

AMES, IOWA

January 12, 2015

The Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees met on January 12, 2015 at 8:00 a.m. in the CyRide Conference room. Vice President Haila called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m. with Trustees Haila, Madden, Abbas, Goodman, and Patwa present. Absent: Trustee Schainker.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Vice President Haila asked for a motion to approve the November 15 and December 4, 2014 Transit Board minutes. Trustee Madden made a motion to adopt the minutes as presented and seconded by Trustee Goodman. (Ayes: Four. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: No public comments.

Trustee Schainker arrived at 8:06 a.m.

ELECTION OF OFFICER(S): Director Kyras explained that the office of President, currently held by Trustee Murrell is vacant as a result of his international study for the spring semester; therefore, an election would need to be held to fill this position. She indicated that Vice President Haila had expressed a willingness to fill this position for the remainder of the 2014-2015 year. She also indicated that Trustee Abbas had expressed an interest in the office of Vice President.

Trustee Goodman made a motion to approve Trustee Haila as President and Trustee Abbas as Vice President for the remainder of the Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees 2014-2015 year. Motion was seconded by Trustee Patwa. (Ayes: Five. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

CYRIDE OPERATIONAL CONTRACT #2: Director Kyras explained that in August of 2014 CyRide staff provided information on a demonstration project to potentially use a private operator to provide additional scheduled trips on selected routes in CyRide's schedule. CyRide staff was not able to fully develop the project for the fall 2014 semester and determined that implementing the demonstration project for the spring 2015 semester impacted 15 drivers' schedules. As a result, the decision was made to wait and begin the project with the 2015 fall semester. Because of CyRide's driver shortage and as a way to reduce overtime expenses, staff felt it was beneficial to consider a smaller demonstration project for the spring semester to allow a private bus operator to operate extra trips to address the overcrowding on regularly scheduled trips.

CyRide staff prepared a RFP (request for proposal) to operate extra trips the same way CyRide does with other contracted service where trips that are not needed as a result of travel pattern shifts can be eliminated. Director Kyras explained that one bid was received from CIT Charters, Inc. for \$65.25 per trip. CIT would operate service with transit style buses, so operations would be very similar. This proposal provides service

for a lower hourly cost and will provide important information to possibly implement the larger project next fall.

Trustee Goodman clarified the proposal by asking if the buses under contract would be operating on routes during off-peak times, and for further explanation on the cost comparison. Director Kyras indicated that CyRide's fully-allocated cost (operating and capital) was \$86/hour; however, is \$55/hour for direct costs. Direct costs are used when they do not impact the number of buses CyRide would need to operate the proposed service, such as adding a bus in the evening, which would require no additional capital investment.

Trustee Goodman made a motion to adopt Alternative #1 to approve a contract with CIT Charters, Inc. at \$65.25 per trip for service as directed by CyRide for the spring 2015 semester. Trustee Abbas seconded the motion. (Ayes: Five. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

Director Kyras informed the Transit Board CyRide staff will continue to work on the scheduled trip demonstration project for the fall 2015.

TRANSIT BOARD OF TRUSTEE EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION: Director Kyras explained CyRide staff received an email from a resident regarding an action by one of CyRide's drivers, who had helped two young children cross a busy street. As a result, Transit Board members had expressed an interest in recognizing outstanding CyRide employee behavior. A discussion ensued regarding the Transit Board, City of Ames and CyRide management staff's roles in recognizing employees. Several ideas for possible Transit Board recognition were discussed, such as annual recognition for employees at a board meeting, certification from the Transit Board, etc.

Due to logistical challenges of gathering groups of drivers during their work hours, there was a consensus for CyRide staff to develop a proposal for Transit Board recognition of employees that provide outstanding service and for staff to present this proposal at a future Transit Board meeting.

TRANSIT DIRECTORS REPORT:

Draft Demand Response Service Action Plan:

Director Kyras explained that the Demand Response Service Task Force had completed a preliminary draft of 23 proposed service improvements and that a public input meeting would be held on January 17th for public comment. President Haila asked about the demand response service task force process after the plan was completed. Director Kyras indicated that there had been discussions for the Assistant City Manager, Melissa Mundt, to lead the effort to identify specific action steps that could be implemented.

Trustee Goodman said the biggest benefit achieved through the task force meetings

to-date was in the agency's collaboration, but indicated that he believes that there is a lot of work yet to be done on both sides. He shared his belief that the process should keep moving forward with final recommendations to be brought back to the city council, Transit Board, and citizens.

Trustee Madden shared comments he had received indicating that two issues were most problematic – driver shortage and length of time on hold to make a reservation. Director Kyras shared that these issues had been discussed at the task force meetings and were included in the 23 proposed actions.

Director Kyras shared that the public input meeting format would be different in that it would not be an open session, but that recorders would be provided to take each individual's comments on the plan. Trustee Goodman shared his surprise at this format indicating a desire to hear all the comments at the meeting. Trustee Schainker shared that the purpose of the meeting was to gain input on the plan for further refinement and then presentation to the funding bodies, in an effort to make sure individual residents' concerns were addressed in the plan. Trustee Goodman directed Director Kyras to share his concern with the task force sponsors.

State Grant Updates:

Director Kyras shared an update on several applications CyRide had submitted for state operating and capital funding. The first was the Iowa Clean Air Attainment Program (ICAPP) funding where CyRide applied for the second and third year of additional service for Brown route and Blue route, Sunday service, and to purchase two new buses to operate the service. She indicated that Iowa DOT staff had recommended that the second year of operating funding and capital funding for two buses be approved to operate this service, both at an 80% level. The Iowa DOT indicated that CyRide could apply for the third year of operating funds in the next round of the program. She indicated that if the recommendation was approved in January 2015, that the student's share of operating costs would be reduced by \$197,917 for 2015-2016 budget year, as students were scheduled to fund 100% of these expenses. Director Kyras indicated that the two buses were included in the Capital Improvement Plan approved by the Transit Board at the December 2014 Transit Board meeting and would be delivered in the 2016-2017 budget year.

Director Kyras also indicated that the first year of the operating costs on the Brown and Blue Sunday service were contained in a State Transit Assistance (STA) grant and that CyRide staff had not been notified to-date on the status of this application.

Additionally, Director Kyras indicated that they had recently been notified that one additional bus had been approved for funding through the State's annual bus replacement program. Director Kyras indicated that this was unanticipated due to the bus' relatively low status on the state's bus replacement priority list, but that other transit agencies had decided not to request funding, which allowed CyRide's bus to rise

to the top. This bus will not be received until the 2016-2017 budget year, so the 20% local funding requirement will be programmed into the next CIP to be approved by the Transit Board in December 2015.

Draft Final Service Level Philosophy and Service Improvement Guidelines:

Director Kyras shared the revised “Service Level Philosophy” and “Service Implement Guidelines” discussed at the November 15, 2014 Transit Board meeting and requested final input on any modifications to these documents before they become final guidelines for the Transit Board. No changes were made in the documents.

Other Topics Discussed

Director Kyras informed the Transit Board of the open house-style public meeting to target students riding the #23 Orange Route - Thursday, January 22 from 2:00 – 6:30 p.m. at Maple-Willow-Larch Commons area. She indicated that the final three alternatives would be shared with riders and then they would be asked to vote on their favorite alternative. She also indicated that this meeting would be an open house format to gain more input from riders.

President Haila inquired if any response was received from the Transit Board’s letter that was sent to the City Council regarding high-density, residential development areas. Director Kyras indicated that the memo had been forward to the City Clerk to be included in the City Council’s communications. Trustee Goodman indicated that the Council had not discussed the board’s memo to-date, but indicated that as part of the Land Use Policy Plan update discussions were being held to include transit in an evaluation tool. The Transit Board discussed having President Haila attend the Ames City Council meeting on Tuesday, January 13, 2015 to share the Transit Board’s concern about the pressure development is creating on CyRide services to the City Council’s attention.

Trustee Goodman shared his concern that the fare free student model contributed to this development pressure.

President Haila asked if the March Transit Board-City Council joint workshop had been scheduled yet. Trustee Schainker indicated they this workshop had not been scheduled to-date as the City Council had several priority topics to be discussed in the next several months.

President Haila inquired about the need to revisit the facility needs due to the impact of parking buses outside. Assistant Director Leners shared with the Transit Board that five or six buses are parked outside each night, which increases fuel costs. He indicated that this results in the need to have staff come in on Sunday’s when the weather is very cold to start buses so that they can idle all night. If they are not operated all night, they will not start on Monday mornings. Assistant Director Leners also shared CyRide staff and the Federal Transit Administration’s concerns regarding bus security when buses are

idled all night. Mr. Leners also stated that CyRide will increase its biodiesel usage from current 5% blends to up to 20% blends in summer months.

ADJOURN: Trustee Abbas made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:51 a.m. Motion seconded by Trustee Patwa. (Ayes: Five. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

FUTURE MEETINGS: Wednesday, February 18, 2015 at 8:00 a.m.
Wednesday, March 25, 2015 at 8:00 a.m.
Wednesday, April 29, 2015 at 8:00 a.m.