

AMES TRANSIT AGENCY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

AMES, IOWA

March 22, 2012

The Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees met on March 22, 2012 in CyRide's Conference Room. Trustees in attendance were Anders, Madden, and Gerdes. Absent: Trustee Schainker, Vander Velden and Wacha. As a result, President Anders indicated that a quorum was not met so that the meeting could not be called to order. He then asked for public comment while waiting for a quorum to be met.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Iowa State University students William Wadas and Michael Plantenburg, residents of the Towers Association and Hall Council, introduced themselves and expressed their concerns with the Brown route that serves Towers residents. Residents raised concerns about no bus service on the Brown route, #6 and #6A, between 6:00 and 7:00 a.m. and between 9:00 and 10:00 p.m. during Dead and Finals week of the ISU academic semesters. They indicated that professors do not follow normal schedules during these two weeks and circumvent University policies with earlier and later tests. This creates a problem for the Towers residents because, unless they walk, they are not able to arrive on Campus for a 7:00 a.m. exam. Students know that expanding service for #6 and #6A during the school year is not a priority, but the residents are asking only the final two weeks of each semester be expanded.

Director Kyras and Peter Englin, Director of Residence Halls, spoke with the Towers group earlier in the week and Peter Englin indicated a possibility to fund this additional service. The 7:12 a.m. pickup time from Storm and Welch would need to be adjusted to schedule arrival on Campus earlier.

Director Kyras reported that more research might be needed regarding the 7:00 a.m. exam times as other routes may also be affected. Following some research, it could be a possibility that additional trips may need to be added to the Gold and Cardinal Routes as well as other areas serving students. The board members discussed whether there would be enough students to justify the additional buses.

Director Kyras clarified the proposal discussed at the Towers Hall Council meeting indicating that the expansion of the Brown route was only for the start of service for Dead and Finals week each semester.

Trustee Madden indicated that he will have a conversation with Dr. David Holger, ISU Provost, who is familiar with the schedules and professors who might be holding classes or testing outside of the normal hours. He indicated that Mr. Holger would need specific details so that their office can follow-up and provide correct information to CyRide to proceed on the early morning extension of routes #6 and #6A. It appears the

morning is the most critical to begin service earlier on the Brown route at 6:42 or 6:45 a.m. For the spring semester, there was a consensus to proceed with adding trip(s) so students could arrive on campus before 7:00 a.m. CyRide will cover the costs estimated to be somewhere around \$1,000. CyRide will wait for clarification from the University if the other two routes, Gold and Cardinal, are affected and address this system-wide next fall.

A quorum was present when Mr. Vander Velden arrived and President Anders called the Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Trustee Gerdes made a motion to approve the Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees minutes of the February 16, 2012 Meeting. Trustee Madden seconded the motion. (Ayes: Four. Nays: None). Motion carried.

MPO REPRESENTATIVE ELECTION: Director Kyras pointed out this item was a carryover from the last meeting when this agenda item was tabled. The question that came up at the last meeting was whether a CyRide staff member could be appointed to this position. Director Kyras indicated that after research, she had found that the AAMPO Bylaws states that it must have one representative from the Ames Transit Agency. Further, she indicated that upon discussion of this issue with the AAMPO Director, he had indicated that it should not be a council member or CyRide employee, as they both have a conflict of interest. Trustee Gerdes will graduate from ISU in May and would not be able to take this position. Trustee Madden asked if Trustee Vander Velden would be available or willing to take the position. The meetings were moved to 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, before the start of the City Council meeting. Meetings are usually once a month between March and July with no meeting typically scheduled for the rest of the year. Trustee Madden will be present for the City Council meeting next Tuesday, March 27 for a different issue and indicated that would be willing to sit on the MPO meeting if Trustee Vander Velden is not able to represent the board next week.

A motion was made by Trustee Madden that Trustee Vander Velden be the Ames Transit Agency representative to the Ames Area Metropolitan Planning Organization. Seconded by Trustee Gerdes. (Ayes: Four. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

INTERMODAL CHANGE ORDER #25 APPROVAL: Director Kyras referenced the updated list of change orders approved to date and Change Order #25, which is the next change order that puts the total dollar amount of these changes above the \$200,000 threshold, requiring Transit Board and City Council approval. The change order #25 addresses the inclusion of floor drains and trap primers and is to be included in Pay Application #13.

Trustee Madden made a motion to approve change order #25 to Weitz Company for an additional \$2,500 for a floor drain trap. Motion seconded by Trustee Vander Velden. (Ayes: Four. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

INTERMODAL FACILITY TESTING SERVICES ADDITIONAL COST: Director Kyras referenced the April 2011 Transit Board approval of a contract with TEAM Services for soils and concrete testing, as well as inspection services for the Intermodal Facility, which included a not to exceed amount of \$60,177.95. When the project began, it was believed the Weitz Corp. would ensure the post-tensioning was accurately constructed. As the construction proceeded, the project team decided this would require an independent inspection of the system and Team Service could complete this at an estimated dollar amount of \$11,640.60. The action requested is for approval to increase the not-to-exceed amount to \$71,758.55 to complete the additional testing. Director Kyras affirmed there is more than \$350,000 funds in unspent project funds to fund this contract increase.

Trustee Madden affirmed that the testing of the cables and long-term maintenance testing for the structure is essential, recommending its completion and increasing the Ames Intermodal Facility contract with Team Services, Inc.

Trustee Madden made a motion to approve increasing the Ames Intermodal Facility contract with Team Services, Inc. from a not-to-exceed limit of \$60,177.95 to \$71,758.55 for the addition of post-tensioning inspection services. Seconded by Trustee Gerdes. (Ayes: four. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

VEHICLE TRACKING UPDATE: This item is informational only for the transit board to provide an update on the status of the vehicle tracking system project. Director Kyras provided background information regarding the project last year and indicated that a formal Request for Proposal (RFP) was completed in December with six RFP's received at the end of January. From that collection of bidders, the field was narrowed to three firms.

CyRide staff, City IT personnel, and the GSB viewed demonstrations from each of the three finalists and, based on project criteria such as the strength of their technology product and its price, recommend NextBus as the vendor. This firm had the highest score, lowest price based on a three-year cost analysis, and provides the strongest passenger information system.

CyRide is in the process of reaffirming the Government of Student Body's commitment to this program and if they wish to move forward with a financial commitment for three years. If confirmed, CyRide staff anticipates requesting transit board consideration of the project in April as well as the City Council.

The project could potentially begin in May with a 14-week window for completion of its installation, with the possibility of having it completed by the time ISU begins their fall semester. This purchase would include the base system, signs for two locations, and monitors in the mobile buses so that they can observe and assist buses. The Kildee and Student Services locations were selected for the signs. Director Kyras indicated that no action was needed at the March meeting.

CYRIDE GROWTH PREDICTION: Director Kyras shared information CyRide staff had developed regarding the impact of an expected increase in enrollment at ISU. She indicated that this analysis was based upon a prediction of 5,000 additional students in the next two year period.

She indicated that staff believes it is critical to examine this impact at this time as CyRide is struggling with having an adequate operating budget at a time when the GSB Trust Fund balance continues to grow. The additional pressure placed on it by increased enrollment could have a significant impact on CyRide's ability to meet its daily demand for service beginning as early as fall 2012. She indicated that with the possibility of up to 5,000 additional students over the next two years, it is important that CyRide plans well in advance so it can prepare to have enough drivers and buses to handle the increased ridership.

Director Kyras indicated that she had had an opportunity to discuss this topic with Trustees Vander Velden and Gerdes prior to the meeting. Further, she compared the current situation to the rapid increase in ridership experienced when ISU students went Fare Free. Additional buses were purchased and additional routes were created when the substantial growth happened. She explained that staff sees two challenges, the Trust fund which continues to grow and is being unused, and CyRide's operating budget struggles. With substantial ridership increases over the last five years, CyRide does not have the capacity on its buses to absorb additional ridership. She indicated that the actual enrollment numbers will not be known until the fall when it occurs, but that CyRide is working toward a progressive solution. She indicated that staff had begun the study by looking at ISU's enrollment and CyRide ridership over the past seven years. CyRide has increased ridership by 39% at a time when enrollment increased 16.1%. Therefore, enrollment increases have had an exponential impact on CyRide's ridership.

Further, she indicated that over the last three years as ridership has increased, the number of peak buses has remained the same, indicating that the buses are fuller and currently lack the capacity for more riders.

She indicated that of the 5.8 million rides, 89% represent student ridership, equating to over 5.1 million rides. Therefore, every student currently enrolled at ISU generates an average of 173 rides each school year. An additional 5,000 students would generate another 865,000 rides, putting CyRide ridership at 6.6 million rides.

Director Kyras then explained the impact that these additional 865,000 rides would have on the number of buses and drivers CyRide would need to hire. Specifically, she indicated that, based on each bus currently providing 80,000 rides, 10 – 11 additional buses could be needed, but realistically, around eight buses due to the timing of the rides occurring throughout the day. She indicated that each peak hour bus requires 2.71 driver shifts, which equates to 16 – 30 additional drivers to operate these shifts.

She then explained what the cost of the additional buses and drivers as well as mechanical and operating staff could be. With eight more buses, she indicated that another mechanic, lane worker, operations supervisor, as well as another trainer would be needed. She indicated that used buses could be sought at \$75,000 per bus, refurbished. She indicated that the cost estimate also included the operation of these additional buses. She indicated that in total the cost, over two years, could be as high as \$1.8 million additional dollars needed.

She also explained the impact that more buses would have on CyRide's bus storage facility. She stated that six buses were currently stored outside overnight as the facility was full and, with completion of the expansion project with the capacity for 11 more vehicles, it could be full when it is completed, leaving several buses still parked outside.

Director Kyras then detailed CyRide's financial capacity to accommodate this potential growth. She indicated that staff had looked at local funding generated over the last seven years and found that it had averaged an increase of 5%. Projecting this level of increase forward two years, indicates a substantial gap in funding to support the larger operations and capital needs.

Director Kyras indicated that each operating and capital budget reflects current levels of operations at anticipated costs the following year. With increased enrollment and additional student fees generated, the additional funds, needed above the amount to match the City and ISU contributions, flows into the GSB Trust Fund, not the budget. The reality is that when more demand is created through higher ISU enrollment, CyRide does not see an increase in funding – it is placed in the GSB Trust Fund under current agreements. She indicated that projecting this increase out through 2014-15 would see the Trust Fund increase to around \$2.5 million.

Staff as looked at how this can be solved allowing additional buses to be placed in service when enrollment increases. She indicated that staff had developed one possible solution by capping the amount of additional dollars placed in the Trust Fund each year at 1%. Specifically, if growth in enrollment is higher than 1%, the remaining increase in fees could be held in the operating budget to provide additional services or buses. She explained the concept using the 2011-2012 increase of 4% as an example. Under this scenario, \$37,566 would be transferred to the trust fund (1%) and approximately \$112,000 (3%) would stay in the operating budget.

Director Kyras asked for the transit board's thoughts or reactions and direction to move forward with this challenge. Trustee Madden indicated that the trust fund historically was started to even out funding when the number of students fluctuates, allowing the fund to pay for years when student fees do not generate sufficient dollars for their share of the local funding. He indicated that a decision needs to be made by everyone involved. Director Kyras indicated that the best solution would allow the funds to automatically stay in the operating budget when enrollment is significantly higher than the previous year. Further, she indicated that it was difficult to go through several approval processes in a timely manner in the fall, when the service needs to be on the street for students. Trustee Madden indicated that students approved the mandatory fee several years ago to hold down student costs. He indicated that this concept was not consistent with being concerned about student costs and lowering fees. He indicated that one-third of the students live in university housing, others live in the campus town and in areas of Ames and pay property taxes. He was concerned with the total amount of dollars students pay within the city.

Trustee Madden indicated that he could speak for the University, but that Trustee Schinker was not there to speak for the city. Trustee Madden is concerned with the structure of streets on campus because they are showing wear with the higher frequency of buses. He indicated that all costs need to be considered in a solution. He also indicated that residents on 16th Street and on the Brown route near Fareway need to be considered as well. Even on existing routes, the probability of adding additional buses needed to be considered.

Trustee Madden stated that he believed 31,000 was a reasonable enrollment number for the fall of 2012 and providing a level of service to meet the 1,300 increase in enrollment was reasonable. He also indicated that the budget process was not finished within the University and that the Fee Committee would be having more meetings. It is everyone's desire not to reduce services, but the exact extent of the enrollment increase is unknown until this fall. He believed that staff should concentrate on next

year first and then could begin discussing future years. Director Kyras indicated that staff would prepare information based on a 2012-2013 enrollment of 31,000 and bring the result of this analysis back to the Transit Board at their April 2012 meeting. She again stated that the current budget was built to provide service to the current 29,877 students at ISU, but that she did not believe it was sufficient for 31,000 students.

Trustee Madden mentioned the possibility of expanding class hours to utilize the facilities for evening classes. This would be beneficial to CyRide and would reduce the need for more buses and drivers.

DIRECTORS REPORT:

- Construction is progressing smoothly on the Intermodal Facility and the good news is that its completion date is moved forward to May 25, 2012, weather permitting. There are three claims on the bonds from subcontractors who have not been paid. This has been given to legal counsel. The retainage could also be used to pay them.
- Fuel contract – CyRide received four bids and Keck was low bidder. CyRide has accepted all the fuel contracts that it could, with the exception of June - July. CyRide budgeted \$3.50 for fuel and the price per gallon is lower for all the contracts. The fuel contract recently completed in March saved a little over \$18,000.
- CyRide’s flood construction project will require a special board meeting to talk about two issues associated with the facility – flood protection design level and earthen berms as a solution. The questions are whether the facility should be flood protected to city-university standards or to the insurance company’s standard, which is 2’ higher. There is a substantial cost to increase the height. Also, earthen berms are less expensive, but if breached, can make the cost of the flood damage worse.
- CyRide had the highest ridership ever with 712,000 rides in the month of February. This is a 4% increase over February of last year.
- Labor negotiations are complete with a 2% increase in 2012-2013, which is the increase approved in the budget and a 2.25% increase in 2013-2014.

TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING: Special transit board meeting Thursday, April 12, at 5:15 p.m. and regularly scheduled meeting Thursday, April 19, 2012 at 5:15 p.m. at CyRide.

Meeting adjourned at 6:25 pm.

Bob Anders, President

Joanne Van Dyke, Recording Secretary

