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

**Executive Committee**

**Bi-Weekly Conference Call**

**Tuesday May 14, 2019**

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

**Minutes**

1. Agenda review
2. Online Toolkits (Pam, Mason)   
     
   Last week, the Commercial Council met and discussed materials previously sent for presentations. Council determined that presentations had some effectiveness, but that the commercial industry needed some different materials more suited to them. For example, NICH infographics are extremely interesting, but it was also desired to grab tidbits from them and share them as factoids in checkout lanes.   
     
   Council hoped NICH could develop toolkits such as an ongoing calendar, point of purchase materials, etc. to help unify industry priorities in a flowing general way that folks could opt into. For example, to create monthly themes (e.g. Pollinators in June) that retail or other commercial entities can borrow from instead of creating their own every time. There becomes strength in having these things handy. The Executive Committee would like to see a prototype of this and Mason agreed to provide one in advance of the next meeting.  
     
   A Question was asked about how MarCom gets materials out to others or whether they also develop content. It was stated that while MarCom should have involvement in helping to create content, that the councils should be driving the content creation based on their needs. MarCom should actively lead in getting the content out, and in ensuring brand unity in materials.
3. Development, *ongoing discussion* (Ellen)  
   Review strategic priorities and current projects (e.g., online toolkits) - what would they cost if we had funding?   
     
   *Motion: Create a Development committee that will take the existing strategic tactics and frame them into a strategic business plan, complete with budgetary requirements by November 2019  
   Ellen 1st / Sylvia 2nd*  
   Discussion followed. Members assembled felt there was a need to develop a 5-year vision for NICH and bring it back to the ExCom to discuss and approve within a discrete timeline. Casey agreed, and felt that it was both a good opportunity to get members of Committees and Councils, not just Chairs and Officers involved. Challenge is to ensure robust participation and delivery within a deadline. The tentative deadline is November.

*Vote to approve: Unanimous*

(Procedural Note: Although a quorum was present, offer was made to those not present to weigh in on this vote if they had objections)

Several NICH members have been approached to serve and have indicated willingness to do so.

1. Committee Updates (new, Emergent Info to Share)
   1. Economic (Casey) – No update but reviving this committee in the latter part of this year is a priority.
   2. Marketing/Communications (Mary Kay)   
        
      Great call last Thursday with two brand new members, Helen Lawson from Spot On Communications who specializes in the green industry and Diane Blazek of the National Garden Bureau. Diane has offered to take our existing tent list and merge it with hers, and then manage it with ours. Sylvia and Mary Kay are very supportive of these efforts. Additional names and contacts can be more easily identified in this manner.
   3. Environmental (Gail)   
        
      The Committee has contracted slightly and currently consists of about 5 members. Their infographics series are in with Jennifer Gray and they are awaiting their return. Gail will reach out to Jennifer. Gail is looking to recruit more people to the Environmental Committee, especially someone who can become its chair it moving forward.  
        
      Ellen suggested that perhaps Mary Kay should reach out to Jennifer Gray. The Pollinator infographic is basically ready to go and the others have only minor edits. Mary Kay will contact Jennifer after Gail, perhaps to ensure that at least the pollinator infographic could be ready soon, especially for Pollinator Week in June.
   4. Community Health Benefits (Pam) - Tabled
2. Council Updates (new, Emergent Info to Share)
   1. Commercial (Mason) -   
        
      They are also actively recruiting. Mason encourages folks who are interested.
   2. Non-Profit (Shannon) – Tabled
   3. Academic/LGU (Heather)   
        
      Council met subsequent to SCC-85. They are working on their drafts of their materials. Heather will also reach out to Natalie, who is the Chair of ASHS’s Commercial Horticulture and Master Gardener Council. She will share the proposed workshop for this year’s ASHS Conference with NICH ExCom on a subsequent call.
3. New Business   
     
   a. Ellen asked for new committee rosters to be submitted by next Tuesday for the next round of Web updates. If this cannot be done, it will wait for the next round.
4. Possible future Hill event (Casey) - Tabled
5. NIFA Listens 2019? (Casey) – Casey mentioned that the NIFA listens 2018 report is not out yet and that Megan Haidet, who directs this for NIFA, was currently working on it.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

Mason will develop sample toolkit.

Gail and Mary Kay will reach out to Jennifer Gray re: Environmental Infographics

Heather will reach out to Natalie Baumgartner re: ASHS 2019 Conference Workshop

Ellen will seek to populate Development Committee