

UConnPIRG Core Meeting 20-21
Monday February 24th, 2020, 7 PM
SU 310

Voting Members: Emily O'Hara (Chair), Jessica Gagnon (Vice Chair), Maya Murarka (Treasurer), Michael Katz (Secretary), Dylan DeMoura, Simon Hua, Max Starke, Kyle Cyr, Peyton Marie De Lorenzo Pease, Natalie Seier, Angelina Vaccarelli, Cheyenne Tavares, David Vallejo, Venkata Patchigolla, Chuck O'Coin, Rebecca Tripp, Chad Schroeder, Shafina Chowdhury, Nia Moore, Ben Albee, Abigail Coia, Carly Saindon, Elizabeth Turano, Victor Htut, Angelica Sistrunk, Julia Ward

Non-Voting Members: Sam Stuynew, Nick Jowkar, Adam Generoso, Richie Kupee, Paul Verbo, Aleksandra Driscoll, Sade' Lawson, John Manke, Hailey Morrell, Jewelia Aubin, Hallie Ricci, Carlos Nique, Ivan Wong, Le Li, Cristian Gutu, Zack Murphy, Zara Mason, Ying Yang, Xuming Ji, Alexander Jarrett, Inchan Hwang, Chase Boulton

Guests: Kurt Daigle (UConnPIRG primary advisor), Justin Landry (ConnPIRG campus organizer for Trinity College)

- I. Meeting brought to order at 7:05pm by Emily O'Hara (Chair)
- II. Introductions
- III. Updates
 - A. O'Hara (Chair) says Colleen Keller and Kyleigh Hillerud are representing UConnPIRG at the National Student Forum, and today they were lobbying on behalf of higher education.
 - B. Dylan DeMoura debriefs the ConnPIRG-MassPIRG Blue Hills retreat, saying it provided great training and an opportunity to collaborate on campaigns with out-of-state people. Overall, attendees are bringing much back to the chapter and had a nice bonding experience. DeMoura recommends going to future retreats.
 1. Kyle Cyr says he had a good time and learned a lot, as the training and activities covered several different aspects of activism. There were good social bonding opportunities, too.
 2. Ben Albee cites a good conversation he had about insulation on-campus.
 3. Abigail Coia says there were good leading questions she had not considered.
 4. O'Hara (Chair) implores Core to inform her of any groups with which UConnPIRG should collaborate.
- IV. Campaign Updates
 - A. Albee provides the ex officio senator update in place of Keller. He mentions that there is a proposed bill that would give ex officio senators (including Keller) voting rights and expand the criteria for who can become an ex officio senator.
 - B. Shafina Chowdhury says Affordable Textbooks' first table last Friday went well, and the campaign distributed all of its shirts. There will be two Open Education Week tables on March 3 and 4, for which she will post a signup sheet on

GroupMe. There will also be a faculty luncheon, with the help of UConn's librarians.

- C. DeMoura recaps Friday's visit to the State Capitol Building, where ten students and Justin Landry (ConnPIRG campus organizer for Trinity College) testified at an Environmental Committee hearing in support of a bill that would ban polystyrene statewide. The group received generally positive reception from legislators, especially from Christine Cohen and Will Haskell. At the Blue Hills retreat, attendees generated seventeen tweets thanking Cohen and Haskell for their support, and the two liked and shared many of these posts. ConnPIRG's legislative lobby day will be on March 11.
 - D. Victor Htut announces that the New Voters Project started working on educational voter toolkits last week. He, co-coordinator Cheyenne Tavares, and O'Hara (Chair) met Noah Frank about election-day registration.
 - 1. O'Hara (Chair) clarifies that Connecticut already permits election-day registration, but Frank is working on a bill to expand it and make voting more accessible statewide. Students can testify on this election reform bill this Friday.
 - E. Albee announces that 100% Renewable Energy has designed its shirts. He also met State Representative Gregg Haddad in Hartford to discuss a bill that would hold statewide universities accountable for transitioning to 100% renewable energy in the near future. Students might be able to testify on it on March 3 or 5.
 - F. Jessica Gagnon (Vice Chair) announces that UConnPIRG and UConn Extension are organizing CT Environmental Action Day this Friday. UConnPIRG will workshop with middle schoolers to take legislative action, in addition to tabling in the Student Union to encourage students to take legislative social media action. She distributes a signup sheet for the table.
 - G. Gagnon (Vice Chair) provides the Hunger & Homelessness update in place of Keller. Last Thursday the campaign held a promotional table for Friday's Husky Market popup food pantry and gave away shirts. The food pantry generated great turnout, but the food supply ran out quickly. Husky Market will take place every couple of weeks, and UConnPIRG will continue supporting it.
 - 1. O'Hara (Chair) mentions that UConn Storrs is not considered a high-status food insecure campus, citing a report from last fall's campuswide food insecurity survey. However, students should still consider ways to help regional campuses and off-campus students.
- V. General Funding Overview
- A. O'Hara (Chair) provides an overview of UConnPIRG's \$5 per-student, per-semester waivable fee and its classification as a Tier III organization, alongside general organizational funding procedures. She divides Core into five breakout groups - facilitated by her, Gagnon (Vice Chair), Maya Murarka (Treasurer), DeMoura, and Chad Schroeder.
 - B. Each group discusses a hypothetical funding proposal and its merits/drawbacks in relation to UConnPIRG's responsibility to uphold good stewardship. Each group shares back to Core.

VI. Business

A. Husky Market

1. Gagnon (Vice Chair) would like UConnPIRG to contribute more to the funding of these popup food pantries. She proposes the following items, totaling \$704.50 (*note: Amazon prices and item availability are subject to change*):
 - a) 10 packs of 365 Everyday Value organic instant oatmeal for \$36.90,
 - b) 20 packs of Kind healthy grains bars for \$55.60,
 - c) 10 packs of Kraft easy mac & cheese dinner cups for \$58.50,
 - d) 20 packs of Capri Sun drink pouches for \$33.20,
 - e) 15 packs of 365 Everyday Value organic dark red kidney beans for \$14.85,
 - f) 8 packs of 365 Everyday Value long grain brown & wild rice for \$23.92,
 - g) 8 packs of Angel Soft toilet paper for \$42.24,
 - h) 2 packs of Presto! paper towels for \$21.98,
 - i) 8 packs of Gillette Fusion shave gel for \$21.20,
 - j) 10 packs of Arm & Hammer Advance White extreme whitening toothpaste for \$54.40,
 - k) 16 packs of Progresso soup for \$25.28,
 - l) 12 packs of UNCLE BEN's ready rice for \$23.76,
 - m) 16 packs of UNCLE BEN's ready rice for \$28.48,
 - n) 16 packs of Prego traditional Italian sauce for \$29.44,
 - o) 16 packs of Prego pasta sauce for \$39.36,
 - p) 16 packs of Barilla pasta for \$16,
 - q) 16 packs of Progresso Traditional chicken noodle soup for \$24,
 - r) 10 packs of Maruchan ramen noodles for \$13.90,
 - s) 16 packs of Idahoan buttery homestyle mashed potatoes for \$15.84,
 - t) 17 packs of Quaker chewy granola bars for \$50.83,
 - u) 17 packs of Breakfast Pack cereal for \$57.46, and
 - v) 2 packs of Gatorade for \$17.36.
2. Julia Ward mentions that her roommate thought USG's advertising merely said the free food was for the student body, so the event organizers should clarify that this is a popup food pantry mainly for people who need the food. Gagnon (Vice Chair) says advertising will be better for March 6.
3. Peyton Marie De Lorenzo Pease inquires about feminine hygiene products, to which Gagnon (Vice Chair) confirms they are already in stock.
4. Venkata raises the concern of people with meal plans taking food from those without meal plans. Gagnon (Vice Chair) agrees, noting that event organizers cannot distinguish between these groups but will try to open up the pantry for more needy people.

5. Schroeder asks about alternative providers, to which Gagnon (Vice Chair) responds that she will address the matter later, as USG is coordinating much of the funding.
 6. Gagnon (Vice Chair) motions to approve the purchase of Husky Market items for up to \$1,000.
 7. Elizabeth Turano seconds.
 8. Motion passes unanimously.
- B. Lobby Day Padfolios
1. Gagnon (Vice Chair) proposes 35 padfolios for \$510 total. These will be used for lobby days this year and in the future, and they will lend a sense of professionalism during lobby days and campus relations meetings.
 2. Patchigolla asks if the padfolios come with pens. Gagnon (Vice Chair) is unsure if they do, but the organization has pens regardless.
 3. Natalie Seier asks if the padfolios will stay in the office or with organizational members. Gagnon (Vice Chair) clarifies that they will remain in the office, and O'Hara (Chair) wants them to be resources for future students as opposed to personal items.
 4. De Lorenzo Pease asks if the padfolios are refillable, which Gagnon (Vice Chair) confirms.
 5. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve the purchase of 35 padfolios for up to \$1,000.
 6. Murarka (Treasurer) seconds.
 7. Motion passes unanimously.
- C. Approval of 2/17/20 Minutes
1. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve the 2/17/20 minutes.
 2. Motion passes unanimously (*Chowdhury, Seier, and Rebecca Tripp abstain*).
- D. Approval of 2/18/20 Minutes
1. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve the 2/18/20 minutes.
 2. Ward seconds.
 3. Motion passes unanimously (*Cyr, De Lorenzo Pease, Tavares, Patchigolla, Tripp, Schroeder, Chowdhury, Albee, Coia, Htut, Simon Hua, Max Starke, Angelina Vaccarelli, David Vallejo, Chuck O'Coin, Nia Moore, Carly Saindon, and Angelica Sistrunk abstain*).
- E. Reimbursement for Travel to Hartford on February 28
1. O'Hara (Chair) says she and Schroeder will drive people to testify on the election reform bill this Friday.
O'Hara (Chair) and Schroeder leave the room at 8:10 p.m.
 2. Gagnon (Vice Chair) wants to reimburse the drivers so that students can attend the hearing.
 3. Turano asks if parking expenses will be reimbursed, which Landry (ConnPIRG campus organizer for Trinity College) confirms.
 4. Gagnon (Vice Chair) motions to approve up to \$100 in reimbursements to O'Hara (Chair) and Schroeder for travel to Hartford on February 28.
 5. Chowdhury seconds.

6. Motion passes unanimously (*O'Hara (Chair) and Schroeder recuse themselves*).

O'Hara (Chair) and Schroeder reenter the room at 8:11 p.m.

VII. Announcements

- A. Turano issues her weekly warning, reminding Core members to clean up after tabling and keep the office vents clear of chairs.
- B. O'Hara (Chair) reminds Core members to submit testimony for Friday's hearing.
 - 1. Patchigolla asks about the time of departure from UConn, to which O'Hara (Chair) responds that she will leave at 10 a.m.
- C. Mental Health Action Day
 - 1. Gagnon (Vice Chair) announces that Mental Health Action Day is this Wednesday. It is being organized mainly by UCCO, and it will allow students to speak on behalf of more mental health support on campus. Proceedings will begin at 9 a.m. with a march from the UConn Seal to Wilbur Cross. Then at 9:15 and 11 a.m., students can testify to decision-makers.
- D. O'Hara (Chair) announces that Black History Month's closing ceremonies will be held this Thursday.
- E. O'Hara (Chair) reminds Blue Hills retreat attendees to submit their online feedback forms.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15pm

Minutes submitted by Michael Katz (Secretary)