

AMES TRANSIT AGENCY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

AMES, IOWA

August 15, 2018

The Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees met on August 15, 2018 at 8:00 a.m. in CyRide's Conference room. Vice President Jeffrey called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m. with Trustees Nelson, Cain, Schainker, Jeffrey and Schrader present. Absent: Trustee Bibiloni.

Also present was Cathy Brown, representing ISU's Facilities Planning & Management Department.

Approval of June 28, 2018 Minutes: Trustee Nelson made a motion to adopt the June 28, 2018 transit board minutes as presented. Trustee Cain seconded the motion. (Ayes: Five. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

Public Comments: Director Kyras explained to transit board members that staff would be gathering comments on its CyRide 2.0 service changes during August and September and would present a summary of all comments to the transit board at the October meeting. She shared common themes of the comments received to date - Peach route service level; Steinbeck and Dickenson route structure/service level. Director Kyras shared that the current week was a "transition period" as classes were not in session and students could be returning throughout the week. CyRide operates a break service, level of service in these situations.

Trustee Jeffrey asked how the transit board members should respond when they receive emails on the new service. Director Kyras requested that board members forward the comments to her and CyRide staff would respond and copy the board member with the response.

Trustee Bibiloni arrived at 8:10 a.m.

Statewide Bus & Bus Facilities Grant: Director Kyras provided information regarding a request by the Iowa DOT. She indicated that on July 23, 2018 she received an email requesting each transit system provide a list of buses they desired to be included in the statewide Bus and Bus Facilities federal grant. She indicated that the deadline provided in the email was July 27, 2018. Director Kyras shared that she had distributed the number of buses she recommended and a funding plan for a consensus of the board in an email as there would not be sufficient time to call a formal meeting. With no comments received, she indicated that, based on a conversation with Trustee Schainker, the plan to include three buses would be forwarded to the Iowa DOT. This action was contingent upon formal approval of the Transit Board at the August 15, 2018 meeting. If board members desired to not fund three 40' buses, CyRide could decline the buses if the state received funding. As such, she requested that the transit board formally take action on the buses and plan.

Trustee Schainker made a motion to approve including three 40' buses in the State of Iowa's Statewide Bus & Bus Facilities Grant Application funded with up to \$377,680 in local match \$180,360 + \$135,000 + \$62,320). Trustee Cain seconded the motion. (Ayes: Six. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

2018 ICAAP Grant Application: Director Kyras provided background on the federal government's CMAQ funding (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality), which she explained that Iowa, in turn, uses to fund their ICAAP program (Iowa Clean Air Attainment Program). She stated that the purpose of this funding program is to reduce congestion or improve air quality and that transit systems can apply for funding to support new or expanded services. Further, she stated in the past CyRide had funded the Plum route, Weekday Green and Brown, and the Blue route service on Sunday. She indicated that CyRide budgets the full service cost and, if successful in receiving a grant, the grant revenues are shared with the funding partner(s) who originally provided the funding or placed in the closing balance for the board to reallocate in the future. She indicated that ICAAP applications were due to the Iowa DOT on October 19, 2018.

She indicated that staff had reviewed its new CyRide 2.0 service structure to determine if its new and expanded services would qualify for the funding program and found that the follow routes would rate the best under the program's criteria.

- #1 Red Route
- #5 Yellow Route
- #7 Purple Route
- #11 Cherry Route
- #13 Lilac Route

She also indicated that one, new bus could be included in the application to support services on these routes. She provided a detailed description of the reason for each route's eligibility and the operating/capital funding that could be requested at an 80% ICAAP funding share - \$840,515. She indicated staff's recommendation was for Alternative #1.

Trustee Schainker asked if the Peach route could be considered. Director Kyras indicated that it replaces two previous routes, so she did not believe it could be considered, and would rate well, as a result. Further, she stated that if CyRide received funding, that the board could use the savings from an ICAAP grant to fund changes to the Peach route next year, if it desired.

President Bibiloni asked if the Plum route savings, as a result of an ICAAP grant, was placed back into the student's CyRide Trust Fund as the student's originally paid for the service. Director Kyras indicated that it had and was reflected in the Trust Fund Summary (previously provided to board members) as a separate line item.

Trustee Cain asked for clarification on how many years CyRide might receive funding and why new buses could qualify for the program. Director Kyras indicated that the operating funding could be applied for each year, for three years and that the bus supports the services contained in the grant. She indicated that funding for new buses was difficult to secure and this program allowed capital expenditures, so that a transit system could afford to purchase a bus to run the services awarded operating funding.

Trustee Schrader made a motion to approve submission of an operating/capital ICAAP grant application for approximately \$840,515 for operating expenses on six of the new/expanded routes under CyRide's 2.0 and the purchase of one bus. Trustee Jeffrey seconded the motion. (Ayes: Six. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

Facility Site Analysis Update: Director Kyras provided a brief background and history of CyRide's facility growth and challenges for new board members; then detailed four options the board and staff had reviewed/selected for further study and updated board members on work that had been completed in the last several months on the board-directed Site Analysis for a second location. She provided information regarding the Site Analysis methodology and the first step in the process to identify available vacant parcels of land.

She outlined the eight steps that would identify possible parcels of land and a process to narrow down/rate these parcels to arrive at a final preferred site by March of 2019. The last step would be to prepare and submit a federal Bus and Bus Facilities grant next summer.

She then explained the first step in identifying possible vacant land within the city limits. She indicated that the City Assessor's office and ISU had provided a list of possible sites that were then placed on a map to assist in identifying the location of each site. Director Kyras requested input on the proposed methodology and the criteria to be used to narrow the possible sites.

Trustee Schainker offered his thoughts regarding the S. Dakota and Hwy. 30 area of Ames. He expressed a concern that this area was part of the southwest growth area, and had been identified as residential housing, which he believed a bus facility would not be compatible with. Director Kyras and Cathy Brown indicated that a CyRide facility could be sited adjacent to Highway 30 and set back from S. Dakota to minimize these concerns.

Trustee Schainker also shared that he believes a good site opportunity would be on the fringe of the community where the area is currently undeveloped near the site, referencing the site included in the map on University Blvd. south of the Research Park. He indicated that he understood this forces CyRide further away, and there were cost ramifications, but he did not want to identify a site where development had plans

around/near the site. Director Kyras indicated that these concerns could be included as part of the ranking of possible sites, after the Fatal Flaw analysis. He also indicated that city parks should be considered a Fatal Flaw.

Trustee Jeffrey asked whether a traffic study that had been previously completed and identified challenges with additional traffic could be considered a fatal flaw. Director Kyras indicated that it could be utilized as ranking criteria, after the Fatal Flaw analysis.

Trustee Schinker suggested a combination of a map in the future, along with a list of the site locations and ownership, to be able to identify the parcel more easily.

There was a consensus to move forward with the study as proposed, with the Trustee requests included.

Affordable Care Act Update: Director Kyras provided a brief history of CyRide's implementation and challenges regarding the Affordable Care Act (ACA) requirements and an analysis of three options to address CyRide's unique part-time driver characteristics. Two of the options require monitoring of part-time driver hours on a monthly basis and the third offers insurance to ACA-defined full time employees who pick more than 30 hours, even though they may not work full-time (1,560 hours) within the year. Director Kyras explained each option, as well as offered pros and cons and estimated costs to implement each of the options.

To summarize the discussion, the first option would require CyRide's staff to monitor its part-time driver hours on a monthly basis, using a software program, and notify the City's Human Resources Department when to offer/terminate insurance. The responsibility of understanding the ACA and applying it correctly would fall on CyRide staff. The cost would include an additional part-time staff person to administer this program at a cost of \$30,000 to \$40,000 per year.

The second option would require hiring a third-party vendor to manage the monitoring of part-time driver hours. CyRide staff would supply the data and the vendor would determine who and when to offer/terminate insurance, as well as notify the City's Human Resources Department. The estimated cost of this approach was \$6,000 per year.

The third approach would not require monitoring of part-time employees as the City of Ames would offer insurance to any employee choosing a work schedule with 30 or more hours. Along with this option, CyRide would implement a new policy where employees could only choose a work schedule with 20-26 hours or more than 30 hours to minimize the possibility that a part-time employee, with less than 30 hours, could work more than 30 hours per week over the course of a year. The estimated cost of this option was \$23,000, based on staff projections of historical data and future staffing predictions. She indicated that all three options complied with ACA.

Trustee Schainker asked staff to describe the IRS process of ensuring compliance with the ACA. Director Kyras explained the two requirements of “Affordability” and “Offer of Insurance” and the ramifications of not meeting these requirements. Trustee Schainker shared his thoughts that doing nothing was not an option and that offering insurance upfront would reduce staff time.

Trustee Cain requested an explanation of how the City offers insurance and its rates. Director Kyras indicated that employees with 30-39 hours of work per week were offered insurance at a reduced rate and 40 hour per week employees at a different rate. Rob Jennings, CyRide’s Scheduler/Budget Analyst indicated that the employee cost for 30-39 hour employees was approximately \$500 per month.

Trustee Jeffrey asked if part-time employees could choose to take overtime. Director Kyras indicated that they could.

Trustee Cain asked how many of the drivers were students and Director Kyras said about a third or 50 are students. Trustee Cain asked if students typically work less than 30 hours per week. Director Kyras indicated that they did.

Trustee Schainker pointed out that under the third option, CyRide could offer insurance to employees who ultimately did not work 1,560 hours in a year, due to reduced hours over breaks and the summer.

Trustee Schainker mentioned that under the Union contract, CyRide/City of Ames could not unilaterally decide to provide employees with an additional benefit without union approval; therefore, he indicating he believed the third option would require discussions with the union, if this approach was approved.

Trustee Cain made a motion to approve option #3 to offer insurance at ¾-time rates to new drivers who choose 30+ hours per week shifts when they begin employment, contingent upon conversations with the Union. Trustee Nelson seconded the motion. (Ayes: Six. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

Transit Director’s Report:

- 1) Towers Turnaround Update:** Director Kyras indicated that the towers turnaround was completed ahead of schedule and is open. Further, she indicated that the final cost is to be split between the City, University and CyRide, as approved by the Transit Board. She indicated that once the final cost was identified, she would provide the board with the final cost and agreed-upon cost sharing.
- 2) Public Transit Infrastructure Grant (PTIG) Awards:** Director Kyras shared that the PTIG awards were made by the Iowa DOT and that CyRide had been awarded funding for its HVAC and bus wash projects. She indicated that CyRide had requested

\$594,627, but was awarded \$517,042, which was \$77,585 less than requested. Rich Leners, CyRide's Assistant Director - Fleet and Facilities, will be working to identify cost reductions in conjunction with CyRide's architectural firm.

- 3) **Iowa DOT Award of New Bus Funding:** Director Kyras indicated that CyRide was awarded four new buses in the State's FY17 funding programs and that CyRide staff would be utilizing the State of Iowa's 40 ft. bus bid to procure these vehicles. She indicated that the process would take approximately two years for the buses to be received.
- 4) **Year End Ridership:** Director Kyras indicated that CyRide's ridership for the 2017-2018 year decreased 1.3%. She indicated that reasons for this decline were attributed to enrollment decreases and changes in development patterns where more students could walk to/from campus.
- 5) **RAGBRAI Ridership:** Director Kyras indicated that CyRide's regular service provided 914 rides to RAGBRAI participants.
- 6) **CyRide Security System Bids & Award:** At the June 28, 2018 transit board meeting, Director Kyras had indicated that CyRide staff was working on the bid specifications for the Building Security System project. This project was delayed due to issues with the hoist construction project and she indicated that this project should be rebid later this fall.
- 7) **Electric Bus Study RFP Update:** Director Kyras indicated that CyRide had received two bids at the end of July; however, the two bids included vastly different costs (\$49,000 versus \$130,000) and project scope. She indicated that staff would be working with the two vendors to determine if the bids could be made to be comparable or whether they would need to be rejected both bids and solicit new bids. She indicated that a special transit board meeting might be needed before the scheduled September meeting to address this issue.

Trustee Item: Trustee Schainker provided the results of the Director's annual performance evaluation, acknowledging Director Kyras' goals, accomplishments and challenges this past year. Trustee Schainker indicated that the transit board was pleased with the numerous projects that the Director and staff had worked on this past year, such as CyRide 2.0, Facility Analysis, Affordable Care Act, new collective bargaining laws and their impact on CyRide employees and grants, grant funding received, electric buses, etc. In summary, he indicated that CyRide had progressed forward under her leadership and that CyRide could not have reached this point without her guidance.

Director Kyras acknowledged CyRide staff, listing all the numerous projects staff had completed to make CyRide successful this past year. She indicated that it was truly a team effort to reach the goals that CyRide had achieved.

Anticipated Closed Session:

Trustee Cain moved approval for a closed session pursuant to Section 20.17, Subsection 3, *Code of Iowa*, to discuss matters relating to contract negotiations. Motion seconded by Trustee Jeffrey. Vote on motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Moved into closed session at 9:18 a.m.

Moved by Trustee Schrader and seconded by Trustee Jeffrey to return to Regular Session at 9:55 a.m. Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

The meeting reconvened in Regular Session at 9:55 a.m.

Set Meeting Times and Place:

- September 17, 2018 – 8:00 A.M.
- October 24, 2018 – 8:30 A.M.
- November 14, 2018 – 8:00 A.M.
- December 12, 2018 – 8:00 A.M.

Adjourn: Trustee Jeffrey made a motion to adjourn at 9:58 a.m. Motion seconded by Trustee Cain.

Juan Bibiloni, President

Joanne Van Dyke, Recording Secretary