

MINUTES: BOARD MEETING

23 February 2024 – Albury

MEETING:	RAMJO Board Meeting		
DATE:	Friday 23 February 2024		
TIME:	9:30am – 1:00pm		
LOCATION:	Albury City Council – Robert Brown Room		
CHAIR:	Cr. Patrick Bourke		
ZOOM:	Join Zoom Meeting https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81473412851?pwd=b2r4Snbt2e3mZoseHKugdkaV7zIYBL.1 Meeting ID: 814 7341 2851 Passcode: 721608		
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 (apology)	Mr. Rick Warren (online)
	Edward River Council	Cr. Peta Betts	Mr. Philip Stone (apology)
	Federation Council	Cr. Pat Bourke	Mr. Adrian Butler (apology)
	Griffith City Council	Cr. Doug Curran	Mr. Brett Stonestreet
	Hay Shire Council	Cr. Lionel Garner (online)	Mr. David Webb (online)
	Leeton Shire Council	Cr. Tony Reneker (online)	Mrs. Jackie Kruger (online)
	Murray River Council	Cr. Frank Crawley	Mr. Terry Dodds (apology)
	Murrumbidgee Council	Cr. Ruth McRae	Mr. John Scarce
	Narrandera Shire Council	Cr. Neville Kschenka	Mr. George Cowan
	Wentworth Shire Council		Cr. Daniel Linklater (could not join) Mr. Ken Ross (could not join)
	Office of Local Government		Mr. Cameron Templeton
	Regional NSW		Mr. Giles Butler
RAMJO STAFF	Ms. Yvonne Lingua - Executive Officer		
	Ms. Carolyn Clancy - Office Manager		
OTHER ATTENDEES	Name		Role
	The Hon. Rose Jackson MLC	NSW Minister for Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth and the North Coast	
	Mrs. Helen Dalton	Independent Member for Murray	

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MEETING AGENDA

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 MEETING: 10 November 2023 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 Mrs. Rose Jackson MLC - NSW Minister for Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth and the North Coast – <i>Attachment B</i> 6.2 Mrs. Helen Dalton - Independent Member for Murray	9:35
7	GOVERNANCE, FINANCE AND OPERATIONS 7.1 2023/2024 Q2 Budget Review – <i>Attachment C</i> 7.2 Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee – <i>Attachment D</i> 7.3 Tabling of Draft Policies – <i>Attachment E</i> 7.4 Update on Regional Resource Recovery Model – <i>Attachment F</i> 7.5 Terms of Reference for General Managers Advisory Committee – <i>Attachment G</i> 7.6 Draft Minutes - General Managers Advisory Committee 2 Feb - <i>Attachment H</i>	10:30
	BREAK	11:30
8	UPDATE ON STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 8.1 Progress and status of Sub-Committee's – <i>Attachment I</i> 8.2 RAMJO Strategic Development – Institute for Sustainable Futures	11:40
9	OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT 9.1 Mr. Cameron Templeton: Office of Local Government Update	11:50
10	REGIONAL NSW 10.1 Mr. Giles Butler: Department of Regional NSW Update	12:00
11	PROJECT UPDATES 11.1 Joint Organisation Net Zero Acceleration – <i>Attachment J</i> 11.2 Disaster Risk Reduction Fund – <i>Attachment K</i> 11.3 Regional Resource Recovery – <i>Attachment L</i>	12:10
12	ADVOCACY 12.1 Proposal for increased advocacy on water buy-backs - <i>Attachment M</i> 12.2 Quarter 2 and current update on advocacy advancements - <i>Attachment N</i>	12:20
13	GENERAL BUSINESS 13.1 Call for general business by the Chair.	12:30
	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

Apologies: Cr. Carol Oataway (represented by Deputy Mayor Lionel Garner), Mr. Terry Dodds, Mr. Phil Stone, Mr. Darryl Jardine and Mr. Adrian Butler are apologies.

Recommendation: That apologies be **accepted** and that leave of absence be granted.

Moved: Edward River / Seconded: Murrumbidgee
Carried

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

Attendees to note any declarations.

- Albury noted an interest in Agenda item 7.4 - Renewal of the Regional Resource Recovery Model.

Recommendation: That Albury's interest in Item 7.4 be **noted**.

Moved: Griffith / Seconded: Murrumbidgee
Carried

AGENDA ITEM 4 – MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Tabling of Draft minutes of 10 November Board Meeting – *Attachment A*

Recommendation: That the minutes of the RAMJO Board Meeting held 10 November 2023 be **received** and the recommendations therein **adopted**.

Moved: Narrandera / Seconded: Edward River
Carried

AGENDA ITEM 5 – MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS RAMJO BOARD MEETINGS

ITEM	STATUS
Invite Water NSW Director to RAMJO Water Security Sub Committee meeting to seek clarity on planned infrastructure changes. Update: This action will be advanced by the Water sub-committee under a new committee chair.	NOT COMPLETED
Board to consider coordinating a regional list of events so councils are not competing with each other for attendances. Update: Events will be noted in the RAMJO E-Bulletin. Councils Events and Communications teams are being liaised with here.	IN PROGRESS
Circulate for the boards review, the final draft of the updated Water Position Paper Update: This Action was discussed at the last Water sub-committee meeting held in December 2023, with required tweaks discussed and drafted.	IN PROGRESS
Item 7.1 - Request a copy of the Regional Digital Connectivity Programs presentation and distribute	IN PROGRESS

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Update: Emails and voicemails have been left requesting a copy of the presentation.	
Item 7.2 - Request a copy of and circulate to members, the Annual State of the Region's Economic Dataset Presentation and query member councils' access to Profile ID datasets	COMPLETE
Item 10.1 - Invite Wentworth, Balranald and Wagga Councils to join RAMJO as Associate Members Update: Wentworth have accepted the invitation. No response yet from Balranald, EO working with our OLG representative to advance this. EO working with the Chair on progressing Wagga membership.	IN PROGRESS
Item 14.2 - Purchase thank-you gifts from the RAMJO board for Cr. Matt Hannan and Cr. Chris Bilkey.	COMPLETE

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

Carried

AGENDA ITEM 6 – PRESENTATIONS

6.1 The Hon. Rose Jackson MLC - NSW Minister for Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth and the North Coast spoke on various topics including social and affordable housing / key worker housing for highly skilled professionals (including police and teacher housing), mental health and water buybacks.

ACTION: Executive Officer to correspond with Rose Jackson's office regarding inclusion in critical stakeholder meetings

ACTION: RAMJO Councils to assess interest in reviewing ACC's MOU with Homes NSW

6.2 Mrs. Helen Dalton – Independent Member for Murray spoke on current approach to water buybacks by the Federal Government and water allocation.

Recommendation: That the Board **note** the presentations by Minister Jackson and Helen Dalton.

Moved: Edward River / Seconded: Murrumbidgee

Carried

AGENDA ITEM 7 – GOVERNANCE, FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

7.1 2023/2024 Q2 Budget Review

Attachment C contains the 2023/2024 FY Q2 budget review. Key points include:

Budgeted income for the quarter = \$275,432.00; Actual income for the quarter = \$58,244.06

Budgeted expenses for the quarter = \$237,356.00; Actual expenses for the quarter = \$87,417.53

Work continues on strengthening RAMJO's internal financial processes, including setting up tracking categories to better differentiate between grant funds tied to projects and operational funds. This is evidenced by the addition of Project Funding streams at the bottom of the Q2 report, however, note that not all projects are listed yet and budgets for each project have not yet been uploaded. The ARIC are aware of and help to oversee the work being undertaken here, and agree that there needs to be a focus on improving our internal system in this space.

Recommendation: That the Board **note** the Q2 budget review update.

Moved: Murrumbidgee / Seconded: Albury

Carried

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7.2 Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee

Attachment D notes the ARIC agenda for the February 2024 meeting and minutes from the November 2023 meeting.

The GMAC moved at its February 2024 meeting to help ensure increased RAMJO board participation at ARIC meetings going forward, with Adrian Butler attending the last meeting held on 14 February.

Work to date includes development of a RAMJO Risk Register and Assurance Map, with the ARIC aiming to keep RAMJO's internal audit workload as minimal as possible by implementing a range of satisfactory oversight mechanisms that feed into to the risk register.

Recommendation: That the Board **note** the update provided regarding RAMJO's ARIC.

Moved: Leeton / Seconded: Edward River
Carried

7.3 Tabling of Draft Policies

Attachment E 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 endorsement by the RAMJO board.

The first round of proposed policies are as follows, and are intended to:

1. *Advocacy Policy:* Provide structure for RAMJO Board and staff members, in relation to advancing advocacy priorities
2. *Social Media Policy:* Provide direction to employees and Board members while informing the community, regarding the use of social media by RAMJO
3. *Related Parties Policy:* Provide a framework to report appropriate disclosures in the Joint Organisation's Financial Statements, as required by the Accounting Standard.

Recommendation: That the Board **endorse** and **adopt** the first round of proposed RAMJO policies.

Moved: Griffith / Seconded: Murrumbidgee
Carried

Cr. Kylie King and Mr. Frank Zaknich left the meeting

7.4 Renewal of the Regional Resource Recovery Model

Attachment F notes an update to recent discussions had surrounding an assessment of and subsequent renewal of, the current Regional Resource Recovery Model.

Recommendation: That the Board:

- **Acknowledge** the difficulties and challenges with the contract/MoU between RAMJO and AlburyCity in relation to the Regional Resource Recovery Model, and note and appreciate the transparency with which both RAMJO and AlburyCity have navigated these; and
- **Endorse** pursual of the development Service Level Agreement within the next six months in relation to the Regional Resource Recovery Model, with the current model remaining in place on a month-by-month basis, until a new agreement is reached and finalised.

Moved: Murrumbidgee / Seconded: Griffith
Carried

Cr. Kylie King and Mr. Frank Zaknich rejoined the meeting

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7.5 Terms of Reference for the General Managers Advisory Committee

Attachment G notes proposed Terms of Reference for effective management of the General Managers Advisory Committee (**GMAC**), for the board's consideration and adoption.

Recommendation: That the Board **endorse** and **adopt** the proposed Terms for Reference for the General Managers Advisory Committee.

Moved: Murrumbidgee / Seconded: Edward River
Carried

7.6 Draft Minutes – General Managers Advisory Committee Meeting – 2 February 2024

Attachment H notes the meeting minutes from the GMAC meeting held 2 February 2024.

Recommendation: That the Board **note** the minutes from General Managers Advisory Committee Meeting held 2 Feb. 2024.

Moved: Leeton / Seconded: Berrigan
Carried

AGENDA ITEM 8 – STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

8.1 Progress and status of sub-committee's

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

Recommendation: That the Board **note** the update provided on the progress and status of RAMJO sub-committees.

Moved: Narrandera / Seconded: Murray River
Carried

8.2 RAMJO Strategic Development – Institute for Sustainable Futures – Verbal update

Following discussions had at the November 2023 board meeting around an apparent siloed approach to RAMJO strategy and advancement of the *Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities*, the EO is currently exploring options for the engagement of the University of Technology Sydney's - *Institute for Sustainable Futures (ISF)* research and development team, to help review and link RAMJO's *Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities (SSRP)*.

The ISF is an independent research institute within the University of Technology Sydney who conduct transdisciplinary, project-based research in line with a vision of creating positive change towards sustainable futures. ISF researchers bring together expertise in a wide range of areas including engineering, architecture, economics, science, social science, international studies and political studies, to deliver practical and holistic solutions to complex problems.

Given the complexity and vast interconnectedness of RAMJO's focus areas within its SSRP and the current limited resources of RAMJO, a holistic approach to advancing priorities may prove more effective in advancing RAMJO's objectives. The EO is seeking approval to utilize an underspend in JONZA funds and investigating other funding opportunities available to Joint Organisations, to help fund such work, pending GMAC and Board approval. The EO will continue to advise the GMAC and board of progress and options in this space.

Recommendation: That the Board **note** the update.

Moved: Berrigan / Seconded: Murrumbidgee
Carried

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AGENDA ITEM 9 – OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UPDATE

9.1 Mr Cameron Templeton, Council Engagement Manager - Riverina and Far South-West

Cameron Templeton gave a verbal update on the work of the Office of Local Government and also confirmed that Brett Whitworth will attend the Board meeting held on 17 May 2024 in Corowa.

Councils awaiting on the final approval of the \$1m flood recovery grant, which is being administered by OLG, are encouraged to reach out to Mary-Kate Haigh for progress information. Her contact details are is 02 4422 2323 / Email: grants@old.nsw.gov.au.

AGENDA ITEM 10 – REGIONAL NSW UPDATE

10.1 Mr Giles Butler Director - Riverina Murray, Regional Development

Giles Butler gave a verbal update on the work of the Department of Regional NSW and noted that ICAC workshops were taking place within the region between March and May.

Recommendation: That the Board **note** the briefing by the Office of Local Government and the Dept. of Regional NSW.

Moved: Murrumbidgee / Seconded: Berrigan
Carried

AGENDA ITEM 11 – PROJECT UPDATES

11.1 Joint Organisation Net Zero Acceleration (JONZA)

Attachment J 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.

Recommendation: That the Board **note** the update provided on Joint Organisation Net Zero Acceleration (JONZA).

Moved: Narrandera / Seconded: Leeton
Carried

11.2 Disaster Risk Reduction Fund (DRRF) Project

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

Recommendation: That the Board **note** the updates provided on Disaster Risk Reduction Fund (DRRF) Project.

Moved: Murrumbidgee / Seconded: Edward River
Carried

11.3 Regional Resource Recovery Projects

Attachment L provides an update on the current position of the Regional Resource Recovery Projects.

Recommendation: That the Board **note** the updates provided on Regional Resource Recovery Projects.

Moved: Berrigan / Seconded: Edward River
Carried

AGENDA ITEM 12 – ADVOCACY

12.1 Proposal for increased advocacy on water buy-backs

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Attachment M contains a motion prepared by Cr. Julia Cornwell McKean of Berrigan Shire Council.

Recommendation: That:

1. RAMJO Councils (or a subset of) seek a meeting with the Premier and Minister on or about 14 March
2. RAMJO issue a media release on water buy-backs with board feedback inclusions

Moved: *Berrigan* / **Seconded:** *Leeton*

Carried

12.2 General update on advocacy

Attachment N notes an update on quarter 2 and current advocacy work.

Recommendation: That the Board **note** the update provided on Quarter 2 and current advocacy work.

Moved: *Murrumbidgee* / **Seconded:** *Edward River*

Carried

AGENDA ITEM 13 – GENERAL BUSINESS

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

MEETING CLOSE: 12.52pm

DRAFT