

AMES TRANSIT AGENCY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

AMES, IOWA

October 24, 2018

The Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees met on October 24, 2018 at 8:30 a.m. in CyRide's Conference room. President Bibiloni called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m. with Trustees Jeffrey, Cain, Nelson, Schainker, Bibiloni and Schrader present.

Public in Attendance: Cathy Brown, ISU Facilities Planning and Management and Lauris Olson, Story County Supervisor.

Approval of September 17, 2018 Minutes: Trustee Jeffrey made a motion to adopt the September 17, 2018 transit board minutes as presented. Trustee Nelson seconded the motion. (Ayes: Six. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

Public Comments: Director Kyras indicated that there were no comments received other than CyRide 2.0 comments that were being gathered and summarized separately. She indicated that she would forward an email to board members regarding this service, as the individual indicated she might attend a future board meeting.

Service Planning for 2019-2020 Budget Year: Director Kyras provided a brief recap of the service planning process for next years' service development, indicating that she recommended establishing a budget option that included an additional \$200,000 in operating expenses to address possible service modifications. She then explained the consultant's recommendation that was developed during the System Redesign Study and indicated suggestions where customers had also indicated that change would be beneficial. She then provided a brief recap of the feedback received as of October 19, 2018 from customers on the CyRide 2.0 fall service.

She indicated that staff had prepared a report regarding possible service changes and cost estimates that could be considered, based on customer feedback, the consultant's long-term service recommendations and staff observations. She then briefly detailed each of the nine possible service proposals that had been developed.

- **#11 Cherry** - Two proposals: evening service (\$39,706) and break-time service (\$13,876).
- **#12 Lilac** – Midday service (\$69,248).
- **#14 Peach** – Two options: Add one bus all day (\$165,675) or just during peak period (\$93,122)
- **#25 Gold** – Two proposals and one service reduction. Proposal #1 – evening service (\$21,652), Proposal #2 – break-time and summer service (\$161,800). Service reduction – Reduce service from 10 to 12 min. frequency (-\$76,913).
- **Earlier Morning Service** – Three additional morning trips on yet-to-be identified routes (\$24,300).

Trustee Jeffrey indicated that it would be helpful to include a brief comparison of the new service as opposed to the service provided last year on each of the routes contained in the proposals.

President Bibiloni shared that he had been receiving comments from students and that not having service on several of the routes during break-times will be a significant concern for students.

While discussing the #14 Peach route proposals, Director Kyras said passengers had two additional routes that could be used - #6 Brown and #9 Plum. Further, she indicated that currently customers can only de-board the bus from campus on S. 16th Street using the #9 Plum route, but that there is no stop to use this route to travel to campus. She indicated that CyRide and ISU Facilities Planning and Management had been discussing this situation and that there was a safety concern in adding this stop as there is currently not a sidewalk to the Vet. Med. complex. ISU had estimated the cost for this sidewalk to be \$150,000. Trustee Cain also shared that students at the Vet. Med. complex have different class times and encouraged CyRide to work with the college if one of the two, #14 route Peach route options is approved, so that student needs could be addressed.

Director Kyras directed board members to the chart listing a summary of these possible changes and indicated that the service improvements totaled between \$423,704 and \$496,257 and the service decreased would save \$76,913. She indicated that CyRide would be receiving at least \$200,000 more in federal funding this year, and each year thereafter, that could be used to fund some of the proposed changes without impacting local partner funding shares in the next budget.

Director Kyras also briefly explained one schedule issue CyRide is currently having that will not be an issue next year. She indicated that buses on the #3 Blue route are typically 10 minutes late all day due to high ridership and the need to stop at every bus stop on the route. She stated that due to construction next year, the route will need to be detoured and that the detour is shorter allowing the route to be timely. However, she indicated that when construction is completed (estimate is 18 months) CyRide's staff/board will need to address this issue.

Trustee Schainker shared his thoughts that he believed that with almost 7 million rides and only approximately 70 customers providing feedback, that he would consider CyRide 2.0 a great success, and therefore, is hesitant to spend up to \$400,000 to address additional service improvements.

Trustee Cain stated that she believed that the #14 Peach route is a concern for the university after receiving comments from Vet. Med. staff, employees, and students.

President Bibiloni shared his view on the number of individuals providing feedback, indicating that many students do not reach out to CyRide to share their concerns

regarding the service and that that he believes that the approximately 70 comments is understated. He further shared that he believed the “Design Your Own Transit System” survey recommended by staff would provide valuable input into customer’s experiences with the new service.

Trustee Schainker shared that he had been receiving negative comments from non-student residents regarding the EASE and #4 Yellow routes. Further, he indicated that he believes that the survey should allow residents to add other options than the ones developed by staff, so that all residents could share their thoughts on how to improve the service. Director Kyras indicated that the “Design Your Own Transit System” survey was not designed to accept open-ended suggestions for additional services and that the survey’s analysis of all possible suggestions was a lengthy process that last time required a 12-month period. Further, she indicated that service changes needed to be designed and approved by the transit board at the January 2019 board meeting. She also indicated that the service proposals developed by staff addressed “gaps” in the current CyRide 2.0 service to return to previous service levels and that they were suggestions by its current riders. President Bibiloni concurred that adding space for customers to add additional service suggestions within the survey would be desirable.

Trustee Jeffrey shared her perspective that CyRide needed to receive input from its entire customer base; however, recognized that most customers were students.

Trustee Schainker further shared his concern that if CyRide’s federal funding was reduced in the future that customers would still expect the same level of service and if \$200,000 more service was added next year that this would be impossible to achieve. He also shared that the transit board had established a maximum local funding partner increase per year of no more than 5%.

Trustee Jeffrey asked what the next step would need to be. Director Kyras indicated that there were several alternative directions the board could take and that these were listed in the report; however, she recommended that the first alternative, to approve a second budget option increasing expenses by \$200,000 to address service modifications. Specific modifications would then be approved after the budget process is completed in January 2019. She indicated that determining the specific changes as soon as possible would be advantageous for students making their housing choices for next year, so that they can make informed decisions regarding how transit will impact their travel.

Trustee Cain made a motion to direct staff to prepare an option, in addition to the baseline budget, for the 2019-2020 budget that incorporates \$200,000 more in operating expenses to fund the Transit Board’s service change priorities. Trustee Schainker seconded the motion. (Ayes: Six. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

By consensus, transit board members directed CyRide staff to develop the online survey, listing potential changes, as well as the opportunity to add additional suggestions, and to prepare a report regarding feedback gained from the survey. Director Kyras then

explained the various methods of informing the public about the survey: press release, public meeting, coordinating with ISU on an email to students, Facebook, Twitter, e-notifications, KASI, etc. Trustee Cain also offered suggestions to reach out to *Inside Iowa State*, which will reach faculty and staff as well. Trustee Schainker also suggested staff reach out to the neighborhood associations, as he had heard concerns with the EASE and Yellow routes. Director Kyras asked Trustee Schainker to share those comments for inclusion in the overall summary of comments staff was compiling.

Facility Site Analysis – Fatal Flaw Analysis: Director Kyras briefly summarized progress to-date regarding CyRide’s facility site analysis, stating that the field of possible sites had been narrowed from 188 to 17. Further, she indicated that board members had directed staff to include possible sites west of Ames and outside the city limits. She indicated that staff had prepared information to further narrow the remaining 17 sites; however, was not able to complete the identification of sites west of Ames in time for the meeting, but that this information would be prepared for the November board meeting. She shared the three criteria staff had developed to narrow the sites west of Ames: vacant parcels with at least 15 acres, parcels within 1 mile of the city limits and that are located on a paved road.

She then explained staff’s results in reaching out to the city and school district regarding the availability of seven of the remaining seventeen sites. She indicated that the three sites near the airport (3800 Riverside Drive, 4600 Riverside Drive, 623 Airport Road) were eliminated due to federal requirements for clear space or that the city had other commitments for the land (solar farm). She also added that the city site at 700 E. 5th Street was currently being used as an ash pond for two departments, so this was also not available for CyRide consideration.

She also indicated that discussions regarding the two sites on Mortensen Road and a third on State street (3915 Mortensen Road, 3399 Mortensen Road, 601 State Street), each adjacent to each other, were also eliminated from consideration as the city and school district indicated that the school district parcel was being considered for another public use.

Trustee Schainker requested clarification on the school district site questioning where CyRide would need land on this parcel. Director Kyras indicated that it would be between the existing parking lot and the ISU-owned land to the east. It was determined that this area was the same location being considered for another public use.

Director Kyras then briefly explained that seven parcels had been eliminated through this analysis and that ten remained. She then briefly explained the ten remaining sites located at the following addresses:

- Curtiss Farm West (2 parcels) – owned by ISU
- University Blvd. – South of the Research Park (2 parcels) – owned by ISU
- 1900 State Street – owned by ISU

- Gateway Hills-Mortensen Rd. Partnership Site (2 parcels) – owned by City of Ames and ISU
- 1825 Dayton Ave. – private ownership
- 1100 S. Dayton Ave. – private ownership
- 5699 Westfield Dr. – private ownership

Trustee Schainker shared his concern with property located on Dayton Road, indicating that it was a significant distance from the desired west and south Ames area. Director Kyras indicated that the final ten locations selected for a more detailed analysis would be ranked and factors such as location would weigh into this final evaluation.

Director Kyras recommended tabling board action at the meeting, indicating that consideration of the parcels identified west of the city limits would need to be completed before the best ten sites could be selected for further analysis.

The board requested clarification on the parcel size needed. Director Kyras explained that, for CyRide's entire operations to be reassembled at the new site, 15 acres would be needed; however, if the training course was added CyRide would need 2-3 acres more for a total of 18 acres. She indicated the course was not required to be on site, but that it was more efficient, if possible. Therefore, a minimum of 15 acres was needed with a desire for 18 acres.

President Bibiloni asked if CyRide had reached out to other organizations to determine if a coordinated approach for the training course would be possible. Director Kyras indicated that staff had not, but this could be accomplished in the future, depending on the outcome of the site analysis. Trustee Cain was asked if Iowa State University would also need a course.

Supervisor Lauris Olsen asked if staff had talked to the county engineer about its future plans to pave roads. Director Kyras explained that this had not been considered at this point in the analysis; however, when the sites are narrowed to the final ten, she indicated that this could be done in the final analysis if a site was not on a paved road at this time.

Director Kyras shared that staff recommended tabling action on narrowing sites for consideration until the November meeting. This recommendation was moved by Trustee Jeffrey. Trustee Schainker seconded the motion (Ayes: Six. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

Transit Director's Report:

- 1) Monthly Financial Report:** Director Kyras indicated that staff had developed a monthly financial report to analyze the status of its revenues and expenses with the purpose of ensuring that it was meeting its budget under the new CyRide 2.0 system. She shared the document staff would be using. Through September, she indicated that expenses

were 1.5% below budgeted and that CyRide had a positive year-to-date closing balance of \$142, 221.

- 2) Iowa DOT Bus and Bus Facilities Grant Results:** Director Kyras indicated that federal awards were made on the Bus and Bus Facilities grants and that only the rural and small systems in Iowa received funding at 83%. She indicated that CyRide was not included in this grant. She indicated that there are additional state funding opportunities and that CyRide hopes to receive funding for one or two buses at an 80% funding level. She reminded board members that they had previous approved local funding to support up to four buses at a federal share of 80%.
- 3) Meeting with FTA Administrator:** Director Kyras indicated that she would be traveling to Kansas City to be part of a small group invited to meet with the FTA Administrator from Washington, DC on how transit is working in our communities. She shared a handout she would be providing to the Administrator, which encouraged an increase in the Small Transit Intensive Cities (STIC) federal program from 2% to 3% and to support future CyRide applications for facility expansion and electric buses.
- 4) Federal Drug Testing Changes:** Director Kyras explained a change in federal regulations effective mid-year - on January 1, 2019. She indicated that random drug testing rates increased from 25% to 50% annually, which will have an impact on the current budget, as well as will increase expenses for the 2019-2020 budget.

Fall Meeting Dates/Times:

- November 14, 2018 – 8:00 A.M.- **Moved to 8:30 A.M**
- December 12, 2018 – 8:00 A.M. – Look for another date.

Adjourn: Meeting Adjourned at 9:40 A.M.

Juan Bibiloni, President

Joanne Van Dyke, Recording Secretary