



Minutes of April 16, 2026 Meeting

Zero Waste Sonoma met on April 16, 2026, at the City of Santa Rosa Council Chambers, 100 Santa Rosa Ave., Santa Rosa, California.

Board Members Present:

City of Cloverdale – Andrés Marquez
City of Cotati – Susan Harvey
City of Healdsburg – Larry Zimmer
City of Petaluma – Patrick Carter
City of Rohnert Park – Emily Sanborn

City of Santa Rosa – Josh Carstensen
City of Sebastopol – Sandra Maurer
City of Sonoma – ABSENT
County of Sonoma – Trish Pisenti
Town of Windsor – Sam Salmon

Staff Present:

Counsel: Ethan Walsh
Staff: Leslie Lukacs, Thora Collard, Xinci Tan, Courtney Scott, Kristen Sales, Rajesh Jyothiswaran, Katie Cushwa
Agency Clerk: Amber Johnson

1. Call to Order Regular Meeting

Regular session was called to order at 9:02 a.m.

Introductions

2. Agenda Approval

Motion: For approval of the agenda.

First: City of Petaluma – Patrick Carter

Second: City of Cotati – Susan Harvey

Vote Count:

City of Cloverdale – Andrés Marquez
City of Cotati – Susan Harvey
City of Healdsburg – Larry Zimmer
City of Petaluma – Patrick Carter
City of Rohnert Park – Emily Sanborn

City of Santa Rosa – Josh Carstensen
City of Sebastopol – Sandra Maurer
City of Sonoma – ABSENT
County of Sonoma – Trish Pisenti
Town of Windsor – Sam Salmon

AYES -9- NOES -0- ABSENT -1- ABSTAIN -0-

Motion passed.

3. Public Comments (items not on the agenda)

- Duane Dewitt – Expressed appreciation for the board members and their involvement. As a steward volunteer for Roseland Creek in Santa Rosa, there are ongoing issues with encampments along the creek generating significant debris. Has concerns that the City of Santa Rosa does not separate collected materials by waste type, resulting in all items being sent to the landfill because they are considered contaminated once touched. Also noted that many discarded clothing items remain usable and could potentially be cleaned, recycled, or resold rather than discarded. Additionally, he encouraged the board to continue working collaboratively to reduce waste in Sonoma County and suggested considering a requirement for bottles sold locally to use attached flip caps that remain connected to the bottle.
- Michael Siminitus – Reported that the Trashlantis Festival at the Sebastopol Community Center was very successful. The event operated using battery, human, and bicycle-powered energy sources. Expressed interest in bringing the event back in the future and requested inclusion in the 2026 Zero Waste Week program. The event, which would typically cost an estimated \$70,000–\$80,000, was successfully organized with approximately \$12,000 in sponsorship funding, and noted that greater community support could make future events even more successful.

4. Consent (w/attachments)

- 4.1 Minutes of the March 19, 2026 Regular Meeting
- 4.2 March, April, May 2026 Outreach Calendar
- 4.3 Assignment, Assumption, and Fourth Amendment to the Agreement for Short-Term Organic Materials Processing Services with Cold Creek Compost, Inc. and Sopris Compost, LLC.

Board Comments:

- None

Public Comments:

- None

Motion: For approval of the consent calendar.

First: City of Cloverdale – Andrés Marquez

Second: City of Cotati – Susan Harvey

Vote Count:

City of Cloverdale – Andrés Marquez
 City of Cotati – Susan Harvey
 City of Healdsburg – Larry Zimmer
 City of Petaluma – Patrick Carter
 City of Rohnert Park – Emily Sanborn

City of Santa Rosa – Josh Carstensen
 City of Sebastopol – Sandra Maurer
 City of Sonoma – ABSENT
 County of Sonoma – Trish Pisenti
 Town of Windsor – Sam Salmon

AYES -9- NOES -0- ABSENT -1- ABSTAIN -0-

Motion passed.

Regular Calendar

5. Update on Proposed Compost Facility Project on Slusser Rd

Board Comments/Action Items:

- Are there any concerns with residents going onto the property to get compost? Is the property fenced off so that no one can reach the airport runways?
- Will this facility be processing the materials collected from the curbside residential green bins?
- Would there be opportunities for compost donation to community gardens from this site?
- Is there an estimated timeline for completion?

Public Comments:

- None

6. HVAC Proposal and Budget Adjustment for 195 Concourse Blvd. [Collard]

Board Comments/Action Items:

- What is the process for contractor proposals?
- Do we need to submit bids for contractors formally?
- Can items within the contracts be revised or negotiated?
- Why was the recommended contractor, AAA Energy Systems, chosen?
- What units would be replaced?
- Thank you for going forward with the proposal of heat pumps rather than immediately investing in additional gas pumps.
- Suggestion to have the agency search for an existing grant being that gas pumps are being replaced with heat pumps.
- Replacing these items may have generated some waste; however, the changes were necessary to streamline the system.

Public Comments:

- None

Motion: To select and approve AAA Energy Systems to replace the outdated HVAC units located at 195 Concourse Blvd., Santa Rosa. In addition, approval of the budget adjustment to fund the project.

First: City of Petaluma – Patrick Carter

Second: City of Cotati – Susan Harvey

Vote Count:

City of Cloverdale	AYE	City of Santa Rosa	AYE
City of Cotati	AYE	City of Sebastopol	AYE
City of Healdsburg	AYE	City of Sonoma	AYE
City of Petaluma	AYE	County of Sonoma	ABSENT
City of Rohnert Park	AYE	Town of Windsor	AYE

AYES -9- NOES -0- ABSENT -1- ABSTAIN -0-

Motion passed.

7. Sona, Virtual Zero Waste Guide Pilot Results and Request for Approval to Launch

Board Comments/Action Items:

- Does Sona save your information for further reference?
- This seems like the first step towards virtual assistance in the future.
- Would this affect the amount of paper guides distributed each year?
- Can you increase the usage if needed?
- Is there a voice option for inquiries?
- Please consider providing information about why there are so many personal questions being asked in order to ask Sona a question.
- Can you see the exit numbers – whether someone starts the conversation and leaves?
- Can you opt out of contact information?
- How does the eco-desk currently operate?
- Is this going to replace staff?
- If Sona cannot answer your question, how does it direct you? Can staff reach out rather than the person having to contact the eco-desk?
- Is there a way to capture voice inquiries?
- What is the location of the data servers?
- What assurance is given that the information shared is secured?
- How does Sona know certain information regarding certain items like controlled substances?
- How is information updated through the website and linked to Sona?
- If someone was to start their search with google would the google search engine direct inquiries to Sona?
- Could we illuminate the personal data collection or ask at the end, so questions are answered first?
- If someone asks multiple questions, are you able to log as multiple inquires rather than 1?
- Pre Sona, how many hours are being dedicated to eco-desk?
- As a tester of Sona, I like the Sona function rather than searching in the regular search bar.
- Is Sona good at detecting typos?
- Sona provided a link that doesn't exist. Please continue to review Sona for accuracy.
- Let people opt out of providing personal information.
- When emails are provided, can Sona ask if they would like to subscribe to our newsletter?
- Sona is off to a good start. Is it possible to review within a period to evaluate how it is operating?
- Residents may not realize that the county is served by multiple haulers, which is why personal information is needed to provide accurate disposal guidance and service options.
- Thanks for bringing this matter to the board.
- Exciting to build on knowledge with gaps in information
- This will not replace the existing eco-desk it is just an added tool.
- Can you confirm that the collection of personal information is needed in order for us to get in contact with them.

Public Comments:

- Marie Kneemeyer, Recology Sonoma Marin – The topic of AI is always interesting. As a public education manager, there are some points and questions to consider. If you are an out-of-county resident, would you be directed in a different direction? Is there a layer of going over the questions and answers to make sure they are accurate answers? Curious to know the time savings between the current search bar and Sona. Eco-desk is an extra beneficial contact point, and it is a difficult thing to get rid of. Suggests that Sona is active and being used during non-working hours only.

Motion: To approve the executive director to proceed with full deployment of Sona, the Agency’s Virtual Zero Waste Guide, on the Zero Waste Sonoma website at zerowastesonoma.gov with the amendment of a 4-month trial and review.

First: City of Petaluma – Patrick Carter

Second: City of Cloverdale – Andrés Marquez

Vote Count:

City of Cloverdale	AYE	City of Santa Rosa	AYE
City of Cotati	AYE	City of Sebastopol	AYE
City of Healdsburg	AYE	City of Sonoma	AYE
City of Petaluma	AYE	County of Sonoma	ABSENT
City of Rohnert Park	AYE	Town of Windsor	AYE

AYES -9- NOES -0- ABSENT -1- ABSTAIN -0-

Motion passed.

8. Boardmember Comments

- Future Fest will be held by Cool Petaluma on May 3, 2026, at the Petaluma Community Center.
- The Climate Ready Cotati Fair on March 28, 2026, was fantastic and well attended.

9. Executive Director Report – VERBAL REPORT

10. Staff Comments

- None

11. Next ZWS meeting: May 21, 2026

12. Adjourn: 10:57 a.m.

Submitted by: Amber Johnson