

WEST CONTRA COSTA INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY (WCCIWMA) BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES – MARCH 13, 2025

Meeting Date | Time 3/13/2025 6:15 PM | Meeting Location City of Richmond, City Council Chambers, 440 Civic Center Plaza – 27th Street, Richmond, CA 94804

Meeting called by Board of Directors

Type of meeting Regular

Authority Staff Present Steve Duran, Reka Abraham, Lisa Borreani, Rachel Dice, Webster Nguyen and Viviane Vidal

Legal Counsel John Bakker

Board Members Present:

Directors: C. Zepeda (Chair) Richmond; W. Ktsanes, El Cerrito; D. Bhattarai, Hercules; A. Tave, Pinole; J. Brown and D. Robinson, Richmond; and R. Xavier (Vice Chair) San Pablo

Absent: S. Scales-Preston and J. Gioia (Ex-Officio), Contra Costa County

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Chair Zepeda called the regular meeting of the West Contra Costa Integrated Waste Management Authority (WCCIWMA), also known as RecycleMore, to order at 6:16 P.M.

The Roll Call established the existence of a quorum (Bhattarai, Brown, Ktsanes, Robinson, Tave, Xavier and Zepeda).

Chair Zepeda adjourned into Closed Session at 6:18 P.M.

CLOSED SESSION

PUBLIC EMPLOYEE APPOINTMENT

Title: Executive Director

Chair Zepeda reconvened from closed session at 6:58 P.M. There was no reported action from the closed session.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Zepeda led the Pledge of Allegiance.

EX-PARTE COMMUNICATIONS & DISCLOSURES

There were no ex-parté communications or disclosures.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No written comments were submitted, or oral comments made, by any member of the public.

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. February 20, 2025 Authority Board Meeting Minutes: (Motion to approve)

MOTION by Vice Chair Xavier to approve Consent Calendar Item 1, as submitted. **SECOND** by Director Bhattarai.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a Roll Call vote.

STAFF REPORT

Staff Report Item 7.1 – Staff Report | Presenter | Steve Duran, Interim Executive Director

Interim Executive Director Steve Duran reported with respect to negotiations for the Post Collection Agreement that there had been a meeting with Republic Services this week and while there had been a constructive conversation, there was no agreement for a six-months extension at this time. The schedule was being set for follow-up meetings to continue for a negotiated agreement. He also reported that the Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with the member agencies were being fine-tuned. The next meeting on April 10 would include a Board orientation with a binder of information to be provided to Board members and alternates, with a walk through of the Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement (JEPA) to make sure that the new members of the Board understood their role and that staff's role was clear. Alternates would be invited to that meeting to receive that orientation.

Staff Report Item 7.2 – Recycling and HHW Programs Update | Presenter | Reka Abraham – Recycling & Household Hazardous Waste Program Manager

The report from the Recycling and Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Program Manager was presented in writing. There were no questions from the Board.

Staff Report Item 7.3 – Outreach Programs Update | Presenter | Lisa Borreani – Program Manager - Outreach

The report from the Outreach Program Manager was presented in writing. There were no questions from the Board.

Staff Report Item 7.4 – Presentation – 2024 Key Accomplishments for Recycling, HHW and Outreach Programs | Presenters | Reka Abraham – Recycling & Household Hazardous Waste Program Manager and Lisa Borreani – Program Manager - Outreach

Recycling & Household Hazardous Waste Program Manager Reka Abraham presented the 2024 Program Summary for Recycling and HHW Programs and Outreach Programs updates. She noted that Lisa Borreani, the Program Manager for Outreach would also make a presentation and she pointed out that Ms. Borreani had been wearing more than one hat during this period of transition to help keep RecycleMore afloat with respect to administration and operations.

Ms. Abraham referred to the background context that had been included in the agenda reports to identify why the programs had been built the way they had and the regulations that had to be followed back to AB 939. She focused on the SB 1383 program as well as other sustainability programs and the HHW programs. Under SB 1383, she offered an overview of the program highlights from last year, particularly with respect to compliance data to verify numbers that had to be submitted to CalRecycle. She identified the poll compliance data that had to be done twice a year and noted that as of Q3 last year, RecycleMore had done 55,542 commercial and multifamily developments, generators under the commercial program in total (including El Cerrito). Out of that total, only 1,753 were not compliant resulting in a 97 percent compliance rate.

While CalRecycle required a 100 percent compliance, Ms. Abraham explained that was difficult to maintain at all times given the frequency where new generators (businesses) opened and closed accounts. Those non-compliant

would fall under outreach, receive education, and be advised they needed to sign up for an organics waiver or receive organics service. When there was no communication from a non-compliant business in 30 days, that business would get an automatic compost cart to bring it up to the 100 percent compliance level.

Ms. Abraham described how the waiver program worked and stated that SB 1383 required that all approved waivers be inspected within five years to make sure the businesses still met the requirements of the waiver. A waiver inspection and enforcement framework had both been developed last year, and a program had been developed to ensure that all approved waivers had inspections and met the five-year goal to avoid fines to the jurisdiction. Compliance was tracked with a robust record-keeping program that was required under SB 1383. Each jurisdiction had to maintain an implementation record that would be reviewed by CalRecycle in an implementation review every four years. Some records were maintained by RecycleMore and some by the member agencies.

Ms. Abraham referred to the edible food recovery program and the identification of the edible food recovery organizations and generators. She described the three contractors that helped with the food recovery network, education, compliant generators and non-compliant generators and explained that a program had been created for them last year. She also reported that RecycleMore had received a grant on behalf of the City of Hercules for SB 1383 last year and had developed an outreach program for its multifamily developments that included door-knocking and the presentation of recycling starter kits for each tenant. That program would start next week with the first pilot.

Ms. Abraham stated the first cycle of an edible food recovery program grant dealt with equipment and supplies. Now in the second cycle, the edible food recovery program had been able to distribute \$98,538 in May 2024, to six food recovery organizations in the jurisdiction. A six-month progress report showed that the organizations had saved an additional 54,000 pounds of food from going to the landfill within the jurisdiction specific to the grant and giving it to people in need. She stated the application cycle for the current grant just closed and RecycleMore was now offering in addition to equipment some stipends, and would be looking through applications from eight applicants to see who qualified for those monies in May 2025. The program was anticipating an additional 32,000 pounds of excess edible food to continue to be rescued in addition to the total that had already been rescued.

As to the additional sustainability programs, Ms. Abraham referred to an interior containers program, repair workshops, backyard composting and mattress recycling. She identified the partnerships involved with each of those programs, their status, progress and successes. She provided an overview of the two HHW facilities in the jurisdiction; a permanent facility in Richmond and a satellite facility in El Cerrito, with two to three temporary one-day collection events located elsewhere in West County, all well received. She identified the number of participants at the temporary events and explained that the number was consistent and the events were well used every year.

Ms. Abraham also highlighted the Marine Flares Collection events funded by CalRecycle's HD 37 grant in partnership with the California Product Stewardship Council (CPSC). The grant was important given the proximity of the Bay, the requirement for boaters to maintain marine flares on boats entering the ocean, and because the flares were explosive, expired after a few years, and there was a lack of any other way to dispose of them. Last year 14 5-gallon buckets of flares had been collected, representing 270 pounds, with 661 individual flares disposed.

Lisa Borreani, Outreach Coordinator, spoke to an overview of the outreach messaging strategy that had been incorporated into everything RecycleMore did; to support the California waste laws such as SB 1383, to educate and create visually engaging materials culturally appropriate for the community, and to be stewards to help preserve the environment through programs and messaging.

Everything done supported the five member cities in RecycleMore including unincorporated West Contra Costa County, with the theme Reduce, Reuse, Repair and Recycle. When possible, the documents were translated into Spanish and also translated into Tagalog and Chinese.

Ms. Borreani highlighted the CalRecycle grants, explained that RecycleMore applied for the Used Motor Oil Payment Program grant each year, and the grant cycles lasted for two years within specific criteria. RecycleMore had recently been notified that it had been awarded the next cycle grant in the amount of \$35,950. The program paid for training, collections, reimbursements, inventory, and zip lock bags and she provided the details for each. During the summertime there were five recycling giveaways at the local auto supply store. RecycleMore also participated in 10 to 12 tabling events annually to engage with the community; educated, raised awareness, and distributed program information; and identified repair workshops and distributed RecycleMore swag and food scrap pails.

Ms. Borreani added that in April each year RecycleMore staff always participated in Earth Day events in several jurisdictions and focused on the composting subsidized program where there was an opportunity to win a composter and other accessories to compost at home. In June, staff attended the Pinole Car Show and educated residents on the proper disposal of used motor oil and where to dispose, and distributed free used oil supplies. Over 200 oil drainers and oil filter drainers were given out at the event. She identified other annual events where information on recycling, composting and HHW programs would be promoted and where food scrap pails would be distributed. She noted that all RecycleMore staff was involved in numerous events each year.

Ms. Borreani also reported on the redesigned RecycleMore website and the new service provider (Nerd Crossing), explained why that change had occurred, and pointed out the existing features that had been maintained in the new website along with numerous new features, and the key achievements that highlighted data from CalRecycle's Electronic Annual Report (EAR). She also noted that the previous Recycling Guide had also been updated.

Ms. Borreani stated the social media strategy was to educate, inform and increase the following of West Contra Costa residents. The content was relevant, engaging and informational about the programs and resources available to the community, the content was timely and pertained to upcoming events, topical news items, waste laws and how to comply. Facebook and Instagram were maintained, and she identified some of the content noting that 20 to 25 original pieces of content had been posted each quarter. She added that the school programs had been revamped and there were in-person classrooms and assembly presentations as well as facility tours at West County Resource Recovery. Republic Service's Sustainability Coordinators and RecycleMore coordinators had prepared three different presentations catered to the grade level of students from K-3, 4-8 and 9-12 levels. This year there had been over 2,625 students who had attended the presentations or tours. In addition to the presentations, three different giveaways were available for the students and she described those giveaways. She offered the Board a facility tour and asked interested members to identify their interest to be able to coordinate a tour in the future.

Director Bhattarai thanked RecycleMore staff for all the work, was interested in the tour, and with respect to backyard composting asked if worms could be included in a more natural composting process. He also asked about the outreach for multifamily units.

Ms. Abraham stated that one of the composters offered by RecycleMore was like a worm farm and through the \$20 off composting accessories ratepayers were able to access one pound of red wiggler worms that were good for composting. She also noted that regular composting used bacteria while composting with worms produced worm castings, which was a different more potent composting that broke things down fast. As to the multifamily outreach, multifamily properties were notoriously difficult for proper recycling and composting, there was a high tenant turnover, and tenants were not putting out their own carts or looking at their waste. An easy way to see if there were positive impacts was that contamination rates would drop.

Ms. Abraham stated there was a constant education process with multifamily. The City of Hercules was invested in getting the grant and getting residents in multifamily areas up to speed with the programs. The first program would start this week and over the year all Hercules multifamily areas were expected to be addressed.

Director Tave asked about participation analyses of the HHW programs and suggested whenever a large one-day event took place participation at the Richmond HHW facility tended to drop, with the events taking pressure off the Richmond site. He asked operations wise whether the events were difficult to put on and he asked about the cost benefit and whether doing more would continue to take the pressure off the Richmond HHW facility.

Ms. Abraham noted that over the summer people typically cleaned out their garages and the like. The one-day events typically during the warm months of the year were very popular because residents did not want to drive all the way to the HHW facility in Richmond. She confirmed that the one-day HHW events were expensive to develop. She wanted to encourage residents to drop off their HHW material at the permanent Richmond facility without waiting for a special HHW event. With respect to volume, she stated it was easier at the Richmond HHW facility since the one-day HHW events were heavily attended and congested. She verified that the Richmond facility was open every Saturday from 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. at the 101 Pittsburg Avenue location in Richmond and closed on Saturdays only on the major holidays.

Director Robinson asked about targets and Ms. Abraham stated the food recovery aspect of SB 1383 was hard to quantify, although SB 1383 had an overarching requirement for a 20 percent reduction of the state's estimated amount from going to the landfill by 2025. Every year RecycleMore reported on the total amount saved each year and from that were able to tell how much had been saved that year. She reported that RecycleMore had exceeded that 20 percent and it already had a robust food recovery network. RecycleMore was working with other generators that were not necessarily SB 1383 generators that were the smaller food recovery organizations to help them and to save more edible food. She noted that she could get the most recent percentage of what RecycleMore saved in the area of edible food recovery from the EAR reports to CalRecycle, and could provide some stats to the Board of each of RecycleMore's programs that could be quantified.

Director Robinson asked RecycleMore staff about lessons learned with the ongoing programs and if there was anything staff might want to pursue or adjust, and Ms. Abraham stated in the ideal world with more capacity and staff there could be more community events, more sustainability programs rather than just compliance-focused programs. While the repair shops were working in that direction, she wanted to look at waste in a different format and bring a circular economy to West County. She noted there was always potential to do more.

Lisa Borreani suggested a community focus to better identify RecycleMore and what it did in the communities.

Director Robinson expressed a desire to do a tour. She referred to Richmond's Dumpster Days and noted that in talking to residents they were unaware of how easy it was to visit the one-day HHW events where the resident would remain in the car and pop the trunk to have their disposals removed. She asked if a video had ever been made about how to use the one-day HHW events, and Ms. Abraham stated that staff had talked about doing that.

Chair Zepeda thanked Ms. Abraham and Ms. Borreani for their great work and noted that he had enjoyed the videos staff had prepared. He referred specifically to the video on batteries, commented that he had learned a lot from the video and requested that RecycleMore's videos be provided to members of the Board. He also expressed a desire for a facility tour. He commented that he happened to be talking to a restaurant owner who had asked how the edible food recovery process worked and who had suggested an app where a restaurant or other business could report when the business would be closing and identify any leftover food stuffs that could be discounted for pickup.

Ms. Abraham stated that such an app already existed. It was called Too Good To Go and businesses and restaurants could sign up to advise when there was excess food for pickup.

Chair Zepeda recommended the Hilltop Mall as a location for a one-day HHW event, verified that the backyard compost bins were all available through RecycleMore's website, including those available for discount, and asked for a compliance scorecard for each member agency.

Ms. Abraham explained that staff had tried to contact Hilltop Mall but had been unsuccessful. She also explained that all RecycleMore member agencies were 100 percent in compliance. She added that the majority of the SB 1383 programs were under RecycleMore's umbrella. Everything done in terms of SB 1383 compliance was done on a regional basis, except for the Hercules grant. Given the size of Richmond, a fair amount of effort was required and she reported that Richmond staff and Republic staff along with RecycleMore staff worked to get the information out to all Richmond businesses. She also described the type of business that required a green compost bin, and described the several options available for disposing of the items that could not be fixed at the Fit-It events since RecycleMore did not dispose of those items.

Chair Zepeda noted that both Pinole and Richmond had community Dumpster Days and he asked if a one-day HHW event could partner with a Dumpster Day event.

Ms. Abraham stated that because one-day HHW events were so expensive, required a lot of space and were difficult to produce, she recommended that the materials be sent to the HHW facility. She suggested in the future RecycleMore might be able to table and hand out information at Dumpster Day events but at this point it was difficult for RecycleMore staff to attend those events because they were so busy with other events, and staff did not always know when the Dumpster Day events would occur because they were not coordinated through RecycleMore but through the collection agreement.

Chair Zepeda asked if fireworks could be collected with the marine flares, and Ms. Abraham stated that marine flares and fireworks were two different material classifications and were transferred and disposed of differently. Marine flares could be stored for a short period of time but not fireworks given that there was no explosive magazine available at the HHW facility. Also, the Marine Flare Program was a very specific collection associated with a CalRecycle grant when only marine flares were collected.

REGULAR AGENDA

Agenda Item 8.1 – Sole Source Professional Services Agreement with HF&H Consultants | Presenter | Steve Duran – Interim Executive Director

Interim Executive Director Duran commented that when he served as Interim Executive Director five years ago RecycleMore was on CalRecycle's naughty list, now RecycleMore was on CalRecycle's nice list, which was a big improvement that was directly attributable to RecycleMore staff.

Interim Executive Director Duran presented the request to approve Resolution 25-03 directing the Interim Executive Director to execute a Sole Source Professional Services Agreement with HF&H Consultants in an amount not to exceed \$90,000 with a \$10,000 contingency to assist with the negotiation of a Post Collection Agreement with Republic Services. Because the contract was a sole source, the Board must make certain findings to be able to approve the Resolution.

Interim Executive Director Duran provided some background to the selection of HF&H Consultants and explained why there was no time to pursue a Request for Proposal for this Sole Source Professional Services Agreement in a not-to-exceed amount of \$100,000.

MOTION by Vice Chair Xavier to make certain findings and approve Resolution 25-03 directing the Interim Executive Director to execute a Sole Source Professional Services

