



April 16, 2021

AMES TRANSIT AGENCY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees met on April 16, 2021, at 2:00 p.m. via video conference. President Schrader called the meeting to order at 2:01p.m. with Trustees Beatty-Hansen, Cain, Jeffrey, Ludwig, and Schainker 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 MARCH 19, 2021 MINUTES: Trustee Jeffrey made a motion to adopt the March 19, 2021 transit board minutes as presented and Trustee Beatty-Hansen seconded the motion. (Ayes: 6 Nays: None) Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

RECOGNITION OF OUTGOING BOARD MEMBERS: Assistant Director of Operations, Chris Crippen, thanked President Schrader for his service on the Transit Board. President Schrader has served 3 terms, with the most recent term as the Board President. He has been an integral part of communicating student needs and has guided the Transit Board through multiple special projects, including the system redesign and investments in accessibility technology.

STATE GRANT AND PUBLIC TRANSIT INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT (PTIG) APPLICATIONS: Assistant Director Crippen requested board approval of the annual grant application to the Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT). She explained that the grant applications support operating and capital needs for the FY 2022 budget year and must be submitted by May 1, 2021.

Assistant Director Crippen reviewed how the operating budget would be impacted by the State Transit Assistance (STA) and the Elderly and Disabled Section 5310 funding. She explained that \$800,000 in STA funds was budgeted for FY 2022, but \$869,019 would be received through formula funding based on new vehicle registrations. She said that two years of Section 5310 funding would be requested in this grant, so that eighty percent federal funding can be applied to the annual service fees for the automatic vehicle annunciators/locators. By utilizing the federal Section 5310 funding for this non-traditional project, a savings in local match of \$85,676 for FY 2022 and \$76,000 for FY 2023 would be created.

Assistant Director Crippen summarized how the capital budget would be impacted by the Section 5310, Section 5339, and Public Infrastructure Grants (PTIG) funding opportunities. She explained that Section 5310 funds could be used for interior digital displays in articulated buses to provide

a visual display of approaching stops that would pair with the automatic voice annunciators. The interior digital displays or infotainment systems were programmed into the FY 2022 Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) at one hundred percent local match, creating a savings of \$8,927 in local match. Assistant Director Crippen stated that Section 5310 funds would be used to replace a low-floor minibus that is leased to Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Authority (HIRTA) in FY 2022 instead of FY 2023 as indicated in the CIP. She added that additional Section 5310 funds would replace a second vehicle currently being leased to HIRTA with a Ford Transit conversion van in FY 2022 instead of FY 2024 as indicated in the CIP. Federal funding would cover eighty-five percent of the costs for both purchases, increasing local match for FY 2022 by \$14,400. Assistant Director Crippen explained that federal funding could be maximized by using the Section 5310 funds and moving the savings from operations to capital to cover the local match commitment.

Assistant Director Crippen said that Section 5339 funding is a competitive grant, and if received the funds would be used for bus replacements. She said that replacement of eight of the oldest and most utilized buses will be requested because there is a possibility that more vehicles will be funded than in previous years. Assistant Director Crippen explained that if any buses are selected for replacement, CyRide would be notified later in FY 2022. The rate of funding for bus replacement is either eighty percent through Iowa Clean Air Attainment Program (ICAAP) or eighty-five percent through Section 5339.

Assistant Director Crippen reviewed the area of the grant application that addresses Public Transit Infrastructure Grants (PTIG) funding. She stated that PTIG funding is a competitive process and CyRide would be notified of awards later in FY 2021. If selected, construction projects could begin in the summer of 2022. Assistant Director Crippen explained that \$750,000 is currently in the CIP for FY 2023 and would fund the third phase of the heating, ventilation, and cooling (HVAC) project to improve air quality in three areas of the garage. She explained that the HVAC project would include three separate PTIG funding requests for the tire area, shop bus vehicle exhaust, and the paint booth/body shop.

Trustee Cain asked how much was already in the budget to cover the local match of \$797,000 needed to for the \$5.9 million requested in the grant applications. Shari Atwood, Transit Planner, stated that that the STA did not have any local requirement and that the \$95,000 annual service fee for the automatic vehicle locator/annunciators are typically within the operating budget using one hundred percent local dollars. She explained that the annual service fee could be funded by Section 5310 dollars at eighty percent, creating a savings to the operating budget.

Trustee Cain asked for clarification of the capital purchases and if the local match portions were already in the budget. Transit Planner, Shari Atwood, explained that the digital displays were already included in the budget and that the funds for the van and the bus for HIRTA were programmed in future years, but to fully utilize the Section 5310 Funds, the savings from using the operating budget could be shifted to the capital budget to complete the purchases now. Ms. Atwood further explained that the HVAC projects were already in the budget for the current year and that if more buses were awarded than what is in the CIP, the project would be brought back to the board.

Trustee Cain asked if local funds were in the CIP for the Section 5339 Funding that would be used to pay for the eight buses listed. Assistant Director Crippen added that if the buses were not identified for replacement, they would not have any chance of being funded, so more buses than what would be expected to be replaced are being requested. She said that two or three buses will likely be identified. Transit Planner, Shari Atwood, said that there will be additional opportunities to modify the budget and identify local match in January when more information is known.

The Assistant Transit Director recommended approval of Alternative #1, to submit operating and capital applications to the Iowa DOT. These applications support transit services in the Ames community and lowers the overall local commitment to projects identified in operating and capital budgets with minor revisions to the City of Ames Capital Improvement Plan.

Trustee Jeffrey made a motion to approve the FY 2022 State Grant and PTIG applications as presented. Trustee Ludwig seconded the motion. (Ayes: 6 Nays: None) Motion carried.

BUS & BUS FACILITIES DISCRETIONARY GRANT APPLICATION: Assistant Director Crippen requested board approval to submit a Bus & Bus Facilities Grant. She explained that the Federal Transit Administration will release a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) with submission deadlines shortly thereafter. She said that since this is a competitive process, information is being presented to the board now, so that the application can be prepared within the time constraints.

Assistant Director Crippen said that the request will be for \$3.7 million to purchase two articulated and three battery electric buses that would replace buses that are 20 years old and past their useful life. She reviewed a chart that detailed the estimated costs and funding sources. The Ames Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO) Surface Transportation Block Grant identified two 40-foot buses for upgrade to articulated buses in FY 2022 and FY 2023 that have local match programmed into the CIP. Assistant Director Crippen explained that a Section 5339 Grant for discretionary federal funding would be submitted to fund approximately \$3.1 million of the five buses.

Assistant Director Crippen said that local match of \$562,125 could be transferred from the Transit Operations closing balance from FY 2020, leaving \$816,558 in the uncommitted closing balance. Trustee Schainker asked what the new percentage would be for the closing balance. Assistant Director Crippen explained that the \$816,558 is the dollar amount above the required 10%.

The Assistant Transit Director recommended the approval of Alternative #1. Applying for this grant would allow CyRide to potentially replace up to five obsolete buses, using funding that requires a lower local investment compared to the standard Iowa DOT process. If awarded, these new buses would offer a significant improvement in CyRide's fleet in both reduced operating costs and improved sustainability.

Trustee Schainker made a motion to approve a submission of a FY 2021 Bus & Bus Facilities discretionary grant application for the purchase of new buses, committing up to \$562,125 in local match for the grant. Trustee Ludwig seconded the motion. (Ayes: 6 Nays: None) Motion carried.

TRANSIT ADVERTISING CONTRACT EXTENSION: Assistant Director Crippen requested approval of a contract extension for advertising services with Houck Advertising. She reviewed the terms of the original contract that was signed in 2017 with options of extension for two additional years. FY 2022 would represent the fifth year of the contract and the final option for extension. Assistant Director Crippen stated that Houck Advertising has agreed to extend the contract under the current terms; an amendment drafted by the Legal Department was included in the board packet.

The Assistant Transit Director recommended approval of Alternative #1. Modifying and extending the existing contract preserves terms that are generally beneficial to CyRide and avoids the need to rebid the contract during a period of significant instability in the advertising market.

Trustee Schainker made a motion to approve a one-year contract extension with a contract amendment to Houck Transit Advertising of St. Paul, Minnesota, to expire June 30, 2022. Trustee Jeffrey seconded the motion. (Ayes: 6 Nays: None) Motion carried.

AMES INTERMODAL FACILITY CONTRACT AMENDMENTS: Assistant Director Crippen explained that the Ames Intermodal Facility has two private tenants, Executive Express and Jefferson Lines, who provide public transportation in Ames. She explained that the current leases state that base rent is adjusted annually according to the Producer Price Index (PPI). Director Neal sought informal board direction about waiving the increase for the 2021-2022 lease period at the March board meeting; contract amendments were drafted that reflected no increase by the Legal Department.

The Assistant Transit Director recommended approval of Alternative #1. The ongoing impact of COVID-19 has heavily disrupted public transportation. These contract amendments will provide time for the Ames Intermodal Facility tenants to adjust their services for the post-pandemic future and help preserve important transportation links in the Ames community.

Trustee Ludwig made a motion to approve the contract amendments for Jefferson Lines and Executive Express for the FY 2022 lease year. Trustee Jeffrey seconded the motion. (Ayes: 6 Nays: None) Motion carried.

COMMUNITY PROJECT APPROPRIATION REQUEST: Assistant Director Crippen requested formal approval of the Community Project Appropriation Request. She said this is a new process that the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure announced, permitting Members of Congress to submit projects for potential inclusion in the next surface transportation reauthorization bill. Assistant Director Crippen said that staff identified a facility expansion as the project with the best chance of being funded, with the possibility of 100% funding. CyRide's on-call architectural and engineering firm has estimated a facility expansion to cost approximately

\$3.5 million. Assistant Director Crippen stated that the application requests an 80% federal share of \$2.8 million with \$700,000 in local match to reach the estimated amount of \$3.5 million; local match is already programmed in the CIP. She said that if approved, a formal application would be submitted to Representative Feenstra.

Trustee Ludwig asked if the project would be funded at 100% or 80%. Transit Planner, Shari Atwood, explained that the request would include 20% local funding to show that CyRide has the funds to support the project, but it is possible that the request could end up receiving 100% federal funding.

The Assistant Transit Director recommended approval of Alternative #1. CyRide has a strong need for a facility expansion to add additional coverage for the bus fleet and to support future expansion of sustainable vehicles. This process provides a step forward for potentially funding this important project.

Trustee Jeffrey made a motion to approve Alternative #1, moving forward with a \$3.5 million request for Community Project Funding for a facility expansion. Trustee Ludwig seconded the motion. (Ayes: 6 Nays: None) Motion carried.

MONTHLY REPORT:

Federal Triennial Review Results: The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) conducts an oversight review every three years to ensure that FTA funds are administered in accordance with transit law provisions. The review was originally scheduled for May 2020 but was delayed due to the pandemic. On average 7-8 deficiencies are found, but CyRide had none. An official, final report will be provided by June 2, 2021 and shared with the board.

American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP): ARP was signed into law on March 11, 2021. CyRide was allocated \$6.1 million of the \$30.5 billion allocated to public transit. ARP funds will primarily be used for payroll and COVID-19 related costs. More information will be shared with the board as it is available.

Federal COVID-19 Reporting Mandate Update: FTA has requested approval from the Office of Management and Budget to require mandatory reporting about COVID-19 and our employees. Administrative Analyst/Transit Scheduler, Rob Jennings, is working with Human Resources and has submitted the initial report.

ISU Vaccination Transportation: Iowa State University reached out to CyRide to provide transportation to vaccine clinics. Since the Food and Drug Administration is suspending use of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, CyRide is unsure if the clinics will still occur at this time.

Custodial Services Contract: CyRide currently contracts with a third-party, Nationwide Office Care, for our custodial services. Due to the pandemic, a rebid of this contract did not occur last

year. A request for proposal (RFP) is being prepared; proposed contracts will be presented to the board for consideration when a vendor is identified.

Fuel Contract: Current fuel contract with Renewable Energy Group (REG) will be expiring on June 30, 2021. Contract proposals will be presented to the board following the completion of the RFP.

Spring Meeting Dates/Times:

- May 21, 2021 at 2:00pm

Adjourn: Trustee Ludwig made a motion to approve adjourning at 2:47pm. Trustee Jeffrey seconded the motion. (Ayes: 6 Nays: None) Motion carried.

, President

Julie Brousard, Recording Secretary