

UConnPIRG Core Meeting 21-8  
Monday March 15th, 2021, 7 PM  
Zoom (remote location due to COVID-19 outbreak)

Voting Members: Colleen Keller (Chair), Dylan DeMoura (Vice Chair), Maya Murarka (Treasurer), Erin McConnell (Secretary), Kyleigh Hillerud, Shafina Chowdhury, Rebecca Tripp, Leah LePage, Benjamin Albee, Gianella Anyosa, Julia Ward, Natalie Seier, Monet Paredes, Joseph Drossman, Emily Lopez, Sasha Goldblatt

Non-Voting Members: Larrinda White

Guests: Kurt Daigle (faculty advisor)

- I. Meeting brought to order at 7:04pm by Colleen Keller (Chair)
- II. Introductions
- III. Chapter Updates
  - A. Keller shares that the Executive Board has been preparing transition documents and information for elections tonight. Maya Murarka has checked in with the Business Office and is getting monthly bills through. At the Executive Board meeting, money was approved for Husky Market and the Women's Campaign, and the rest of the Executive Board is doing the usual.
  - B. Benjamin Albee gives the Ex-Officio update. The Undergraduate Student Government (USG) is hosting an event for Rare Disease Day.
  - C. Julia Ward gives the Legislative Committee update. The meeting times are Mondays at 6pm and Tuesdays at 5pm.
- IV. Campaign Updates
  - A. Rebecca Tripp gives the Hunger & Homelessness update. They share that they met with the Center for Career Development about the closet project, contributed to the national database for Swipe Out Hunger, met with Planting Our Roots and Husky Market partners about a livestream, are meeting with the Dean of Students and Community Outreach office tomorrow, and are submitting testimony on Wednesday. The campaign meetings are Fridays at 2pm.
  - B. Shafina Chowdhury gives the Affordable Textbooks update.. They share that the UCTV video has been uploaded to social media, Red Hat has reached out to them about working on their documentary, and they are discussing next steps for the campaign. The campaign meetings are Thursdays at 3:30pm.
  - C. Leah LePage gives the Public Health update. They share that they are working on outreach. The campaign meetings are Wednesdays at 6pm.
  - D. Albee gives the Save the Earth update. They share that their flier was approved by the Residence Hall Association (RHA) today, they are finishing episodes 7 and 8 of the podcast this week, the legislative team is meeting to write testimony on SB 30 "An Act Concerning Food Waste Diversion and Anaerobic Digestion Facilities" at 3:30pm this Wednesday for a public hearing at 10am on Friday, and they will be creating a campaign Instagram account. The campaign meetings are Sundays at 5pm.

- E. Sasha Goldblatt gives the Women's Campaign update. They share that the care packages are approved and will be distributed between April 12th and April 16th, they will be attending the National Organization of Women (NOW) this Thursday, and bi-weekly Instagram posts are starting this week. The campaign meetings are Thursdays at 3pm.

V. Business

A. Minutes

1. Keller motions to approve the Core meeting minutes from Monday, March 8th, 2021.
2. Kyleigh Hillerud seconds.
3. Motion passes unanimously.
  - a) Monet Paredes and Julia Ward abstain.

VI. Elections

A. Chair

1. Hillerud nominates Natalie Seier, who accepts.
2. LePage nominates Tripp, who accepts.
3. Ward nominates Keller, who declines.
4. Seier shares that they currently serve as Recruitment and Retention Director, which has given them the experience of representing this organization as a whole, which the Chair needs to do in campus relations meetings. They have also had many conversations with the current Executive Board about bridging the gap between campaign work and the chapter as a whole, and will continue working towards this. They want to lead this chapter with three things: reciprocity, intersectionality, and intention. With reciprocity, there is so much this organization can do for students and so much they can do for us, and they teach with that philosophy in Activist Class, that they currently run with DeMoura, and the URBN program they have started. With intersectionality, everything the organization does needs to work towards equitable goals. With intention, they emphasize being intentional with what the organization is doing and what the organization is coming back to. They expect every person to hold them accountable, as they will do for everyone in the chapter. They are tough when needed, but will never meet a situation without kindness. There are many things to do in the next year with the rebrand and the fact that almost 2 classes of students (the incoming freshmen and current freshmen) are unaware of this organization, and they believe they are the best person to lead the organization through this.
5. Tripp shares that they currently serve as the Hunger & Homelessness coordinator and have previous experience as a legislative intern. They want to cultivate campus connections to become more intersectional and better understood by activists. They have put effort into coalition building through moderating the Poverty in the Pandemic Panel, working with Planting Our Roots, Creating Caring Communities, and more. They understand the nuances of working with the administration and fellow student activists. They understand the scope of each campaign, and hope

to work with many organizations on campus and to boost them. They want to maintain a culture that makes members remember why they are in the organization.

6. Hillerud asks each candidate why they think they're the best person to lead the chapter through a Re-Affirmation vote.
  - a) Seier believes that since they've planned and ran the Recruitment Drive, represented the chapter, been in a cabinet position, worked across the campaigns, and have lots of relations across campus, they would be the best fit to lead the chapter through a Re-Affirmation vote. They want to share their vision for what the chapter can be moving forward, and are not afraid to speak out if something isn't going well. They are happy to work for the organization while it continues to grow.
  - b) Tripp speaks to her experience networking and thinks it will be incredibly important for the organization with the rebrand and Re-Affirmation vote. They have lots of experience bringing in new interns and getting them involved, which will translate to a chapter-wide level. They have the communication skills to lead Executive Board meetings and the cabinet, and want to work as a cohesive unit to promote our chapter, show what each campaign brings to the table, so people can get involved in the organization's intersectional initiatives.
7. LePage asks what both candidates would like to see continue from the previous administration.
  - a) Seier would like to see work with the Treasurer and the campaign coordinators to spend down the surplus, by expanding Husky Market, creating a version of Husky Market for Affordable Textbooks, and implementing more sustainable things across campus. They also would like to see the internship program solidified for credit across different departments, and to expand the organization's reach across the state, since we are no longer affiliated with CONNPIRG. They would also like to expand the organization's engagement with the branch campuses, through the implementation of more programs like Husky Engage.
  - b) Tripp would like to keep the campaign highlights, as the action items will bring people to Core, help with inter-campaign work, expand the organization's reach, visibility, and legislative tactics at the chapter level, and gets interns more involved at chapter level. They want to expand the organization's spending through initiatives like Husky Market, and a closet and coat drive. They want to continue coalition building by connecting with the regional campuses in terms of Husky Market and working with Senators and Representatives when doing legislative action on all of the campaigns, and they want to start contracting for research which will add to the organization's intersectionality and allow us to take

on more issues. They want to cultivate an environment where everyone feels represented, and have good conversations that move the organization forward.

*Seier and Tripp exit Zoom at 7:41 p.m.*

8. Core engages in closed discussion.

*Seier and Tripp return to Zoom at 7:48 p.m.*

9. Seier is elected as UConnPIRG's 2021-22 chapter chair.

#### B. Vice Chair

1. Hillerud nominates LePage, who accepts.
2. Ward nominates Tripp, who accepts.
3. DeMoura nominates Chowdhury, who declines.
4. LePage shares that they came to the organization for activism, but stayed for the people. They currently run the Public Health campaign and learned how to do the job on the fly, but feel as though they have a great grasp of the position now. They have gone through the leadership development ladder, and feel as though they would make a great Vice Chair. They will be open and accessible to campaign coordinators and rising leaders in the chapter through Activist Class and leadership development. They want to boost the morale of the chapter by motivating individuals to work hard and love what they do, especially during the rebrand, and they want to bring enthusiasm to the position.
5. Tripp shares that their passion is leadership development. They want to work with the campaigns and leaders to hone grassroots techniques, and they share that they would not be here if not for the emphasis this organization has on leadership development. They want to see long-term initiatives that can be sustained and can evolve, as they see currently in their capacity as Hunger & Homelessness campaign coordinator where they delegate to a team of interns. They want to attend campaign meetings, conduct debriefs, and facilitate communication between the Executive Board, cabinet, and campaign coordinators, and transform their ideas and goals using their experience as a campaign coordinator. They understand the challenges of running a campaign, and want to bring in external resources to evolve Activist Class, increase inter-campaign work, and lead effective training sessions. They also want to expand the for-credit internship program, revive the mentorship program, and work with other activist groups on workshops and collaborations. They believe activism is bigger than the individual.
6. DeMoura asks how each candidate envisions spending their time.
  - a) LePage shares that their two main focuses will be communication and consistency. A big part of being Vice Chair is working with the Executive Board and the campaign coordinators, which is where communication comes in. Even though things can be overwhelming and stressful, the Vice Chair is that bridge between the Executive Board and the campaign coordinators. They want to be consistent and push themselves to be as timely as they can,

while being someone who is accessible to all members of the organization and ensuring that the lines of communication are always there and are always reliable.

- b) Tripp shares that they are looking forward to working with the Recruitment and Retention Director during the rebrand and Re-Affirmation drive. They want to reach out to organizations that are doing the same work as us, and understand the importance of communication; it's important to know when to reach out for help, and they have a good grasp on how to facilitate those conversations between the Executive Board and the campaign coordinators. When the campaign coordinators are overwhelmed, they want to bring in external resources such as a legislative head to help with initiatives. They want to delegate support for the campaign coordinators to ensure they can focus on the Re-Affirmation drive, and delegate that time appropriately from week to week. They also want a constant stream of communication among the campaign coordinators to understand what they are expecting from week to week.
7. Hillerud asks what is one thing each candidate would keep and/or change from previous leaders in this role.
    - a) LePage shares that they admire the consistency from previous Vice Chairs. You never know how much of an impact you can make on a new member of the organization, so they want to be a resource for those new members and bring a level of enthusiasm and excitement to the table with a rebrand and the Re-Affirmation drive. They want to show people their passion and empower people to continue with theirs.
    - b) Tripp shares that they were developed as a leader by previous Vice Chairs and they hope to be that person for new members. They want to develop Activist Class, in addition to inter-campaign work, and bringing in external sources for additional training. They understand the limitations of their knowledge and will bring in external people when needed. They want to start activist workshops outside of Activist Class for the campus community to network and to bring in new members.

*LePage and Tripp exit Zoom at 8:07 p.m.*

8. Core engages in closed discussion.

*LePage and Tripp return to Zoom at 8:13pm.*

9. Tripp is elected as UConnPIRG's 2021-22 chapter vice chair.

#### C. Treasurer

1. Seier nominates Albee, who accepts.
2. Murarka nominates herself, who accepts.
3. Albee shares that they will be a good steward of this organization's money by making the buying process more accessible to campaigns to spend down the surplus. They have been running a campaign for a while, and

they've wanted to request money, but haven't had anyone reach out to them to help. They have three goals: prioritize clear processes and documentation to make the Treasurer and Treasurer's Assistant roles, and buying process easier; coordinate with campaign coordinators to support and reach out to them, instead of the other way around; and be at the forefront of on-campus events, so supplies can be purchased quickly and in a timely fashion.

4. Murarka shares that they are currently the Treasurer, have been on the Affordable Textbooks campaign, and in the Activist Leadership Program. As an economics major, they understand that money is one of the things that makes the world go around. They have learned the systems in place here at UConn, understand that the Treasurer has accountability, and believe they are the most capable and qualified person to do this role. They want to reach out to campaign coordinators to make purchasing easier and more streamlined, and make relations with the Business Office better. They also want to spend down the surplus, and educate students about what it means to be a Tier-III.
5. Seier asks how each candidate plans to utilize and keep communication with the Treasurer's Assistant, while keeping communication with the rest of the chapter.
  - a) Albee says that they will delegate to the Treasurer's Assistant as they've done so this semester by delegating to the 10 people on their campaign. They are always keeping in contact with people, and making sure people know what they have to do.
  - b) Murarka shares that they would have regular meetings with the Treasurer's Assistant during the Fall to discuss their updates. They have helped the Treasurer's Assistant put purchase requests together and have taught the Treasurer's Assistant how to do this role.
6. Hillerud asks how each candidate sees themselves playing a role in the campaigns.
  - a) Albee wants to be at the forefront of running events to get purchases done efficiently and quickly, so they will be involved with all campaigns. They have gained an appreciation for the organization as a whole, and not just the individual campaigns, and will still work on some of the campaigns as much as it pertains to the role.
  - b) Murarka shares that the previous Treasurer shared that the role is one of the most important in the chapter, and while they are not a creative person, this is a good way to get involved while supporting those who are creative.
7. DeMoura asks how each candidate sees the Treasurer functioning during the Re-Affirmation drive next year.
  - a) Albee shares that a town hall would be beneficial to let the campus community know how the funding works as both an educational

and a social event, and emphasize that campus relations are important to ensuring our fee is reaffirmed.

- b) Murarka shares that a lot of pushback is due to people not knowing how this organization can spend its money. They are unsure how to educate people, but suggest more publicity for a town hall would get more people to an event that hasn't had a high turnout in the past. They also share that the Treasurer will need to be accountable for themselves.

*Albee and Murarka exit Zoom at 8:33pm.*

8. Core engages in closed discussion.

*Albee and Murarka return to Zoom at 8:41pm.*

9. Albee is elected as UConnPIRG's 2021-22 chapter treasurer.

#### D. Secretary

1. Hillerud nominates LePage, who declines.
2. DeMoura nominates Ward, who accepts.
3. DeMoura nominates Chowdhury, who declines.
4. DeMoura nominates Goldblatt, who declines.
5. DeMoura nominates Paredes, who accepts.
6. Seier nominates Gianella Anyosa, who declines.
7. Ward nominates Murarka, who accepts.
8. Ward shares that they have been a part of the organization for two years as an intern, the campaign co-coordinator of the Public Health campaign, and the legislative committee director. They are dedicated to this organization and would be a good fit for Secretary, as they are a writing tutor and love the writing process. They want to start a coalition between campaigns to write pieces for publication in local Connecticut newspapers and the Daily Campus, which will give the organization good visibility. They also want to make the position accessible to interns and new members, and make the position a place where members and campaigns can pitch ideas about initiatives and reach out to professors, reporting organizations, and more.
9. Paredes joined the organization last semester and is currently on the Save the Earth Campaign. They have worked on the campaign's podcast by sending out emails and coordinating with different student activists and professors. They are an organized person in general with great presentation skills, and they are currently in the Leadership Learning Community. They want to implement open communication in Core and the campaigns, and to reach out to other groups for more collaborative organizing.
10. Murarka shares that one thing they like about Secretary is how they get to be the person who writes the story of the organization. They are someone who is very organized and is a great fit for the role. They have very established relationships in the organization and the Business Office, and know the intricacies of how the campaigns function.
11. Hillerud asks what each candidate would like to take on in the extra time they have as Secretary.

- a) Ward would like to work with the different campaigns to get student voices out to UConn and the public. They want to work more with the internship program, and to tailor pathways towards pieces of writing that can be disseminated with a focus on activism. They also want to streamline the class raps into a page that is easily readable.
  - b) Paredes would like to work with different organizations to make a more powerful impact on campus, like getting involved with other Learning Communities.
  - c) Murarka would like to work with leadership development, the legislative committee, and when campaigns are writing letters to the editor.
12. Tripp asks how each candidate will plan to make emails engaging and easy to read, and what they would keep/change.
- a) Ward shares that they would streamline the information included in the emails, include memes, and work with the Communications Director to create graphics, so they can be more accessible.
  - b) Paredes shares that they would also include memes, and email highlights, so members don't have to read big, blocky paragraphs.
  - c) Murarka would divide emails into sections by campaign, and promote other organizations' events around campus.

*Ward, Paredes, and Murarka exit Zoom at 9:01pm.*

13. Core engages in closed discussion.

*Ward, Paredes, and Murarka return to Zoom at 9:10pm.*

14. Paredes is elected as UConnPIRG's 2021-22 chapter secretary.

VII. Announcements/Wrap Up

- A. Keller thanks everyone for staying for this longer than normal Core.

Meeting adjourned at 9:16pm

Minutes submitted by Erin McConnell (Secretary)