

## AMES TRANSIT AGENCY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**AMES, IOWA**

**January 19, 2012**

The Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees met on January 19, 2012 in CyRide's Conference Room. President Anders called the meeting to order at 5:18 p.m. Trustees in attendance were Anders, Schainker, Vander Velden, and Gerdes. Absent: Trustees Wacha and Madden.

President Anders welcomed GSB's new appointment to the Transit Board, Rachel Gerdes. Trustee Gerdes' appointment replaces Anna Fox, GSB Senator, who resigned from the GSB to focus on her studies.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Trustee Vander Velden made a motion to approve the December 6, 2011 minutes from the Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees Meeting. Trustee Schainker seconded the motion. (Ayes: Four. Nays: None) Motion carried.

**FY12/13 BUDGET PROPOSALS:** Director Kyras recapped the FY12/13 budget proposals presented to the Board of Trustees in December. She also indicated that she had had the opportunity to meet with new Board Member Gerdes to bring her up-to-date on the budget and the agenda. She indicated that there were no changes from the budget proposals presented in December. She indicated that she had been informed of the proposed percentage reduction in federal funds for the following budget year, 2013-2014, could be a 9.1% reduction in federal funding. She indicated that action taken in November on the FY12 Transportation Appropriations Bill increased transit funding by .2% for the 2012-2013 budget.

To recap, she indicated that there were two options provided to the Transit Board. The first option reflected a baseline increase with City and ISU funding at 7% and GSB at 9% with a closing balance of 9%. She indicated the higher GSB amount was due to the student's portion of the fare increase.

Option 2 is baseline along with two service reductions: three holiday services and the last trip on the Gold route. It included the same funding from the local entities, but increased the closing balance to 10%.

Staff's recommendation is Alternative #2 to reduce the two services leaving a closing balance of 10%, as it will put CyRide in a better position to address the next year's federal funding reductions.

Trustee Wacha arrived at 5:20 p.m.

Trustee Wacha asked if CyRide had received comments regarding the fare increase after its implementation. Director Kyras indicated that they had not received phone calls or emails, but that CyRide drivers had indicated that customers were commenting to them about the difficulty of the increase. President Anders indicated that drivers were being polite and courteous, under difficult situations, giving amnesty to customers who were not aware of the change.

Trustee Wacha made a motion to adopt Alternative #2 to reduce service levels next year allowing the closing balance to increase to an estimated 10%. Motion seconded by Trustee Vander Velden. (Ayes: Five. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

Trustee Madden arrived at 5:25 p.m.

**FY12/13 – FY16/17 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN:** Director Kyras indicated that there were no changes to the Capital Improvement Plan as presented at the December Transit Board meeting. She indicated that the most important year was the first year as these projects would be implemented starting in July 2012. She indicated that the buses were funded through grants; and explained the shop and office equipment. Further, she indicated that the categories were annual recommendations. She also indicated that the bus stop improvements plan would begin to be implemented during the summer. After these purchases, the capital fund closing balance would be \$29,000 at end of the year.

Trustee Wacha inquired about the status of the vehicle tracking project. Director Kyras indicated that the RFP would be due the following week on January 27, 2012 and that after the final decision was made and the actual dollar amount known, CyRide staff would present the results to GSB and the Transit Board.

Trustee Wacha made a motion to approve the Capital Improvements Plan as presented. Motion seconded by Trustee Gerdes. (Ayes: Six. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

Trustee Anders asked about the CYROID application for smart phones. CyRide staff is familiar with the application, but has received complaints regarding its out-dated information.

**TRANSIT SCHEDULING SOFTWARE:** Director Kyras updated Transit Board members on the transit scheduling project. This technology software is a scheduling task Tom Davenport, CyRide's Transit Coordinator, currently completes with an Excel spreadsheet. However, with CyRide's growth, this task has become cumbersome and lends itself to errors. She indicated that CyRide is the only urban transit system in Iowa that does not have transit-specific scheduling software. The scheduling software will be funded 80% by the State of Good Repair Grant with a budget of \$200,000.

Tom Davenport released the Request for Proposals (RFP) on October 31, 2011 and received four bids on November 30, 2011. The field was then narrowed from four bids to three: INIT Innovations in Transportation, Inc., Schedule Master's, Inc., and Trapeze Group. CyRide staff invited the three companies to demonstrate their product to CyRide and the City of Ames Information Technologies department so that the group could gain a better understanding of each product.

Following the demonstrations, CyRide staff completed an evaluation based on technical merit and Best-And-Final-Offer pricing. INIT Innovations in Transportation, Inc. received the highest combined rating of 3.96 on a scale of 1 – 5, based on the final pricing and their product's capabilities.

INIT proposed an option called, "WebComm", which is very beneficial internally to communicate information to the drivers. As the base product was under the total budget of \$200,000, staff was recommending the purchase of this option as well. This option would enable drivers to go on-line internally, request vacation time-off, and download run sheets. Director Kyras indicated that the annual software maintenance fee for the recommended package and option would be \$31,476.86 annually beginning one year after implementation, when the warranty expired. This expense will be included in future operating budgets.

Staff's recommendation is to approve award to INIT Innovations in Transportations, Inc. for transit scheduling software for an amount not-to-exceed \$180,481.71, contingent upon Legal Counsel Approval of a contract.

Trustee Wacha asked Director Kyras for more information regarding the benefits of the transit scheduling software and inquired as to whether it would directly benefit the customer. Director Kyras explained that it is an internal program, but that it allowed for accurate, efficient scheduling of CyRide buses and drivers. Mr. Davenport added that the problem with using an Excel spreadsheet was that if a formula was incorrect, then the problem would escalate throughout the scheduling process. Director Kyras indicated that scheduling was more of an art than a science and that Mr. Davenport had perfected the art over the years. She indicated that purchasing the software package would better ensure accuracy of the work and assist new schedulers in the future to complete the task.

Trustee Wacha asked whether the software was compatible with the vehicle tracking software. Director Kyras indicated that staff had intentionally begun the purchase process for the scheduling package before the vehicle tracking technology, as it would utilize the database from the scheduling package. She said that this compatibility would be a requirement for the successful vehicle tracking vendor.

She further indicated that this product is expected to benefit the dispatchers by alerting them if a driver does show up for their run. With the current process, dispatchers might not be aware of a “No Show” until it was time for the run to begin. Tom Davenport also stated that the program has the capacity to expand as CyRide grows. He also indicated that the software package would automate the payroll function, which the current payroll process CyRide uses does not.

Board members asked how CyRide staff would train the bus drivers. Director Kyras indicated that the INIT proposal included driver training. Tom Davenport indicated that CyRide would install the WebComm software option in two stages. The first stage would be installed in house on workstations so drivers could begin to feel comfortable with the program and then it could be expanded to be accessed from computers outside CyRide through a password-protected log-in.

Trustee Madden made a motion to approve award to INIT Innovations in Transportation, Inc. for Transit Scheduling software in the amount not-to-exceed \$180,481.71, contingent upon Legal Counsel Approval of contract. Motion seconded by Trustee Gerdes. (Ayes: Six. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

**2012-2013 FUEL CONTRACT:** Director Kyras provided board members with a history on CyRide’s fuel contract experiences. She indicated that the proposal before the transit board would be the fourth fuel contract CyRide had entered into with the first year showing a savings of \$35,000. The second year experienced a \$5,000 increase in fuel expenses and the results for the third year or current year at approximately a \$10,000 savings. CyRide switched to this type of purchasing arrangement because of the volatile fuel market in 2007/2008. During that period, prices increased from \$2.00 to \$4.00 per gallon in a short period of time. Fuel contracts are purchased for a two-month period with a minimum of 42,000 gallons of fuel in this time period. CyRide's current fuel contract expires at the end of March and now is a good time to enter into another contract before farmers begin spring fieldwork, which increases the price of fuel contracts.

The process is different for purchasing fuel under a contract. Bids for fuel need to be accepted immediately upon receipt, which does not allow time for CyRide staff to come back to the Transit Board or City Council for approval. Previously, CyRide’s Transit Board of Trustees established a guideline committing to contracting no more than 70% of CyRide’s fuel usage.

The proposal before the Transit Board is to contract for up to five, two-month contracts, not to exceed \$735,000. This represents the budgeted price per gallon of \$3.50 in the 2012-2013 budget for the amount of fuel purchased for these five months.

Trustee Schainker made a motion to approve up to 5, two-month fuel contracts at a total price not to exceed \$735,000 and accept fixed rates + mark-up/deduct for the remainder of CyRide's fuel purchases. Motion seconded by Trustee Vander Velden. (Ayes: six. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

**2012—2013 DIAL-A-RIDE CONTRACT:** Director Kyras noted that in the fall of 2011, Heartland Senior Services (HSS) notified CyRide of their request to terminate Dial-A-Ride service by the end of the month as they believed that the contract was not generating sufficient funding to cover expenses. CyRide staff held several meetings to identify costs and revenues for this service and Tom Davenport worked with Heartland Senior Services' Auditor concerning the cost analysis. At the last meeting, it was determined that the current contract was generating sufficient revenues; however, HSS indicated that they did not want to extend the contract after June 30, 2012.

Because CyRide is federally funded, it must follow the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act to provide complementary fixed-route transit service for people physically unable to ride CyRide. CyRide has contracted with HSS for these services for the last seven years. CyRide has received no official information from HSS, but through the City of Ames ASSET process, has learned that HSS has budgeted \$175,000 from the DAR contract during the 2012-2013 budget year. This year, the contract is estimated to generate \$155,000. The \$175,000 cost would be a 13% increase and exceed the 3% increase allowed in an extension of the current contract.

Director Kyras indicated that there are two options for the Transit Board to consider - postpone a decision on extending the contract until closer to the end of the budget year or the transit board can cancel the contract effective June 30, 2012, based on HSS's desire last fall and the increase required for the next budget year, and distribute a new Request For Proposal to operate Dial-A-Ride services for the 2012-2013 budget year. She indicated that HSS would still have the opportunity to bid for the service.

Alternative #1, to cancel the contract and rebid the service, is Director Kyras' recommendation. She believes that there are bidders that could provide this service for CyRide. Both HIRTA and Boone County have indicated an interest. There could be two or three bidders.

CyRide receives federal funding for the provision of Dial-A-Ride service, as distributed by the Iowa DOT. CyRide is not eligible to receive federal funding if it directly operates this service; therefore, \$120,000 to \$130,000 would need to come from CyRide's budget if it were to directly operate Dial-A-Ride service. Trustee Schainker asked what the total cost might be if it were rebid. Director Kyras indicated that she cannot predict if the cost would be higher or lower; however, she indicated that she was aware that Boone County's cost had decreased while ridership had increased in the last several years under a new Director.

Trustee Madden made a motion to proceed with formally notifying Heartland Senior Services of CyRide's desire to terminate the existing Dial-A-Ride contract and prepare a Request for Proposal for this service to be completed in the spring of 2012. Motion was seconded by Trustee Gerdes. (Ayes: Six. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

Trustees asked several questions about the Dial-A-Ride expenses and revenues under the current contract. Director Kyras indicated that CyRide as well as City of Ames staff were having difficulty in indentifying actual costs. She indicated that HSS had reported to HIRTA that HSS's transportation program had made a profit of \$30,000 in the first quarter of the current budget year.

**MARY GREELEY MEMORADUM OF UNDERSTANDING:** Director Kyras received an e-mail from Mary Greeley's Emergency Coordinator asking for a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the hospital's emergency transportation needs. CyRide provides this type of services on an informal, as-needed basis to the community when an emergency declaration is made by the Mayor. Hospital officials indicated that they would need a formal agreement. Director Kyras indicated that the agreement would need to state the restrictions placed upon it by federal charter regulations and that it would indicate CyRide's standard published rate of \$80 an hour for services outside its regular service level.

Trustee Madden questioned whether the contract language requested by the hospital made emergency transportation a higher priority than CyRide services. He indicated that CyRide would need to fulfill its obligations first, and then could provide other services to the greatest degree possible. Trustee Madden indicated that language indicating this priority needed to be included in the contract. Specifically, he suggested clarification to the language indicating meeting CyRide's daily service levels requirements first as determined by the Transit Director. Director Kyras also indicated that the City Attorney's office had reviewed the contract.

Trustee Madden made a motion to authorize the Transit Director to move forward with the Memorandum of Understanding with modifications indicating the priority of regular transit service as determined by the Transit Director. Trustee Gerdes seconded the motion. (Ayes: six. Nays: None.)

**Bus Shelter Design:** Director Kyras explained to the Transit Board members that it had solicited assistance from an advertising firm to design the new look for bus shelters. She reminded the board that the Trustees had approved a contract in March 2011 with Columbia Equipment Company to purchase new bus shelters for replacement of existing shelters that were in poor condition and for shelters at new bus stop locations. Funding for this project has been secured through state grants, in turn funded with federal dollars at 80% of the cost.

CyRide contracted with Trilux Marketing firm to design new shelters and, along with a team of ISU and CyRide staff, numerous designs were presented and a basic design was agreed upon.

Director Kyras indicated that the new design was superimposed at two locations: Lincoln Way in front of Wallaby's restaurant and Bessey Hall on the ISU Campus. The design would use solar panels wherever possible. The next step is to develop a 3-5 year implementation plan that would identify specific locations for improvement in each year. Currently, there is \$249,061 available for bus shelter improvements with an additional \$50,000 programmed each year.

Questions and discussion from board members:

- Board members questioned the possibility of advertising on the bus shelters. Director Kyras said CyRide could not control what the advertising says and therefore, could not legally control this advertising if it were incorporated into the bus shelters. Trustee Madden stated ISU has set policies for advertising on Campus.
- Trustee Wacha asked about the finish on the shelters and if they would need to be repainted. Director Kyras said this was currently being discussed with the manufacturer, but most likely it would be powder coated and would require minimal maintenance.
- Trustee Wacha inquired about where the bus tracking signs would be located in the shelters. Director Kyras indicated behind the front "CyRide" panel.
- Trustee Madden asked who would be in charge of cleaning the shelters. Director Kyras indicated that it was a combination of CyRide and ISU. She stated that CyRide cleaned the shelters several times a year, that ISU and CyRide emptied the trash and removed the snow.
- Trustee Madden asked if radiant heat could be installed in the shelters. Director Kyras explained there is no radiant heat in the current designs. Trustee Madden thought this might be something to consider at some locations where passengers have no place to go inside. CyRide staff will inquire from the manufacturer if radiant heat could be added to the bus shelters and what the cost would be.

Director Kyras indicated that no action was needed at this time and that staff will keep the Transit Board updated on the project.

#### **DIRECTORS REPORT:**

- Intermodal Facility project continues to progress well and is on schedule to meet the completion date of June 6. Three change orders were approved by the City Manager office in December, two credit, and one large cost change order.
- The status of CyRide's facility construction project was discussed. Director Kyras indicated that contract negotiations with URS had delayed the project, but should be completed in February. In the meantime, she indicated that CyRide

staff and FM Global held a preliminary meeting with the URS team to discuss flood protection goals and project criteria.

- Director Kyras provided board members with the status of the request for free youth bus fares. She indicated that a meeting would be held on Jan. 20<sup>th</sup> that would include CyRide staff, AMOS representatives, Sheila Lundt with the City of Ames, United Way and School District officials to begin this conversation.
- Director Kyras stated that preparations for the Intermodal Facility ribbon-cutting ceremonies had begun. She indicated that any expenses could be funded with the TIGER grant and that there was interest from federal officials and Congressmen to attend the event. She asked if board members had any thoughts on activities at the event that most likely be held between June 11 – 15. Suggestions were to have Mayor Ann Campbell, ISU President Steven Leath speak at the event. Other suggestions were to invite Campustown merchants, CAA. Coffee, cookies, possibly a band. Susan Gwiasda, City of Ames Public Information Officer, will assist CyRide with this event.
- CyRide will soon attain another milestone. Calculations indicate that in June of 2012, CyRide will reach its 100 millionth rider. Staff plans to celebrate this event by identifying the approximate time this will occur and acknowledge a rider. A press release will also be prepared.
- CyRide received a national ridership first. Based on 2010 statistics, CyRide achieve the #1 ranking for transit system's serving populations of 50,000 to 200,000 for the highest rides per capita - 106. In comparison, Boston carries 88 rides per capita and Washington, DC at 106. CyRide carried 5,377,155 passengers in 2010. A press release was distributed with this information.
- According to state and Congressional sources, another round of grant opportunities will be available in February or March of 2012. Another round of TIGER and State of Good Repair grants are scheduled. She indicated staff would prepare projects for discussion at the February board meeting for consideration. Transit Board members expressed interest in applying for the TIGER grant and possibly considering downtown Ames. Director Kyras reminded the board that transit needs to be involved with the project. It was discussed that this would be a positive to the downtown community district, but creates additional CyRide cost to modify routes. North of the railroad tracks is the recommendation so buses do not have to deal with train delays.

**TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING:** Thursday, February 16, 2012 at 5:15 p.m. at CyRide.

Meeting adjourned at 6:25 pm.

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Bob Anders, President

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Joanne Van Dyke, Recording Secretary