



October 13, 2021

AMES TRANSIT AGENCY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees met on Oct. 13, 2021, at 4:30 p.m. in the CyRide Conference room. Vice President Ludwig called the meeting to order at 4:34 p.m. with Trustees Beatty-Hansen, Cain, Ríos Martínez and Schainker present.

APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 15, 2021 MINUTES: Trustee Beatty-Hansen made a motion to adopt the September 15, 2021 Transit Board minutes as presented, and Trustee Cain seconded the motion. (Ayes: 5 Nays: None) Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

LANE WORKER HIRING WAGE INCENTIVE: Director Neal requested approval of a part-time lane worker hiring incentive for FY 2022. She explained the position has been difficult to fill due to the very late or very early hours that are required. Currently, lane workers are paid the same hourly wage as part-time drivers but do not receive benefits. Director Neal said there has been increased applicant flow for the part-time driver position since the implementation of the hiring incentive, and similar results are expected if a hiring wage incentive is approved for the lane worker position. The total cost for the lane worker hiring wage incentive is not expected to be greater than \$3,000 and would be in effect temporarily through the end of the current union contract, which ends in June 2022.

The Transit Director recommended approval of Alternative #1. Offering a temporary lane worker hiring incentive would help improve CyRide's ability to attract new applicants for these difficult-to-hire positions at a low cost to the organization.

Trustee Beatty-Hansen made a motion to approve Alternative #1, to offer a temporary part-time lane worker hiring wage incentive of \$750 for FY 2022 and direct staff to work with the Human Resources Director to implement the incentive. Trustee Ríos Martínez seconded the motion. (Ayes: 5 Nays: None) Motion carried.

FY 2023 SERVICE PLANNING – DISCUSSION: Director Neal reviewed informal service requests made by customers to gauge the board's interest in staff preparing formal options for consideration for upcoming budget discussions. She confirmed that no major service changes were being recommended by staff.

The board briefly discussed the #6 Brown and #11 Cherry route customer suggestions, as well as service during Iowa State University (ISU) breaks for the #7 Purple, #9 Plum, and #11 Cherry routes. Director Neal explained operating that during ISU breaks, the #11 Cherry route could be less costly by transitioning the #7 Purple route to the #11 Cherry route instead. This service modification would have a net cost between \$4,800 and \$13,700, depending on the hours of service desired on the #11 Cherry route.

Director Neal reviewed the current budget assumptions for FY 2023. Current proposals include a 2% baseline increase for Iowa State University Administration and for the City of Ames and a 0% increase for the Iowa State Student Government. She explained that this would be an increase of approximately \$40,754 for the City of Ames and \$17,872 for Iowa State University Administration. Trustee Schainker said that a 0% increase for the Student Government would help replenish the funds in the Student Trust Fund, as well as the budget amendment to not request approximately \$611,000 from the Student Government for FY 2021.

Director Neal confirmed that no formal proposals were requested by the board, and staff would move forward preparing the budget without any additions or modifications to current service.

ANNUAL TRANSIT ASSET MANAGEMENT (TAM) PLAN – PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND TARGETS UPDATE: Director Neal requested approval of the Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan performance targets for FY 2022. She explained there is an annual requirement to submit performance measures that show how transit assets will be operated, maintained, and improved. Director Neal added that beyond fulfilling the requirements, a fleet in a State of Good Repair (SGR) promotes safe, efficient, and dependable transportation for the community.

Director Neal discussed the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) classifications of revenue and non-revenue vehicles using a useful life benchmark (ULB). She said that the ULB provides an estimate of how many years a vehicle can be in service and still maintain an SGR. Transit agencies are allowed to set their own ULB's but must justify large differences in reports to the National Transit Database. CyRide uses a ULB of 15 years, one year more than the FTA uses for large buses due to difficulty funding large bus purchases. She explained that minibuses (cutaways) have a lower agency ULB to match the Iowa Department of Transportation's ULB, so we can remain competitive with other agencies for replacement schedules.

Director Neal listed the three performance measure categories that CyRide uses to determine the SGR, including rolling stock, equipment, and facilities. She explained that rolling stock includes all revenue vehicles, such as minibuses/cutaways, 40-foot and 60-foot buses and minivans, equipment includes non-revenue support services and maintenance vehicles, and facilities include the CyRide facility and the Intermodal Facility, which have conditions calculated every four years. A chart was utilized, which showed the results for the CyRide performance measures for 2020 and 2021. She said that the fleet exceeding the ULB for large 40-foot and 60-foot buses, shop truck and minivan categories were met in 2021, but the ULB for minibuses (cutaways) was not met due to significant delays in the delivery of the six new minibuses caused by the pandemic and supply chain disruptions.

Director Neal requested board approval of FY 2022 performance targets, which changes the fleet exceeding the ULB from 40% to 30% for large buses and from 89% to 22% for minibuses (cutaways); all other categories would remain the same at 0%. Director Neal pointed out that eight 40-foot buses are expected to be received in FY 2022. Vice President Ludwig asked if all bus purchases mentioned were already approved by the board. Director Neal confirmed that they were, and that an additional two minibuses were programmed in FY 2023.

The Transit Director recommended approval of Alternative #1, to approve FY 2022 TAM plan performance targets for each FTA required asset class/category. Approval of this alternative will allow CyRide to meet its federal obligations and help guide future capital need assessments.

Trustee Cain made a motion to approve Alternative #1, to approve CyRide's recommendation to establish the FY 2022 Transit Asset Management (TAM) plan performance targets to submit to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Trustee Ríos Martínez seconded the motion. (Ayes: 5 Nays: None) Motion carried.

STATEWIDE BUS & BUS FACILITIES GRANT APPLICATION: Director Neal requested approval to include CyRide buses in the consolidated statewide grant application for bus replacement. She explained that this funding opportunity through the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) is in addition to the notice of funding by the FTA. To be included in the grant application, the IDOT will need to be notified of the number of buses CyRide is requesting for replacement. Currently, CyRide has eight 40-foot buses eligible for funding.

Director Neal reviewed the funding available through the federal program, which funds at 85% of the cost, versus 80% that is available through the traditional Public Transit Management System (PTMS) program for bus replacement. She said that the difference in funding levels would equate to approximately \$25,000 for each bus, for a total of \$205,208 in savings for eight 40-foot buses, which are 19 years old and beyond their useful life. Director Neal confirmed that if the grant was approved, the \$615,640 for local match would use the capital bus replacement fund that currently contains \$2.5 million.

The Transit Director recommended approval of Alternative #1, to approve the inclusion of eight 40-foot heavy-duty buses and submit a Letter of Support and Commitment in the state's grant application. This funding leverages federal dollars to replace buses that are 19 years old and assists in managing CyRide's fleet age.

Trustee Beatty Hansen made a motion to approve Alternative #1, to include eight 40-foot heavy-duty large buses in the State of Iowa's Statewide Bus & Bus Facilities Grant Application, with a local match of \$615,640, and submission of a Letter of Support and Commitment to the Iowa DOT for these vehicles. Trustee Ríos Martínez seconded the motion. (Ayes:5 Nays: None) Motion carried.

MONTHLY REPORT:

FY 2021 Bus and Bus Facilities Notice of Funding Opportunity: At the April board meeting, the Transit Board approved submission of a grant application through the bus and bus facilities grant program to purchase two articulated and three battery-electric buses. Applications for this grant are due November 19, 2021. If awarded, 85% of the cost of the buses would be funded by federal funds. Trustee Schainker inquired how the local match requirement would be funded. Director Neal said that the local match would be funded with a portion of the operations fund closing balance above the 10% requirement that the board allocated when the grant submission was approved.

Public Transit Infrastructure Grants (PTIG) Funding: CyRide was recently notified that the PTIG Grant request for Phase 3 Heating, Cooling, and Ventilation (HVAC) project was approved. The project will improve air quality in the maintenance area tire shop, paint booth, and body shop. The project total will be \$414,435 with 80% or \$331,548 in federal funding.

Automatic Passenger Counter / LED Sign Project Status: In 2019, CyRide began installing intelligent transportation systems to enable usage of the automatic vehicle location (AVL) systems through the MyState app and our website to provide automatic voice announcements (AVA). This was done to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. In June, the board approved a plan to have 78 buses equipped with automated passenger counters (APCs). So far 64 units have been installed, with the remainder being installed in November over ISU's break. Additionally, 68 LED Signs have been installed to complement the AVA systems and help orient passengers on the bus.

EASE Outreach: East Ames Service Extension (EASE) provides on-demand, weekday service between Duff Avenue and Interstate 35 from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Ridership has dramatically declined since the pandemic started. Staff is contacting businesses in this service area to educate them about the service to increase ridership. Trustee Schainker mentioned that the City of Ames City Council just approved industrial annexation to 580th Avenue; plans for the route may want to consider this information.

Demand-Response Software: CyRide has two services, EASE and Moonlight Express, that require passengers to call to schedule a ride. Staff is exploring demand-response software like Lyft or Uber that could allow passengers to schedule service via an app on their phone. Costs from a project of this nature could fit into the FY 2023 capital budget.

Adjourn: Trustee Cain made a motion to approve adjourning at 5:11 p.m. Trustee Beatty-Hansen seconded the motion. (Ayes: 5 Nays: None) Motion carried.

Liz Jeffrey, President

Julie Brousard, Secretary