

## AMES TRANSIT AGENCY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

AMES, IOWA

July 2, 2008

The Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees met on July 2, 2008 at 7:30 a.m. in CyRide's conference room. The meeting was called to order at 7:32 a.m. by President Anders. Trustees in attendance: Madden, Schainker, Hayek, Popken and Munoz.

Jen Munoz, new transit board member, was introduced to the other members of the transit board as well as the CyRide staff.

**AWARD RECOGNITION:** Director Kyras introduced and recognized Paul Klimesh and Eric Williamson who represented the Ames Transit Agency at the IPTA State ROADEO competition held in Des Moines the weekend of June 28th. Paul placed first and Eric placed second in the 40 foot bus competition. Paul and Eric also received the First Place Award for the team competition for large bus competition. Paul will represent CyRide for the 10<sup>th</sup> time at the APTA Bus and Paratransit Conference that will be held in Seattle, Washington May 2009. Paul and Eric also received the Third Place Award for the team competition for small buses.

Director Kyras displayed the award CyRide received at the IPTA Annual Awards dinner presented by the Federal Transit Administration for its Leadership in Energy and Environment Design for the new office facility.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Trustee Madden made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 2, 2008 Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees meeting. Trustee Hayek seconded. (Motion carried unanimously).

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** No public comments.

**SAFETY AND SECURITY STATEMENT:** Director Kyras told the transit board that the Federal Transit Administration requires each transit agency to provide a safe and secure transit experience. While preparing for the upcoming Triennial Review in July, it was discovered that a safety policy statement was required to comply with these federal regulations. The board was asked to review the policy contained in the board packet and approve its contents.

Trustee Popken made a motion to approve the Safety and Security statement drafted by CyRide staff. Motion seconded by Trustee Madden. (Motion carried unanimously.)

**IOWA CLEAN AIR ATTAINMENT PROGRAM (ICAAP) APPLICATION:** Director Kyras explained to the board the purpose, allowable uses, and how the ICAAP funds could be obtained. CyRide staff is proposing a FY2009 application for funding of two hybrid 40-foot buses, which could be used to provide service to the E. 13<sup>th</sup> St area. It was explained that through last year's request, CyRide received funding for two years of marketing expenses.

Discussion among the transit board indicated concern that this application might imply that CyRide will be providing service to the new mall and this decision has not been made by the transit board. There was further discussion that ICAAP funding

would usually pay for only new services not existing routes, but that if the mall did progress as planned, the buses could be used to expand other new services that might be offered in the future. Director Kyras also explained that it would be at least 18 months before the buses were received. Director Kyras indicated the earliest CyRide would know if this application would be funded would be February of next year and staff would then need to sign contracts with the Iowa DOT and conduct a formal procurement. At the earliest, it would be the fall of 2009 that a commitment would be made to actually purchase the vehicles. Director Kyras indicated that she would bring this procurement back to the board, if it were approved by the Iowa DOT, before a procurement commitment was made. This would allow the board to determine if the E. 13<sup>th</sup> Street route or other new routes were planned to be able to meet the ICAAP requirements.

Trustee Madden made a motion to approve the purchase of two hybrid 40-foot buses in an ICAAP application for potential operation to the new Life Style Center. Motion seconded by Trustee Popken. (Motion carried unanimously.)

**QUARTERLY OPERATIONS REPORT:** Highlights from the Operations Report were: overall ridership was up 5.3%; safety has improved; expenses increased by 8.8%, but were offset by higher revenues of 15.1%, due to higher farebox revenue, interest income, advertising revenue, and federal dollars.

Maintenance expenses for the quarter have risen sharply due to higher fuel prices and the refurbishment of wheelchair lifts that malfunctioned. Waxing procedures have been suspended and vehicles are being repainted as a better long-term investment.

Fixed route ridership increased by 6.9% year to date with Brown north and Red west showing the biggest increase. The number of drivers reporting late to work has increased as well as the number of complaints. With higher ridership, increased complaints are typical; however, staff will be reviewing policies and practices to determine if improvements can be made.

Dial-A-Ride ridership decreased by 6.3% because of the harsh winter and the expenses increased with the higher fuel prices.

Moonlight Express ridership continues to increase, 1.6% as well as expenses associated with the increased ridership.

Trustee Madden asked if CyRide has access to data to see how CyRide measures up to other comparable transit systems. He requested that this be brought back to the transit board at a later date.

Because CyRide's fleet of buses is older and requires additional maintenance, CyRide is attempting to identify sufficient local dollars to purchase used buses in good repair to reduce the older, higher maintenance vehicles.

## TRANSIT DIRECTOR'S REPORT JULY 2008:

Director Kyras explained the projects for which state grant funding was approved: Infrastructure (RIIF) requested and received \$512,000

Grant applications funded for second year were:

- JARC – Brown Route Continuation requested \$24,770 and received \$24,770
- JARC – Yellow route continuation requested \$2,383 and received \$2,383
- JARC – E. 13<sup>th</sup>/New Mall was not funded because the new mall is too far into the future nor was the New Freedom grant application for two hybrid buses for E. 13<sup>th</sup>/New Mall because FTA is currently reviewing prior year's request for CyRide buses.
- The Ames to Iowa City Medical transportation requested \$82,159 and was allocated \$82,159.
- Total dollar amount requested was \$857,214 of which \$621,312 was allocated.

Director Kyras explained that after the June 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting approving a bike rack demonstration project, CyRide had the opportunity to accelerate this project by purchasing and installing bike racks on the four new buses being delivered in July. When the new buses are put in service in August, CyRide staff will design a program and a brochure to educate the public on how to load and unload bikes. Press releases and information on the CyRide website will be available to assist with the bike program as well.

The marketing plan, the bus stop improvement plan, as well as the facilities study should be completed and will be brought to the board in August.

“Dump The Pump” was a success with ridership increasing 29%. CyRide staff felt the response was excellent and a fare free project should be considered in some form in the future. Board members asked if data had been collected as to which group increased the ridership - young professional, ISU employees, students, etc. Staff indicated that ridership had not been tracked to provide this type of information, but that the largest increase occurred during the evening. Further discussion among board members on this topic continued as follows: whether this was the time to proceed with Fare Free and if a demonstration were to be held, when would be a good time. It was discussed that summer time would be less costly when students are absent, but during the school year everyone could participate. Transit Board members felt the purpose of the Fare Free program would be to gain community ridership as student ridership already exists. Board members further stated that they believed that the focus would be on certain areas of the community which could provide opportunities to increase ridership. It was discussed that if CyRide proceeds with a demonstration project, it should have the resources to handle the ridership. There was concern raised about where these resources would come from.

As part of the fare free discussion, the board and staff discussed CyRide priorities for the next year in light of the number of projects that were being requested. Director Kyras indicated that there were a number of requests for new programs (vanpools, Ames to Des Moines service, Fare Free, school bus coordination) and that all could not be studied and recommendations provided to the board in the next year.

Therefore, she indicated that she would bring this topic back to the board in August to help prioritize CyRide's activities.

**DIRECTOR PERFORMANCE EVALUATION:** Trustee Schainker coordinated details on Director Kyras' performance evaluation and applauded her for the excellent job she has done this past year focusing on many projects. He indicated that there are eight factors included in the performance evaluation and Trustee Schainker added a 9<sup>th</sup> factor to include the new building project. Trustee Schainker made a motion to increase Director Kyras current salary \$106,336 to \$112,588, a 6% increase. Trustee Madden seconded the motion. (Motion carried unanimously.)

**CYRIDE/AMES SCHOOL DISTRICT COORDINATION REQUEST:** At the last City Council meeting a request was made of the CyRide Board to explore coordinating bus service with the Ames School District. It was decided that Director Kyras will look into this planning study and talk with the superintendent of the Ames School District to see if the Ames School Board has any interest in this idea.

**SET TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING:** Next transit board meeting will be held on August 28 at noon.

**ADJOURN:** Meeting adjourned at 8:23 a.m.