

Solid Waste Disposal and Recyclable Materials Processing Authority of Broward County, Florida

SWA Executive Committee Meeting

August 15, 2025, 9:00 – 11:00 AM

Broward County Government Center West

1st Floor Board Room – Surtax Plaza

1 North University Drive

Plantation, FL 33324

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order and roll call was taken. A quorum was not met. Due to the absence of a quorum, no official votes or actions could be taken.

Present: Chair Ryan, Vice Chair Furr, Member Shuham, Alternate Member Geller, Alternate Member Breitzkreuz, and Broward School Board Representative Member Bulman.

Not present in person but present virtually: Member Rydell and Alternate Member Murphy-Salomone.

Not Present: Member Newton, Member Mead, Member Caggiano, Member Horland, Member Metayer Bowen, Member Dunn, and Member AJ Ryan.

Public Comment

Public comment began with one speaker commending the Authority, staff, and consultants for completing the Solid Waste Management and Recycling Master Plan, urging Broward to set a national example by committing to upstream reduction, organics diversion, and circular procurement. The speaker recommended a binding target of reducing total waste generation by 75 percent by 2035, launching large-scale composting facilities by 2027, and creating a Zero Waste Implementation Task Force that includes community and environmental representatives.

Another speaker, a marine biologist, cautioned against proposals for sargassum pyrolysis to produce biochar, citing research that sargassum contains arsenic, a known carcinogen. Concerns were raised that pyrolysis would not eliminate arsenic and that biochar use could contaminate groundwater, harm crops, and pose risks to wildlife and humans. The speaker recommended further research into leaching dynamics and offered expertise to collaborate on safer approaches.

A third speaker praised the draft plan's long-term vision but expressed concern that prioritizing incineration over landfill capacity would undermine zero-waste goals. The speaker argued that incineration locks the county into ongoing waste generation and could constrain investment in organics and emerging waste technologies. They recommended focusing on organic waste diversion as the most effective path to meet state targets, using landfill expansion only as a temporary measure, and ensuring that any consideration of incineration undergoes broader public engagement before adoption.

The next speaker urged the Authority to prioritize local glass recycling, noting its potential to cut taxpayer costs, reduce beach erosion, and protect coral reefs. Another resident asked that full minutes, not [AI] summaries, be posted and noted discrepancies in how a prior waste-to-energy motion was recorded. The Chair noted minutes could not be approved without a quorum but agreed draft minutes should be posted online going forward.

The next speaker questioned why food-waste composting and recycling were not clearly emphasized in the Master Plan, asked for stronger education on plastics and PFAS, and raised concerns about landfill expansion. The Chair clarified that food waste diversion is a priority, that the Authority opposed expansion at Monarch Hill, and promised to provide documentation. Another resident supported accelerating organics management, highlighted agricultural and anaerobic digestion opportunities, and raised conflict-of-interest concerns about Waste Management advising municipalities while also profiting as a major hauler, noting a lack of transparency around robotic sorting technologies.

Meeting Minutes

Approval of the July 18, 2025, Executive Committee Meeting Minutes was postponed to the next meeting, due to the absence of a quorum.

Chair and Vice Chair Statements

Because there was no quorum, the Chair did not proceed with updates or decisions per the meeting agenda. The Executive Director was asked to clearly notify members in advance when a quorum is unlikely so members can participate online instead of traveling. A substitute date in early September was proposed for the next Executive Committee meeting.

The Vice Chair thanked SCS for delivering the Master Plan on schedule in August and called it a meaningful milestone that provides a blueprint for future work, while noting county concerns that the financing elements still need refinement. The Chair emphasized that celebration is premature until real diversion and behavior change are achieved across households, schools, businesses, and the retail supply chain, and until measurable metrics show progress. Current recycling diversion was noted at approximately thirty-eight percent.

Executive Committee members discussed analytical issues that will need follow-up at the next meeting, including how to calculate progress toward the seventy-five percent goal when overall waste generation is reduced, and whether the plan's volume and infrastructure assumptions account for the potential addition of three non-member cities if they join the Authority. One member also sought clarification that the Education and Outreach Subcommittee is aligned on pausing focus groups, since a posted agenda appeared to continue that work.

No motions were made and no votes were taken due to the absence of a quorum. The meeting concluded with thanks to SCS for timely submittals, appreciation for a recent presentation to the Climate Change Task Force, and confirmation that staff will circulate written comments sent to the Executive Director, post draft meeting minutes, and provide the requested organics citations before the next session in early September.

New/Old Business & Informational Materials

- Due to a lack of quorum, the Executive Director to survey member availability for rescheduling the Executive Committee meeting to early September.
- The Executive Director to distribute written public comments sent to him to all members, send out the exact Master Plan citations for food-waste programs to the resident that requested the information and ensure draft meeting minutes are posted moving forward.

Chair Ryan adjourned the meeting.