

UConnPIRG Core Meeting 20-23
Monday March 9th, 2020, 7 PM
SU 310

Voting Members: Emily O'Hara (Chair), Jessica Gagnon (Vice Chair), Maya Murarka (Treasurer), Michael Katz (Secretary), David Vallejo, Victor Htut, Irene Soteriou, Ben Albee, Colleen Keller, Kyleigh Hillerud, Julia Ward, Chad Schroeder, Kyle Cyr, Simon Hua, Brian Garzon, Leah LePage, Natalie Seier, Cheyenne Tavares, Angelica Sistrunk, Angelina Vaccarelli, Dylan DeMoura, Paul Verbo, Rebecca Tripp, Mary Elizabeth Monticello, Shafina Chowdhury, Chuck O'Coin

Non-Voting Members: Andre Sahij Johnson, Ethan Werstler, Julia Stage, Hannah Schneider, Lauren Tougas, Marisa Doyle, Jillian Hurley, Andrew Werner

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

- I. Meeting brought to order at 7:02pm by Emily O'Hara (Chair)
- II. Updates
 - A. Colleen Keller announces that USG has written legislation in support of SB 99 (i.e. the polystyrene ban).
 - B. O'Hara (Chair) says New Voters Project met with UConn ResLife, which will give the campaign open access to register voters for fall 2020. She asks Core to provide her with campus relations ideas.
- III. Campaign Updates
 - A. Shafina Chowdhury says last week's Affordable Textbooks table was successful, having nine or ten volunteers and garnering fifty student signatures. Six or seven staff members came to the faculty luncheon, which also went well. The campaign will offer hoodies for students at future tables.
 - B. Dylan DeMoura announces that public health concerns related to the coronavirus outbreak caused UConn, UConnPIRG, and State Capitol officials to cancel the in-person lobby day scheduled for Wednesday. However, there will be a virtual lobby day table on Fairfield Way from 11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. that day. The goal is to film 200 video petitions for - and create 400 contacts with - students' local legislators, advocating on behalf of legislation tied to UConnPIRG's campaign initiatives. There will be an inflatable sperm whale at the event as an attention-grabber that illustrates the negative impact of waste on marine life. UConn and Trinity College will also have students write letters-to-the-editor (LTEs) for their local newspapers and engage students in social media action.
 1. Jessica Gagnon (Vice Chair) believes this will make a much bigger impact than the in-person lobby day, which would have only allowed for 20-30 attendees.
 2. Jim Leahy (ConnPIRG lobbyist) suggests the environment surrounding this event will allow for better press coverage.

3. O'Hara (Chair) asks if members of any campaign can participate. Gagnon (Vice Chair) confirms this, adding she will send a chapterwide email tonight and post on GroupMe.
 4. Chowdhury asks for clarification about the timing of the event, which Gagnon (Vice Chair) provides.
- C. DeMoura announces that Zero Waste is collaborating with the Office of Sustainability for Earth Week and trying to organize more big events on campus this semester.
- D. Cheyenne Tavares says New Voters Project will hold a propmaking session for Absentee Voter Appreciation Week, which will take place the week after spring break. The campaign has also reserved a space for its primary party on April 21 from 12-4 p.m.
- E. Ben Albee says 100% Renewable Energy is focusing on campus relations before its awareness week. Other environmental organizations are holding events at the same time, which ideally will amplify the impact of UConnPIRG's event.
1. Chad Schroeder praises the campaign's interns for staying up-to-date on statewide developments.
- F. Keller recaps Hunger and Homelessness's latest campaign meeting, where attendees discussed social media action for HB 5013 - which relates to SNAP benefits for college students - and the Husky Market food pantry on March 13.
1. DeMoura asks about the meaning of SNAP. Keller clarifies that it is the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, which provides food stamps.
- G. Albee says students can tour UConn's cogent plant Friday at 2 p.m.
1. DeMoura asks what the cogent plant is. Albee says it is a gas power plant that powers UConn's entire campus.
 2. Schroeder says the tour provides an educational overview of UConn's piping and general infrastructure.
 3. O'Hara (Chair) encourages Core members - even those not on the 100% Renewable Energy campaign - to go on the tour.
- H. O'Hara (Chair) reminds Core that four of UConnPIRG's five campaigns have bills being proposed that tie into the organizational mission, so everyone should try to help with Wednesday's virtual lobby day if possible.
1. Leahy (ConnPIRG lobbyist) proposes an inter-campaign contest for collecting video petitions.
 2. Natalie Seier agrees with Leahy (ConnPIRG lobbyist), adding there should be a tracker to encourage students to film video petitions for multiple campaign initiatives.
 3. Chowdhury asks about the possibility of filming a video petition that addresses multiple bills. Leahy (ConnPIRG lobbyist) recommends focusing on one initiative for each petition and letter.
- IV. All About Campaign Selection
1. O'Hara (Chair) initiates a discussion about campaign selection - which will take place in a few weeks - explaining how and why UConnPIRG picks the campaigns it runs. She provides context behind the importance of designing campaigns that combat special interest corporations. She

describes the goals of the campus program and the major obstacles PIRG faces in accomplishing such goals. She provides the elements of a typical campaign mix and discusses the concept of a statewide lead campaign, which will also be up for a vote soon. She briefly outlines the ten primary campaign selection criteria, which will be discussed within small breakout groups. She displays the outline of a typical campaign proposal, providing the following steps: problem, solution, goal, strategy, tactics, program team support, and evaluation. She asks about the possibility of running New Voters Project as a standalone campaign in fall 2020, with Core members providing points of support and opposition. She clarifies that this is not truly the plan for fall 2020; rather this hypothetical was meant to encourage critical consideration of other campaigns.

2. Each campaign coordinator (Chowdhury, DeMoura, Tavares and Victor Htut, Albee, and Keller) facilitates a breakout group to evaluate their campaign within the context of the ten primary campaign selection criteria before recapping its group's discussion to Core.

V. Business

A. Approval of 3/2/20 Minutes

1. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve the 3/2/20 minutes.
2. Elizabeth Turano seconds.
3. Motion passes unanimously (*Angelina Vaccarelli and Mary Elizabeth Monticello abstain*).

B. OER Sweatshirts

1. Kyleigh Hillerud reiterates that Affordable Textbooks will provide sweatshirts to students who visit the campaign's upcoming table and film a video petition in support of open-educational resources.
2. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve the purchase of OER sweatshirts for up to \$3,500.
3. Monticello seconds.
4. O'Hara (Chair) asks Michael Katz (Secretary) to send out the official quotes for the sweatshirts to the chapter upon their availability.
5. Motion passes unanimously.

C. OER Water Bottles

1. Hillerud announces that Affordable Textbooks will also give away OER-themed water bottles at its table.
2. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve the purchase of 500 OER water bottles for up to \$5,000.
3. Keller seconds.
4. Albee asks about the probability that the total cost will exceed the proposed up-to amount. Gagnon (Vice Chair) says the water bottles will not be ordered if this is the case, and Hillerud clarifies that the high up-to amount is merely a precautionary measure.
5. Motion passes unanimously.

D. Staplers and Pens

1. Hillerud proposes the distribution of mini-staplers and pens at the Affordable Textbooks table, tying into the campaign's initiative of educational enrichment.
 2. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve the purchase of 500 mini-staplers and 750 pens for up to \$4,000.
 3. Chuck O'Coin seconds.
 4. Motion passes unanimously.
- E. Phone Wallets
1. Hillerud also proposes the distribution of phone wallets at the Affordable Textbooks table.
 2. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve the purchase of 300 phone wallets for up to \$1,000.
 3. Chowdhury seconds.
 4. O'Hara (Chair) says photos of the phone wallets should be sent out to the chapter upon their availability.
 5. Motion passes unanimously.
- F. Stamped Envelopes for Absentee Voter Appreciation Week
1. Seier proposes the purchase of stamped envelopes, which will allow absentee voters to mail their ballots. Said envelopes will be provided to students at three New Voters Project tables the week after spring break, prior to Connecticut's state primary on April 28.
 2. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve the purchase of 120 stamped envelopes (\$107.70 total) for up to \$150.
 3. Htut seconds.
 4. Motion passes unanimously.
- G. Purell Office Sanitizer
1. O'Hara (Chair) proposes the purchase of Purell hand sanitizer in order to prevent sickness and maintain office cleanliness.
 2. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve the purchase of two large pumps of Purell hand sanitizer for up to \$50.
 3. Chowdhury seconds.
 4. Seier suggests raising the proposed up-to amount given shipping expenses and high demand.
 5. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve the purchase of two large pumps of Purell hand sanitizer for up to \$100.
 6. Chowdhury seconds.
 7. Motion passes unanimously.
- H. Pizza for 3/30/20 Core Meeting
1. O'Hara (Chair) wants to hold a longer Core meeting for state board elections on March 30 and thus provide food for those in attendance, who might otherwise miss dinner.
 2. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve the purchase of Sgt. Pepperoni pizza for March 30's Core meeting for up to \$100.
 3. Albee seconds.
 4. Motion passes unanimously.

I. Equipment Rental for Virtual Lobby Day Table

1. Gagnon (Vice Chair) reiterates that the virtual lobby day table will have a 15-foot inflatable sperm whale to represent state pride (the sperm whale is Connecticut's state animal) and Zero Waste's commitment to protecting marine life from pollution. Justin Landry (ConnPIRG campus organizer for Trinity College) has the whale at his house, and Leahy (ConnPIRG lobbyist) believes he can borrow a generator or compressor for Wednesday.
2. Seier asks if the whale will be at the table under any and all circumstances, and if said whale is UConnPIRG property. Gagnon (Vice Chair) says she will try to ensure the whale is at the table, and she clarifies that equipment rental is merely a backup plan in the event that Leahy (ConnPIRG lobbyist) cannot provide a generator or compressor himself. UConnPIRG is borrowing the whale from Environment Connecticut.
3. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve equipment rental for the virtual lobby day table for up to \$100.
4. Htut seconds.
5. Motion passes unanimously.

VI. Announcements

- A. Turano issues her weekly warning to those who have spilled food in the office.
- B. O'Hara (Chair) announces that executive board elections will be held in two weeks, and any interested parties must send Kurt Daigle (UConnPIRG primary advisor) their name, netID, and expression of intent to run for a seat.
- C. O'Hara (Chair) asks Core members to fill out her feedback form, noting that nobody has done so yet.
- D. O'Hara (Chair) asks those interested in running for an executive board position to stay in the room for 10-15 minutes after Core.

Meeting adjourned at 8:18pm

Minutes submitted by Michael Katz (Secretary)