

AMES TRANSIT AGENCY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

AMES, IOWA

January 29, 2009

The Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees met on January 29, 2009 at 4:00 p.m. in CyRide's conference room. The meeting was called to order at 4:07 p.m. by President Anders. Trustees in attendance: Anders, Schainker, Madden, Popken and Munoz. Absent: Trustee Hayek.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Trustee Popken made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 18, 2008 Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees meeting. Motion seconded by Trustee Madden. (Motion carried unanimously).

PUBLIC COMMENTS: No public comments.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES – VICE PRESIDENT ELECTION: CyRide received notification via e-mail from Trustee Hayek he resigned his position on the transit board effective January 19, 2009. With Trustee Hayek's resignation, this leaves the position of Vice President vacant that needed to be filled for the remainder of his term. President Anders asked for nominations from the floor.

Trustee Popken was nominated by President Anders. Trustee Schainker seconded the motion. (Motion carried unanimously.)

Jacob Wilson arrived at 4:10 p.m. and was introduced to the transit board by Director Kyras. Mr. Wilson will take Mitch Hayek's position as GSB Senator on the transit board following his approval by the City Council at the February 10, 2009 City Council meeting.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN: Director Kyras reviewed the Capital Improvement Plan that was distributed with the December board packet and indicated that no changes were made since the December meeting to the documentation presented today. It contains future capital plan purchases and improvements. Highlights for 2009/10 budgets were adding six 40' used buses, 1 Administration vehicle, facility repairs to the old wash bay and shop exhaust system, bus stop improvements, three – four computers, including a lap top, as well as shop equipment. Purchases planned for the remaining years of the plan will be refined as the year approaches.

During conversations regarding the Capital Improvement Plan, the board asked if CyRide would receive any benefit from the Federal Economic Stimulus Funding for these capital purchases. Director Kyras indicated that this was a separate board agenda item; however, a brief discussion ensued to help understand the changes in the capital bus purchases. She explained to the board the Iowa DOT's change in policy to allocate the funds instead of sub allocating to the transit systems. The Director indicated a concern that under the sub allocation

process CyRide should be receiving approximately \$1,800,000 which would purchase five to six buses, but was unsure how many buses CyRide would receive under the DOT allocation process as initial calculations indicated that CyRide would be just below the cut off to receive this funding. CyRide staff has expressed their concern to the DOT regarding this allocation.

Trustee Madden made a motion to adopt the Capital Plan as presented. Motion seconded by Trustee Munoz. (Motion carried unanimously.)

- **2009/10 BUDGET:**

Director Kyras explained that two items that were discussed in previous board meetings, Summer Fare Free and additional evening service to DMACC during the school year were not carried forward into the proposed budget included in the board packet. An adjustment in this year's budget will need to be made in order to balance next year's budget. Director Kyras walked the board through this change.

The existing 2008/09 budget will adjust fuel from \$3.48 per gallon to \$3.00 per gallon. This will increase the closing balance by \$148,000 in the current budget. This increased fund balance will allow for lower local share contributions in the FY2009/10 budget.

Director Kyras then detailed the 2009/10 budget which includes maintaining the current level of bus service as well as:

- adding two buses between 2:00 and 6:00 p.m. each weekday to alleviate overcrowding and buses running late and;
- a new route adding service to the Aquatic Center

In addition, the budget anticipates a 12% closing balance to help defray unanticipated expenses. The staff recommendation is asking for 5% across the board from the three funding partners. The result of this lower-than-anticipated local share will allow the GSB Trust Fund to grow by \$157,000 next year. Director Kyras explained that all other assumptions remained unchanged from the budget presented to the board at their December meeting.

Trustee Madden explained that the University is facing extensive budget cuts and there is no guarantee, due to the uncertainty of state funding, that it will be able to support this level of funding once their 2009/10 budget is completed. Following a lengthy discussion, Trustee Schinker pointed out all parties have to be flexible during these challenging economic times explained the budget can always be adjusted at a later date if the University is not able to meet the adopted funding level of 5%.

Trustee Popken made a motion to adopt the 2009/10 budget as presented to the transit board and a one time Summer Fare Free program if the City Council approves buying service for \$165,000. Motion was seconded by Trustee Munoz. (Motion carried unanimously.)

SATELLITE BUS FACILITY PRESENTATION: Director Kyras reviewed the scope of work that had previously been completed on the Satellite Bus Facility and the revised scope of work the board approved at the October 2008 meeting. CyRide staff, along with ISU and City staff, met with Adam Manuel from PB Americas to identify the space needs and possible sites for a satellite bus facility.

The current site, which is approximately 4.5 acres, does not allow adequate room for expansion and is land locked because of the ISU Cooling Towers, which would be too costly to move, as well as soccer fields and University Blvd. The study recommended the site be located on at least 10 – 12 acres, which is difficult to find in a prime location such as the current CyRide location. Ten sites were selected from all possible vacant land within the city and rated in the matrix presented in the board packet. Of the ten sites, two are potential location sites. A PowerPoint presentation was shown to the board which further discussed these sites.

Site E, located East of University Blvd. and south of Hwy. 30, meets a majority of the criteria developed for site review. Its challenges lie in the lack of utilities to the location, it is not on a paved road and its located just outside of the city limits. An additional challenge is its prime location within the ISU Research Park's expansion.

Site D is located on South Riverside Road across from Sigler Printing. This location is similar in size and desirability to Site E ; however it is on an arterial street and utilities are available. An additional challenge for this location is its less direct access to the center of Ames.

The remaining sites were briefly discussed.

Trustee Madden indicated his concern for Sites D and E as they were owned by ISU's Foundation and were not planned for a transit facility. He also indicated that assumptions regarding possible leasing of the land similar to CyRide's existing site would not possible. Trustee Schainker expressed concerns about taking land for the Research Park's expansion.

Director Kyras indicated that she was looking for direction from the Transit board regarding the future of CyRide's facility as federal funding opportunities could be available in the next several months. Discussion followed regarding the possibilities of remaining at the existing site, the undesirable bus parking existing today and what might be the most cost-effective use of \$21 million that was identified as the need for a satellite facility?

Trustee Schainker indicated that he would like to see more information on the existing site before considering dividing the operation. These included:

- Identifying the operating cost for 2 facilities/locations
- Determine if there would be adequate bus maintenance/storage if all parking was removed from the site.
- A financial plan identifying the local match needed to build a \$6 million portion of the building within the next 5 years as well as all other capital purchases. Long range planning (operations plus capital)

Trustee Popken departed at 5:15pm.

Because there has not been enough time for planning, Director Kyras suggested asking the congressional delegation for \$6 million to begin construction at either the existing site or a satellite location so that the transit system was in line for the funding and could begin addressing its space challenges.

In order for Director Kyras to meet the small window of opportunity to request funding through the Transportation Bill and to provide guidance for Director Kyras, Trustee Schainker made a motion for the transit board to give authority to Director Kyras to move forward with applying for \$6 million dollars in funding through the Transportation Bill. This funding would be allocated towards the satellite facility or for expansion at CyRide's existing location. However, Trustee Schainker clarified, because there are more questions to be answered and more discussion on the Satellite Bus Facility, the transit board is not committed to designating this money to this specific project. Motion was seconded by Trustee Madden. (Motion carried unanimously.)

VEHICLE PURCHASE: The five-year Capital Improvement Plan identifies the need for support vehicles for use to relieve bus drivers and administrative support. This plan also moves the transit system toward green vehicles and implementation of sustainable initiatives. In the 2009/10 budget year, the CIP identifies the purchase of a Toyota Prius. Because of the popularity of this vehicle and high fuel prices, the car has not been available for government purchase. However, due to lower fuel prices and the availability once again under the state contract, CyRide staff would like to purchase this vehicle six months earlier than planned as fuel prices are anticipated to increase.

Trustee Schainker made a motion to amend the 2009-2014 Capital Improvement Plan to include the purchase of a vehicle to replace existing vehicle #968 and to award procurement of the vehicle at this time. Motion seconded by Trustee Madden. (Motion carried unanimously.)

TRANSIT DIRECTOR'S REPORT – JANUARY 2009:

Highlights from the report were:

- Ridership continues to increase significantly with two of the highest ridership months CyRide has ever experienced, February and December, The year closed with a 7.5% increase in number of rides provided. The table enclosed noted a decrease in Orange route ridership which indicates passengers are walking to bus stops and riding the regular routes.
- Discussion with ISU staff, to jointly procure approximately 70% of its fuel (210,000 gallon) to achieve a level of comfort with fuel prices. Staff will bring recommendations to the transit board in the next few months.

SET TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING: Next transit board meeting will be held February 26th at 4:00 p.m. in the CyRide Conference Room.

ADJOURN: Meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.