

UConnPIRG Core Meeting 20-19
Monday February 17th, 2020, 7 PM
SU 310

Voting Members: Emily O'Hara (Chair), Jessica Gagnon (Vice Chair), Michael Katz (Secretary), Michelle Pan, Peyton Marie De Lorenzo Pease, David Vallejo, Maria Mejia-Giron, Irene Soteriou, Leah LePage, Enji Zhou, Merideth Mahoney, Elizabeth Champeau, Colleen Keller, Angelina Vaccarelli, Chad Schroeder, Julia Ward, Kyle Cyr, Dylan DeMoura, Carly Saindon, Abigail Coia, Ben Albee, Nia Moore, Maya Murarka, Elizabeth Turano, Mary Elizabeth Monticello, Amanda Cicchetti, Kyleigh Hillerud, Victor Htut

Non-Voting Members: Simon Hua, Jinyu Wei, Patrick Houlihan, Vivian Ha, Xi Chen, Zhaoteng Zhu, Angelica Sistrunk, Chuck O'Coin, Anthony D'Andrea, Tyler Nguyen, Jacob Leroux, Shaozhuo Xu

Guests: Kurt Daigle (UConnPIRG primary advisor), Jim Leahy (ConnPIRG lobbyist)

- I. Meeting brought to order at 7:02pm by Emily O'Hara (Chair)
- II. Introductions
- III. Updates
 - A. Colleen Keller announces that she and Dylan DeMoura are drafting USG legislation for a statement of position in Friday's hearing.
 1. Jim Leahy (ConnPIRG lobbyist) says that there is a hearing for a proposed statewide polystyrene ban this Friday. There are positive signs for the legislation in that it was raised in the first committee hearing and now is a part of the first public hearing, and that the committee chairs have a sense of urgency due to the shorter legislative session.
 - B. Jessica Gagnon (Vice Chair) announces that Affordable Textbooks will table in McMahon on Friday from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. A signup sheet will be posted in the UConnPIRG GroupMe.
 - C. DeMoura hopes to have students testify during Friday's hearing (no prior experience is necessary). Zero Waste will hold a propmaking session on Wednesday from 6-8 p.m. Friday's hearing will take place midday, with transportation provided.
 - D. Victor Htut notes that last Thursday and Friday's Valentine's Day-themed voter registration tables went well, as volunteers collected 21 total forms that contained few errors. New Voters Project's immediate focus will shift to the development of voter toolkits.
 1. Leahy (ConnPIRG lobbyist) adds that Secretary of State Denise Merrill has a few bills up for public hearing, and that State Senator Mae Flexer has automatic voter registration in the process of being codified into state law.
 - E. Ben Albee notes that 100% Renewable Energy's first campaign meeting today went well. The campaign is designing t-shirts containing facts about renewable

energy and fossil fuels, and it will conduct research and help Zero Waste with its lobbying efforts.

- F. Keller announces that USG's Food Insecurity Task Force is hosting the Husky Market event - which will provide free groceries to undergraduate students - this Friday from 3:30-5:30 p.m. The event graphics have been posted in the UConnPIRG GroupMe
- IV. Special Election for Spring 2020 Treasurer
- A. Kyleigh Hillerud nominates Maya Murarka, who accepts.
 - B. Chad Schroeder nominates Htut, who declines.
 - C. DeMoura nominates Schroeder, who declines.
 - D. Murarka discusses her organizational experience, particularly as the treasurer's assistant. She also cites her high school leadership experiences and her knowledge as an economics major. She has been learning under former treasurer Rachel Cormier and feels prepared to succeed her and be a steward of UConnPIRG's fee.
 - E. O'Hara (Chair) inquires about Murarka's ability to handle the demanding time commitment required from a treasurer. Murarka responds that although the transition will be difficult, she will spend more time in the office between classes and scale back on her other diversions as necessary.
 - F. Kyle Cyr asks Murarka what she is most looking forward to in her new role, to which she says that she is eager to feel validated by her accomplishments.
Murarka leaves the room at 7:32 p.m., after which Core initiates closed-door discussion.
Murarka reenters the room at 7:34 p.m.
 - G. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve Murarka's appointment as UConnPIRG's Spring 2020 treasurer by unanimous consent.
 - H. Motion passes unanimously.
 - I. O'Hara (Chair) announces that the treasurer's assistant position is now open, and that Michael Katz (Secretary) will send a chapterwide update email containing the necessary criteria for the application and position. Each applicant will send a letter of intent detailing their suitability for the position, and the executive board will then review each application blindly. The submission deadline will be in about a week.
- V. Announcements
- A. O'Hara (Chair) announces that the business originally intended for tonight's Core meeting will be addressed tomorrow night at 7 p.m. in SU 214.
 - B. Elizabeth Turano conducts her weekly warning, saying that someone spray-painted a part of the office.
 - C. O'Hara (Chair) implores those intent upon protecting UConn's budget to submit their testimony to the appropriations committee by tonight at APPtestimony@CGA.CT.GOV, and to attend tomorrow's appropriations hearing if possible (she displays a link for this onscreen). Students can text UCONNPROUD to 860-269-0269 and get up-to-date information as well as opportunities to advocate for UConn.
 - 1. Hillerud explains the proposed cut in UConn's funding increase and provides additional context surrounding the hearing.

2. Leahy (ConnPIRG lobbyist) says that 47 attendees will be from the UConn Storrs campus and another 47 will be from the UConn Health Center. He stresses the importance of supporting the budget before considering action regarding the \$2.5 million shortfall.
 3. Albee reminds Core that UConn is still recovering from previous budget cuts.
 4. O'Hara (Chair) acknowledges the opportunity for students to contact their local legislators.
 5. Mary Elizabeth Monticello asks whom out-of-state students like her should contact, to which O'Hara (Chair) responds that UConnPIRG can provide the contact information for Flexer and State Representative Gregg Haddad.
- D. DeMoura provides an overview of the PIRG Blue Hills retreat, which will take place from February 22-23.
1. O'Hara (Chair) finds the experience inspiring and actionable.
 2. Hillerud agrees with O'Hara (Chair), imploring all Core members to attend regardless of their organizational experience.
 3. Schroeder notes that the event is free, and that it provides an opportunity to meet people who are committed to activism at different experience levels and across various contexts.

Meeting adjourned at 7:46pm
Minutes submitted by Michael Katz (Secretary)