

BOARD MEETING

25 February 2022

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|------------------------|--|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| MEETING: | RAMJO Board Meeting | | |
| DATE: | Friday 25 th February 2022 | | |
| TIME: | 9:30am – 12:30pm | | |
| LOCATION: | Jerilderie | | |
| CHAIR: | TBA | | |
| ZOOM: | https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83376083792?pwd=SzdabHNkRFpDZVEzTitYN3lwZUpjZz09 Meeting ID: 833 7608 3792 Passcode: 579303 | | |
| ATTENDEES: | Council / Organisation | Voting Member | Non-Voting Member |
| | Albury City Council | Cr. Kylie King | 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. Peta Betts | Mr. Philip Stone |
| | Federation Council | Cr. Pat Bourke | Mr. Adrian Butler |
| | Griffith City Council | Cr. Doug Curran | Mr. Brett Stonestreet |
| | Hay Shire Council | Cr. Carol Oataway | Mr. David Webb |
| | Leeton Shire Council | Cr. Tony Reneker | 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 Nicola Gleeson Coopes –Executive Officer E: Nicola.GleesonCoopes@alburycity.nsw.gov.au M: 0408 498 534 | | |
| OTHER ATTENDEES | Name | Organisation | Role |
| | Ms Ally Dench | Office of Local Government | Executive Director |

MEETING AGENDA

| Item | Topic | Time |
|------|--|-------|
| | OPENING | 9:30 |
| 1 | Election of Chair for Initial Stage of meeting | 9.31 |
| 2 | Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledgement of traditional custodians | 9:35 |
| 3 | Apologies and Leave of Absence | 9:36 |
| 4 | Declaration of Items of Pecuniary or Other Interest – Board Members / Designated Persons | 9:37 |
| 5 | Election of RAMJO Chair | 9.38 |
| 6 | Annual reimbursement to Chairperson | 9.40 |
| 7 | Election of RAMJO Deputy Chair | 9.45 |
| 8 | Matters arising from previous Board meetings | 9:50 |
| 9 | Minutes from previous Board meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19 November 2021 | 9:55 |
| 10 | Introduction to Joint Organisations and RAMJO | 9:56 |
| | BREAK | 10:30 |
| 11 | OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UPDATE Mr. Cameron Templeton: Office of Local Government Update | 10:45 |
| 12 | Update - Regional NSW Mr Giles Butler : Director Riverina Murray of Regional NSW | 10.50 |
| 13 | Guest Presenter –Ally Dench - Office of Local Government | 11:00 |
| 14 | GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14.1 Nicola Gleeson Coopes: Q2 2021-2022 Budget Report 14.2 Nicola Gleeson Coopes: JO Review report and discussion 14.3 Nicola Gleeson Coopes: Revised 2021-2022 forecast – Attachment D, Attachment E 14.4 Nicola Gleeson Coopes: Member Fee guidance for local government budgets 14.5 Nicola Gleeson Coopes : Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee | 11:15 |
| 15 | UPDATE ON STRATEGIC PRIORITIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15.1 Sub Groups review and summary 15.2 Cr. Chris Bilkey: Water Sub-Committee Update 15.3 Phil Stone: Digital Connectivity Sub-Committee Update 15.4 George Cowan: Energy Security Sub-Committee 15.5 David Webb: Regional Freight Transport Plan 15.6 John Scarce: Health Committee Update 15.7 Revised Regional Strategic Priorities | 11:35 |

BOARD MEETING

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| Item | Topic | Time |
|---------------|--|-------|
| 16 | ADVOCACY 16.1 Local Councils' Domestic Waste Charges Review 16.2 IPART rates peg for 2022-2023 16.3 Planning regime changes 16.4 One Basin CRC 16.5 Electric Vehicle charging stations 16.6 Southern Lights | 11:55 |
| 17 | PROJECT UPDATES – information Only <i>Written reports, taken as read.</i> 17.1 Matthew Dudley: Contaminated Land Management 17.2 Kirstie Muntz and Andrea Baldwin: Regional Waste Kerbside Contract & Waste Groups 17.3 Nicola Gleeson Coopes : Energy Audit and Strategy 17.4 Karina Ewer : Shared Services | 12:05 |
| 18 | OPERATIONAL MATTERS 18.1 General Managers and Engineers group minutes 18.2 Board dates and locations for 2022 | 12:15 |
| 19 | GENERAL BUSINESS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Call for general business | 12:20 |
| Meeting Close | | 12:30 |

Agenda Item 1 – Election of Chair for Initial Stage of meeting

The position of RAMJO Chairperson is currently vacant. The RAMJO Returning Officer is the Executive Officer Nicola Gleeson Coopes.

The Returning Officer will invite nominations for the position of Chair to chair this meeting of RAMJO. Two or more mayors of member councils may nominate a voting representative of the joint organisation board who is a mayor.

There are three methods of voting:

- open voting (show of hands);
- ordinary ballot (secret ballot); and
- preferential ballot.

Recommendation:

- That nominations for the position of Chairperson for this meeting be accepted.
- That in the event of there being more than one nominee, the RAMJO Board determine by resolution, the method by which the election be conducted being: preferential ballot, ordinary ballot or open voting.
- That the Returning Officer conduct the election for the position of Chairperson for this meeting.

Agenda Item 2 – Welcome

Meeting Chair to welcome attendees and acknowledgement of country. Specific welcome is extended to new RAMJO board members :

- Cr Peta Betts, Mayor Edward River
- Cr Doug Curran, Mayor Griffith
- Cr Kylie King, Mayor Albury City
- Cr Carol Oataway, Mayor Hay Shire
- Cr Tony Reneker, Mayor Leeton Shire

Agenda Item 3 – Apologies and Leave of Absence

Apologies:

Recommendation:

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

Agenda Item 4 – Declaration of Items of Pecuniary or Other Interest – Board Members / Designated Persons

Agenda Item 5 – Election of a new Chair

The Executive Officer will act as the Returning Officer, and will announce the names of the nominees, who must accept their nomination.

There are three methods of voting:

- open voting (show of hands);
- ordinary ballot (secret ballot); and
- preferential ballot.

Recommendation:

- That nominations for the position of Chairperson be accepted.
- That in the event of there being more than one nominee, the RAMJO Board determine by resolution, the method by which the election be conducted being: preferential ballot, ordinary ballot or open voting.
- That the Returning Officer conduct the election for the position of Chairperson.
- That the Chairperson hold office for a two-year period through to February 2024

The newly elected Chair will take the chair for the remainder of the meeting.

Agenda Item 6 – Annual reimbursement to Chairperson

Whilst there is no specific provision in the Joint Organisation legislation to make an annual payment to the Chairperson, up to now RAMJO has believed that an annual remuneration is appropriate, based on the additional workload placed on the Chairperson over and above their role as a Mayor, and in line with the legislative provisions that already apply to Mayors and County Council Chairpersons. The General Managers reviewed these payments at the January 2022 meeting and recommended to the Board that the payment remain \$10,000 per annum, paid monthly for the term of the two year Chairperson term. There remain no payment to the Deputy Chair.

Recommendation :

That the Board **adopt** that the annual remuneration for the Chairperson position is \$10,000 per annum, paid monthly for term of the two year Chairperson term. There remain no payment to the Deputy Chair.

Agenda Item 7 – Election of a Deputy Chair

The Executive Officer will act as the Returning Officer, and will announce the names of the nominees, who must accept their nomination.

There are three methods of voting:

- open voting (show of hands);
- ordinary ballot (secret ballot); and
- preferential ballot.

Recommendation:

- That nominations for the position of Deputy Chairperson be accepted.
- That in the event of there being more than one nominee, the RAMJO Board determine by resolution, the method by which the election be conducted being: preferential ballot, ordinary ballot or open voting.
- That the Returning Officer conduct the election for the position of Deputy Chairperson.
- That the Deputy Chairperson hold office for a two-year period through to February 2024

Agenda Item 8 – 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 to write in support of a feasibility study for Lake Coolah / Lake Mejum, to be sent to : <ul style="list-style-type: none">o Deputy Prime Minister, Barnaby Joyceo Deputy Premier NSW, Paul Tooleo Minister for the Environment, Sussan Ley,o Chair National Water Grid Authority, Christopher Lyncho NSW Water Minister, Melinda Paveyo Federal Water Minister, Keith Pitto Commonwealth Water Holder, Jody Swirepiko Chair of the Murray Darling Basin Authority, Air Chief Marshal Sir Angus Houston With a copy to any other agencies that emerge as relevant stakeholders. | IN PROGRESS |

Recommendation:

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

Agenda Item 9 – Minutes of 19 November 2021

- Draft Minutes of 19 November 2021 – **Attachment A**

Recommendation:

That the minutes of the RAMJO Board Meeting held 19 November 2021 be received and the recommendations therein be adopted.

Agenda Item 10 – RAMJO and Joint Organisations introduction

Nicola Gleeson Coopes will give an overview of joint organisations and RAMJO's structure and work.

Recommendation:

That the Board **note** the presentation by Nicola Gleeson Coopes.

Agenda Item 11 – 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.

Agenda Item 12 – Presentation – Regional NSW

Giles Butler, Director Riverina Murray of Regional NSW will provide a verbal update.

Recommendation:

That the Board **note** the presentation by Giles Butler.

Agenda Item 13 – Guest Presenter – Ally Dench - Office of Local Government

Ally Dench is the Executive Director Local Government at the Office of Local Government.

Recommendation:

That the Board **note** the presentation by Ally Dench.

Agenda Item 14 – Governance and Finance

14.1: Quarterly Budget vs Spend Review Q2 2021-2022

Please find at **Attachment B** a spreadsheet documenting Q2 spend to date against budgeted items for FY2021-2022. As in previous quarter, the format has been changed slightly, to introduce a year to date cycled budget column, and a variance column against this cycled budget. The final two columns are the same, the full year budget, and a variance column for this full year budget against year to date actuals. No further changes will be made until the new budget with the new board. The budget has been cycled in line with actuals where this is known, otherwise quarterly evenly.

Relating to income:

- RAMJO budgeted to receive \$ 226,711 year to date, and \$ 325,199 has been received. This is due to the timing of receiving last year's Procurement Australia Rebate (\$61,325), and the unbudgeted Energy audit and strategy grant. a material variance.
- RAMJO has not recognised the \$150k from OLG NSW received in late June 2021 for capacity building funds yet, it is currently on the balance sheet as unearned income in advance.

Relating to expenses:

- RAMJO budgeted to spend \$296,938 year to date, and spent \$178,743 at the end of Q2.
- This variance is due to:
 - Salary and wages are \$99,752 less than budget, due to the resignation of the Executive Officer, and the office manager acting in this role at a lower rate, part time. Additionally, there has been no invoice from Albury City for the Stakeholder and Project Manager year to date. There will be an overall underspend in salaries due to this.
 - Timing differences due to even cycling, Q1 and Q2 have been quiet due to COVID meaning meetings are online.

Recommendation:

That the RAMJO Board **note** the 2021-2022 Q2 budget versus spend report.

14.2: JO Review report and discussion

The JO review was released at the start of December 2021, and a summary from RAMJO's perspective is found at **Appendix C**.

The JO network continues to advocate on this issue, especially around funding implications. The JO review report was adopted by the previous Minister, the new Minister is revisiting, and submissions are encouraged.

Recommendation:

That the RAMJO Board **receive** and **note** the Joint Organisation Review summary.

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14.3: Revised 2021-2022 forecast

On the basis of the previous two agenda items, a discussion of RAMJO's proposed revised end of year forecast is attached at **Attachment D**, with the detailed reforecast at **Attachment E**. The original budget had a deficit position of (\$252,872). This reforecast is currently a deficit of (\$76,890), before any further staffing changes.

The General Managers supported a new admin hire as requested in the report attached, continuing to support Southern Lights (separate agenda item 13.5), Increased consultancy for the Regional Strategic Priorities.

There is no current provision to meet ARIC requirements (Agenda item 14.5).

Recommendation:

That the Board **approve** the revised 2021-2022 RAMJO General Fund forecast, and the revision of the Office Manager position to a two year fixed term position shared with the Waste project.

14.4: Member Fee guidance for local government budgets

As part of RAMJO's annual budget process, guidance on member subscription fees for the upcoming financial year should be provided to the Board in the February meeting of each year, to support member council budgeting. The full operational budget is brought to the Board for endorsement at its April meeting. It is proposed that fees be in line with 2021-2022 financial year, with any increase within the rate cap of 0.7%.

Recommendation:

That the Board **notes** the proposed fees for member councils for 2022-2023, for council budget purposes.

14.5: Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee

All RAMJO councils are currently compliant or working towards the changing Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) requirements.

JOs must appoint an ARIC from 4 June 2022, but this does not have to comply with the guidelines until 2027. JOs have until 2025 to establish a risk management framework and internal function. RAMJO has been following up the last submission made to OLG, and investigating options to be compliant through a shared committee with a member council.

Recommendation:

That the Board **notes** the upcoming requirements for RAMJO to have an Audit Risk and Improvement Committee.

Agenda Item 15 –Strategic priorities update

15.1: Sub Groups review and summary

As the strategic regional priorities will be reviewed after all councils have reviewed their Community Strategic Plans, RAMJO proposes that all sub group memberships remain the same– with the option of any new mayor to join or change groups as their interests and expertise lie.

Attachment F summarises Sub Groups, and seeks support for secretarial support for the groups move back to the host councils. Mr John Scarce will step down as the Chair of the Digital Connectivity sub committee, and Mr Phil Stone will take over this Chair.

Recommendation:

That the Board **endorse** the memberships and Chairs of strategic priority sub groups as they are, with the option of the new mayors joining groups they are interested in.

That the Board **endorse** the secretarial support for the sub groups moves back to the host council wherever practicable, and catering costs remain with RAMJO.

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15.2 Cr. Chris Bilkey: Water

The water sub group is reviewing and updating the RAMJO Water Position paper in line with NSW Water Strategy, ACCC report. Cr Chris Bilkey, Chair of the Water Sub Committee, the EO, and George Cowan met with the incoming Minister of Water and Lands Kevin Anderson MP to brief him on RAMJO's Water Position Paper. Steph Cooke MP also attended the meeting.

15.3 Phil Stone: Digital Connectivity

The grants with FSG are being followed up. Regional Connectivity Blackspot mapping rounds will open again soon.

15.4: George Cowan: Energy Security

There is a regional visit by Lisa Miller from DPIE and Simon Wright, the energy subject matter expert 21-23 February. The aims of these meetings is :

- To understand where each council is at with its energy thinking and actions.
- To understand respective needs in terms of direct support to accelerate transition to renewables.
- To explain potential approaches and turn DPIE's support into action plans over the next few months.

Progress on the regional strategy continues.

15.5: David Webb: Regional Freight Transport Plan

Engineers have met to revisit the revised regional Freight Priorities. Brad Ferris will be in touch to follow up any outstanding council reviews. These priorities will be mapped and collated and brought back to the next General Managers' meeting.

15.6 John Scarce: Health

The Health Sub Committee has not met since last Board meeting. Mapping is progressing on regional issues. Local MP Justin Clancy is now the Parliamentary Secretary for Health and has been open about his support for RAMJO.

15.7 Revised Regional Strategic Priorities

To progress the RAMJO new Regional Strategic Priorities, as most councils are not expecting significant changes with their CSPs, RAMJO should start a series of workshops with member councils and the RAMJO Board.

Recommendation:

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

Agenda Item 16 – Advocacy

16.1 Local Councils' Domestic Waste Charges Review

IPART is seeking feedback on a proposed 'benchmark' waste peg (similar to the rates peg), an annual report naming councils with increases greater than the peg, and standard pricing principles. Submissions are due by 29 April 2022.

Recommendation:

That the Board **delegate** the Domestic Waste Charges Review RAMJO submission to the General Managers.

16.2 IPART rates peg for 2022-2023

There is concern at the base level 0.7% rate peg for the 2022-2023 financial year. RAMJO is making a submission, Board to delegate to the General Managers for finalisation by the due date of 7 March 2022.

Recommendation:

That the Board **note** the IPART rate peg for RAMJO councils with concern, and **delegate** the RAMJO submission to the General Managers.

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16.3 Planning regime changes

There have been a handful of planning changes with very short timeframes, which RAMJO is concerned by, and is seeking further information on. These include *Significant Agricultural Land, Discussion Paper: A New Approach to Rezoning*, and *Infrastructure Contributions System's Reform Program*. The Planning Officers Working Group will review and recommend a response from RAMJO.

Recommendation:

That the Board **delegate** the RAMJO submission/s on recent Planning changes to the General Managers.

16.4 One Basin CRC

The ONE Basin CRC bid that RAMJO is a partner in has been successfully shortlisted for Stage 2 of the application process. There have been five other bids shortlisted (List is here: <https://business.gov.au/grants-and-programs/cooperative-research-centres-crc-grants>). The Stage 2 bid will be submitted before Feb 3 2022 and CRC Advisory Panel interview end of March.

Recommendation:

That the Board **note** the One Basin CRC bid update.

16.5 Electronic Vehicle charging stations

There is momentum and multiple funding streams related to Electronic Vehicles at the moment. The General Managers agreed there was value in working together at a RAMJO level. The Engineers working group will review and decide on RAMJO's action.

Recommendation:

That the Board **note** the Electronic Vehicle update.

16.6 Southern Lights

The next stage for the Southern Lights project is discussed at **Attachment G**, these recommendations were discussed and approved by the General Managers.

Recommendation:

That :

- RAMJO wind-back its involvement with Southern Lights to focus on the finalisation of the roll-out for the Member Councils and on addressing the performance issues which includes: Essential Energy Performance Reports, Public Lighting Code Reviews and Australian Energy Regulator Pricing Review.
- RAMJO continues to budget for contributions to expert consultant advice through Southern Lights, approximately \$5,000 per annum.
- Mr Brad Ferris, Deputy CEO Albury City remain the RAMJO delegate.

Recommendation:

That the Board **discuss** the advocacy items noted above.

Agenda Item 17 – Project Updates

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

- 17.1: Contaminated Lands Management – **Attachment H**
- 17.2: Riverina Waste Group & Murray Waste Group – **Attachment I**
- 17.3: Energy Audits and Strategy – verbal update
- 17.4: Karina Ewer : Shared Services– verbal update

Recommendation:

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

Agenda Item 18 – Operational Matters

- 18.1 – General Managers Group Meeting Minutes

The General Managers met on Friday 28th January 2022, minutes can be found at **Attachment J**.

- 18.2 – Murray Regional Tourism

Appendix K has the report from Ms Karina Ewer on the latest meeting of MRT, to be taken as read.

- 18.3 Board dates and locations for 2022

The full calendar is at **Attachment L**, proposal is summarised below:

MEETING DATES 2022

| GENERAL MANAGERS | | RAMJO BOARD |
|------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| Friday 28 January 2022 | | Friday 25 February 2022 |
| Friday 22 April 2022 | | Friday 13 May 2022 |
| Friday 22 July 2022 | | Friday 12 August 2022 |
| Friday 14 October 2022 | | Friday 11 November 2022 |

Extraordinary board meeting –to sign 2021/2022 financial statements, Thursday 13 October.

Recommendation:

That the RAMJO board **adopt** the meeting schedule for 2022.

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

Agenda Item 19 – General Business

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

BOARD MEETING

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Next meeting date to be confirmed at agenda item 18.3.

MEETING CLOSE