

## AMES TRANSIT AGENCY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

AMES, IOWA

May 25, 2016

The Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees met on May 25, 2016 at 8:00 a.m. in the CyRide Conference room. President Haila called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m. with Trustees Staudt, Madden, Haila and Gartin present. Absent: Trustee Schainker. Trustee Valentino joined the board meeting via conference call.

President Haila introduced the Student Government representatives who will serve on the Ames Transit Board of Trustees for the 2016-2017 term, Trustee Steven Valentino, Student Government Senator and Trustee Cole Staudt, Student Government Representative on the Transit Board and President of the student body.

**APPROVAL OF APRIL 29, 2016 MINUTES:** Trustee Madden made a motion to adopt the April 29, 2016 transit board minutes as presented. Trustee Gartin seconded the motion. (Ayes: Five. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

Trustee Schainker arrived at 8:06 a.m.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** No public comments.

**BUS CAMERA SYSTEM UPGRADE:** Director Kyras explained that the bus camera system project had been included in the Capital Improvement Plan over the past several years as CyRide systematically updates this technology on its buses. CyRide currently has budgeted \$225,000 for fiscal years 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 to purchase bus camera systems. As a result, CyRide issued a Request For Proposal (RFP) for "Mobile Video Security Systems." She further shared the purpose for this purchase, which is to equip 28 buses that currently do not have camera systems and to replace obsolete equipment as some camera systems are 17 years old and beginning to fail. Adding to the issues with its cameras is that CyRide's fleet has four different video systems to manage.

CyRide received seven responses to the RPF, with the bid price representing 30% of the evaluation criteria and 70% on other factors such as warranties, references from other systems, etc. As a result of the evaluation, the bids were narrowed to three firms that best meet the needs of CyRide. CyRide staff's recommendation was to award the proposal to the second lowest bid from Seon of Lynchburg, Virginia, based on its enhanced technology system and CyRide's positive experience with current Seon camera systems.

President Haila shared his thoughts about the importance of the bus camera systems and asked if there was a possibility to accelerate the purchases to better equip the fleet. Additionally, Trustee Madden asked about the general health of the 2016 -2017 budget to support this purchase acceleration in light of driver overtime costs and the impact of the Affordable Care Act. In response, Rich Leners, CyRide's Assistant Director – Fleet and

Facilities, shared additional information received the previous day from the Seon firm. He indicated that the firm announced a new feature for the Seon camera systems (not included in the proposal), called "InView 360 Around Vehicle Monitoring," that could assist drivers when buses needed to be backed up. He indicated that CyRide staff had planned on purchasing 56 cameras, but would purchase fewer cameras if the upgraded InView feature was added. Rich Leners further explained the new features, indicating that the cameras would have real-time views as buses travelled through campus, as well as a view of a blind spot in the mirror and the rear doors. He further explained that the camera would be mounted on the four corners of the bus, with the software incorporating the four views into one display. Mr. Leners indicated that CyRide had not yet received pricing on this new feature so was unsure of how this might impact the budget and number of cameras that could be purchased.

In light of this new information, Director's Kyras recommended awarding up to \$225,000 and not include a specific number of camera units, which would allow staff to determine the best mix of camera models for the entire system. Trustee Schainker had concerns that the price could be significantly higher and asked to have this purchase brought back to the June 16th Transit Board meeting once pricing is confirmed.

Trustee Gartin asked if CyRide's camera program reused existing cameras. Director Kyras said new buses are ordered with new camera systems as part of the bus purchase; however, when used buses replace existing buses, the camera systems were moved to the used buses. With the growth of the fleet, the existing systems have not allowed all buses to be equipped with this technology. Director Kyras also stated that the cameras would need to be ordered and installed on the buses during the summer months.

As these system are new to the market, Rich Leners proposed ordering a few of the new InView cameras to test them and see if they provide a benefit for CyRide, but not purchasing all camera systems with this newer technology.

Trustee Gartin shared his concern that if the InView model was beneficial that upgrading the model in the original proposal to this newer system would be time consuming, may not be financially beneficial and would not allow for the desired fleet standardization.

President Haila requested clarification regarding the ability of the originally proposed system to be upgraded to the new InView technology in the future after the new technology was tested and if determined beneficial. Mr. Leners indicated that he believed, from the basic information received on the Inview systems, that it simply required additional hardware (module) to make this change.

Trustee Madden indicated that he was comfortable in delegating authority to CyRide staff to make the decision on which technology to purchase to maximize the benefits of the system and, further to report to the board members if there is a need to exceed the

\$225,000 budget. He moved awarding the bid to Seon for the not-to-exceed budget of \$225,000. Trustee Gartin seconded the motion.

Trustee Gartin felt CyRide's insurance carrier would be pleased with the technology purchase and encouraged CyRide staff to determine if their installation could reduce CyRide's insurance costs.

Barb Neal, Operation's Supervisor, indicated that approximately one-half of CyRide accidents were as a result of backing up a bus.

President Haila asked for the vote regarding the motion made and seconded on the floor. (Ayes: Six. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

**DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY CHANGE:** Director Kyras explained that staff is required to periodically review its policies for compliance with federal regulations, one of which is CyRide's Drug and Alcohol Policy. This policy was modified by the Transit Board in 2010 and, upon review, changes to the Drug and Alcohol policy were required as highlighted in red in the board's material. She then explained the categories of changes that are reflected in the new policy:

- Safety sensitive position titles
- Responsibility for the program changes from the Human Resources Department for the City to CyRide's Assistant Director – Operations
- Change in testing facility
- Clarification on CyRide's Zero Tolerance policy compared to the FTA's Second Chance policy.

President Haila asked if it the Drug and Alcohol Policy was a City of Ames or Ames Transit Agency policy. Director Kyras stated that it is an Ames Transit Agency policy as the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires CyRide to have a separate policy that addresses transit specific requirements.

Trustee Madden commented that CyRide could keep the policy more recent if the specific testing facility was not named in the policy. Director Kyras indicated that this was required in the policy per FTA requirements and that the basic policy was a template provided by the FTA.

A lengthy discussion followed referencing the policy language on CyRide's zero tolerance policy and the verbiage required by the FTA, indicating a conflict and lack of clarity in the policy as revised.

Transit board members asked for further clarification regarding the FTA's Second Chance policy as it relates to hiring. Karen Jamison provided more information on the hiring process and drug testing, indicating that a positive drug test would not show up

on their driver's license check, but on their background check. Further, she indicated that drug tests are given when drivers are reporting for/or at work only, with the drivers shift being covered and the driver escorted to the testing site. She also explained that CyRide drivers are hired knowing the drug and alcohol policy and are given a copy of the policy, so they are aware upfront of these requirements. Karen Jamison said it is rare that CyRide has anyone test positive for drugs and that there has been only one positive test for alcohol. Safety is very important to CyRide and this policy helps make sure drivers are not unprepared.

Transit board member asked if this policy covers temporary drivers. CyRide staff clarified that all employees in the listed positions, whether they are full-time, part-time or temporary, are required to be tested, which includes employees that supervise drivers.

Transit board members raised numerous concerns about the policy language regarding CyRide's "local authority," conflict in federal and local language and specific testing levels. Director Kyras indicated that staff would confer with individuals familiar with the policy's requirements to ensure that CyRide's revision would continue to allow its program to be in federal compliance.

Trustee Madden made a motion to refer recommended Drug and Alcohol Policy changes back to CyRide staff as the Drug and Alcohol Policy changes for further review/clarification. Trustee Schainker seconded the motion. (Ayes: Six. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

**SYSTEM REDESIGN STUDY – COMMITTEE STRUCTURE:** Director Kyras updated the transit board members on the three proposals CyRide received for assisting the transit system in reviewing its routes/schedules and overall system. She provided a brief history of the process used and the status of the decision to determine the best firm to assist in this study. She also shared the budget and sources of funding for the study (\$150,000 with \$100,000 from the Ames Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO) and \$50,000 from CyRide's operating budget). Director Kyras also shared that the original price of each proposal received was higher than budgeted.

She then explained that in preparation for the study to begin after the first of the fiscal year, that individuals on the two committees, established in the scope of work for the project, would need to be identified and shared her thoughts on the representatives that should be on each committee, as identified in the board material.

Trustee Madden suggested adding a student from Iowa State on the Technical Committee to gain real-life experience from this process. President Haila inquired about whether there was a benefit for a public safety official on one of the committees. Trustee Madden shared his thoughts that a City of Ames Public Works representative was on the Technical committee and could fill this role.

Trustee Gartin indicated that he was supportive of the committee representatives identified, but was concerned about the timing of the study without a clear direction with the City land use plan as an update was planned for two years in the future. He was concerned that the lack of a new plan at this time could hamper CyRide's study. Further, he shared that the city was growing and without up-to-date land use plans, he was concerned that CyRide's routes could not be well thought out. He advocated for a "recheck" of CyRide's study results after the land use plan was updated, providing preference for a firm to re-evaluate this in the future if they had completed the current study for CyRide.

Trustee Schainker proposed approaching the question of committee representation differently by asking what CyRide wanted to accomplish from the study and its goals. Director Kyras shared her perspective that, "CyRide has grown from a system providing service to 4 million to almost 7 million riders and the goal of the study was to determine if the current service structure was the 'best' design to serve this new level of ridership."

Trustee Schainker was concerned that this goal did not reflect the reality of finite financial resources. Director Kyras indicated that this question would be addressed with the Transit Board as one of the first consultant tasks to set the goals and parameters for the study, such as limiting service changes to no more than an annual 5% increase in local shares.

President Haila confirmed the importance of this board goal-setting meeting and his thoughts that the committees could help guide the study; however, that it was the Transit Board's responsibility to make the final decision.

Trustee Staudt shared that he believed that the RFP clearly delineated the role of the Transit Board in making the final decision and that the steering and technical committees would be advisory. The RFP was written so that each committee will provide a recommendation, but then it will be the role of the transit board to make the final decision.

Trustee Schainker agreed that establishment of goals/parameters upfront was the first step for the Transit Board. Director Kyras shared that the financial analysis was contained in the RFP and that two to three alternatives would be included in the final product.

Trustee Gartin suggested reaching out to non-riders. Director Kyras indicated that this was included in the scope of work in the RFP.

Trustee Madden suggested the Transportation Research Institute be included on the Technical Committee as it has transit expertise and is connected to the community.

Trustee Gartin raised a concern regarding traffic volumes in areas of the city where major developments were occurring and would like to see this incorporated into the study to make sure that transit routes are assisting in traffic issues throughout the community. He specifically identified the South Duff corridor as a potential traffic issue with commuters to the south. Director Kyras said the scope of work does not look at service to/from other communities and Trustee Madden said at some time CyRide may become a regional transit system, but this was not included in the current study.

Transit board members further discussed what they would like to see achieved by this study and indicated that the study would gather the community's perspectives for consideration by the Technical and Steering committee and decision by the Transit Board.

President Haila indicated his interest in determining, with the existing budget and recommendations from the Orange Route study, how CyRide can better move people through campus and carry more people with the same number of buses and drivers.

Director Kyras will add students to the technical committee, visit with CTRE about becoming involved in the process and move forward with contacting the remainder of the people for the two committees.

Transit board members continued discussion regarding the Research Park and special route structures for special events.

Trustee Staudt shared his thoughts about the study indicating that board members should be open to the public's expectations and recommendations from the committees. Further, he indicated that he believed the board's role is to be realistic in the adopted system changes and to consider the benefits of the current structure as well as any modifications.

Trustee Gartin made a motion to approve Alternative #2 to approve representatives of CyRide's System Redesign Study's Technical and Steering Committee's as modified by board members. Trustee Staudt seconded the motion. (Ayes: Six. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

President Haila shared his intention to be a part of the consultant interviews.

**QUARTERLY OPERATIONS REPORT (JAN – MAR. 2016):** Director Kyras explained that this agenda item contained both the standard quarterly operations report format, but also included a summarized version to allow for a quick overview of the system's performance for board members. Director Kyras briefly described the new format indicating it included a table with key performance measures and then an explanation of areas where performance was either trending downward or was an area for monitoring. She then summarized the performance comments:

- DAR – one negative quarter with lower expenses.
- MLX – stable ridership this quarter and year to date.
- Accidents – CyRide accidents that could have been avoided (preventable) were higher this quarter, but year to date were stable. CyRide staff is convening an internal committee to look at the accident trend this year, with the goal to develop solution(s) to avoid more accidents in the future.
- Customer Comments - More passenger comments, with ridership being stable indicates less customer satisfaction. Staff will monitor this trend to determine the major “themes.” Currently a majority of these include the need for more service and overcrowding.

Board members asked clarifying questions regarding how to interpret the new format.

Director Kyras requested board input regarding the new, summarized format and if it was helpful to continue in the future. Transit board members agreed it was a phenomenal tool for a quick snap shot of how the system was performing and it appeared to be a straightforward methodology to understand. The consensus was to use this new format for the next several reports, with some additional changes to make it easier to understand the positive and negative trends.

#### **TRANSIT DIRECTOR’S REPORT:**

- Federal grant application was submitted by the state with the hope of receiving up to 12 buses. CyRide will know results of application in August or September.
- Ames Chambers will travel to Washington, DC in June and CyRide has been asked to develop information that could be shared with Iowa’s Congressmen and their staff as a part of the Chamber’s priorities (meeting handout).

Trustee Gartin left the meeting at 9:45 a.m.

- Update on summer hiring indicated that CyRide was continuing to struggle to gain interest in driving with low numbers of applicants. However, Director Kyras shared that nine new employees were beginning their training and that seven had left CyRide employment. She indicated that this was not unexpected as students graduated at the end of the spring semester, but that CyRide should see an increase in the number of individuals hired with fewer leaving. There was a brief discussion regarding the impact of ISU’s priority scheduling. President Haila asked if CyRide has the ability to achieve its hiring goals for fall. Director Kyras indicating the goal of 30 new drivers hired/trained for fall would be a challenge, but would keep the board informed. She provided further detail on the new processes being used to attract applicants.
- Rate setting sheet attached to the previous board packet included an incorrect fare structure for passes. The attached sheet reflects current and proposed

rates. This correction requires no action as the board approved no change in pass rates, which is correctly reflected with the revised sheet.

- Director Kyras skipped over this topic as it was included in a previous agenda item.
- The Odyssey of the Mind event will occur in the next few days. The last time this event was held in Ames CyRide provided over 92,000 rides.
- Preliminary plans and specifications for the pit construction project will be taken before the City Council for approval as required under Chapter 26A of the City Code. Once the bids are received, information will be provided to the Transit Board for approval of award. President Haila requested additional information on this process. Assistant Director – Fleet and Facilities, Rich Leners, explained the city procurement process and the rationale for dividing the work of replacing all pits into two phases.

Director Kyras indicated that a special meeting of the Ames Transit Board of Trustees would be held on Thursday, June 16, 2016 at 8:00 a.m. for the purpose of considering the System Redesign Study proposals.

**NEXT MEETING TIMES AND PLACE:**

- July 20, 2016, 8:00 AM – This meeting was rescheduled for July 11th at 8:00 AM due to board member scheduling conflicts.
- August 24, 2016, 8:00 AM

**Meeting Adjourned:** Trustee Staudt made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Trustee Valentino. Meeting adjourned at 10:04 a.m. (Motion carried.)

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John Haila, President

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Joanne Van Dyke, Recording Secretary