

The Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees met on October 21, 2014 at 8:00 a.m. in the CyRide Conference room. President Murrell called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m. with Trustees Murrell, Madden, Abbas, Goodman, Haila, and Schainker present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Trustee Goodman made a motion to approve the September 30, 2014 Transit Board meeting minutes as presented. Motion seconded by Trustee Madden. (Ayes: Four. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: No public comments.

FUEL CONTRACT- CALENDAR: Director Kyras explained the history of CyRide's fuel contracting projects - five contracts since 2009, not contracting for summer months due to low fuel volume, Transit Board goals of stabilizing and reducing this expense, and the current contract expiration in December 2014. As a result of the last two unfavorable contracts, she indicated that the five contracts overall had cost CyRide more than if it had purchased fuel at the time of consumption; however, it had stabilized fuel over that time period at a level below budget. With the current contract ending soon, she requested board direction to bid fuel for the next calendar year. Staff's recommendation is to not contract for fuel and instead bid an over-under rack (market) rate for the next year, which will allow staff to purchase fuel with one bid throughout the year. The bid would be completed in November and brought back to the transit board in December for approval.

Trustee Goodman inquired if CyRide could purchase fuel both on contract and at an under-over market rate. Rich Leners, CyRide's Assistant Director - Fleet and Facilities indicated that this is not possible.

Trustee Goodman made a motion to adopt Alternative #1 to purchase fuel utilizing a fixed rate + mark-up/deduct bid for fuel used during calendar year 2015 and not enter into a contract. Trustee Schainker seconded the motion on the floor. (Ayes: Five. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

Transit board members asked if CyRide staff had investigated fueling buses with natural gas (CNG). Director Kyras said this would require a CNG fueling station on CyRide's property, which in turn requires a large capital and infrastructure investment. She indicated that the current facility site would not accommodate this infrastructure. She indicated that the cost of fuel was lower at approximately \$1.80 to \$1.90 per gallon, but that CNG buses also operated at lower miles per gallon.

BUS LOCAL SHARE: Director Kyras explained the bus procurement plan for the next five year period, which included the purchase of five used buses per year, four articulated buses in the Ladders of Opportunity grant and potentially two, new 40' buses in the pending

State ICAAP grant. She then discussed the local financial commitment that would be needed to meet this plan. CyRide will need \$125,000-\$135,000 per year to purchase and rehabilitate used buses, \$296,600 in 2016-2017 for the two 40' buses and \$575,000 in 2017-2018 for the four articulated buses. She indicated that CyRide typically transfers \$800,000 per year in local dollars into the capital fund for all capital purchases, which includes buses, equipment, facility repairs and building expansion. She indicated that staff would provide a detailed five-year capital plan, with all capital purchases, to the board at the December 2014 meeting; however, she believed it was important to share the amount that would need to be committed to buses, prior to that meeting, in light of the grants CyRide had recently received.

Director Kyras indicated that CyRide currently has 88 buses and is operating with a three bus spare ratio, which is significantly lower than the 20% federal recommendation. As a result, the transit system will operate all current and future buses until they can no longer be maintained, allowing the fleet to grow to approximately 95 buses in the next five years.

Trustee Schinaker asked if this was the total capital commitment needed for the budget each year and Director Kyras reiterated that this was only the bus portion and that the remaining capital needs would be added to this and presented at the December board meeting.

2015-2016 SERVICE CHANGE PROPOSALS: Director Kyras indicated that each fall CyRide staff, with the aid of the City of Ames Planning staff, determine where new apartment complexes will be occupied for the next ISU school year. This allows staff to determine where additional resources will be needed to address changing ridership patterns in Ames. As a result of this review, the following impacts were identified for the fall 2015-2016 school year.

- Several new complexes on Red route could potentially increase ridership by 83,810
- With the completion of Copper Beech, CyRide's gray route could potentially see an increase of 56,000 rides
- The new complex on S. 4th on the blue route, another 63,000 rides
- If sidewalks and bike paths are not built along Oakwood, by the Ringgenberg development, CyRide could expect residents to drive to the Iowa State Center, Orange route increases by 32,640.
- In total, there is a potential for 236,000 additional rides during the 2015-2106 school year.

Trustee Madden said plans are to construct a sidewalk and bicycle trail along Oakwood for the Ringgenberg area. Director Kyras indicated that if this was completed, the impact could be shifted to the Brown route instead. Trustee Haila asked if the Ringgenberg complex was designed for students or for professionals in the community.

Director Kyras indicated that her understanding was that it was more for professionals; however, she indicated that if apartments are in demand next year, she believed that CyRide needed to be prepared for student impact in this area.

Director Kyras indicated that a new apartment complex was being designed south of Lowes that was to have approximately 1,200 beds and would be designed primarily for students. This complex would not be ready for fall 2015, but will have a significant impact in the future as the Yellow route is not designed to address ridership demand anticipated from this large of a student apartment complex.

Director Kyras indicated that in addition to new development patterns, staff also looks at ISU enrollment predictions, which she had received from Trustee Madden suggesting that enrollment will even out over the next few years after one more year of a substantial increase. Trustee Madden shared that some enrollment numbers can more easily be predicted, such as the number of Iowa high school students and that the number of out-of-state students are leveling out, but some factors cannot be predicted. He also indicated that Iowa State is fortunate to have a 99% job placement rate in many majors and that currently Iowa State has programs that are attractive to students. He also cautioned that with the possibility of redistribution of state higher education dollars benefitting Iowa State University, that the University of Iowa would be increasing its recruitment efforts toward Iowa students, which could reduce ISU enrollment in the future, impacting the enrollment projections.

Director Kyras explained that in light of the 2015-2016 development and enrollment predictions, staff had prepared services modifications that could address these changes.

- CyRide has added ten additional hours of service per weekday for the last two years and this year staff recommends reducing this to five additional hours per weekday in light of lower enrollment predictions. This service will address overcrowding that will occur on individual buses next year - \$80,000 cost.
- The Red Route is the second busiest route in CyRide's system, with as many as six buses on one trip to provide capacity. The #1A Red Route to campus only, that currently operates the same route as the #1 Red Route, could be operated on a new route on Mortensen and State Street. This would decrease confusion on which bus is only going as far as campus and reduce the number of full buses that pass customers by. The disadvantage of this proposal is that service on the Red Route would be decreased by half as the #1A resources would operate on a new route - \$75,000 cost.

Trustee Madden inquired about whether the new route could be an Express route that had only one stop on campus at the Memorial Union and what impact this would have. Tom Davenport, CyRide's Transit Coordinator, indicated that the route would be approximately five minutes shorter, but that he believed that this would lower ridership on the new route, which would not accomplish the original purpose of this change to

reduce ridership on the #1 Red Route. Trustee Madden asked if the new Red Route would impact eastbound traffic on Mortensen onto State Street as this is a busy street. Staff indicated buses would operate on these streets and, as a result, additional time would be built into the schedule to accommodate traffic delays. Trustee Madden asked about a stop on State Street if it became developed. Director Kyras indicated that if the Breckenridge development is built, a bus stop could be added.

Director Kyras indicated that the Red Route proposal was only conceptual at this time as customer input would be needed before the specific schedule was developed, which is a requirement of the Federal Transit Administration.

Trustee Goodman inquired about the Transit Board's service philosophy - to provide access to the maximum number of people or to provide links to people and places? Trustee Goodman also shared that he believes that CyRide should provide equal access to all members of the community, such as non-students on the Red route. He suggested that new service proposals be financed by the party receiving the greatest benefit and/or that a split be determined between the three funding partners. With this approach, he indicated that the funding partners could then determine the value of the change based on the financial impact to them. A lengthy discussion ensued on how to divide the cost of local funding between the three funding partners and a consensus that the transit board needed a service philosophy.

Trustee Schainker asked what board members believe CyRide should have as an expected level of service - frequency of service, geographic coverage, etc. He indicated that currently CyRide is operating under a policy to continue to put more buses out no matter what the cost. He shared that he believes that the transit board needs to decide what they want as a service level before the board can make a decision on service changes for next year. Trustee Schainker agreed with Trustee Goodman that the board needed to develop a Transit Board of Trustees service philosophy.

Trustee Haila shared his concern that a lot of the pressure CyRide was currently experiencing was due to development growth in areas under-served or not currently served by CyRide. He indicated that if developers want additional service, CyRide is not in a position to assure service to their complex. Trustee Madden indicated that there was a new complex being considered on South 17th with 770 beds and is bigger than the Copper Beech complex. Trustee Haila asked if there was a way to have developers share in the cost of service to these new complexes. Trustee Madden mentioned that developers are paying their property taxes, which benefit CyRide. The question was raised about how CyRide could address this situation.

Trustee Haila also indicated that another factor to consider is that CyRide is running out of facility space to house additional buses.

The discussion returned to the service proposals and identifying the service level each proposal would fall within - Five additional hours, current capacity; Gray route weekday and Red Route, improvement to the current routes; and the weekend Gray route, new route.

The Transit Board agreed to schedule a special meeting to discuss local share responsibilities and service prioritization. The discussion then turned to who should be at this meeting in addition to board members - GSB? President Murrell said there are students interested in providing input on growth issues, such as CyRide. Trustee Madden said there will be a forum with students who feel ISU has gotten too big and, as a result, impacting the student experience.

Trustee Goodman suggested hosting a meeting on a Saturday to discuss service levels, funding shares, and some creative solutions to lessen the impact on CyRide's system. The Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees agreed to hold a special meeting, Saturday, November 15, 2014 at 8:00 am at CyRide's offices to further discuss these issues.

Director Kyras reminded the transit board that CyRide needs to make a decision on the budget options as staff will need to prepare CyRide's budget for the December 4th Transit Board meeting. It was agreed that Option #1 for the budget would be the baseline service level plus five additional hours of service each weekday at a cost of \$80,000. Further options, if any, will result from the November 15th meeting.

The discussion returned to the purpose of the special November 15th meeting. The Transit Board of Trustees agreed that they did not want to create a mission statement at this meeting. Four categories for discussion were identified: 1) philosophy; 2) service improvement priorities 3) what kind of services, funding model/splits; and 4) creative solutions. Board members suggested that a draft agenda be shared with the members for comment prior to finalizing its contents.

Trustee Goodman shared that he believes that CyRide is not being as creative as it possibly could be with the service philosophy and cost sharing. Barbara Neal, CyRide's Operations Supervisor, mentioned that CyRide's services have changed in the past eight years. The peak time period used to be until around 9:00 am with less busy times when classes were in session. Today, CyRide's peaking at 7:30 a.m. is as busy as an 8:00 a.m. trip and peaking continues throughout the day.

Director Kyras shared the two-tiered student fee approach as one option discussed in previous meetings to creatively address how to finance CyRide in the future.

FIVE-TEAR FINANCIAL ANALYSIS: No discussion, with board members agreeing to review this material on their own prior to the special board meeting on November 15, 2014.

ORANGE ROUTE STUDY RECAP: Director Kyras briefly reviewed the Orange Route Study progress to-date, including the purpose of the study, data collection (surveys and passenger counts), the alternatives identified to improve the route and the alternatives that still remained under consideration. These current alternatives are:

1. **Baseline - No Change** – Same service level
2. **All Articulated Buses** - Operate current route with only articulated buses
3. **Two Routes** – Splitting the route into two – four options developed
4. **Bus Rapid Transit** - Articulated buses with shorter route, fewer stops, technology to reduce travel time
5. **Streetcar** – Shorter route with over-head electrification, rail in street

She explained that this study had been on hold for the past year to provide time for discussions on campus congestion as it relates to the Orange Route. The study will begin again in January with public input sessions followed by selection of a preferred alternative by the board anticipated in April 2015.

Trustee Madden left at 9:50 a.m.

Trustee Schainker shared his thoughts on improving the Orange route - that the alternatives being discussed could make the service more attractive so more students from the Red, Blue, and Gray routes would get in their car and drive to this route. However, if changes are not made, then the Red, Blue, and Gray routes become more attractive and CyRide would need to increase services on these routes. He indicated that the question was - which is a better solution?

TRANSIT DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Trustee Haila asked about the STIC Funding and Director Kyras said the University and the Ames Chamber are helping move this initiative forward.

SET TIME AND PLACE FOR NEXT MEETINGS:

- Special meeting of the transit board, Saturday, November 15 at 8:00 A.M., CyRide office
- December 4, 2014, 8:00 AM, CyRide office

ADJOURN: Meeting adjourned at 9:58 A.M.