

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

12 May 2021

MEETING:	RAMJO Board Meeting		
DATE:	Wednesday 12 th May 2021		
TIME:	10:00am – 1:00pm (arrive at 9:30am for coffee)		
LOCATION:	Deniliquin Ute Muster Museum, Conargo Road, Deniliquin		
CHAIR:	Cr. Kevin Mack		
ATTENDEES:	Council / Organisation	Voting Member	Non-Voting Member
	Albury City Council	Cr. Kevin Mack	Mr. Frank Zaknich
	Berrigan Shire Council	Cr. Matthew Hannan	Mr. Rowan Perkins
	Carrathool Shire Council	Cr. Darryl Jardine	Mr. Rick Warren
	Edward River Council	Cr. Norm Brennan	Mr. Philip Stone
	Federation Council	Cr. Pat Bourke	Mr. Adrian Butler
	Griffith City Council	Cr. John Dal Broi	Mr. Brett Stonestreet
	Hay Shire Council	Cr. Jenny Dwyer	Mr. David Webb
	Leeton Shire Council	Cr. Paul Maytom	Ms. Jackie Kruger
	Murray River Council	Cr. Chris Bilkey	Mr. Terry Dodds
	Murrumbidgee Council	Cr. Ruth McRae	Mr. John Scarce
	Narrandera Shire Council	Cr. Neville Kschenka	Mr. George Cowan
	Regional NSW		Mr. Giles Butler
Office of Local Government		Mr. Cameron Templeton	
RAMJO STAFF:	Ms Bridgett Leopold – Executive Officer E: bleopold@alburycity.nsw.gov.au M: 0408 498 534		
	Ms Nicola Gleeson Coopes – Office Manager E: Nicola.GleesonCooopes@alburycity.nsw.gov.au M: 0436 370 772		
	Ms Rosie O’Keeffe – Media and Grants Administration Officer E: ROkeeffe@alburycity.nsw.gov.au		
	Ms Bella Thomas – Governance and Administration Officer E: BThomas@alburycity.nsw.gov.au		
OTHER ATTENDEES	Name	Organisation	Role
	Andrea Baldwin	Albury City / RAMJO	Team Leader Waste
	Kirstie Muntz	Albury City / RAMJO	Resource Recovery Lead
	Russell Tait & Vicki Lowry	Deniliquin Ute Muster	Chairman and GM

MEETING AGENDA

ITEM	TOPIC	TIME
1	Chair Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledgement of traditional custodians Welcome: Terry Dodds General Manager Murray River Council 	9:01
2	Apologies and Leave of Absence	10:02
3	Declaration of Items of Pecuniary or Other Interest – Board Members / Designated Persons	10:03
4	Matters arising from the last meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10th February 2021 	10:04
5	Minutes from previous Board meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10th February 2021 	10:05
6	Russell Tait: Chairman of <i>Play on the Plains Festival Ltd</i> & Deni Ute Muster Museum Presentation on disused railway line opportunities for local fundraising	10:06
8	GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.1 Bridgett Leopold: Q3 2020-2021 Budget Report 6.2 Bridgett Leopold: 2021-2022 Draft Budget 6.3 Bridgett Leopold: Statement of Revenue Policy 6.4 Bridgett Leopold: Code of Conduct Panel of Reviewers 	10:35
9	OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UPDATE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7.1 Mr. Cameron Templeton: Office of Local Government Update 	11:00
10	ADVOCACY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8.1 OLG Review of Joint Organisations 8.2 ACCC Final Report: Murray Darling Basin Water Markets Inquiry 8.3 Legislative Assembly Committee on Investment, Industry and Regional Development: Final Report into support for drought affected communities 	11:15
BREAK		11:30
11	STRATEGIC PRIORITIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1 Cr. Chris Bilkey: Water Sub-Committee Update 5.2 John Scarce: Digital Connectivity Sub-Committee Update 5.3 George Cowan: Energy Security Sub-Committee 5.4 David Webb: Infrastructure Mapping 5.5 David Webb: Regional Freight Transport Plan 5.6 Bridgett Leopold: Best Practice Aggregated Procurement 5.7 John Scarce: Health Committee Update 	11:45
12	PROJECT UPDATES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.1 Matthew Dudley: Contaminated Land Management (written update only) 	12:00

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ITEM	TOPIC	TIME
	6.2 Kirstie Muntz and Andrea Baldwin: Regional Waste Kerbside Contract & Waste Groups 6.3 Bridgett Leopold: Southern Lights (written update only)	
14	OPERATIONAL MATTERS 7.1 Office of the Children’s Guardian – opportunity for collaboration 7.2 General Managers Group Minutes 7.3 NSW JO Chairs Meeting Minutes	12:20
15	GENERAL BUSINESS <ul style="list-style-type: none">Housing affordability and availability	12:40
	Meeting Close & Lunch	13:00

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AGENDA ITEM 1 - WELCOME

Meeting was moved forward to 9am.

Deni Ute Muster Museum Chairman Russell Tait and General Manager Vicki Lowry welcomed the Board, and spoke about the Deni Ute Muster's history, financing, and the COVID impacts on the 2021 planning.

Agenda order amendment: Item 6 Russell Tait presentation directly after Item 1. See detail below at Item 6.

The Chairperson Cr Kevin Mack welcomed the Board Members and guests to the meeting and acknowledged the Traditional Custodians of the region. Cr Mack welcomed Terry Dodds the newly appointed General Manager of Murray River Council.

AGENDA ITEM 2 – APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Apologies:

- Cr John Dal Broi – Griffith City
- Cr Neville Kschenka – Narrandera
- Mr Cameron Templeton - Office of Local Government
- Mr Adrian Butler – General Manager of Federation Council
- Mr Giles Butler – Director Regional NSW

Acknowledgement of Mr Rowan Perkins retirement from Berrigan Shire Council after 22 years' service, and from the RAMJO Board as a non-voting member.

Recommendation:

- That apologies be accepted and that leave of absence be granted.

Carried.

Moved Federation, seconded Edward River

AGENDA ITEM 3 – DECLARATION OF ITEMS OF PECUNIARY OR OTHER INTEREST – BOARD MEMBERS / DESIGNATED PERSONS

None.

AGENDA ITEM 4 – MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS RAMJO BOARD MEETINGS

ITEM	STATUS
Executive Officer to consider releasing joint media release with other JOs regarding Best Practice in Aggregated Procurement	IN PROGRESS
Invite Water NSW Director Vince Kelly to RAMJO Water Security Sub Committee meeting to seek clarity on planned infrastructure changes	IN PROGRESS
RAMJO to host a cross border workshop with the Murray Group of Councils to consider matters in common and seek opportunities for collaboration	IN PROGRESS
Executive Officer and General Managers' Advisory Committee to prepare a detailed report indicating the financial sustainability position of the JO for the May 2021 Board meeting.	COMPLETE
RAMJO undertake Code of Conduct EOI process via LGP on behalf of Member Councils	IN PROGRESS

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Recommendation:

- That the RAMJO Board **note** the status of matters arising from previous Board meetings.

Noted.

AGENDA ITEM 5 – MINUTES OF 10TH FEBRUARY 2021

- Draft Minutes of 10th February 2021 – **Attachment A**

Recommendation:

- That the RAMJO Board **approve** the minutes from the Board meeting of 10th February 2021, and the recommendations therein be adopted.

Carried.

Moved Leeton, seconded Federation.

AGENDA ITEM 6 – RUSSELL TAIT PRESENTATION

Agenda item 6 was moved forward - Russell Tait, Chairman of the Deniliquin Ute Muster Museum and Event, provided a short presentation regarding revenue raising opportunities across the region via repurposing disused railway materials.

Recommendation:

That the Board **note** the presentation from Russell Tait.

Noted.

Agenda order amendment: Item 12.2 NSW Kerbside services directly after Item 6. See detail below at Item 12.2.

AGENDA ITEM 8 – GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE

8.1: Q3 2020-2021 BUDGET REPORT

The Executive Officer provided a quarterly report at **Attachment C**. As previously reported, of note is that RAMJO does not have quarterly budgets, rather an annual budget as spending (other than wages) is not on a regular basis. Therefore, there are some variances in the report, however spending remains on track with budgeted items.

The following matters relate to variances noted in this report:

- Relating to income, RAMJO budgeted to receive \$505,142, but rather \$518,070 has been received.
 - \$217,144 is from Membership Fees
 - \$55,000 from energy 'service delivery'
 - \$175,000 from 'service delivery' - Adverse Event Management Plans for 9 Councils (including Armidale)
 - \$61,000 from LGP and PA procurement rebate
 - \$17,499 from 5% Project Administration fee for the Waste Coordinator funds only
- Relating to expenses, RAMJO budgeted to spend \$420,950, rather we have spent \$336,070 by Q3 end.

Significant underspends relate to:

- Website maintenance & social media of nearly \$9,000 (via employment of media officer with OLG grant)

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Significant overspends appear as:

- Water Committee Media and Marketing (\$9,500)
- Provision for Consultancy (\$16,510) – these costs relate to FWJO support and will be recovered
- Water committee – media / marketing
- Rosie’s position
- Consultancy – recovery from FWJO
- Office manager - overspend due to journal issue – will be rectified before EOFY

Executive Officer estimates \$70-100k further spend before EOFY and notes an adjustment of unrestricted cash at prior year end from \$84k to \$226k.

Recommendation:

- That the Board **receive** and **note** the Q3 Budget report.

Received and noted.

Moved Albury, seconded Edward River

8.2: 2021-2022 DRAFT BUDGET

Executive Officer provided a summary of the provided budget document, and noted:

- Move waste funding admin percentage from 5% to 15% based on calculation of EO and other staff time spent on this matter
- Current grant applications out for consideration – Energy \$2,500,000/ Water \$349,000/ Waste audit - \$427,000 total across RAMJO Councils (Albury & Narrandera not eligible under the grant funding conditions)
- Budget includes current staffing levels for 2021-2022, as this is a realistic staffing level to achieve RAMJO’s priorities.
- Budget is ‘worst case’ scenario but reflects current position.

Following the Local Government general elections, the Executive Officer will provide a presentation to councils that demonstrates impact, including financial benefits for councils of RAMJO’s work.

Recommendation:

The RAMJO Board:

- **adopt** the draft budget at Attachment D
- **note** an operational deficit of \$252,872 which is able to be managed by unrestricted cash in bank for the 2021-2022FY
- **note** additional outstanding matters including the JO review, FWJO cost sharing arrangements and grant funding applications remain outstanding.
- **Agree** that pending the outcomes of the JO review, the General Manager Executive Committee will work with the Executive Officer to formulate an alternative funding model that relates to alternative operational outcomes.

Noted.

Moved Leeton, seconded Murrumbidgee

8.3: STATEMENT OF REVENUE POLICY

A Statement of Revenue Policy has been prepared in accordance with legislative requirements at Attachment E.

Recommendation:

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That the Board **adopt** the Statement of Revenue for 2021-2022FY

Moved Berrigan, seconded Murrumbidgee

8.4: CODE OF CONDUCT PANEL OF REVIEWERS

Following approval at the previous Board meeting, RAMJO developed an Expression of Interest (EOI) which was released to the LGP Legal Services Panel providers. The EOI closes on Tuesday 18th May 2021, following from which RAMJO will undertake an assessment of the submissions received. A list of providers will be informed of their suitability and corresponding information, briefings, and support documentation will be delivered to Councils for their upcoming Council meeting in late May to late June. A review of Council meeting dates is underway to ensure sufficient time remains for Councils to consider and adopt recommendations for select providers from the regional panel. Phil Stone volunteered to be on the RAMJO panel to review the EOI submissions.

Recommendation:

- That the Board **note** the timing for the Regional Panel of Reviewers to be provided to individual Councils for endorsement.

Noted.

Agenda order amendment : Item 12.3 Southern Lights, directly after 8.4. See detail below at Item 12.3.

Agenda order amendment : Item 13.2 Office of the Children’s Guardian, directly after 12.3. See detail below at Item 13.2

AGENDA ITEM 9 – OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UPDATE

Mr Cameron Templeton was an apology for the meeting.

ADVOCACY

10.1: OLG REVIEW OF JOINT ORGANISATIONS

Due for completion June 2021.

10.2: ACCC FINAL REPORT: MURRAY DARLING BASIN WATER MARKETS INQUIRY

Extensive (700 page) document has been received. Submission by NSW government has been rejected and should be reconsidered, after issues with floodplain harvesting.

10.3: LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON INVESTMENT, INDUSTRY AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT: FINAL REPORT INTO SUPPORT FOR DROUGHT AFFECTED COMMUNITIES

Final report received.

Board noted these reports have been received.

AGENDA ITEM 11 – STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Board were provided the following updates.

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11.1: WATER

Cr Kevin Mack gave an update of Troy Grant's recent regional visit, attended by the water subcommittee.

Noted.

11.2: DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

John Scarce gave an update of Digital Connectivity subcommittee. Investment in regional productivity. Regional priorities for connectivity are required.

Noted.

11.3: ENERGY SECURITY

George Cowan's written report was accepted as written

Noted.

11.4: REGIONAL FREIGHT TRANSPORT PLAN

David Webb provided an update on the Freight Transport Plan, including the next steps whereby roads will be prioritised depending on criteria agreed to by the committee. David will work with the Executive Officer to complete this stage of work.

Noted.

11.5: BEST PRACTICE AGGREGATED PROCUREMENT

Bridgett Leopold. Nothing to add.

Noted.

11.6: HEALTH

Phil Stone / John Scarce - encourage other councils write to the Minister in relation to the inquiry into *Health outcomes and Access to Health and Hospital Services in Rural, Regional and Remote New South Wales*. Strategic priorities to be determined by subcommittee in June.

Subcommittee to consider a regional position paper and a short submission to be put forward to go to Minister Brad Hazzard and the Commissioner for the Ambulance Service. Subcommittee should meet in early June.

Noted.

Recommendation:

- That the Board **note** the updates from the strategic priority committees. (discussion recorded above).

Noted.

AGENDA ITEM 12 – PROJECT UPDATES

12.1 MATTHEW DUDLEY: CONTAMINATED LAND MANAGEMENT (WRITTEN UPDATE ONLY)

The written report was taken as read.

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12.2 KIRSTIE MUNTZ AND ANDREA BALDWIN: REGIONAL WASTE KERBSIDE CONTRACT & WASTE GROUPS

Presentation about kerbside services in NSW, regional strategy, community procurement, appetite for further collaboration.

Noted EPA regulations around waste diversion, difference between RAMJO region diversion rates compared with EPA targets that have been signed up for.

Increase in costs for cells and impact of diversion – increased from \$500k / cell to \$3.3m / cell.

Discussion around the model contract, garbage trucks doing road analysis.

12.3 BRIDGETT LEOPOLD: SOUTHERN LIGHTS (WRITTEN UPDATE ONLY).

The written report was taken as read.

Recommendation:

- That the Board **receive** and **note** the project updates.

Received and noted.

AGENDA ITEM 13 – OPERATIONAL MATTERS

13.2 OFFICE OF THE CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN – OPPORTUNITY FOR COLLABORATION

Following detailed discussion, it was agreed that a working group will be formed consisting of Mr Terry Dodds, Ms Jackie Kruger, Mr Phillip Stone.

13.3 – GENERAL MANAGERS GROUP MINUTES

The Minutes of the General Manager's meeting were taken as read.

13.4 – NSW JO CHAIRS MEETING MINUTES

The Minutes of the JO Chairs meeting were taken as read.

Recommendation:

- That the Board Members **note** the minutes and updates from the various groups.

Noted

AGENDA ITEM 14 – GENERAL BUSINESS

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY AND AVAILABILITY

This item was not discussed.

HECS DEBT

Following a detailed discussion and advocacy opportunities, Mr Terry Dodds raised an opportunity around amortisation of HECS debts which could be applied to encourage people into regional areas. Cr Kevin Mack offered

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to bring the position paper to the Minister via Regional Cities Australia agenda, who were already discussing this matter, and to Regional Development Australia given the Commonwealth context.

EMERGENCY SERVICES LEVY

Treasury paper– offset Emergency Services Levy (ESL) – paper to be circulated. Need a rep from Transport NSW to come to the next meeting.

POLICE NUMBERS

Craig Ireland discussion about police resourcing - Leeton / Griffith / Narrandera.

Next meeting is late July depending on the release of the OLG paper on JOs.

Alternatively, the meeting will be scheduled following council general elections.

Meeting closed : 12.26pm.