

UConnPIRG Core Meeting 20-26  
Monday April 6th, 2020, 7 PM  
WebEx (remote location due to COVID-19 outbreak)

Voting Members: Emily O'Hara (Chair), Jessica Gagnon (Vice Chair), Maya Murarka (Treasurer), Michael Katz (Secretary), Chad Schroeder, Colleen Keller, Shafina Chowdhury, Mary Elizabeth Monticello, Kyleigh Hillerud, Elizabeth Turano, Venkata Patchigolla, Rebecca Tripp, Natalie Seier, Julia Ward, Cheyenne Tavares, Ben Albee, Abigail Coia, Leah LePage, David Vallejo, Chuck O'Coin, Victor Htut, Dylan DeMoura, Carly Saindon, Kyle Cyr

Guests: Justin Landry (ConnPIRG campus organizer for Trinity College)

- I. Meeting brought to order at 7:04pm by Emily O'Hara (Chair)
- II. Introductions
- III. Campaign/Executive Board Updates
  - A. Cheyenne Tavares announces New Voters Project's Fall 2020 campaign slogan ("Your Voice. Your Vote. Your Future."). She and Natalie Seier will take over UConnPIRG's Instagram account tomorrow. NVP's campaign proposal is complete, and the campaign will release its voter toolkit next week and continue designing merchandise for next semester. Members will also send tweets and emails to Governor Ned Lamont to allow mail-in voting for Connecticut's state primary.
  - B. Colleen Keller says Hunger and Homelessness is planning for next semester (including big events for an awareness week). The campaign is continuing its efforts with its local needs assessment and website, and will conduct a social media takeover this Wednesday.
  - C. Shafina Chowdhury says Affordable Textbooks is working on a booklet, survey and petition. Its campaign proposal is complete, and Irene Soteriou will take over UConnPIRG's Instagram account on Thursday.
  - D. Ben Albee says 100% Renewable Energy is conducting a virtual conference in a few weeks with several angles. The campaign is working on an agenda and research for this conference. A Save the Earth campaign proposal, combining 100% Renewable Energy and Zero Waste, is complete.
  - E. Dylan DeMoura says Zero Waste is working with Trinity College and Environment America to plan the campaign's future. Leah LePage took over UConnPIRG's Instagram account today, and New York has expanded its statewide polystyrene ban. A letter-to-the-editor/op-ed writing session in support of maintaining single-use plastic bag bans will take place on Thursday at 5 p.m.
  - F. Michael Katz (Secretary) discusses his inter-campaign plans for the remainder of the semester, including his *Daily Campus* article published today calling for the facilitation of youth civic engagement. He will conduct his transition meeting with secretary-elect Kyle Cyr this Friday.
  - G. Chad Schroeder announces that there will be a social coffee hour on Thursday at 10 a.m., where participants will view and discuss powerful photography. A game night will also take place on Friday or Saturday. Schroeder implores Core to fill

out his interest forms regarding movie nights and individual presentations, and to send him ideas for other social events.

- H. O'Hara (Chair) provides an overview of UConnPIRG's Fall 2020 campaign selection timeline. Katz (Secretary) will send the campaign proposals, which were due today, tomorrow in a chapter-wide email. Core should review them all before April 13's campaign proposal presentation and vote (the statewide lead recommendation will also be determined at this time). A multimodal evaluation of the chapter and its campaigns will take place on April 20.
- IV. 2020-21 State Board Elections
- A. Jessica Gagnon (Vice Chair) nominates Keller, who accepts.
  - B. Gagnon (Vice Chair) nominates Kyleigh Hillerud, who accepts.
  - C. Chad Schroeder nominates Albee, who declines.
  - D. Dylan DeMoura nominates Schroeder, who accepts.
  - E. Hillerud nominates Tavares, who accepts.
  - F. Gagnon (Vice Chair) nominates Seier, who accepts.
  - G. Hillerud nominates Maya Murarka (Treasurer), who accepts.
  - H. Venkata Patchigolla nominates DeMoura, who declines.
  - I. O'Hara (Chair) nominates Mary Elizabeth Monticello, who accepts.
  - J. DeMoura nominates Julia Ward, who accepts.
  - K. Gagnon (Vice Chair) nominates Rebecca Tripp, who declines.
  - L. Schroeder nominates LePage, who declines.
  - M. Albee nominates Chowdhury, who declines.
  - N. Schroeder nominates Victor Htut, who declines.
  - O. DeMoura nominates Patchigolla, who declines.
  - P. O'Hara (Chair) nominates Kyle Cyr, who declines.
  - Q. Keller believes she is fit to be a statewide representative and provide a good connection between the state board and chapter, citing her role in several valuable conversations as this year's state board secretary.
  - R. Hillerud cites her experience as this year's state board chair and last year's state board secretary. She has been involved with UConnPIRG throughout her entire college career and wants to continue supporting the organization on a statewide level. The state board has been especially effective this year, so she wants to continue strengthening it.
  - S. Schroeder believes UConnPIRG is fundamentally the best place to make change, but there are still many ways to do so. He has strived to use his privilege to lift other people up, and he has provided several ideas and built up state leadership despite admittedly not having all the answers. He hopes to get more money off-campus after writing the organization's purchase orders as state board treasurer.
  - T. Tavares says she was honored to win one of two open state board seats among ten candidates last semester and gained confidence from the experience. Her biggest strengths involve conducting tough, important conversations and proposing ambitious ideas. She is excited about the committees that Schroeder proposed, and she would be more active on the state board next year, particularly in facilitating a statewide emphasis on NVP as its campaign coordinator.

- U. Seier has a vision to progress UConnPIRG's work and wants to emphasize reciprocity between the statewide chapter and the organization. She is excited for Schroeder's proposed committees, and would provide more leadership opportunities and prioritize important issues.
- V. Murarka (Treasurer) says she has become one of the chapter's most active members upon being elected treasurer at the beginning of the semester. She has been looking at multiple dimensions of the organization's issues, and she wants to continue working with Trinity College, fix the purchase order system and show the power of student activism and as a representative of UConnPIRG.
- W. Monticello wants to see the organization grow and thrive to make necessary changes. She cites her ability to share ideas to ConnPIRG as a member of UConnPIRG's planning committee and a regular participant during state board meetings. She believes she would represent the organization well and be able to encourage ConnPIRG's support of UConnPIRG and other statewide chapters.
- X. Ward cites her experience as an intern over the last year, being able to use the skills she has learned and build upon them to move up within the organization.
- Y. Cyr asks each candidate what they bring to the state board that would not suffice for a smaller role.
  1. Keller says she has many good ideas and tries to take initiative on many things. She cites her experience attending a leadership conference in Washington, D.C.
  2. Hillerud cites her experience as an organizational representative since her freshman year, when she attended NST in Washington, D.C. She has a good rapport with members of UConnPIRG, MassPIRG and other regional chapters. She also has fun ideas and the willingness to challenge preconceived notions.
  3. Schroeder cites his extensive knowledge of and commitment to organizational issues, alongside his ability to relay knowledge of the funding system. He is unafraid to say what needs to be said and put UConn students first. He also has planning experience, which he would use to establish committees that other PIRG chapters lack and expand UConnPIRG and its leadership.
  4. Tavares stresses the importance of education and awareness over attaining high numbers. She would put her ideas, dedication, compassion and work ethic to good use on a statewide level.
  5. Seier says she has been the organization's driving voice in discussing intersectionality, and she is willing to learn from others.
  6. Murarka (Treasurer) says she is a good listener and seeker of other perspectives. She asks several questions borne out of curiosity in an effort to find the best solutions to critical issues. She has a strong knowledge of the organization's funding. She would maintain accountability to students, spend down the organization's surplus and get money off-campus.
  7. Monticello cites her ability to instill connections, compassion and action. She wants UConn to hold online collaborative events with Trinity College, and she has the initiative to propose ideas and make them a reality.

8. Ward cites her background as an applied economics major concentrating on environmentalism and social resources, through which she can discuss organizational issues in ways that reach those who do not align with UConnPIRG's perspective.
- Z. Patchigolla asks each candidate to use one word to describe their main focus on the state board level.
1. Keller says "collaboration."
  2. Hillerud says "expansion."
  3. Schroeder says "committee development."
  4. Tavares says "understanding and evolving."
  5. Seier says "reciprocity."
  6. Murarka (Treasurer) says "understanding."
  7. Monticello says "connection."
  8. Ward says "communication."

*Keller, Hillerud, Schroeder, Tavares, Seier, Murarka (Treasurer), Monticello and Ward exit WebEx at 8:05 p.m.*

- AA. Core engages in closed discussion.

*Keller, Hillerud, Schroeder, Tavares, Seier, Murarka (Treasurer), Monticello and Ward return to WebEx at 8:18 p.m.*

- BB. Core members submit an online ranked-choice voting form to Gagnon (Vice Chair), Katz (Secretary), and Turano, who track the results.

- CC. Keller, Hillerud, Schroeder, Tavares, Seier and Murarka (Treasurer) are elected as ConnPIRG's 2020-21 state board representatives.

## V. Business

- A. Approval of Amended Constitution and Bylaws

1. O'Hara (Chair) shares UConnPIRG's governing documents and provides an overview of their major amendments. The constitution now contains an updated mission statement to reflect the chapter's changing values, alongside clearer executive officer terms and the addition of an interim clause to address executive board vacancies. The bylaws now address the compensation of executive officers, alongside the addition and compensation of the executive cabinet. O'Hara (Chair) also proposes an amendment to add the executive officer terms to the bylaws' compensation of officers section.
2. DeMoura asks about the possibility of adding compensable duties within the bylaws. O'Hara (Chair) says the bylaws would need to be amended to enact immediate changes.
3. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve the amendments to UConnPIRG's constitution as reflected currently.
4. Gagnon (Vice Chair) seconds.
5. Motion passes unanimously.
6. O'Hara (Chair) motions to approve the amendments to UConnPIRG's bylaws as reflected currently.
7. Chowdhury seconds.
8. Motion passes (*DeMoura abstains*).

VI. Announcements

- A. O'Hara (Chair) displays information about a purchase order meeting on Thursday at 7 p.m., which will be held without staff for conversation and context. This will be followed by a meeting on Friday at 4 p.m. with staff.
- B. Gagnon (Vice Chair) announces that the next mentorship cohort meeting will be held tomorrow at 7 p.m., where Hillerud will present about the printing press being the most important invention of all time. This meeting is open for all to join.
- C. Keller asks Core to send their letters of intent for executive cabinet positions to O'Hara (Chair) or Gagnon (Vice Chair) by April 13 for the sake of de-identification. Information on the available roles and the process of writing LOIs will be made available.
  1. Seier asks if other cabinet roles can be proposed. O'Hara (Chair) says yes, but compensation will not be provided immediately.

Meeting adjourned at 8:51pm

Minutes submitted by Michael Katz (Secretary)