

BOARD MEETING AGENDA

17 May 2024 – Corowa

MEETING:	RAMJO Board Meeting		
DATE:	Friday 17 May 2024		
TIME:	9:30am – 1:00pm		
LOCATION:	Club Corowa – Ms. Birdie Room, 30 Betterment Parade, Corowa NSW		
CHAIR:	Cr. Patrick Bourke		
MICROSOFT TEAMS	Join the meeting now Meeting ID: 491 662 059 049 Passcode: B5oAY6		
ATTENDEES:	Council / Organisation	Voting Member	Non-Voting Member
	Albury City Council	Cr. Kylie King	Mr. Frank Zaknich
	Berrigan Shire Council	Cr. Julia Cornwell McKean	Mrs. Karina Ewer
	Carrathool Shire Council	Cr. Darryl Jardine	Mr. Rick Warren
	Edward River Council	Cr. Peta Betts	Mr. Gary Arnold
	Federation Council	Cr. Pat Bourke	Mr. Adrian Butler
	Griffith City Council	Cr. Doug Curran	Mr. Brett Stonestreet
	Hay Shire Council	Cr. Carol Oataway (online)	Mr. David Webb (online)
	Leeton Shire Council	Cr. Tony Reneker	Mrs. Jackie Kruger
	Murray River Council	Cr. Frank Crawley	Mr. Terry Dodds
	Murrumbidgee Council	Cr. Ruth McRae	Mr. John Scarce
	Narrandera Shire Council	Cr. Neville Kschenka	Mr. George Cowan
	Wentworth Shire Council		Cr. Daniel Linklater Mr. Ken Ross
	Office of Local Government		Mr. Cameron Templeton
	Dept. of Regional NSW		Mr. Giles Butler
RAMJO STAFF	Ms. Yvonne Lingua - Executive Officer		
	Ms. Carolyn Clancy - Office Manager		
OTHER ATTENDEES	Name	Role	
	Ms. Kalina Koloff	NSW Cross Border Commissioner	

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Item	Topic	Time
	OPENING	9:30
1	WELCOME Acknowledgement on Country	9:30
2	Apologies and Leave of Absence	9:31
3	Declaration of Items of Pecuniary or Other Interest – Board Members / Designated Persons	9:32
4	MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS: 23 February 2024 Board meeting – <i>Attachment A</i>	9:33
5	Matters and action items arising from previous Board meeting	9:34
6	GUEST SPEAKERS 6.1 Kalina Koloff – NSW Cross Border Commissioner	9:35
7	GOVERNANCE, FINANCE AND OPERATIONS 7.1 2023/2024 Q3 Budget Review – <i>Attachment B</i> 7.2 Draft 2024/2025 Operational Budget 7.2.1 <i>Attachment C</i> – Written report 7.2.2 <i>Attachment D</i> - Membership Fee scenarios 7.2.3 <i>Attachment E</i> - Budgeted Income v Expenditure 7.3 Audit Risk and Improvement Committee 7.3.1 <i>Attachment F</i> - Internal Audit Requirements 7.3.2 <i>Attachment G</i> – Agenda and minutes from recent meetings 7.4 Tabling of Draft Policies Round Two – <i>Attachment H</i> 7.5 Renewal of RAMJO Office Lease – <i>Attachment I</i> 7.6 Draft Minutes - General Managers Advisory Committee 19 April - <i>Attachment J</i>	10:15
BREAK		11:30
8	UPDATE ON STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 8.1 Progress and status of Sub-Committee's and working groups - <i>Attachment K</i> 8.2 Digital Connectivity Project – <i>Attachment L</i>	11:45
9	OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT 9.1 Mr. Cameron Templeton: Office of Local Government Update	12:00
10	REGIONAL NSW 10.1 Mr. Giles Butler: Department of Regional NSW Update	12:10
11	PROJECT UPDATES 11.1 Joint Organisation Net Zero Acceleration – <i>Attachment M</i> 11.2 Disaster Risk Reduction Fund – <i>Attachment N</i> 11.3 Regional Resource Recovery – <i>Attachment O</i>	12:20

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Item	Topic	Time
12	ADVOCACY 12.1 Updated primary water position paper – Attachment P 12.2 Living document – water advocacy priorities paper - <i>Attachment Q</i>	12:30
13	GENERAL BUSINESS 13.1 Call for general business by the Chair.	12:40
Meeting Close		1:00pm

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AGENDA ITEM 1 – WELCOME, ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Chair to welcome attendees and acknowledgement of country.

AGENDA ITEM 2 – APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

N/A

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

- Attendees to note any declarations.

AGENDA ITEM 4 – MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Tabling of Draft minutes of 23 February Board Meeting – *Attachment A*

Recommendation:

- That the minutes of the RAMJO Board Meeting held 23 February **received** and the recommendations therein **adopted**.

AGENDA ITEM 5 – MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS RAMJO BOARD MEETINGS

ACTIONS FROM 23 FEBRUARY MEETING

AGENDA ITEM	ACTION	STATUS
6.1 Presentations	Executive Officer to correspond with Rose Jackson's office regarding inclusion in critical stakeholder meetings regarding water buy-backs	COMPLETED Additional meeting had with Minister Jackson by Water sub-committee representatives
6.1 Presentations	RAMJO Councils to assess interest in reviewing ACC's MOU with Homes NSW	COMPLETED Raised with Housing sub-committee chair and relevant details sought from AlburyCity
8.1 Update on Strategic Priorities	RAMJO to prepare a submission to the IPART review of Councils financial model in NSW	COMPLETED IPART review ceased, replaced with parliamentary inquiry. A Submission has been made by RAMJO to the parliamentary inquiry. A federal inquiry is also being had.
12.1 Advocacy	Amend tabled buy-backs press release per boards feedback	COMPLETED Press release amended and distributed. Final release included on May Agenda
12.1 Advocacy	Liaise with Murray River Group of Councils (MRGC) on water buy-back advocacy matters	COMPLETED / ONGOING Contact made. RAMJO representatives (Berrigan and Murray River) attended a MRGC meeting. Collaboration may continue via digital connectivity project.

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FROM EARLIER BOARD MEETINGS	
ITEM	STATUS
<p>Invite Water NSW Director to RAMJO Water Security Sub Committee meeting to seek clarity on planned infrastructure changes.</p> <p>Update: This action will be advanced by the Water sub-committee under a new committee chair.</p>	<p>NOT COMPLETED</p> <p>May be more suited to the LWU Working Group</p>
<p>Board to consider coordinating a regional list of events so councils are not competing with each other for attendances.</p> <p>Update: Events will be noted in the RAMJO E-Bulletin. Councils Events and Communications teams are being liaised with here.</p>	<p>IN PROGRESS</p>
<p>Circulate for the boards review, the final draft of the updated Water Position Paper</p> <p>Update: This Action was discussed at the last Water sub-committee meeting held in December 2023, with required tweaks discussed and drafted.</p>	<p>IN PROGRESS</p>
<p>Item 10.1 - Invite Wentworth, Balranald and Wagga Councils to join RAMJO as Associate Members</p> <p>Update: Balranald are tabling the invite at their May council meeting. Wagga have been invited to join as Associate members.</p>	<p>IN PROGRESS</p>
<p>Recommendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That the RAMJO Board note the status of matters arising from previous Board meetings. 	

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AGENDA ITEM 6 – PRESENTATIONS

6.1 Ms Kalina Koloff – NSW Cross Border Commissioner

Recommendation:

- That the Board **note** the presentation by the NSW Cross Border Commissioner

AGENDA ITEM 7 – GOVERNANCE, FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

7.1 2023/2024 Q3 Budget Review

Attachment B contains the 2023/2024 FY Q3 budget review. Key points include:

Budgeted income for the quarter = \$13,248; Actual income for the quarter = \$14,931.19

Budgeted expenses for the quarter = \$106,578; Actual expenses for the quarter = \$97,624.12;

Recommendation:

- That the Board **note** the Q3 budget review update.

7.2 Draft 2024/2025 Operational Budget

Attachments C, D and E will help inform discussions around the 2024/2025 draft operational budget, which will need to be lodged with the Office of Local Government as endorsed by the Board, by 30 June 2024.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the board **endorse**:

- An increase to the base funding amount from \$3,100 from the previous year, to \$5,000
- The application of the 4.5% rate peg, an increase of 0.8% from the previous years 3.7% rate peg application
- The removal of the \$10,000 'flat rate fee' for member councils with populations below 5,000 people

Furthermore, it is recommended that the board **endorse**:

- Through the GMAC and Executive Officer, a continued focus on and commitment to addressing RAMJO's long-term financial sustainability challenges, including revenue diversification.

7.3 Audit Risk and Improvement Committee

Attachment F provides a written report on developments pertaining to internal audit requirements and a copy of the current Assurance Map. *Attachment G* provides a copy of the agenda for the May ARIC meeting and minutes from the 14 February meeting.

A verbal update will also be provided by the Executive Officer, highlighting:

- Advice received from the RAMJO ARIC chair regarding the Internal Audit function; and
- Broader Joint Organisation (JO) network collaboration with Brett Whitworth of the Office of Local Government (OLG) on making ARIC for JO's more fit for purpose.

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Recommendation:

- That the Board **note** the update provided on ARIC operations; and
- **Endorse** the Executive Officer pursuing the ARIC chairs advice in not conducting an Internal Audit in 2024/2025 FY, per an exemption provided in the regulations.

7.4 Tabling of Draft Policies - Round Two

Attachment H notes three (3) policies for the Boards endorsement and adoption, which have been reviewed by the GMAC. Going forward, more required policies that will help ensure RAMJO's overall compliance will be developed and shared with the GMAC for their review and input, prior to a request for adoption by the RAMJO board.

Round two of required policies are as follows, and are intended to:

1. *Credit Card Use Policy:* Provide a clear framework to enable the appropriate use of corporate credit cards issued to RAMJO staff, and where relevant and appropriately approved, other parties such as selected sub-contractors.
2. *Budgeting, Financial Reporting and Purchasing Policy:* Set out the approved guidelines for purchasing, budgeting and financial reporting by RAMJO staff.
3. *Privacy Management Plan:* The Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (PPIPA) provides for the protection of personal information and for the protection of the privacy of individuals. Section 33 of the PPIPA requires all councils to prepare a Privacy Management Plan. This plan has been prepared for the purpose of ensuring compliance under section 33 of the PPIPA.

Recommendation:

- That the Board **endorse** and **adopt** the second round of proposed RAMJO policies and plans.

7.5 Lease Renewal for RAMJO Office

Attachment I provides further information on RAMJO's current office lease agreement with AlburyCity.

Recommendation:

- That the Board **endorse** the execution of clause 7 of the current lease agreement, accepting the option to renew the lease for a further two (2) years, with the cost subject to a current market review by AlburyCity.

7.6 Draft Minutes – General Managers Advisory Committee Meeting – 19 April 2024

Attachment J notes the meeting minutes from the GMAC meeting held 19 April 2024.

Recommendation:

- That the Board **note** the draft minutes from General Managers Advisory Committee Meeting held 19 April.

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AGENDA ITEM 8 – STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

8.1 Progress and status of sub-committee's and working groups

Attachment K notes progress made and the current position of RAMJO's sub-committee's, which directly link to RAMJO's *Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities*.

Recommendation:

- That the Board **note** the update provided on RAMJO sub-committees and working groups

8.2 Digital Connect Project

Attachment L shares preliminary ideas and developments had on a proposed major Digital Connectivity project, aiming to leverage off-of programs aimed at mitigating and managing anticipated negative socio-economic impacts as a result of voluntary water buy-back purchases. The attachment also includes a draft advocacy position paper between the Murray River Group of Councils, Berrigan Shire and Murray River Shire councils around the *Water Amendment (Restoring our Rivers) Act 2024*.

Recommendation:

1. That the Board take **note** of and **endorse** the pursual of preliminary project scoping for a major Digital Connectivity project, funded fully or in part by proposed *Water Amendment (Restoring Our Rivers) Bill 2023* programs, aimed at mitigating and managing anticipated negative socio-economic impacts, as a result of voluntary water buy-back purchases.

AGENDA ITEM 9 – OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UPDATE

9.1 Mr Cameron Templeton, Council Engagement Manager - Riverina and Far South-West will give an update on the work of the Office of Local Government.

Recommendation:

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

AGENDA ITEM 10 – REGIONAL NSW UPDATE

10.1 Mr Giles Butler Director - Riverina Murray, Regional Development will provide an update on the work of the Department of Regional NSW.

Recommendation:

- That the Board **note** the briefing by the Dept. of Regional NSW.

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AGENDA ITEM 11 – PROJECT UPDATES

11.1 Joint Organisation Net Zero Acceleration (JONZA)

Attachment M provides an update on the current status of the JONZA project, which is also the vehicle for advancing RAMJO's broader Energy Security and Affordability priorities.

11.2 Disaster Risk Reduction Fund (DRRF) Project

Attachment N provides an update on the current position of the DRRF project.

11.3 Regional Resource Recovery Projects

Attachment O provides an update on the current position of the Regional Resource Recovery Projects, run by AlburyCity's Regional Resource Recovery team.

Recommendations:

Energy and JONZA:

- It is recommended that the board **note** this report;
- **Endorse** RAMJO applying for the second round of funding from JONZA program; and
- **Endorse** a review and update of the RAMJO Regional Energy Strategic Plan to ensure alignment with JONZA 2.0.

Other projects:

- That the Board **note** the updates provided on current RAMJO projects.

AGENDA ITEM 12 – ADVOCACY

12.1 Updated primary water position paper

Attachment P notes the final, updated version of the primary water position paper, seeking the boards endorsement to adopt the paper, including recent amendments to the Executive Summary and inclusion of point 3e, per tracked changes.

Recommendation:

- That the board **endorse** and **adopt** the updated position paper, aiding RAMJO's advocacy pursuits in this space.

12.2 Live advocacy document – Up-to-date water priorities paper

Attachment Q notes the most recent and up-to-date, water priorities paper, reflecting advocacy priorities around the Water Amendment (Restoring our Rivers) Act 2023.

Recommendation:

- That the board **note** the most recent and up-to-date, water priorities paper.

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AGENDA ITEM 13 – GENERAL BUSINESS

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

13.1 Murray Regional Tourism – Board Vacancy

As at 13 May, no nominations have been received by RAMJO representative to sit on the Murray Regional Tourism Board.

MEETING CLOSE

