AB 939 LOCAL TASK FORCE PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, August 14, 2025
12:30 P.M. to 2:00 P.M.
400 Aviation Blvd, Greenhouse Conference Room
Santa Rosa, California 95404

Absent (In alphabetical order)	**In attendance (In alphabetical order)**
Annie Stuart- Clean Water Organization Chair, Member of public Arthur Deicke- EPS Bob Cipolla- Community Member Chloe Ballard- City of Windsor Danielle Walsh- Sonoma County LEA Dylan Resig- Resynergi Emily Harris- Recology Emily Newcomer- Ridwell Jennifer Lyle, Sonoma County Katie Cushwa- Zero Waste Sonoma Kristen Sales- Zero waste Leslye Choate- LEA Max Bridges- League of Women Voters Renee Gundy, City of Santa rosa Tasha Wright- City of Santa Rosa (Water Dept) Trish Pesenti- Sonoma County Xinci Tan – Zero Waste Sonoma	Alissa Johnson- Resource Recovery Alyssa Messer – 3rd District Rep Amanda Rivers- Resource Recovery Brian Bauer- Resynergi Catherine Dodd- families advocating for chemical and toxic safety fact Celia Furber- Recology Courtney Scott- Zero Waste Sonoma County Dan Nobel- Association of Compost Producers Greg Carr- 1st district rep. J. Glen Morelli – TPW – Integrated Waste Kyle LaRue- Director of Zero Waste and Compliance Leslie Lukacs – Zero Waste Sonoma Liz Bortolotto – Chair Luana Pinasco- Committee member/ 4th District Rep Mark Soiland- City of Cotati Representative Michael Anderson- Marketing and Recycling Historian Rajesh Jyothiswaran- Zero Waste Sonoma County Samantha Stevens- LEA Sloan Pagal- Zero Waste Sonoma Stu Clark – 4th District Rep Taryn Obaid- Climate Change Organization Tiffany Seder- Sonoma County Public Infrastructure

AI Summary and overview of notes:

Sonoma Infrastructure and Zero Waste Updates

The meeting began with introductions from various participants, including representatives from Sonoma County Public Infrastructure, Zero Waste Sonoma, and other organizations. The group approved the minutes from their June 12th meeting with a correction to a typo about Cold Creek Compost's location. Brian Bauer from Synergy was invited to provide an update on the organization's activities, which he planned to present in more detail later. The conversation ended with a brief overview of an upcoming presentation on synergy's work.

Plastic Recycling System Implementation

The meeting discussed the development and implementation of a plastic recycling system that aims to increase recycling rates from 6-9% to 16%. The system, which

uses pyrolysis technology, has undergone extensive testing and received approval from various regulatory bodies despite opposition from anti-incinerator groups. The team is working to educate the community and address concerns about emissions, with data showing compliance with strict environmental standards. They are planning to deploy a single module that can process plastic five times daily, with the goal of expanding to other locations.

Safe Waste Pyrolysis System Project

The meeting discussed a pyrolysis system project, emphasizing its environmental benefits and safety measures. The system is designed to process waste more efficiently and cleanly than traditional methods, producing fewer emissions and hazardous substances. The project team addressed concerns about potential risks, highlighting the system's small scale, fast processing, and multiple safety safeguards. They also mentioned plans to share extensive third-party data to build public trust and encourage support for the project.

Opposing Sonoma Pyrolysis Facility

The meeting focused on concerns about a proposed pyrolysis facility in Sonoma, with Catherine presenting scientific and environmental objections. She highlighted that the facility would emit 20% above Clean Air Act limits for certain chemicals, raise health hazard risks, and create microplastics through improper storage of plastic waste. The group discussed the need for better management of medical plastics through Re Synergy's recycling program, while acknowledging that the proposed facility's location near residential areas and schools was inappropriate given the environmental and health risks involved.

Pyrolysis Oil Project Demand Discussion

The meeting focused on discussing a pyrolysis oil project, with Mike raising concerns about potential buyers and disposal if the oil cannot be sold. Brian explained that there is strong demand for the oil as it meets petrochemical standards and helps meet recycling targets. The group also addressed local community concerns about property values, truck traffic, and emissions, with Brian noting that the number of trucks will be lower than in the past.

Sonoma Waste Plan Review Decision

The Local Task Force (LTF) reviewed the County of Sonoma's Integrated Waste Management Plan (CIWMP) and decided not to recommend revisions at this time. Stu, Liz, and Greg concluded that recent changes, including new facilities and expansions, had been properly documented in annual reports and did not require a full plan update. The LTF adopted a written statement to be submitted to Zero Waste Sonoma, indicating that the current plan remains adequate despite some changes in waste management operations.

Waste Reduction Initiatives Update

The group discussed several waste reduction initiatives. Celia reported on a new reuse hub opening in Petaluma in September that will serve the North Bay region with repair fairs and training sessions. She also updated on an expanded reuse event at the Grace Pavilion on September 27th, which will be open to all Sonoma County residents for free shopping of reusable items. Kyle shared progress on a winery recycling service collection, which has successfully gathered 101,000 pounds of wine bottles, 29,000 pounds of cardboard, and 19,000 pounds of plastic wrap. The collection site will soon be able to accept plastic film once they acquire a bailer, with plans to partner with Isis Spain for processing rather than Trex.

Artificial Turf vs Natural Grass Comparison

The ad hoc committee is working on a presentation comparing artificial turf versus

natural grass, with a draft currently containing 8 subject headers covering playtime, cost, environmental impact, and health impacts. The committee plans to finalize their presentation in November or December, after which they will work with the Sonoma Parks department and present to the Board of Supervisors. While the Parks department requested an earlier presentation, the committee decided to present to their full board first to ensure all 10 jurisdictions are included, with the understanding that their findings and recommendations would need to be adopted by the full LTF before being presented to the Board of Supervisors.

Plastic Turf and Zero Waste Planning

The meeting focused on scheduling and planning for upcoming events, including a moratorium on plastic turf installations and Zero Waste Week. Catherine emphasized the urgency of studying and halting plastic turf installations, as two more fields have been installed since her initial recommendation three years ago. The group agreed to aim for the third Thursday in November for a meeting, with a goal to finalize findings and recommendations before setting schedules. Additionally, the fourth annual North Bay Zero Waste Week was announced, set to take place from October 11-18, featuring over 30 free or donation-based events across Sonoma and Napa counties.

1. Welcome & Introductions

2. Approval of draft minutes from June 12, 2025, meeting

Motion passed and minutes approved.

3. Update from Resynergi – Brian Bauer

Notes about the pushback on the Resynergi site:

They have a third party doing it and it was published in their permitting draft. If they supported the project based on the HRA and there is a lot of

Trying to change from 6%-60%.

It is a safe and clean system and while there is community pushback the concerns seem unfounded based on science and assessments.

They are classified as an incinerator, but the emissions are so different. Any of the tail gases that come out are broken down. They can take #2 but cannot take #4.

There are more VOCs from school drop off than they will do in 24 hours. They are way under the strict Cal OSHA limits. They are monitoring and they have the fence line test and will continue to monitor and compare assessments result from baseline. They are a CA green model versus drilling the other ground and everything coming out of the system is used. There is a lot of criticism that they use a lot of power, but they co-generate power. It is quiet in that no one is going to hear them and everything is inside. There is a debate if there is light and heavy industrial and other industries. What is the worst possible explosion that can happen and that is all in the system at an time. There is nationally recognized labs that do ETL testing and they will continuously do rigorous testing.

Questions:

It is good to hear the presentation, and this is complex issue on Monday. The CA 6.9 health hazard risk, but we are all exposed to cancer risks through the environment and so there are cumulative effects. We should not downplay that and there is an important scientific point. There is a reaction from families who are buying into the village. This requires a high level of sorting and that is going to be done by AI and there is concern about the reliability of that. The 3 chemicals do have serious health harm and there is concern that the particulate matter is going to be sorted by bag house and they collect the waste and put it in cakes. Where and how will this be stored, transported, and put into waste? Then there is the char and where is that

going to be? Anytime you have plastics stored without coverage, just the winds and the sun creates microplastics. The last thing is just how many trucks are we adding? Liz answers question- Maybe if we have a quick comment, but for in depth questions perhaps there is more of a space for Brian to engage in dialogue. Let's take that offline for now because it is derailing other subjects and items on the agenda.
What would happen to oil if it cannot be sold? There is a huge demand for plastic and resin makers. They are committed to buying and pretty endless. Brian's contact info is on the slide. Brian made the comment that this is a complicated matter and can be an issue of people not listening.
Comment: My children have bought a home in Somo, if they had known this but the property values are going down and they are questioning the road impact, the emissions, and question the partnership with Recology. There is concern that they will never recover. Brian- the number of trucks is 12 per month (the current building tenants have 12 per day) and we discussed the impact with the developers.

4. CIWMP 5-year review – Leslie Lukacs

Presentation: Per 8939, part of the planning includes doing a county integrated waste management plan and one of the functions and it is time for the CIWMP, and we brought a copy (the version we brought is 30 pgs. but the whole document is 299). We would like to bring the LTF in October and we would like to form a committee so that as we form this in October, we can get this approved and submitted in November. It gives them time because CAL Recycles switched to the EAR that is submitted regularly and captures the regulations. It has less emphasis, and it turned more into them having to do it. Since they are zero waste Sonoma and planning for Zero waste is important, we would like to include them in the process.
Liz update: a subcommittee got offline to review the CIWMP starting in Feb and under this law that every county diverts the waste stream and develops a county wide waste management plan. It has been revised, and the most recent time was 2010. The regulations require that the local task force before the 5-year anniversary make a finding and identify any areas that may be deficient and needs to be a revision to them or not. After the presentation in February and the 3 of them reviewed the whole CIWMP to get concurrence from the whole LTF on their findings. They were going to give an update on their findings and recommendations. They were looking for a concurrence so they can get a written response in case a revision is required or not. When you look at the rules and guidance that Cal recycle gets out, it is focused on AB8939 compliance. We took the time to read the pages and the supplemental EIR for 2010 and the appendixes. The real key is to look at the local assistance and do we need to form formally form an ad hoc committee and it's sufficient to do what we are doing so far if the whole LTF is okay with that. If anyone else is interested in that it is welcome to do that. They are looking at a new compost facility, landfill expansion, hazardous waste facility and so do we need to do a revision of the county plan? My feelings on this is no. There are updates in the annual reports, the public is informed, and really the focus and they came to the conclusion that none of this requires revision to the CIWMP. Last time it was revised was in 2010 and needed a supplemental EIR. It was a lot of work, time, and money. The CIWMP expanded the central landfill site. They prepared a statement and even though there are changes they have reports that they are going to CAL Recycle. New plans are coming forward that are in alignment with this system. We can defer that action to October if we wanted to dive into this further. We are not worried about a quorum. The biggest concern that Greg has is what we are going to do about the landfill after it reaches it fills, and the current recommendations can do more with private enterprise developing businesses that want

to invest in reuse and recycle. It is not that they cannot go through processes, but it could be simpler in some of the zoning and general plan rules. However, he is satisfied that the county board is pursuing the ultimate capacity of the landfill, and they clearly understood that they needed to continue working on this and not let this slide. Once they work on this further, the more they will understand about the importance. He also holds that if these kinds of discussions with county and city planners continue, then the main revisions could be handled through them. The CIWMP could be a vehicle for those who are not satisfied but he does think that going through a CIWMP update will be a process that will take several years, be expensive, and take a review. This is a wiser move and there is always another chance down the road if we are not making progress in improvements.

Motion to adopt the written comment letter -Passed unanimously.

5. Reuse Bazar & Hub Update - Celia Furber

Presentation: the info session was last night in Petaluma and will be opening at the outlet mall in September. It will help support the repair fairs that are happening 2x a month and will be at the hub and get help with repair. It is a big asset of the region. Recology will be posting a reuse Bazar- they did the first ever one last year in Santa Rosa and last year that was city of Santa Rosa residence. They will be expanding it this year and it will be open to everyone in Sonoma County. Drop off from 8-11 pm and the shopping is free. They will take, organize, and from 12-3 they will take what they want and need. They achieved a 77% diversion rate during last year's event. It will be on 9/27 next month.

Questions: *NA*

6. Sonoma County Composting Counsel update – Dan Noble

Presentation: He is going to withdraw agenda items for others.

Questions: *NA*

7. Conservation Corp North Bay recycling update – Kyle LaRue

Presentation: The winery site collection and they have collected 100K lb. of wine bottles, plastic wrap, and cardboard. They will continue to aim to open their drop off site and would be interested in talking about that further.

Questions:

Can people drop off plastic wrap? Not yet. They are getting a wine service coop.

Can this be sold to Treks? This will be going to a different company. Likely shifting to a different company like Golden Bear.

Is this just like pallet wrap or other plastic film? It will be anything as long as it is clean and dry. Maybe we can actually bring them on.

Taryn- there is a comment that Trek and so much plastic onsite because they can only use a small percentage onsite. The point being there need to be more companies that use this stuff because it cannot be on to them alone.

8. Artificial Turf Sub Committee Update – Taryn Obaid

Presentation:

The artificial turf ad hoc, met this morning- they have an early stage working draft of the presentation. In the next two weeks they will be completing areas of responsibility for key findings and recommendations. 8 different subject heads including playtime, cost, health impact, and their finding, key considerations, and board of supervisors as they look to choose grass or artificial turf. The next October meeting will be bringing forward a draft of the presentation for everyone to look at and bring input and one on one conversations with the board of supervisors before finalizing at the end of November/December. It will be two parallel paths, and the parks department is looking to the ad hoc for our expertise on public and environmental impacts. They are only

looking at operational aspects of each and every one.

Questions: *NA*

Leslie- It is recommended that the parks department go to the Zero Waste, the ask of their board is to hear the recommendations. It is not just within the county, and it is happening in other counties and cities. Ask is for Taryn to come to the board and draft. They talked about this a number of times and there is a pending board presentation. There could be a way for them to get to the point where they have a draft and meet with parks. If we don't go through the full LTF then it means they cannot say they do this through the full LTF, but that does not limit their ability to put together their finding and representation. They are looking for consensus on the whole group. Doing what Leslie is suggesting does not preclude them from meeting with the parks department before meeting with the board. Leslie- they pulled it on purpose awaiting the draft from the ad hoc committee. They want to take the executive directors of the agencies to collaborate together. The process is preferred so all the elected officials hear it. The Russian River keepers want to be involved too. Being at the November meeting would be great since that would be the third Thursday. There is a sense of urgency and there is a lot of moving pieces. They are starting to put together findings and it is important that they have this clear agreement from the group, and this is their finding and recommendations.

9. CA State Legislative Review 2025 – Alyssa Messer

Presentation: pushed to next time.

Questions:

10. ***Public*** **Comments***

Catherine- She presented this task force three years ago making a position on moratorium on plastic installation until it is studied. She believes that the board should have all the information and since then two more plastic turf fields have been installed. There is an urgency on this and we would like to see changes before she passes.

11. Member Announcements and Comments

Sloan- Gearing up for fourth annual zero waste week and they are going to have the website be live with these events at the end of the month and there are three donation days with the intention of engaging and activating with the intention of building community and learning how to fix things. They will be doing a proclamation for zero waste week.

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

October 9, 2025

13. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn 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.