



**February 19, 2021**

**AMES TRANSIT AGENCY BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

The Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees met on February 19, 2021, at 2:00 p.m. via video conference. President Schrader called the meeting to order at 2:06 p.m. with Trustees Beatty-Hansen, Cain, Jeffrey, and Ludwig present via video conference.

**ELECTRONIC MEETING DECLARATION:** This meeting is being held electronically because of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Governor of Iowa's Public Health Disaster Emergency Declaration which included limits on public gatherings; therefore, it is impractical to hold an in-person meeting. (§21.8(1)(c) and §21.3)

**APPROVAL OF JANUARY 15, 2021 MINUTES:** Trustee Jeffrey made a motion to adopt the January 15, 2021 transit board minutes as presented and Trustee Beatty-Hansen seconded the motion. (Ayes:5 Nays: None) Motion carried.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None.

**SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM FUNDING REQUEST FY 2025:** Director Neal requested board approval for the submission of a grant for FY 2025 to the Ames Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO) through a program called the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) for \$225,000 that is due on March 31, 2021. She explained that each year the AAMPO receives approximately \$1.8 million for transportation capital projects in Ames; transit capital projects are eligible for funding at 80% through the STBG program. Previous requests included \$225,000, which was awarded in 2020 for upgrading a 40-foot bus to a 60-foot articulated bus.

Director Neal stated that if the FY 2025 grant were awarded, it could be used to upgrade a 40-foot bus to a 60-foot bus or a battery-electric bus. Trustee Jeffrey asked if the type of bus had to be defined in the grant submission. Shari Atwood, Transit Planner, stated that the type of bus did not have to be specified in the grant request.

Director Neal recommended approval of Alternative #1, to approve a request for \$225,000 in federal STBG funds from the AAMPO. She stated if awarded, these federal funds would help with planned bus purchases and move CyRide toward a more efficient, sustainable fleet.

Trustee Jeffrey made a motion to adopt Alternative #1, to approve a grant request of \$225,000 in bus capital funds from the AAMPO for STBG federal funds in FY 2025. Trustee Ludwig seconded the motion. (Ayes:5 Nays: None) Motion carried.

**COVID-19 RESEARCH DEMONSTRATION GRANT PROGRAM:** Director Neal shared that the COVID-19 Research Demonstration Grant submitted in November was awarded to CyRide for \$450,000 on January 19, 2021. The award will fund approximately 74 of the 78 automatic passenger counters (APCs) requested at a 90% federal share. She explained that the \$50,000 local match required for this project was included in the FY 2021 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Director Neal stated that formal board approval to submit a Section 5312 grant to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is required to utilize the funds.

The Transit Director recommended approval of Alternative #1, to authorize the Transit Director to execute and file a Section 5312 grant application in the amount of \$450,000 to the FTA.

Trustee Cain made a motion to authorize the Transit Director to execute and file a Section 5312 grant application in the amount of \$450,000 to the FTA. Trustee Jeffrey seconded the motion. (Ayes: 5 Nays: None) Motion carried.

**IOWA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY COUNCIL GRANT FUNDING OPPORTUNITY:** Director Neal requested formal board approval to submit a grant to the Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council for \$25,383. If received, the grant would fund the 4 remaining APCs that were not funded with the COVID-19 Research Demonstration Grant at a 75% federal share or \$19,037, lowering the local funding commitment to fully equip the large bus fleet. She explained that informal approval to proceed with the submission of the grant had already been obtained from the board via email due to the submission deadline being before the board meeting.

The Transit Director recommended approval of Alternative #1, to approve submission of the Iowa Developmental Disabilities Transportation Grant funding in the amount of \$25,383 (\$19,037 federal funding and \$6,346 in local funding), for the purchase of up to four automatic passenger counter units and their associated hardware.

Trustee Ludwig made a motion to approve submission of the Iowa Developmental Disabilities Transportation Grant funding in the amount of \$25,383 (\$19,037 federal funding and \$6,346 in local funding), for the purchase of up to four automatic passenger counter units and their associated hardware. Trustee Jeffrey seconded the motion. (Ayes:5 Nays: None) Motion carried.

## **MONTHLY REPORT:**

**Spring Semester Ridership Update:** A graph showing a comparison of ridership for the first two weeks of the semester with the same time last year was reviewed. Ridership is reflective of the same levels seen this past fall and is much lower than the same time last year. Trustee Ludwig asked if there would be a push to promote ridership in the fall. Director Neal said that CyRide was planning to increase efforts to welcome students back and promote the habit of riding the bus. There was a discussion about how in-person classes could affect these numbers.

**Federal Grant Funding:** A chart comparing 2020 and 2021 formula Section 5307 Funding and Small Transit Intensive Cities (STIC) funding was reviewed. There was no change in the Section 5307 funding that is based on population and population density. There was a change of .6% in STIC funding that measures CyRide's ability to outperform larger transit agencies. This funding is typically applied to payroll, but due to the CARES funding it was applied to the CIP.

**Infotainment Monitors:** Three new Gillig buses have intelligent transportation systems that include APCs and interior infotainment screens. These screens display safety and service messages, including the next few stops coming up along the route, as well as allow for additional revenue from advertisements through Houck Advertising.

**Valentine's Day:** Bus destination signs displayed fun Valentine's Day messages. Community feedback was positive.

**Second Quarterly Report:** Information for the second quarter operations and key performance measures are detailed in the board packet. Low ridership is impacting the statistics for things such as passengers per customer comment.

**Spring Meeting Dates/Times:**

- March 19, 2021 at 2:00pm
- April 16, 2021 at 2:00pm
- May 21, 2021 at 2:00pm

**Adjourn:** Trustee Ludwig made a motion to approve adjourning at 2:20p.m. Trustee Jeffrey seconded the motion. (Ayes:5 Nays: None) Motion carried.

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Jacob Schrader, President

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Julie Brouard, Recording Secretary