

AMES TRANSIT AGENCY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

AMES, IOWA

January 30, 2008

The Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees met January 30, 2008, 7:30 a.m. at City Hall Conference Room 135. President Goodman called the meeting to order at 7:40 a.m. Trustees in attendance: Ayers, Anders, Madden and Schainker.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Trustee Madden made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 10, 2007 Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees meeting. Trustee Ayers seconded. (Motion carried unanimously).

PUBLIC COMMENTS: No public comments.

TWO MILLION MILE SAFE DRIVER AWARD – John Botten: Agenda item deferred until end of meeting.

CYRIDE BOARD OF TRUSTEES ELECTION: Director Kyras explained that the position of Vice President is vacant due to the graduation and departure of Chris Hynak. The transit board can elect a current Trustee to fill this position or wait until Chris Hynak's replacement is approved by City Council sometime in February.

Trustee Madden made a motion to nominate Trustee Ayers as the Vice President. Seconded by Trustee Anders. (Motion carried unanimously.)

FY2009 BUDGET AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM: Director Kyras reviewed the FY2009 Budget and Capital Improvement Plan presented at the December transit board meeting. The budget adopted by the transit board will be included with the City Budget at the City Council meeting.

The recommended FY2009 budget would increase by 6.2% over the amended 2008 budget and would include:

- Adding service to the Green route Sunday mornings per public request
- Reinstating the Silver route from the "S" Lot on Sunday evenings
- Adding one part-time dispatcher
- Adding one part-time maintenance clerk
- Adding one full-time receptionist

Expenses are expected to increase for the operations division (fixed route and Dial-A-Ride) by \$326,157. This is due to higher fuel prices anticipated to increase from the current average of \$2.61 to \$2.90, an increase of \$188,000; the cost of the adding service, \$11,953; the increase in salary and benefits, \$133,670; and the staffing changes adds an additional \$33,700 to the FY09 operations expenses.

The revenues are expected to increase 12.2%. Changes in revenues include: higher federal funding, \$546,502, an increase of 61.6%, and a decrease in state funding by 5.5%, \$30,000 lower, farebox revenue is projected to increase 9.6%, \$24,300 and other revenues are expected to increase due to additional training dollars, advertising dollars and higher interest earnings.

Fund balances are projected to decline slightly due to capital budget expenditures in FY09. The GSB Trust Fund deficit is expected to improve and have a positive balance by FY10.

President Goodman expressed his concerns regarding the increases in the budget, and if the increases could be sustainable over time. Director Kyras believes they would be sustainable as ridership is higher and is anticipated to stay higher which provides CyRide with the maximum federal dollars. She also indicated that a majority of the increases were needed to replace staffing reductions made in previous years when ridership had been lower. Of particular concern was the need for more dispatching hours to cover direct oversight of the daily operations. Trustee Madden indicated enrollment figures at Iowa State are looking good as well and are expected to increase.

Director Kyras further explained one area of concern in future funding which should be only a one year funding concern. The Transit Intensive Cities program provides funding for cities less than 200,000 population who meet or exceed the average of at least one of six criteria when compared to cities over 200,000 population. CyRide staff received notification that CyRide lost one of the criteria with a corresponding reduction of federal funds of about \$125,000 for next year. CyRide has met five of the six criteria the last two years and expects to get the 5th criteria back next year as ridership dipped only the one year causing this loss in funding.

The board discussed future challenges and opportunities that would affect future budgets such as service to East Ames and the proposed Mall, Fare Free City Wide, and service to the Aquatic Center as CyRide staff had received several inquiries regarding service to the new facility. CyRide staff will be searching for grants to fund these routes.

The list for planned improvements for the CIP FY2009 – 2013 are 3 – 40 ft buses, 3-4 computers per year, \$50,000/year for shop equipment, \$50,000/year for bus stop improvements, AVL Technology in 2010 and 2011, and resurfacing the commuter lots in 2012.

Trustee Madden made a motion to approve the CyRide staff's recommendation to approve the FY2009 Budget as presented with service improvement option #2 (additional service and staffing changes) and the FY2009 – 2013 Capital Improvement Plan. Motion seconded by Trustee Anders. (Motion carried unanimously.)

PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (PTDP): Director Kyras explained she was providing information regarding the Passenger Transportation Development Program for the transit board but that no action needed to be taken by this board. The results; however, would have a significant impact on CyRide's ability to receive federal and state funding. A new federal requirement affecting transit systems was mandated last year called the PTDP and continues as an annual requirement each year. This federal requirement directs Metropolitan Planning Organizations to develop coordinate transportation needs/services between transit providers and human service agencies. This requirement needs to

be completed before agencies are permitted to submit grant applications for Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC), New Freedom or 5310 funding opportunities.

Shari Atwood, Transit Planner, and Director Kyras met with human service agencies to develop this plan. An on-line survey was completed and the two three results gathered from this survey of the 34 Transportation Developments Plan Needs Ranking were: bus vouchers & gas passes, service outside Ames to Iowa City and Des Moines. With this information, a project has been developed to address the need for service outside of Ames. Discussions have taken place with Heartland Senior Services and various local funding agencies to determine if this project was feasible. Trustee Anders asked if there were any possibilities of partnering with Jefferson/Trailways. Director Kyras indicated this would be difficult to do without adjusting their route and the many stops in small towns along the way. This project will be included in the plan, but additional conversations will need to take place within the community before a grant application is submitted.

MINI BUS PROCUREMENT/CONTRACT: Director Kyras explained that CyRide contracts with Heartland Senior Services (HSS) for services required under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The contract is for operating expenses only, not capital. This contractual relationship has been beneficial to both parties. However, Heartland was having difficulty with the fleet replacement needs. Therefore, the Capital Improvement Plan approved by the board included the purchase by CyRide of one vehicle to be leased to Heartland for use on the contractual service.

CyRide has been working with Ottumwa, Iowa (Region 15) as part of a statewide contract for minibuses and the procurement allows other agencies to purchase vehicles under the statewide contract. Therefore, the board was being asked to consider the purchase of a vehicle under this bid for lease to Heartland Senior Services. The contract between the two agencies is currently being drafted by the City's legal department and will be brought back to the board prior to releasing the bus to HSS.

Trustee Hynak made a motion to approve the purchase of one minibus under the Region 15 procurement of vehicles statewide. Trustee Schainker seconded the motion. (Motion carried unanimously.)

DMACC MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING: Director Kyras informed the transit board that CyRide had been contacted by a DMACC representative requesting service to the DMACC Hunziker facility which is currently near the end of CyRide's Gray route. DMACC representatives were concerned about liability and safety for students walking from the end point of Gray to the DMACC facility. In order for CyRide to accommodate their request, CyRide would have to turnaround on DMACC property. Therefore, this issue was referred to legal counsel to draft a Memorandum of Understanding between DMACC and the City of Ames holding the city and CyRide harmless from damage to their parking facility due to the weight of the buses driving through the parking lot and damaging it. In conversations with DMACC regarding this concern, they have indicated that they would take full responsibility for all repairs if needed to the DMACC parking lot. The board was asked whether they had any concerns about operating on private property and entering into an agreement regarding the use of their facility.

The consensus from board members was that this was a positive route change and that with the Memorandum of Understanding they felt comfortable that the liability risk had been addressed.

Trustee Madden made a motion to approve the service extension and Memorandum of Agreement on the #4 Gray route to operate onto the DMACC Hunziker complex. Motion seconded by Trustee Anders. (Motion carried unanimously.)

TRANSIT ADVERTISING ANALYSIS: Director Kyras explained that the existing contract for advertising on the outside of CyRide buses was due to expire at the end of April. CyRide realizes revenue of approximately \$66,000 per year, which is 51% of the sales. Before entering into another contract, staff prepared an analysis to determine if CyRide, over the years, had grown large enough to realize more revenue if this function were part of CyRide operations. All areas of advertising expenses and revenues were reviewed as presented in the board packet.

The board discussed the advantages and disadvantages of hiring staff in-house to sell advertising. One of the major concerns was the belief that it would be difficult to find and retain a qualified individual on a part-time basis to be able to increase advertising sales. Trustees requested staff to work with the advertising firm to encourage local merchants advertising and look at discounting their rates. The consensus from the board was to continue to contract at this time and review this issue at the end of the next contract.

Trustee Madden made a motion to begin the process for a three-year renewable contract, up to a maximum of five years, for the purpose of allowing the exclusive right to sell advertising on the interior and exterior of CyRide buses. Trustee Anders seconded the motion. (Motion carried unanimously.)

ALTERNATIVE FUELED VEHICLE ANALYSIS: Director Kyras provided information on alternative fueled vehicles in response to the City Council and the University's plan to support sustainability. The purpose of this agenda item was to gain board direction on the type of vehicles that CyRide should be purchasing in the future. The three main types of sustainable energy sources for buses are hybrid electric-diesel, compressed natural gas (CNG), and corn/soy-based fuels – biodiesel/ethanol. Advantages and disadvantages for each of the sources were presented in the board packet for board members review.

Based on the analysis, CyRide staff recommended to the board to begin introducing hybrid-electric technology into the fleet of large buses up to a maximum of 16 buses which is the number of vehicles that can be housed at CyRide's current facility. Further that light duty buses continued to be fueled with biodiesel and to purchase flex-fueled or hybrid cars to support the daily operations.

Trustee Schainker indicated that he would feel more comfortable in trying a couple of hybrid buses and testing these vehicles before committing to a certain direction for sustainable vehicles.

Director Kyras told the transit board that there are grants available to demonstrate this type of technology. Specifically, there is a new Power Fund, \$25 million available for the next four years, that is a possibility for funding a hybrid demonstration project. Director Kyras also explained the Urban Transit Consortium and CyRide's role in joining together with four other transit systems around the state to apply for a hybrid bus demonstration project. Specifically, twelve buses would be purchased with 2 buses for Ames. Director Kyras would be meeting with the Office of Energy Independence Director following this meeting to discuss this further. Funding for this purchase would be 90%.

TRANSIT DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- ▶ Construction is approximately 3 weeks behind and should be substantially completed by the third week in March. CyRide will give up one possible LEED certification point regarding a "blowout period" which would delay staff's move into the new offices by almost two months. The building is still being considered for silver LEED certification, but should be at least a certified building. CyRide staff is beginning to discuss ribbon cutting ceremony/open house for the facility. Suggested dates to explore were during the Iowa State University 150th wrap up/VEISHEA weekend; Business After Hours in August.
- ▶ Topics of discussion for the February meeting will be: Facilities Master Plan, New Charter Bus Regulations, and Fare Free discussion.
- ▶ CyRide received notification of a federal Triennial Review which a federal review required of transit systems every three years by an independent consultant. This review has been scheduled for April 16 – 17, 2008.

SET TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING: Transit board meetings were scheduled for February 20, 2008 at 9:00 a.m., March 26, 2008 at 9:00 a.m., and April 30, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. All meetings tentatively scheduled to be held in Conference Room 135 at City Hall.

ADJOURN: Meeting adjourned at 9:05 a.m.