

AMES TRANSIT AGENCY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

AMES, IOWA

August 24, 2007

The Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees met August 24, 2007, 4:00 p.m. at City Hall Conference Room 135. President Goodman called the meeting to order at 4:08 p.m. In attendance: Trustees Madden, Anders, and Hynak. Trustee Ayers arrived at 4:18pm. Absent: Trustee Schainker.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Trustee Madden made a motion to approve the June 21, 2007 minutes as presented. Motion was seconded by Trustee Anders. (Motion carried unanimously.)

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

IOWA CLEAN AIR ATTAINMENT PROGRAM (ICAAP) APPLICATIONS: Director Kyras explained each fall the Iowa DOT solicits applications for funding capital and operating projects that help reduce congestion and improve air quality within the State of Iowa. CyRide staff has developed three applications, two of which were repeated from last year. The reason for submitting two of the applications again was based on discussions with Iowa DOT staff regarding the merits of the two projects. Through these discussions, it was determined that the projects met all the eligibility criteria and decisions by the ICAAP Funding Committee were based on the quantity and quality of transit applications received on a yearly basis. Areas that are close to not meeting air quality standards are given priority followed by other statewide priorities – last year was the new Iowa DOT facility in Ankeny.

The first project to request funding again this year was the Gray Route addition. It will be CyRide's final opportunity to submit this application as it is the third year in operation and the funding will only pay for the first three years of a new service. CyRide is requesting funding for 80% of the operating cost for one year, which is approximately \$50,000, and the purchase of an additional bus to support that service. Total cost would be a little under \$400,000.

The second application is the Public Information Program that was included last year as well. This is a two year marketing plan targeting residents living in apartments, Iowa State students, particularly freshman, and the business community. CyRide is looking at a little over \$30,000 for each year. Several ideas were discussed with Liz Kurt, Director of New Student Program at ISU. Trustee Madden suggested contacting ISU Dining regarding bus marketing with them. CyRide has also had discussions with Facilities Planning and Management personnel regarding improved bus stop facilities on campus.

The third one is a new application for replacing a bus based on the significantly lower emission of a new bus as compared to one of CyRide's oldest buses in the fleet. Typically, the ICAAP committee has not funded bus replacements; however, the enormous air quality benefits of the new emissions standards on new buses compared to the bus to be replaced make it an ideal candidate for the funding. CyRide proposes to replace a very old bus, a 1968 bus, that is still in operation which has very dirty emissions. This project would replace the bus with a new bus

which would operate on biodiesel and would assist CyRide in meeting the City's Cool Cities initiative. The cost would be approximately \$335,000.

Local share for the three applications is included in the budget. Trustee Madden made a motion to adopt Alternative #1 to submit all three applications (Gray Route Addition, Public Information Program and New Alternative Fueled Bus) for consideration of ICAAP funding. Motion was seconded by Trustee Anders.

Trustee Anders asked about tallying the number of cars that drive from west Ames to the commuter lot when marketing CyRide service. Director Kyras explained the frequency of service on the Red route has increased due to significantly higher ridership for this route. Red route ridership has grown considerably compared to the Orange route, but many people drive to the commuter lot because of the convenience and frequency of the Orange route service. Trustee Madden reported ISU's enrollment was one of the top two or three highest enrollments ISU has had and should be recognized in the ridership.

Following some discussion, motion on the floor to submit the three applications was approved unanimously.

FACILITIES MASTER PLAN DISCUSSION: Director Kyras told the transit board this item does not need any action at this time; however, she is requesting board guidance the possible updating of CyRide's current Facilities Master Plan. This plan update is not currently funded in the budget. The current Master Plan was completed in 2001 and divided improvements to the facility into three phases. The construction occurring now is completing the 2nd phase and the third phase, constructing a new maintenance area, is the last phase yet to complete.

In light of the Transit Feasibility Study to add services and larger vehicles, Director Kyras asked the board's opinion regarding updating of the Master Plan first before service decisions were made as current facility constraints may significantly affect the direction of service expansion and changes for the future. One of the considerations leading to consideration of this plan update is that previously, the fleet had been comprised of mainly 35 ft. buses and now CyRide is switching from 35 to 40 ft buses with the possibility of moving to 60 ft. buses as is recommended in the Transit Feasibility Study. The 60 ft buses will take more space in CyRide's facility. Additionally, the Transit Feasibility Study recommended expansion of service in two areas which would add four additional 40 ft. buses to the fleet and that the community has been requesting bike racks on the buses, which takes another foot per bus. Director Kyras' concern is that we will outgrow the storage portion of our building under the current Facilities Master Plan. CyRide staff believes that it may not be a wise use of public funds to further enhance the current building if the bus storage areas will not be adequate for future growth.

With the reasons noted above, Director Kyras thought it would be prudent to update the Facilities Master Plan at this time. The study would look at three options. First, the current facility - what CyRide would need to accommodate all buses, how its property could be used more efficiently and the cost of this option. Second, consider a satellite facility for CyRide, which could be a joint project with Heartland Senior Services, as they are considering building a facility to accommodate their service. Another option is looking at relocating CyRide to another site that would

accommodate all aspects of CyRide. The board discussed the cost of the last phase recommended in the existing Facilities Master Plan which is roughly estimated to be at least \$3 million dollars.

The board discussed the timing of this study prior to knowing the communities desire on the services recommended in the Transit Feasibility Study, the potential for ridership increases, and the probability of articulated buses. Director Kyras explained that the articulated buses recommended in the study could be a short-term solution to ridership concerns and would necessitate significant modifications to the current facility for space and height restrictions. The Facilities Plan update could be conducted concurrently with community discussions and assist staff and the board in making informed decisions regarding the future operations and capital needs for CyRide. Trustee Goodman asked about available funding for the third phase of the current master plan. Director Kyras indicated that CyRide currently has approximately \$1.5 million dollars available of the \$3 millions dollars needed to construct this addition and that the remainder of the funds would need to be secured through future earmark requests. Director Kyras also shared with the board that earmarks are becoming more difficult to secure and that CyRide's current request for 10 vehicles is unlikely to be funded.

Trustee Madden stated that the current location is ideally located in the center of CyRide's service area. Rich Lenner, CyRide's Assistant Direct – Fleet & Facilities, indicated that the facility is heated to about 42 degrees in the winter. This keeps the vehicles out of the weather which saves on vehicle maintenance. If the above options are added, space is tight right now in our current location and that would move five to eight buses outside. CyRide staff is trying to look far enough ahead for future planning and earmark for future development.

Trustee Madden indicated the University might be willing to open the discussion on the current location looking forward 3 to 5 years and this would give CyRide time to see what the community input would be.

CyRide staff proposes to prepare a scope of work delineating the three options and sending it to several firms to determine a cost estimate. Concerns expressed by the transit board related to the amount of change that might occur that would make an updated master plan obsolete before its implementation. The implementation of the Fare Free system has made the existing plan obsolete. It was discussed that this will not happen again. Additionally, CIT has helped CyRide with extra trips on the fixed route and that has helped CyRide manage the dramatic growth. CyRide could continue this partnership with CIT.

Trustee Hynak made a motion to move forward on getting an educated guess on what the cost of this study would be and once we have this information deciding whether the time is now or six months from now to proceed with a new Master Plan. Seconded by Trustee Anders. (Motion carried unanimously.)

CONFIRMATION/ELECTION OF BOARD AND AAMPO OFFICIALS: Director Kyras explained she had visited with the Boards new student representatives earlier in the week and asked them to think about whether they would like to hold an office on the transit board and/or represent the board on the Ames Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO).

Trustee Anders expressed his interest in representing the Ames Transit Agency as board representative for the Ames Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO). Trustee Goodman made a motion to nominate Trustee Anders for this position. Seconded by Trustee Madden. (Motion carried unanimously.)

Trustee Madden nominate Trustee Hynak for Vice President of the transit board. Seconded by Trustee Anders. (Motion carried unanimously.)

FINAL 2006-207 BUDGET ANALYSIS: Director Kyras reported the final capital and operating budget figures from last year. Operating expenses were 3.1% under the amended budget, fixed route expenses were 3.7% under budget, and Dial-A-Ride expenses were 7.5% above budget. Operating revenues were 2.0% above the amended budget due to the fact there was a policy change that allowed transit systems to draw down 100% of its funds in operating assistance. This change contributed an additional \$47,790 to the operating budget. Also, revenues were up due to increased shuttle revenue (State Fair, Special Olympics and Odyssey of the Mind).

The operating closing balance is up approximately 28% this year. The GSB Trust fund deficit was anticipated to increase \$44,630 and actually increased \$71,248 due to lower student semesters. The current budget year begins the first year that this trust fund will begin reducing this deficit.

Highlights on the capital side are: CyRide received more money from state and federal grants. More than \$1.1 million dollars was received that had not been anticipated. The process of the office construction started later than anticipated so CyRide expenses were down because of this timing. Closing balance was 41% higher, but will be spent by 2008.

DAR carried more riders this year which is beginning to be a trend. Tom Davenport, CyRide's Transit Coordinator indicated that in the past Heartland helped CyRide out by getting Medicaid vouchers which moved DAR passengers to Medicaid rides. This also results in clients not having to pay for their first 30 trips.

TRANSIT DIRECTOR REPORT: Director Kyras shared with the board the office building's construction change order history. So far there have been three change orders. Budget information for the construction process was also provided for the transit board members.

Additionally, CyRide has submitted three grant applications and has received confirmation on the New Freedom grant, which is money for going above and beyond the American with Disability Act, and JARC. With the New Freedom grant, CyRide will purchase a new bus that would be lift equipped.

CyRide has not received confirmation on the Alternatives Analysis application, but does not believe that this application will be approved due to the manner in which the Federal Transit Administration distributed the Bus and Bus Facilities funding.

State Fair shuttle ridership was down due to the heat and humidity. Money generated above expenses can be transferred to CyRide's local capital budget for future capital needs.

Elwood Drive will change to University Boulevard in September and CyRide had discussed with ISU FP&M personnel changing CyRide's address to University Boulevard. The reason CyRide would like to change the address is due to difficulties that out-of-town visitors have in finding the building. CyRide staff felt that it would be a good time to complete the address change for several reasons. At ISU FP&M's request, this project will be delayed because ISU is considering changing some of the streets in the area during the next year and would like to consider all changes together.

Following some discussion, a motion was made by Trustee Anders to move forward with the address change. Seconded by Trustee Madden. (Motion carried unanimously.)

Trustee Anders inquired if it was possible to have a State Fair shuttle originate from Ames since the buses are going to the State Fair anyway and, people wanting to go the State Fair and do not have vehicles, could use this transportation. This opportunity has been discussed by CyRide staff; however, the problem is in returning from the State Fair. There is not a set schedule for this return service and CyRide would incur more cost because it would have to have another bus there for this transportation. Staff was encouraged to further investigate this possibility.

SET TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING: Next transit board meeting is scheduled for September 28 at 7:30 a.m. Board members will be notified of room location unknown at this time. October 26 at 7:30am for the following month meeting

Trustee Anders reported he had attended a meeting of 1000 Friends of Iowa to discuss transit oriented development and its ability to create economic vibrancy in neighborhoods. A lot of studies have been completed on how transit planning and orientation can enhance development. Trustee Anders thought the community and CyRide should share this information with the area development group.

ADJOURN: Trustee Madden made a motion to adjourn at 5:19 p.m. Seconded by Trustee Anders. (Motion carried unanimously.)