

## AMES TRANSIT AGENCY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

AMES, IOWA

October 21, 2010

The Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees met on October 21, 2010 at 5:00 p.m. in Beardshear Hall, Conference Room 3150. President Anders called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m. Trustees in attendance were Anders, Schainker, Wacha, Choi and Pinegar. Absent: Trustee Madden.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – Seeing no additions or corrections to the minutes from the September 23, 2010 meeting, Trustee Pinegar made a motion to adopt the minutes as distributed. Trustee Choi seconded the motion. Ayes: 5, Nays: 0. (Motion carried unanimously.)

Trustee Madden arrived at 5:30pm.

**PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE:** Janelle Durlin, MICA, Jean Kresse, United Way of Story County, Rose Marie Scott, MICA, Deb Schildroth, Story County Community Services, and Nick Stull, Richmond Center. Human Service representatives attended to address the FY12 Service Change Option for service to Human Service Agency relocations.

**AMES AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATIVE:** Director Kyras explained to the board members who were not familiar with the AAMPO, this organization has an appointment representative from each planning organization to serve as a representative and CyRide's would share our interest in transit. Bob Anders had served as representative to the AAMPO board since August 2007 and because of another conflict he has on Tuesday nights, would like to have the transit board elect or consider another representative. The AAMPO meetings average four times a year from 6:30 – 7:00 p.m.

Trustee Pinegar made a motion to nominate Trustee Choi to replace Trustee Anders as the representative to the AAMPO. Motion seconded by Trustee Wacha. Ayes: Five; nays: 0. (Motion carried unanimously.)

**FY12 SERVICE CHANGE OPTIONS:** Director Kyras shared the service requests CyRide staff receive from the public and where significant change in ridership has occurred. This year, there are four options to present and was the reason for the Human Services sector attendance for this meeting.

All options begin with the baseline budget with next year dollars. The first three options are custom requests.

**Option 1** is request for evening service to DMACC Hunziker Center. Bus service began to the DMACC Center January of 2009. CyRide currently operates the #4 Gray route to this facility located near Hwy 30 and I-35 in the morning and afternoon. Students can arrive at class in the afternoon but have no access to service following evening classes.

Two additional trips to service DMACC at 6:05 and 9:05pm to accommodate evening service is annual cost estimate less revenue \$12,383.

**Option 2** is expanded service to Human Service Agency Relocations. The Human Services agencies (Richmond Center, Children and Family Resources, MICA and MICA Dental) have relocated to the S. 16<sup>th</sup> and High Street area. The #4 Gray route currently provides Service to this area, but also has a three-hour period when service does not operate during the day. These agencies serve low-income and disabled residents and are in need of transportation to these services during the day for their clients

The current service operates during the weekday between 7:30 – 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 – 5:00 p.m. This option provides three additional trips operating every 60 minutes to provide continuous service to the human service agencies during their hours of operation.

The annual cost estimate less revenue for Option 4 is \$33,800.

**Option 3** is a Blue Route Expansion. Since the Wal-Mart opening on S. Duff, ridership has increased significantly at the bus stop on S. 5<sup>th</sup> and Duff. This option would extend to accommodate Target customers as well as Wal-Mart and would allow patrons to deboard closer to these retail stores. This service request is the most requested service of any route.

**Option A** would operate Monday through Sunday 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. east of Duff Avenue onto South. 3<sup>rd</sup> and return on South 5<sup>th</sup>. South 3<sup>rd</sup> and South 5<sup>th</sup> streets were built to bus standards, but conversations with Target personnel will need to take place to see if this extension is possible and probable. The cost for this service is \$352,900. The cost is high because additional buses will be needed for the additional time to extend the route.

**Option B** is to improve the frequency of service. Blue route operates service at 20-minute intervals Monday through Saturday and 40-minute intervals on Sunday, but this option would increase the frequency on Sunday to 20-minute intervals. This would allow buses to stay on time by adding one bus to Sunday's and decreasing customers wait time. Service would be scheduled every 20-minutes from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. from the Friley bus stop to the S. 3<sup>rd</sup> and Duff bus stop. Service would remain at the 40-minute intervals during the other times of the day.

The annual cost estimate less revenue is \$19,800.

**Option C** is essentially the same as Option B except the 20-minute interval would extend to more of the route from North Grand Mall to South 3<sup>rd</sup> and South Duff stop. This option would service Schilleter Village.

The annual cost estimate less revenue is \$38,400.

Trustee Anders questioned the cost of Option A when adding only time to the schedule; appears to be an expensive fix and asked if the current schedule was that tight not to accommodate the additional time.

Trustee Wacha also questioned the cost of Option A. Tom Davenport, Transit Coordinator, explained the stoplights cut into the schedule and the buses lose time quickly when they wait at stoplights for a minute.

Trustee Pinegar asked what effect the Wal-Mart had on the schedule. Tom Davenport told the transit board members, ridership is anywhere from 72 up to 106 on a Sunday adding an extra bus on Sunday and moving from 40 – 30-minute headways. Only Option B adds a bus.

Trustee Schainker questioned the road structure by Target and whether they were built to withstand the weight of the buses and would this extension be probable.

Trustee Schainker asked if the ridership on Sunday was consistent or if any surveys were completed providing documentation for the 20-minutes to 40-minute interval.

No surveys have been distributed, but could be initiated and results compiled quickly.

**Option 4** is a CyRide staff request. Increase the number of full-time weekend shifts by one each weekend day and reduce the part-time shifts by one. There are no full-time shifts only part-time shifts on Saturday and Sunday, which makes it difficult to fill these shifts. Drivers have commitments and do not want to give up their weekends.

The annual cost estimate less revenue is \$13,350, with \$9,000 of this covering insurance.

Janelle Durlin addressed the board asking for the board's consideration to expand service to accommodate the relocation of the Human Service agencies. Speaking on behalf of Rosemary Scott, MICA, and herself, some of the human service agencies have moved or in the process of completing their move to S. 16<sup>th</sup> Street. Our agencies serve 1400 families for the WIC program as well as 40 patients a day for the Story County Dental Clinic.

Nick Stull, Richmond Center, requested increase service to the area to accommodate low-income families, 100 – 120 families, who apply for the LIHEAP program for energy assistance. The food pantry is to be relocated to this area and their service is open from 8:30 – 4:30 p.m. with the highest concentration of families from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Trustee Anders questioned the stoplights in this area for pedestrians to cross so the clients could use other routes to this area. The human service agency personnel told the transit board; many of their clients are single parent or disabled, and it is dangerous for their clients to cross at the stoplights on South Duff. Tom Davenport told the transit board, there is no southbound near side stop for CyRide.

Nick Stull from the Richmond Center asked about service on the Yellow route from City Hall.

Trustee Madden arrived at 5:30 p.m.

Tom Davenport told Nick Stull and the transit board, the Gray route is the best, safest, and best level of service. Yellow route is accessible from the Red route, but not enough time to transfer to the Gray route at S. 16.

Jean Kressee, United Way of Story County, sees the clients using the Gray route easier. Director Kyras pointed out; in the future, the Gray route will have more demand with future development along S. 16<sup>th</sup> Street.

Trustee Pinegar asked, from the four options presented and given the tough budget year, if the CyRide staff had a priority on the options presented.

Trustee Kyras view Option #2 – expanded service to the Human Service Agency Relocation or #3 – Blue Route Expansion – option A. Tom Davenport, supported her choices but would support #3 – option C instead of option B. Mr. Davenport felt the Gray route service is very, very poor and this option would move the service up to poor.

A lengthy discussion followed on probably two more years of difficult funding and discussing funding for the additional service, any sort of increase will be scrutinized. Nick Stull, Richmond representative, would see a cost savings to clients who struggle with mental health and struggle financially with service to the Human Service Agency campus plus the potential for growth and increased ridership to this location.

Trustee Anders was concerned with the safety of the clients crossing at S. 16<sup>th</sup> to reach the WIC, Dental Clinic, and LIHEAP program on High Street, but thought clients will travel where services are located.

The added service will come with a cost and the options are to place this service into the budget and the human service agencies thanked the transit board for giving them the opportunity to express their concerns and offer their suggestions and are grateful the transit board is considering additional service. Trustee Anders recommended the Human Services staff be knowledgeable with educating their clients on using the CyRide bus service.

**DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICTY CHANGE:** Director Kyras informed the transit board, the revised Drug and Alcohol policy was presented and approved by the transit board during the September 14, 2010 following the drug audit completed in June. Since that approval, a revision by the USDOT to increase the number of controlled substances transit systems must test for from five to six. Policy attached indicates the six locations throughout the policy that were changed to adopt the USDOT regulations of testing.

**STATE OF GOOD REPAIR GRANT PROJECT:** CyRide staff applied for a nationally competitive grant directed by the Federal Transit Administration for the purchase of 10 buses to replace existing buses that were 23-37 years old and scheduling software. CyRide received notification we received the award of \$3,688,000 from this program. Director Kyras expressed some issues the staff attempted to work through with state and federal officials upon notification of this award, but did not have much success.

CyRide will receive full funding for ten buses and the scheduling software as well as one bus from the IDOT, which was previously approved in the 2009 statewide earmark. The State of Good Repair cumulative local match will be \$432,000, 90% federal funding, 10% local match; the additional bus approved has an 83% federal funding and 17% local match. This would not have a negative impact on the closing balance.

According to the Congressional delegation, only the buses were funded, not the scheduling software. However, Federal Transit Administration in Kansas City believes it is fully funded but was not listed in the description because most of the funding was for buses and, therefore only noted the buses. CyRide staff is confident this includes the scheduling software, but will not be sure if funds for this software are available for another two months.

The issue that concerns CyRide is Cedar Rapids and Dubuque were awarded grants as well as the State of Iowa. Since the award, the State of Iowa has changed their original policy that has been in place from 2002 until now October 8, 2010. The original policy from a transit system being limited to a certain number or percentage of its fleet being eligible for replacement under a statewide grant for five years even if it received an individual award. With the new policy in place as of October 8, 2010, transit systems will not be eligible for any buses on the statewide list the first year of their award and would have an equivalent amount of buses removed permanently, from the top of its list.

The impact is punishing CyRide and would have two of our buses that are 20 years old, taken off the list permanently. This means 10 buses were funded in CyRide's grant and 12 would be taken off the statewide list. If these two buses are funded through additional earmarks, the IDOT would take two more buses off the list so that CyRide would always, from this point forward, have two buses in which there was no way they could receive funding from any source other than 100% local dollars, which relates to the \$392,000 at today's cost. Director Kyras has and is trying to communicate the impact to IDOT representative, the policy that was effective as of October 8, 2010, can or is willing to modify it in light of the impact.

A lengthy discussion followed between transit board members requesting clarification, explanation, and questioning the effect to CyRide that reflects CyRide receiving zero buses from the statewide list includes CyRide's top 10 buses as well as 2 buses purchased from Iowa City with two buses being replaced through local match with an outlay of approximately \$800,000. The current policy permanently removes bus number 966 and 964 from the list.

Director Kyras asked if the transit board would support drafting a letter to the Director, Nancy Richardson, asking her to review the policy that was effective October 8, 2010.

Trustee Wacha made a motion to support Director Kyras to draft a letter on behalf of the transit board appealing the change to the IDOT statewide policy effective October 8, 2010 permanently removing vehicles from the statewide list. Trustee Schainker seconded. Ayes: 6; Nays: 0. (Motion carried unanimously.)

**TRANSIT DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Director Kyras told the transit board labor negotiations have begun and will affect the budget. Ten of the 16 items that are under negotiations were CyRide's. At the top of the list is premium pay for MXL and IPERS .

Intermodal Facility Update bidding process to begin October 26 with award December 15, 2010; contractor mobilization beginning by the first of the year.

Ridership increased 3.5% in September with Red route increases slowing, Orange route increasing, and Brown route increasing to the Somerset area and Blue route showing the healthiest increase in ridership. Visuals included showed ridership trends.

URS will attend the next transit board meeting providing adjustment to the smaller options providing circulation at the current facility.

**TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING:** November 18, 2010 at 5:00 p.m. A room will be secured in City Hall, if possible.

**ADJOURN:** Meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

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Robert Anders, President

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Joanne Van Dyke, Recording Secretary