

Minutes
AB 939 LOCAL TASK FORCE REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, December 12, 2024
12:30 P.M. to 2:00 P.M.
2300 County Center Drive, La Plaza A, Room A212
Santa Rosa, California 95404

<u>Absent (In alphabetical order)</u>	<u>In attendance (In alphabetical order)</u>
<u>Alissa Johnson- Sonoma County Resource Recovery</u> <u>Aryam Blanco- Sonoma County Environmental Health</u> <u>Brandon Hart – TPW – Integrated Waste/ Sonoma</u> <u>Casey Fritz- Zero Waste by Sonoma County</u> <u>Chloe Ballard Town of Windsor</u> <u>Danielle Walsh- Sonoma County LEA</u> <u>Greg Carr- 1st district rep</u> <u>Jennifer Lyle, Sonoma County</u> <u>Katie Cushwa- Zero Waste Sonoma</u> <u>Kyle LaRue- Director of Zero Waste and Compliance</u> <u>Leslye Choate- LEA</u> <u>Mark Soiland- City of Cotati Representative</u> <u>Max Bridges- League of Women Voters</u> <u>Michael LeRusso</u> <u>Michael Anderson- Marketing and Recycling Historian</u> <u>Renee Gundy, city of Santa rosa</u> <u>Stephen Zollman- Sebastapol city</u> <u>Sunny Galbraith – 350 Sonoma County, city of Sebastopol</u> <u>Tasha Wright- City of Santa Rosa (Water Dept)</u> <u>Trish Pisenti- Sonoma County</u> <u>Xinci Tan – Zero Waste Sonoma</u>	<p style="text-align: center;">-</p> <u>Alyssa Messer – 3rd District Rep</u> <u>Amanda Rivers</u> <u>Amber Johnson- Zero Waste Sonoma</u> <u>Arthur Deicke- EPS</u> <u>Bob Cipolla- Community Member</u> <u>Celia Furber- Recology</u> <u>Dan Nobel- Association of Compost Producers</u> <u>Dylan Resig- Resynergi</u> <u>J. Glen Morelli – TPW – Integrated Waste-</u> <u>Kristen Sales- Zero waste</u> <u>Leslie Lukacs – Zero Waste Sonoma</u> <u>Lendri Pursell- FAFTS</u> <u>Luana Pinasco- Committee member</u> <u>Liz Bortolotto – Chair</u> <u>Sloan Pagal- Zero Waste Sonoma</u> <u>Stu Clark – 4th District Rep</u> <u>Terry Taylor- town of Windsor</u> <u>Taryn Obaid- Climate Seat</u> <p style="text-align: center;">-</p>

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| <p>1. Welcome & Introductions</p> |
| <p>2. Approval of draft minutes from October 10, 2024, meeting
 Motion: Stu Clark
 Seconded: Alyssa Messer
 Motion Passed</p> |
| <p>3. <i>Update</i> on Reuseable Cup Pilot - Leslie Lukacs, Sloane Pagal
 Presentation:
 Context about the project: the pilot ran for 3 months in Petaluma, 30 participating restaurants and establishments, 60 bins located throughout Petaluma. We were just one of the many partners. Recycology sorted the purple cups. The report will be done in February, the data will be coming out. 85% that received a cup used and reused it thus far. We will be able to present more in February. This is a top tier of investment needs for a reusable program (so this is under</p> |

consideration). In terms of the influencers, marketing, education, and outreach there was a lot of investments. Still in the preliminary phases and so we are still collected data. There are a few slides. There were a lot of groups involved and even that group was involved to go and get cups. There were lessons learned. Closed loop partners is the managing partner. They are also looking at the return rate and optimal locations for placement for the return bins. The concentration for where the cups were given were in downtown Petaluma, but there were multiple places throughout the community to return the cup. Some of the biggest pushback was why plastic and they did do testing on various materials and looked at the greenhouse gas omissions from each of the materials. The consideration includes how many times a cup has to be reused before you see the environmental benefits and they also considered what would result in cups being returned versus kept by consumer. The cups that went to recycling just got recycled (not reintroduced). There were various phases that happened in the campaign and they considered on how for people to reuse. They reached 5.5M and impressions. Data has shown that this was highlighted in the Guardian and representatives from Japan will come out to Petaluma in 2025 to discuss the program and implementation. Due to this being free, this was an equitable way to ensure participation.

Question:

Is there statistics on how many times a cup was reused- there is no data yet. 250k cups returned (not counting cups put in the recycle bin) is the data we currently have.

Did they have lids- yes. They were not recyclable, but they were disposable

Did we initiate this program- Closed loop reached out to us. Sonoma County is on the radar in the nation regarding our climate action initiatives, reuse initiatives, and recycling initiatives. They assessed different cities and identified Petaluma as an ideal location for the pilot.

Was this a grant? It was not a grant, just an investor in this project which totaled 2.5 M dollars. Another question that came about is that many of the brand owners are looking at solutions. Brand owners are getting pressured about sustainability and sustainable initiatives and many are wanting to be involved in participate. Pilots like this have happened in the past and they did not work because people did not reuse them and return it because people kept them. Many of these brand owners may also be fiscally motivated to invest with SB 54. We are applying for a super grant.

Considerations for cost? The pilot was done with the highest standards considered so we can see what we can scale down, adjust, and improve upon so it can be more fiscally sustainable.

4. Update on Reuse Bazaar - Celia Furber

Presentation:

There was a reuse bazaar (a first-time event) on 9/28. This is part of the franchise agreement with the city and collaborated with the city on what this could look at. The city was looking at what would be beneficial for their residence. The concept for this was limited for Santa Rosa for drop off (limited to 1 vehicle full) and others can shop for free what had been dropped off. They did this at Finley Park, and it was 3 hours for drop off and overlapped for 4 hours for shopping.

Stats overall indicate that this was a great success. They collaborated with the city, reuse alliance, and conservation core. 277 vehicles came for drop off with 221 shoppers. They were able to keep 75.29%. There were guidelines about the quality of items and overall, there were a lot of high-quality items that were presented. This will be held again in 2025. There were 23,403 pounds recovered. Items to flipside thrift were taken. They also took things to libraries, medical centers, animal shelters, etc. The conservation core was huge to have that partnership and helped recycle items appropriately. There was about 1500 pounds of cardboard collected. Narrative feedback thus far indicates that the citizens found it to be positive.

Question:

So, they took all the furniture? Yes, unfortunately 7,680 pounds were landfilled (mostly

furniture).

Why is furniture being thrown away? Any conclusions? When planning, they reached out to multiple locations and we could not speak to the quality of furniture they were going to get so there was not a great deal of interest. Flipside was willing to work but lacked space for the furniture. They are starting to look at this data and plan for the upcoming year. Speaking to the second hand furniture, it is heavy and can take a lot of space. There is an issue with ease and convenience for recovering furniture. At this event, there was an upholster there to help discuss how to. What they are seeing with the last update and this, is the focus on reuse. One of the problems with the reuse model is the inventory cost for things that may be slow moving.

Is there a plan to expand this to other cities? - It took a lot of resources to pull this off and there was a lot of set up, planning and costs. There is an appetite to still host it, but perhaps expand it to other Sonoma County citizens. They are still in the trial phase and there is learning for growth.

5. Update on Community Action against plastic grass – Taryn Obaid

Presentation:

Basically, every environmental and climate organization in Petaluma signed a letter to ask the city council to ban artificial turf due to the cost, impact, injury rates, and the concerns with measure J. We generate 50% of all the organic milk in CA and the farm bureau is shutting down the wells due to water being contaminated by chemicals. They are asking the city council to consider a ban. They pulled it from Monday's agenda, and they are looking at talking about it more. Out of this has discussed for the county and if the task force can create an ad hoc with artificial turf and opportunities for moving away from artificial turf and looking at its impact and cost. They want us to look at this, so we don't end up with a disaster on our hands.

Question:

Now there is a motion for Petaluma's city council to look at. The impetus is that there is a sports field that has already been replaced multiple times for 10x the cost of natural grass. There was a discussion and parks and climate commission both said no to putting more plastic down.

Do we know why it was postponed- probably for more consideration and cost analysis as momentum builds and to pause that recycling of turf is not recyclable and is very costly.

Lendri and Bob, you are involved in this too. Do you have a good deal of data on this issue? There are advocates around the county with different expertise and they have different areas of expertise to discuss this issue. Yes, something can be pulled together, and it would be helpful for the group to look into this as well.

A few questions- the Lucchesse park issue, is that a city park? Who would pay the expense of paying to replace the turf? It has come before the park commission, but this has come back to the city.

For the request for the LTF to form an ad hoc committee, how was that received? The letter went to the Petaluma city council, but in terms of the request for the ad hoc was received verbally from a 350 Petaluma person. That did not come in the form of a letter.

Lately there has been an experience with the infill which is 2-3 times the weight of plastic grass. The Shoplin Field regional park near cardinal Newman just vacuumed all the infill out because it could not withstand the heat of the summer. It is not sustainable, and it is just a succession of waste products, and we don't know what is happening with all of this waste product.

What would you consider the magnitude of this issue for the country? Is there a percentage of the acreage that's covered in the county? The notion of an independent review and what are the facts would be a reasonable request, but right off the bat what is the magnitude overall. In terms of impact [stats from beyond impact] is that this is the equivalent of 3.2 million plastic bags and straws. It has a life of 10 years and then it is very costly to move and house. In what we are seeing the total plastic gas emissions, it is worse than plastic utensils. The

counter argument we may get is the severe drought and this is something we need to address in this open letter. Natural grass can be used with grey water, but artificial turf requires potable water. There are drought-tolerant natural products that we can examine as well.

[Celia response] are we considering authoring a letter of support- a comprehensive analysis that gets at the cost is the ask. [Stu response] a similar model we can look at is the ad hoc for addressing the barriers for permitting the recycling committees. This can be difficult and time intensive, so this is why we are looking at the magnitude. This is a good idea, but we need to look at the pros and cons from multiple vantage points. We will need to know and rely on the expertise and research of others. If we were to take this on, we would take our findings and recommendations to the authority in place who want to hear our recommendations. We cannot understate the work involved and it is incumbent to get the data from subject matter experts.

***Are there national groups looking at this?** There are a few. Common Wheel in Marin is a researcher who can help, and we can find people from the East Coast. Turi, Lowell Massachusetts, and Beyond Plastic are the more well-known organizations.*

***Glenn:** plastics outside is something [he] has reservations about. In terms of a social matter, it is not worth the price to pay due to pollution. If there is an ad hoc it should focus on the nuances of the environmental impact and recyclability. However, we want to make sure we take a nuanced look and keep it within the focus of keeping these materials out of our landfills.*

[Stu] I am interested, but I would have to know more to agree with the LTF forming an ad hoc. To do this right is a big effort. For the permitting, we met months and months with experts who put work into it, and it still took the better part of a year to make our recommendations.

[Taryn] We are fortunate that we have a county that is interested in public health and there is a lot of data out there to address the impact. Also, other cities are considering bans on turfs and the fiscal, environmental, and health costs are there. There is a sense of urgency because of the forever chemicals.

[Leslie] another example of sub committees included the committee on compostable plastics. We had stakeholders involved and we were able to come to a consensus because of Terry's expertise as a professional mediator. We have the science, and we are seeing schools take this out. We could use this model as well.

[Liz] I get that we are considering forming an ad hoc committee for putting together this information. This is about us bringing information around plastic grass for the county to make an informed recommendation. This is good to know as there may be things we want to discuss or touch. We are just gathering key points from all of the research. We would create an ad hoc committee to create a report. We will have to stay factual and objective [lost the stream at 1:45pm].

Motion to create and ad hoc to look at the impact of plastic turf on sports field and recommendations

Motion: Taryn Obaid

Seconded: Dan Noble

Motion Passed

Volunteers to be on the committee - Taryn, Liz, Sloan, Stu, Dan, Alyssa, Bob

6. *Update on Compost Coalition of Sonoma County - Dan Noble*

Presentation:

Further details will be moved to next meeting due to time.

Bottom line they have been working on this issue and this has returned to the permitting issue. We are not permitting new facilities fast enough and what was proposed if we can use the state association to help the local coalitions. What was recommended at the last meeting is that we put together a white paper, we shop it at the state level. The question is how do we collaborate on this and the eight core design principles of resource management. We want to look at both the

state and local level.

Question: questions held off for next time.

7. Update Conscious Container – Liz Bortolotto

Presentation: Further details will be moved to the next meeting due to time.

Question: questions held off for next time.

8. *Public Comments**

No Public Comments

9. Member Announcements and Comments

Updates:

-the zero-waste guide will be coming out much sooner and it will be around educating around compost contamination.

-zero waste will be bringing the workplan and budget to the next LTF meeting.

10. Next Regular Meeting Date/Suggestions for Agenda Items -

February 13, 2025

11. Adjournment

Motion: Celia Furber

Seconded: Stu Clark

Motion Passed

*PUBLIC COMMENTS: Members of the public desiring to speak on items that are within the jurisdiction of the Local Task Force shall have an opportunity during each regular meeting of the Local Task Force. When recognized by the Chair, each person should give his/her name and address and limit comments to 3 minutes, with the discretion of the Chair to modify that time limit.