

AB 939 LOCAL TASK FORCE
Minutes
PUBLIC MEETING
Thursday, August 13, 2026
12:30 P.M. to 2:00 P.M.
195 Concourse Avenue, Suite B (new location**)**
Santa Rosa, California 95404

<u>Absent (In alphabetical order)</u>	<u>In attendance (In alphabetical order)</u>
Alissa Johnson – Solid Waste Industry Arthur Deicke- EPS Ayram Blanco - LEA Bob Besso- Community Member Bob Cipolla- Community Member Catherine Dodd- families advocating for chemical and toxic safety fact Chloe Ballard- Town of Windsor Derek Trowbridge – Agriculture Industry Emily Harris- Recology Erik Billing – City of Sebastopol Jennifer Lyle, SPI Kristina Owens – Town of Windsor Kristyn Byrne – Recycling Organization Kyle LaRue- Education Representative Leslye Choate- LEA Luana Pinasco - 4th District Rep Mark Soiland- City of Cotati Representative Marie Kneemeyer- Recology Portia Sinnott – Member of the Public Sloane Pagal- Zero Waste Sonoma Stu Clark – 4th District Rep Sydney Simonson- Sonoma Garbage Collectors Tasha Wright- City of Santa Rosa Xinci Tan – Zero Waste Sonoma	Alyssa Messer – 3rd District Rep Amanda Rivers- Resource Recovery Brian Bauer Celia Furber- Recology Dan Nobel- Association of Compost Producers Greg Carr- 1st district rep Jenine Rinn- community member J. Glen Morelli – TPW – Integrated Waste Josh Feinstein Leslie Lukacs – Zero Waste Sonoma Liz Bortolotto – Chair Michael Anderson- Marketing and Recycling Historian Monique Chapman- SPI Rajesh Jyothiswaran- Zero Waste Sonoma County Samantha Stevens- LEA Spring Maxfield - Santa Rosa Urban Arts Partnership, Reuseable Foodware Pilot Taryn Obaid- Climate Change Org. Todd Sutton- PRCC Tiffany Seder- SPI

1. Welcome & Introductions 2. Approval of draft minutes from June 11, 2026 meeting Recommend that for new location- include the address in the minutes. Motion to approve: June Minutes passed with the change in the address added
3. Guest Presenter, Todd Sutton, Story of PET Recycling Presentation: • Here to do overview of PET recycling • Who is PRCC- PET recycling corporation of California. With a lot of negative press about recycling and the negative branding of plastic- they are there to defend the value of PET. Is largest supplier of PEET bails and they have helped recycled 4.3 billion plastic bottles. It is a nonprofit and PRO (producer responsibility organization). The people who make the

containers and the product that go into the containers is PRCC. PRCC provides steady supply/ flow of material through the pipeline and works with reclaimers. Sell an average of 18 million pounds of bottles per month. PRCC helps ensure CA PET bottle manufacturers meet mandated recycled content for new containers. PRCC helps replace virgin material with PET which has big environmental benefits so that the manufacturers can meet those containers. Mandated content laws make sure it is not all virgin materials.

- **Reuse-** Reuse is the best. If you have to have a bottle, please recycle it. People will empty out cars and will have mixed materials and have consumer behavior to convince people to recycle.
- **Why-** the choices communities make directly determine whether millions of PET bottles become valuable, recycled material or landfill waste. Single use is bad and we are trying to differentiate PET from the rest. Help support recycling centers and bring resilience and local circularity and stimulate local economy.
- **What is PET-** Polyethylene terephthalate- it is food safe plastic (identified as 1 in the numbering system) and it is the most recycled plastic in the world. It can be recycled numerous times with minimal additional feedstock.
- **PET recycling video:** *Overview of the process.*
- **PET has a cool story-** saves energy, water, and conserves natural resources when recycled and 90% less CO2 emissions compared to virgin.
- **Over 70% of CA PET beverages are recycled. Most recycled items go back into bottles/packaging.**
- **NAPCOR-** compared to aluminum and glass, it measured better regarding key environmental metrics (especially gases emitted during transportation) and reduced organic material going into water ways.
- **It is the most environmentally friendly packaging for beverages (when reusable it is not available).**
- **Ask-** looking at increasing the recycling centers (RC's) in CA. Working with circular CRV association to expand the number of CA RCs. Interested in communities that are interested in expanding recycling centers for CRV and buy back centers.

Questions

* ***When the bottles are recycled how do you get the contamination out?*** We are advocating for cap on to minimize cross contamination and they then do a separation process to get the different PET.

* ***Did we lose a recycling center recently and can you speak to the policy that drove that change the call to action-*** cannot speak to the demise of RC statewide and there were multiple factors that drove that. They are working with Circular CRV and there is a new recycling center in Santa Rosa by Rincon Valley, and we have also worked with the Petaluma recycling center, so they are looking at reverse vending machine. If you have some influence in your community, we want to see more happening. They are taking advantage of local. Places like bottle bank and places like that, their biggest selling factor is the convenience, and you can bring a mix bag of CRV (aluminum, bottle, glass, etc.) and the convenience is the selling factor.

* ***In Windsor we have an older demographic who does not do online things, has been a barrier for them to access it. How is that being addressed?*** A lot of them are through the Circular CRV association- this is something we can talk about and that there is a complication with apps being a barrier to participation. The new app does address that demographic and there are now multiple choices for easing convenience for the consumer. They don't favor one or the other for choices but want to make sure there are options.

* ***Some of the plastic containers that door dash comes in- is that PET?*** #2 plastics (jugs, buckets, etc.) they weigh a lot and are very recyclable. That is a different polymer and that is a different type of plastic, but they would want that in a curbside program.

***The domestic market for thermoform has dried up. Is that something you advocate for as well or just PET bottles:** A lot of thermoform being included in PET bails (which is more than we would like to see). It is tragic that we lost a processor in CA and so this was sent out of state. It is all influenced by multiple factors and this influence recycling. We do want to see more thermoform outlets so they can be separated. Yes, we want to see thermoform recycling and 54 is going to force that hand a little bit and we are looking forward to good legislation.

***How many times a virgin PET bottle can be recycled- it is going through a lot of mechanical process and mixing in other PET-** it can be infinitely recycled to become food safe based on the process and reformulating the chemical bond- solid stating allows it to be reused again. You are going to get yield loss through a system, but this is going to be with minimal input of a system, and it will be rebounded and reformulated so it can be food safe- it is still 90% less.

***With that understanding, we can understand what and where to innovate. They have lots of material outside and can let that into the new produce and it can be 90% and they have more recycled material in their produce-** I don't have that information at the moment, but to clarify you are talking about a different type of plastic (film plastic). If you save all your plastic film, that is HDPE/LDPE film (2 and #4) and if you bring it clean it will feed products like Treks, but that is not 100% HDPE.

Website- PRRC.Biz/education/

4. SB 54 update, Leslie Lukacs

Presentation:

- With SB 54, there is an update that we will be doing a presentation to the board at the next board meeting to give them background to what it is and how it impacts zero waste Sonoma and this will be the first time the board sees a presentation. What the advisory board is- there are many stakeholders and local jurisdiction that bear responsibility and pay in to the system and to be into compliance. The producer responsibility organization is CAA which includes producers themselves (e.g. Target, Starbucks) and there is an advisory board that represents a different sector of the stakeholders (e.g. environmental justice, compost industry, jurisdiction voice for CA).
- Where we are at- CAA had to come up with a plan to implement 54 and comments are due tomorrow. They finalized all their comments on implementing legislation and they made comments on every single chapter. Everyone is welcome to provide comments on the plan- these comments letters are due tomorrow 8/14.
- Large majority was in consent of the comments. This is where EG communities tend to live and the other sticking point is that there is a precedence issue on that. We don't want plastics to be produced if they are going to pay for systems and it is a little hard to exclude this for 5 years and be revisited (the plan is revisited every 5 years).
- The implementation is continuing and should be finalized by the end of the year. They should go over the covered materials list and that these materials need to be compliant with SB 54 and then there are some materials that don't make sense to be included because there is no recycling/ composting system. They are trying to work on that locally and if they could do one master list. They are working in it regionally and locally.

Questions:

- **Company is Sonoma County meat Company and does wholesale meat sale. Their goal is to not use plastics, but there is not an alternative to plastics for meat packaging. They can go into more detail with CAL recycle and seeing that they don't qualify for the small producer exemption. There is a group that is currently trying to apply for an exclusion, but that was too costly for a small business to join, resulting in the business being out of compliance without there being a**

clear path forward. What is available? – CAA would be your best bet since they are working on behalf of producers. *I have reached out.* I would be happy to talk to you further through Liz.

- **If enough groups file exemptions in CA for materials to be on the exemption list, then would they be removed off the list if there are not enough facilities in CA to process them?** One of the variables is the lawsuits against 54 and the transparency in labeling act. There is some interstate commerce clause as a packaging and there is another lawsuit from NARC and CA against waste that is more of a friendly amendment to the law and there are some lawsuits one of which from the former director of CAA and that is all impacting the CAA list. As haulers and cities, they have to move forward because they don't know how they are going to manage the lawsuits.

5. Compost Coalition Update, Dan Noble

Presentation:

- **Shifting gears from Geo resource to bio resource of the circular economy.** Regarding the green bin, I have represented the compost industry now for many years and now that we have food scraps going into it- we have plastic waste going into it. We have compost here in Sonoma County but not as much as we would like to have. We are keeping an ad hoc committee going (Compost Coalition)
- **Quick Committee report:** there are 35 members on the list, they come and learn/ share/ compare. They are not all composters- there are categories of bio resource managers. Health soil feeds the environment, and they do it on a bio regional basis. It is more complex on the bio resource side. The bio resource managers include natural and working lands. They have commercial compost producers, and they have compost consultants, farm composters, government agencies, and they have bio product producers in agriculture. That comprises the working group – it is in part education and in part growth of compost. They are also getting more into community education. There is one with the state association, and they have now implemented the compost caravan. We have all the composters in that region and will be doing that this spring in collaboration with the state. It is the way we go from state to local. The biggest issue is getting more compost facilities permitted and they have an open house here.
- **Brad (SP)** is in the process for the permitting and that is all part of the public record as we move forward. That does not include all the on-farm composting and the other co-chair of the working group and speak and present on that. He is contractor with zero waste Sonoma on their educational program.
- The industry is still learning and evolving to the next generation, and they are working with all kinds of generators. They are creating a new product category that is advanced compost that is bio fertilizer. It is in microorganisms based on composting with an inexpensive facility.

Question:

* **Does anyone track how much compost is produced-** yes but it is funny numbers. There is a report by CAL Recycle that is every 5-6 years. Especially home composter and mega facilities.

***Is there an official number-** It is going up and rather than expanding the facility, it is creating pressure to produce low-quality compost instead and stressing the current facilities.

6. Ridwell update, Liz Bortolotto

Presentation:

*They provided their service last September, they offered fed ex bags to put two different kinds of plastic in and you would FedEx them to their address. They expanded this recently. For 20\$ a month, there is a box that comes in and you can put in crinkly plastics and they take/ expand the

service to door side pickup, and you can out different kinds of plastic in the bag. They are also taking fabrics/ textile waste. They collect those and send them out and reuse them.

* We have a lot of materials for curbside recycling and there are many kinds of plastic. They are now in Marin and Sonoma County. There was a community talk about Ridwell at the veteran's hall in Santa Rosa. This is a more local answer for them and this typically costs 20\$ a month and pick up every other week. The film plastic may be headed towards Treks, and the multilayer plastic may be someone who makes industrial piping/blocks.

*As we get into this world of businesses that have contractual processes that get recyclable material.

*Celia to speak more on this- the LA times article came out and their markets are questionable. They are sending their chip bag materials out of state and can be a barrier. Is it an environmental win to truck material out of state for someone who does not want it? They do violate the franchise agreements in Windsor and Sonoma. The city of Sonoma sent them a cease-and-desist letter. They did not come for the contract and legal requirements- they did not get permission to be a hauler. The mail-in service is fine (similar to teracycle), but the hauling is questionable. If they are going to be players in Sonoma County, they need to go through the other channels as the other haulers did. It is interesting to see this kind of business pop up.

Question-

Is the concern that they are a subscription service being the franchise agreement- 1

800 Junk is like a boutique service because they don't offer what Recology and Zero Waste Sonoma so they are not a competitor. The pickup service is where they are not going through the appropriate channels.

7. Public Comments*

Regarding Ridwell- there is potential in the technology for recycling multilayer plastic, but we are not there.

8. Member Announcements and Comments

*City of Santa Rosa is going to review an ordinance to include definitions for the prohibition of irrigation of nonfunctional (non-recreational) turf. It appears to be August 18th and listen in on it.

*You can drop off any stretchy plastic for free and there is also a nonprofit is picking it up as well.

9. Next Regular Meeting Date/Suggestions for Agenda Items - October 8, 2026

10. Adjournment

Motion made to adjourn and passed unanimously