**National Initiative for Consumer Horticulture (NICH)**

**Executive Committee**

**Bi-Weekly Conference Call**

**Tuesday April 16, 2019**

**10am ET / 9am CT / 8am MT / 7am PT**

**Minutes**

Attendees: Sylvia, Missy, Ellen, Heather, Pam, Mason, Gail, Shannon

1. Committee Updates (new, Emergent Info to Share)
   1. Marketing/Communications (Mary Kay)   
      Committee meeting this week. Sylvia put a deadline on the association tent list ‘fill in’ effort – project complete by end of month. Sylvia will share list with Pam, Pam will review and see if there is an opportunity for Extension Master Gardener volunteers to help fill in the list.
   2. Environmental (Gail)  
      Working to get infographic task finalized before May although Committee is struggling with communication challenges. Gail working on policy briefs for pollinator conference. Opportunity to provide comments on Gail’s urban pollinator brief. Shannon and Ellen offered their support. Palaces for the People podcast covers role of horticulture in reducing crime and includes some evaluation measures. Shannon will email podcast information to the committee.
   3. Community Health Benefits (Pam)  
      Working on internal engagement. Letter has been sent and now moving on to email. Committee would like to know other things in strategic plan they should be focusing on. Stymied because focus has been on getting people engaged as opposed to education. How can we get people re-engaged to be excited. Are we ready to start developing tools/resources for engagement? Committee would like to work on curriculum and social media toolbox.
2. Council Updates (new, Emergent Info to Share)
   1. Commercial (Mason)  
      i. Industry side feels putting out good info in infographics. Infographic may be shared but other than that they don’t know what to do with it. Can we come up with a toolkit (captions, suggestions, calendar) about how they can use the infographics? Council is asking for more direction on what they are supposed to be doing with the resources/information we are sharing. ExCom discussed and feel we should give them social media posts.   
      Specific Example: Charlie Hall’s green industry survey. Industry sees the survey come out, they go to Charlie’s talks, etc. but no one knows what to do with the info or how to use it to make their businesses better. Does NICH have the ability to synthesize/analyze Charlie’s data and make recommendations for what to do with the information? If Charlie’s data shows that people are spending a lot more money on their pets. What does that mean for the industry? We communicate the data and make recommendations for what to do with that info – e.g., pets that live in homes with green plants live longer.  
      ii. #PlantsDoThat is the fav hashtag – Plants aren’t the only way to connect to NICH, it is just a way to bring the industry together. A unifier. Encourage people to also # what their business sector is. This is a great way to help people discover us while they are searching something else. Tag sector AND tag us – important practice. Plants is broad enough that industry feels it covers all sectors. E.g., #PlantsDoThat #Gardens #Landscapes   
      iii. Other messages in addition to infographics that could really help support the industry. How do we find messaging that says plants are easy and plants are worth it? How do we convey a message that it’s ok if your plant dies? You get what you pay for with these plants. You don’t have to stress yourself out to keep certain plants going. #LetItGrow and #LetItGo
   2. Non-Profit (Shannon)  
      Connected with Jenny – not interested in co-chairing but happy to help launch the initial conversation with non-profit allies. Will be meeting in the near future. Shannon will also share invite with the committee – if you have non-profit partners please share the meeting invite with them. Ellen will see if we can’t turn the meeting invite into a list serve recruitment question/call for support.
   3. Academic/LGU (Heather)   
      Next meeting later this month. Subcommittees are creating publications.
3. New Business
   1. List serve/communication topics   
      Interested in creation of online toolkits (Ppts on infographic topics, social media memes, captions, image set) that will meet the needs of our industry and extension partners. Mason, Missy, Heather, and Pam will get together to pilot an online toolkit around a theme BY THE NEXT MEETING. Pam – slides, Mason – social Want to develop some consumer-facing marketing pieces to help support the industry in their customer engagement efforts.   
      e-blast – Ellen has drafted and shared. Sylvia will proof-read. Committee will skim/review and provide feedback TODAY. Ellen will send final to list serve.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

* Sylvia will put a deadline on the tent list ‘fill in’ effort.
* Sylvia will share tent list with Pam.
* Pam will review tent list and see if there is an opportunity for Extension Master Gardener volunteers to help fill in the list.
* Shannon will email podcast information to the committee.
* Marketing Commiittee will social media templates
* Shannon will share Non-Profit invite with the ExCom – if ExCom members have non-profit partners please share the meeting invite with them.
* Ellen will see if we can’t turn the Non-Profit invite into a list serve recruitment question/call for support.
* Mason, Missy, Heather, and Pam will get together to pilot an online toolkit around a theme BY THE NEXT MEETING.
* Sylvia will proof-read e-blast, ExCom will provide feedback.