mock trial, and he advocates statewide expansion.
- BB. Seier has learned much about her leadership capabilities and observed her surroundings intently. She would listen to her constituents' feedback and take it to the state board while imparting her own ideas that have originated from her collaboration with key organizational leaders. She wants to be an organizational representative.
- CC. Ward cites her experience as Zero Waste's legislative intern and her connections with other statewide schools as a member of Connecticut's National Guard. She notes her interest in working with people at other college campuses - particularly on legislation - and that serving on the state board would be a valuable learning experience.
- DD. O'Hara (Chair) praises all candidates for their leadership.
- EE. Hillerud asks all candidates if they would run for the statewide treasurer position. Htut says he would, for it would not be as time-consuming as the chapter treasurer role and could provide valuable experience for him in pursuit of said chapter treasurer role. Vaccarelli, Tavares, Patchigolla, and Patel all decline, with Patchigolla noting that other candidates may be better-suited for the role. Schroeder says he would, for he has ideas related to funding and collaboration. Katz (Secretary) says he would on account of his understanding of UConnPIRG's funding, but he expresses a willingness to accept any available role on the state board. Brown and Seier decline. Ward says she would as a business and finance double major.
1. Htut asks if the statewide treasurer position is separate from the two open state board representative seats, and Hillerud clarifies that treasurer constitutes one of the two open seats.

2. Donahue (Treasurer) clarifies that the state board treasurer position demands significantly less time commitment than the chapter treasurer position does. He highlights the importance of participating in discussions. *Htut, Vaccarelli, Tavares, Patchigolla, Patel, Schroeder, Katz (Secretary), Brown, Seier, and Ward exit the room.*
- FF. Core engages in closed-door discussion.
- GG. *Htut, Vaccarelli, Tavares, Patchigolla, Patel, Schroeder, Katz (Secretary), Brown, Seier, and Ward reenter the room.*
- HH. O'Hara (Chair) outlines the ranked-choice voting system to be used tonight.
- II. Core votes to determine UConnPIRG's two new Spring 2020 ConnPIRG board representatives. Gagnon (Vice Chair) and Donahue (Treasurer) collect and count the votes (*Katz (Secretary) abstains from his vote-tallying duties on account of his candidacy*).
- JJ. Hillerud notes that state board membership is not a prerequisite to impacting such discussions. *Gagnon (Vice Chair), Donahue (Treasurer), and Kurt Daigle (UConnPIRG primary advisor) exit the room at 8:52 pm to continue tallying votes.*
- KK. Schroeder and Tavares are elected as UConnPIRG's two new Spring 2020 ConnPIRG board representatives.
- LL. Hillerud announces that she will send the chapter information regarding November 17's state board meeting.

VIII. Business

- A. Approval of 11/4/19 Minutes
 1. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve the 11/4/19 minutes.
 2. Ward seconds.
 3. Motion passes unanimously (*Keller and Htut abstain*).
- B. Bottle Openers
 1. Hillerud notes that the chapter purchased bottle openers during the 2016 elections. These are intended to be a fun giveaway item for next semester's recruitment drive and involvement fair, as students often need them. The bottle openers also provide good organizational visibility. Hillerud proposes 1,000 bottle openers (\$360 total) for up to \$500.
 2. Schroeder inquires about the material being metal or plastic, to which Hillerud confirms that it is metal.
 3. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve up to \$500 for the purchase of 1,000 bottle openers.
 4. Htut seconds.
 5. Motion passes unanimously.
- C. iPads
 1. Hillerud notes that during November 7's Communications meeting, she discussed the idea of purchasing iPads, which would prove valuable in collecting student petitions, voter registration information, and UConn students' names and netIDs (for free product giveaways). iPads would present a more convenient and environmentally friendly alternative to the standard pen-and-paper. Hillerud proposes 2 iPad mini covers (\$78 total)

and 2 iPad minis (\$798 total). The total with tax would be \$931.63, but Hillerud proposes up to \$1,200.

2. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve up to \$1,200 for the purchase of 2 iPad Mini covers and 2 iPad minis.
3. Keller seconds.
4. Motion passes unanimously.

D. Card Swipers

1. Hillerud notes that the One Card Office provides swipers for student identification cards. She would motion for a permanent purchase of the swipers, but the One Card Office only provides annual leases. She proposes up to \$500 for a 1-year lease on 2 One Card readers, which costs \$454 total.
2. Htut asks if the lease on the swipers would need to be renewed before Spring 2021, to which Hillerud responds that it likely would.
3. Cormier asks if the swipers are programmed for official One Card Office-issued identification only, to which Hillerud affirms that they are.
4. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve up to \$500 for the purchase of a 1-year lease on 2 One Card readers.
5. DeMoura seconds.
6. Motion passes unanimously.

E. Food for 100% Renewable Energy Awareness Event

1. Patel reiterates next week's 100% Renewable Energy awareness event on November 20 in SU 304B. Given the time during which the event will take place, he would like to provide University Catering for attendees. He plans to purchase the "Mediterranean bar" package for \$690 total (\$23/student, with 30 students expected to attend) and proposes up to \$900 total.
2. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve up to \$900 for University Catering for 100% Renewable Energy's awareness event in SU 304B.
3. Patchigolla seconds.
4. Motion passes unanimously.

F. Wired Microphone & Possible Miscellaneous Expenses for 100% Renewable Energy Awareness Event

1. Patel notes that there will be a wired microphone perched upon the podium. Usage of said microphone costs \$5, but Patel proposes up to \$100 in case the Student Union applies an additional charge for monitor use.
2. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve up to \$100 for a wired microphone and possible miscellaneous expenses for 100% Renewable Energy's awareness event.
3. Brown seconds.
Gagnon (Vice Chair), Donahue (Treasurer), and Daigle (UConnPIRG primary advisor) reenter the room at 9:04 pm.
4. Motion passes unanimously (*Gagnon (Vice Chair) and Donahue (Treasurer) abstain*).

G. Packing Supplies for Temporary UConnPIRG Office Cleanup

1. O'Hara (Chair) announces that the UConnPIRG office will receive new carpeting soon, but that consequently all small items must be removed from the office temporarily. She proposes up to \$100 for cardboard moving boxes and shipping tape.
 2. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve up to \$100 for the purchase of packing supplies for a temporary UConnPIRG office cleanup.
 3. Donahue (Treasurer) seconds.
 4. Motion passes unanimously.
- IX. Weekly Warning
- A. Elizabeth Turano **warns** those who have not responded to her emails to fill out the office calendar with campaign events.
- X. Announcements
- A. O'Hara (Chair) congratulates Donahue (Treasurer) on his graduate school acceptance.
 - B. Katz (Secretary) announces that there will be a planning meeting on November 15 for a Hartford youth climate strike on December 6. He will provide more information in the UConnPIRG GroupMe.
 - C. Gagnon (Vice Chair) discusses UCCO and UConn NAACP's "March in Solidarity," which is focused upon three major initiatives and will take place on November 19. Those interested in attending a planning meeting should consult her and DeMoura.
 - D. Schroeder announces the chapterwide "Secret Snowflake" gift-giving activity, for which he will send a Google Form this week. Participants will list their interests and be matched up with another UConnPIRG member for whom to provide a gift in secret. This year's maximum individual gift budget is around \$10.
 - E. O'Hara (Chair) reiterates that she will be away for the Students Learn Students Vote Coalition summit from 5 pm on November 12 to midnight on November 14. She implores Core to contact Gagnon (Vice Chair), Donahue (Treasurer), and Katz (Secretary) for emergencies, business, and tomfoolery in her absence.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10pm

Minutes submitted by Michael Katz (Secretary)