

BOARD MEETING

20 August 2021

MEETING:	RAMJO Board Meeting		
DATE:	Friday 20 th August 2021		
TIME:	9:00am – 12:00pm		
LOCATION:	Online		
CHAIR:	Cr. Kevin Mack		
ZOOM:	https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84321364848?pwd=Ky85UCt1ckpHNmQyTThrQUFha29jdz09 Meeting ID: 843 2136 4848 Passcode: 389855		
ATTENDEES:	Council / Organisation	Voting Member	Non-Voting Member
	Albury City Council	Cr. Kevin Mack	Mr. Frank Zaknich
	Berrigan Shire Council	Cr. Matthew Hannan	Ms. Karina Ewer
	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
	Outgoing RAMJO EO		Ms Bridgett Leopold
	Regional NSW		Mr. Giles Butler
Office of Local Government		Mr. Cameron Templeton	
RAMJO STAFF	Ms Nicola Gleeson Coopes – Interim Executive Officer E: Nicola.GleesonCooopes@alburycity.nsw.gov.au M: 0408 498 534		
	Ms Kirstie Muntz – Project and Stakeholder Manager E: kmuntz@alburycity.nsw.gov.au		
	Ms Bella Thomas – Governance and Administration Officer E: BThomas@alburycity.nsw.gov.au		
OTHER ATTENDEES	Name	Organisation	Role
	Mike Ritchie	MRA Consulting	Managing Director
	Brad Ferris	Albury City	Deputy CEO Infrastructure, Planning & Environment

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Joseph Rahme	NSW Telco Authority	Customer and Stakeholder Services
Sonia Anderson	NSW Telco Authority	Critical Communications Enhancement Program (CCEP)
Jill Ludlow	Murrumbidgee Local Health District	CEO
Simon Kalinowski	Mandalay	CEO
Brad Ferris apparently coming twice	Albury City	Deputy CEO Infrastructure, Planning & Environment
Steven Millett	Albury City	Service Leader Assets, Sustainability & Environment

MEETING AGENDA

Item	Topic	Time
	OPENING	9:00
1	Chair Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledgement of traditional custodians Welcome: Ms. Karina Ewer, Berrigan Shire Council 	9:01
2	Apologies and Leave of Absence	9:02
3	Declaration of Items of Pecuniary or Other Interest – Board Members / Designated Persons	9:03
4	Matters arising from previous Board meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12th May 2021 	9:04
5	Minutes from previous Board meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12th May 2021 	9:05
6	Guest Presenter – Mike Ritchie MRA Consulting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource recovery, circular economy, implementing FOGO, the new Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy. 	9:06
7	Guest Presenter - Joseph Rahme – NSW Telco Authority <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critical Communications Enhancement Program 	10:00
8	Guest Presenter - Jill Ludford – Murrumbidgee Local Health District <ul style="list-style-type: none"> COVID vaccination rates in RAMJO local government areas 	10.20
	BREAK	10:30
9	SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL 9.1 Nicola Gleeson Coopes : Update on FWJO Cost Sharing Model	10:40
10	GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE 10.1 Nicola Gleeson Coopes: Q4 2020-2021 Budget Report 10.2 Nicola Gleeson Coopes: Interim Executive Officer arrangements 10.3 Nicola Gleeson Coopes: RAMJO Workplan during transition 10.4 Nicola Gleeson Coopes: End of year reporting to OLG	10:45
11	OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UPDATE 11.1 Mr. Cameron Templeton: Office of Local Government Update 11.2 Mr. Cameron Templeton: Smart places funding application (including Simon Kalinowski from Mandalay)	11:00
12	ADVOCACY 12.1 OLG Review of Joint Organisations	11:10
13	Board farewell to Ms Bridgett Leopold, RAMJO Executive Officer	11.11
14	UPDATE ON STRATEGIC PRIORITIES – information only 14.1 Cr. Chris Bilkey: Water Sub-Committee Update	11:20

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Item	Topic	Time
	14.2 John Scarce: Digital Connectivity Sub-Committee Update 14.3 George Cowan: Energy Security Sub-Committee 14.4 David Webb: Regional Freight Transport Plan 14.5 Nicola Gleeson Coopes: Best Practice Aggregated Procurement 14.6 Phil Stone / John Scarce: Health Committee Update	
15	PROJECT UPDATES – information Only <i>Written reports, taken as read.</i> 15.1 Matthew Dudley: Contaminated Land Management 15.2 Kirstie Muntz and Andrea Baldwin: Regional Waste Kerbside Contract & Waste Groups 15.3 Nicola Gleeson Coopes : Energy Audit and Strategy	11:30
16	OPERATIONAL MATTERS 16.1 General Managers Group Minutes 16.2 End of Year Financial Reporting: GPFS & Audit 16.3 RAMJO Grant Funding Submissions 16.4 NSW JO Chairs Meeting Minutes	11:35
17	GENERAL BUSINESS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Riverina Murray REOC Covid-19 Multi-agency preparation (late addition) Government eplanning portal (late addition) NSW elections 4th December 2021 \$150k capacity building funds 2021-2023 Call for general business	11:40
	Meeting Close	12:00

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Agenda Item 1 – Welcome

Chair Kevin Mack to welcome attendees including:

- Newly appointed Chief Executive Officer of Berrigan Shire Council – Ms Karina Ewer

Agenda Item 2 – Apologies and Leave of Absence

Apologies:

Recommendation:

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

Agenda Item 3 – Declaration of Items of Pecuniary or Other Interest – Board Members / Designated Persons

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
RAMJO undertake Code of Conduct EOI process via LGP on behalf of Member Councils	IN PROGRESS

Recommendation:

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

Agenda Item 5 – Minutes of 12th May 2021

- Draft Minutes of 12th May 2021 – **Attachment A**

Recommendation:

That the minutes of the RAMJO Board Meeting held 12th May 2021 be received and the recommendations therein be adopted.

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Agenda Item 6 – Guest Presenter – Mike Ritchie MRA Consulting **Mike dialling in at 9am**

Mike Ritchie is the Managing Director of MRA Consulting Group. He is an expert in waste management, resource recovery and technology, climate change, carbon and sustainable development, and has a vision for the future that is both environmentally sustainable and economically rational. Mike will provide a presentation on the current state of play for resource recovery and circular economy in NSW and how this applies to RAMJO member councils, implementing FOGO, how LGAs can better meet resource recovery targets, and the new Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy. We have allowed 15 minutes towards the end of the session for Q&A.

Recommendation:

That the Board **note** the presentation by Mike Ritchie.

Agenda Item 7 – Guest Presenter – Joseph Rahme - NSW Telco Authority – **Joseph dialling in at 10am**

BLURB.

Recommendation:

That the Board **note** the presentation by Joseph Rahme.

Agenda Item 8 – Guest Presenter – Jill Ludford – Murrumbidgee Local Health District **Jill dialling in at 10.20 – only has 10.20-10.30am**

Jill Ludford is the CEO of Murrumbidgee Local Health District.

Recommendation:

That the Board **note** the presentation by Jill Ludford.

Agenda Item 9 – Cost Sharing Update: RAMJO and the FWJO

The cost sharing relationship has concluded, with the passing of the FWJO Executive Officer delegations from Ms Bridgett Leopold to the General Manager of Broken Hill Shire Council Jay Nankivell at an extraordinary meeting 14th July 2021.

The Board of the FWJO passed an additional motion expressing their thanks for the hard work of Ms Bridgett Leopold and Ms Bidy De La Haye. The General Managers group recommend that the board also pass a similar motion.

Recommendation:

That the Board **note** the conclusion of the cost sharing relationship between RAMJO and the FWJO.

That the Board the RAMJO Board **note** their appreciation for the hard work of Ms Bridgett Leopold and Ms Bidy De La Haye with the FWJO partnership.

Agenda Item 10 – Governance and Finance

10.1: Q3 2020-2021 Budget Report

Please find at **Attachment B** a spreadsheet documenting Q4 spend to date against budgeted items for FY2020-2021.

Note that this is an interim finance report, further year-end adjustments and processing will be completed before the financial statements are audited.

Relating to income:

- RAMJO budgeted to receive \$505,142, but \$ 674,607 has been received.
- Of this number:

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- \$217,144 is from Membership Fees
- \$45,000 from energy 'service delivery', \$43,354 unbudgeted addition DPIE grant funding for writing the energy strategy.
- \$175,000 from 'service delivery' - Adverse Event Management Plans for 9 Councils (including \$25,000 unbudgeted for Armidale)
- \$61,000 from LGP and PA procurement rebate, \$11,000 higher than budgeted.
- \$17,499 from 5% Project Administration fee for the Waste Coordinator funds
- \$91,206 charged to the FWJO for the cost sharing arrangement, including recharging costs incurred by RAMJO on their behalf. This was unbudgeted.

In addition, the \$150k from OLG NSW received in late June has not been recognized, it is currently on the balance sheet as unearned income in advance.

Relating to expenses:

- RAMJO budgeted to spend \$420,950, and spent \$444,135 at the end of Q4.
- Significant underspends relate to:
 - Website maintenance & social media of nearly \$9,000 (via employment of media officer with OLG grant)
- Significant overspends :
 - Water Committee Media and Marketing (\$12,008), due to Troy Grant's regional visit and in supporting the Water paper.
 - Provision for Consultancy (\$19,000) – incurred supporting the FWJO support and have be recovered in the FWJO recovery income line above.
 - Office Manager Costs (\$53,835) – which is a journal issue and must be recovered from OLG capacity building grants (will be completed as part of financial year end processing).

As part of the financial statement process, RAMJO intends to set up reserves in equity to track 'unrestricted internal cash' year on year.

Recommendation:

- That the RAMJO Board **receive** and **note** the Q4 2020-2021 budget variance report.

10.2 Interim Executive Officer arrangements

Due to time constraints with the resignation of Ms Bridgett Leopold, the unknown outcome of the Joint Organisation review and the impact of this on the ongoing financial sustainability of RAMJO, an expression of interest process was undertaken within existing RAMJO staff for a six month contract. Consultation was undertaken with the GM Executive, and AlburyCity's Human Resources department to ensure the process was appropriate. After reviewing applications and interviewing two staff, Nicola Gleeson Coopes was appointed as Interim Executive Officer for a period of six months. Following the 6 month period, the new Board will be able to make an informed decision following the release of the joint organisation review as to how they would like to resource RAMJO.

Nicola's move to the EO role left the Office Manager position vacant. Following a series of discussions, it was determined that an internal EOI would be advertised amongst Member Councils to allow for a 6-month secondment. A skills and resourcing gap analysis indicated a combination of office management, project/program management and stakeholder management was required, with the successful applicant preferably having experience in two or more of these areas. A Position Description for this role was developed and circulated 19th July 2021 to General Managers. The General Managers were then able to circulate the Position Description through their councils at their discretion.

Three staff were interviewed, and the successful applicant for the Project and Stakeholder Management role was Ms Kirstie Muntz from AlburyCity.

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Item 10.3 considers the workplan for the joint organisation during the next six months, discussing the transition period.

Recommendation:

That the Board **approve** the Interim Executive Officer appointment for six months.

That the Board **note** the 6-month secondment EOI opportunity circulated to all Member Councils

10.3 RAMJO Workplan during transition

Attachments C and C1 go through the proposed workplan of the RAMJO team over the next six months, including the caretaker period that councils will be in. Joint organisations do not go into caretaker. The focus is on completing RAMJO's outstanding existing projects, undertaking the financial statements and performance statement, getting ready for the incoming Board, and beginning the development process for the revised Statement of Regional Priorities.

Recommendation:

That the Board **note** the RAMJO work plan during the council caretaker period and the months until year end.

10.4 End of year reporting to OLG

Attachment D has the report sent to OLG re: the acquittal of the capacity building funds.

Project	Budget	Spent at 30/06/21	Remaining
Energy	\$ 83,000	\$74,432	\$8,568
Procurement	\$ 36,400	\$38,040	(\$1,640)
Digital Connectivity / Grants Officer	\$ 30,600	\$37,722	(\$7,122)
TOTAL	\$150,000	\$150,194	(\$194)

Recommendation:

That the Board **note** the reporting to OLG for the final acquittal of the OLG Capacity Building Grant funds for the 2020-2021 year.

Agenda Item 11 – Office of Local Government Update

11 .1 Office of Local Government Update

Mr Cameron Templeton will provide a verbal update from the Office of Local Government.

Recommendation:

That the Board **note** the briefing from the Office of Local Government.

11 .2 Smart Places funding opportunity – **Simon Kalinowski dialling in at 11am**

Mr Cameron Templeton will provide a summary of the Smart Places funding stream and the potential for RAMJO to apply for this opportunity. Mr Simon Kalinowski from Mandalay will discuss the options for councils.

Recommendation:

That the Board **discuss** the Smart Places funding.

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Agenda Item 12 – Joint Organisation Review

Ms Nicola Gleeson Coopes will provide an analysis of the results of the Joint Organisation Review if that has been received by the Board meeting date. The State Government's response will not have been made public by the meeting date.

Recommendation:

That the Board **note** the results of the Joint Organisation Review.

Agenda Item 13 – Board Farewell to Ms Bridgett Leopold – **Bridget dialling in at 11.10am**

Ms Bridgett Leopold, RAMJO Executive Officer, concluded at RAMJO Friday 16th July 2021. The Board thanks her for all that RAMJO has accomplished under her leadership in the last two and half years.

Recommendation:

That the Board **note** their appreciation for Ms. Bridgett Leopold and the many achievements RAMJO has accomplished due to her hard work and vision for the organisation.

Item 14 – Strategic priorities update

Verbal updates on each strategic update to be given in the meeting.

14.1: Cr. Chris Bilkey: Water

14.2 John Scarce: Digital Connectivity

14.3: George Cowan: Energy Security

14.4: David Webb: Regional Freight Transport Plan

14.5: Nicola Gleeson Coopes: Best Practice in Aggregated Procurement (BPAP)

14.6: Phil Stone & John Scarce: Health

Recommendation:

That the RAMJO Board **note** the strategic priorities updates.

Agenda Item 15 – Project Updates

Written updates on each project currently being managed by RAMJO provided as attachments.

15.1: Contaminated Lands Management – **Attachment E**

15.2: Riverina Waste Group & Murray Waste Group – **Attachment F**

15.3: Energy Audits and Strategy – verbal update

Recommendation:

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

Agenda Item 16 – Operational Matters

16.1 – General Managers Group Meeting Minutes

The General Managers met on Friday 23rd July 2021, minutes can be found at **Attachment G**.

16.2 End of Year Financial Reporting: GPFS & Audit

The audit of RAMJO’s financial statements is booked the week 13th September. This year RAMJO will be preparing the financial statements in house, and liaising directly with the auditor. The Interim Executive Officer is a chartered accountant with experience in local government audit and it is not expected this will pose any issues.

16.3 – RAMJO Grant Funding Submissions

At the April meeting, RAMJO detailed the grant submissions for the Murray Darling Basin Economic Development Program under the following categories, Waste, Energy, Water/Digital Connectivity. The initial round of these successful grants has been announced, and RAMJO has not been successful so far. Feedback received is that unsuccessful grants have not yet been announced, allowing for some optimism until otherwise notified.

16.4 – JO Chairs Meeting Minutes

The JO Chairs met online on 5th August 2021. A copy of the minutes is at **Attachment H**.

Recommendation:

That the RAMJO Board **note** the operational updates.

Agenda Item 17 – General Business

- Riverina Murray REOC Covid-19 Multi-agency preparation (*late addition*)
- Government eplanning portal (*late addition*)- – **Attachment I – From Chris Bilkey**

Suggested Motion

That:

- 1) RAMJO notes the intent of the E-Planning Portal via various media releases in relation to references made in “saving time for applicants” “Saving time for Councils” and “providing a streamlined digital service” from Minister for Planning (Rob Stokes), and Minister for Digital/Minister for Customer Service (Victor Dominello).
- 2) RAMJO notes that the objectives and intent of the E Planning Portal system formed part of the NSW State Governments Planning Reform agenda are not meeting the needs of regional NSW Councils or Communities for reasons outlined in this brief.
- 3) RAMJO support the recommendation to request an immediate independent review in relation to the NSW government’s E Planning Portal System, against the objections (improved functionality and improved timeliness) of the governments planning reform agenda and objective of the planning portal itself in a regional NSW context.

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- NSW elections 4th December 2021
- \$150k capacity building funds 2021-2023 – [Nicola's table](#) :

Priority area	Project	Impact	Capacity building
Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart places - Cameron Templeton will discuss at board meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBA 	Cameron to clarify
Shared services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map across RAMJO footprint skill gaps and opportunities within councils • Review possible models for shared resources in skill gap areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to attract candidates improved with greater remit / experience • Potential lower cost for councils (e.g. building permit numbers) • Knowledge across region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of area • Opportunities • Council resources • JO strengthen region
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and statistic support for Health position paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy • Funding opportunities • Link with State govt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the region • Ability to use for grant funding
Service planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial sustainability of member councils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councils have understanding of service levels and financial impacts • Sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detail of councils' activities and priorities • Regional possibilities • Financial impacts for councils
Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revolving energy fund scoping and legal advice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to continue with energy projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal framework for energy projects
Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upskilling local suppliers to work with councils • Procurement manual and templates developed • Legal advice for standard contracts • Procurement project officer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost savings to councils • Regional local economic benefit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depth to regional procurement

Looking for a recommendation delegating to the GM forum to determine by 30 August.

A call for General Business items will be made by the Chair.

Next meeting Wednesday 10th November 2021 in Albury.

MEETING CLOSE