

AMES TRANSIT AGENCY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

AMES, IOWA

September 16, 2019

The Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees met on September 16, 2019, at 4:15 p.m. in CyRide's Conference room. President Bibiloni called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m. Present: Trustees Cain, Jeffrey, Schrader and Schainker. Absent: Trustee Nelson.

APPROVAL OF AUGUST 8, 2019 MINUTES: Trustee Jeffrey made a motion to adopt the August 8, 2019, minutes as presented. Trustee Schrader seconded the motion. (Ayes: Five. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

TITLE VI SERVICE STANDARDS & POLICIES OVERVIEW: Interim Director Neal explained the first two agenda items are part of CyRide's Title VI program. Neal explained the Board must approve an overall Title VI Program, including service standards and policies, for submission to FTA by October 1, 2019. Neal went on to explain this agenda item requests approval of modifications and/or clarifications to the standards and policies section of the overall Title VI program. Specifically, four areas were under review: vehicle headways, on-time performance, service availability, and vehicle assignments.

Neal explained the vehicle headway standard was last reviewed in 2013 and was not reviewed in 2016, due to the system redesign. She explained CyRide's routes prior to and after CyRide 2.0 modifications exceeded previous, board-established standards.

Trustee Nelson arrived at 4:19 p.m.

Interim Director Neal and staff recommended an update to CyRide's previous minimum service headways to reflect current operations with CyRide 2.0 changes. Neal referenced 2019-2020 frequencies for CyRide service and stated that recommendations were based off these standards. Trustee Schainker asked for clarification on if the new changes were a requirement. Shari Atwood, Transit Planner, explained she had contacted The Civil Rights office at the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and they confirmed standards should follow the minimum service CyRide is currently providing. These standards are not meant to be an absolute each time CyRide expands frequency or adds a new route, but the standard should be applied whenever designing a new service or route. In general, CyRide serves areas with minorities at a greater frequency than other areas of the Ames' community. Interim Director Neal went on to explain changes regarding curb-to-curb and flexible services are based on the addition of the EASE route and the elimination of #25 Silver route.

The next standard Interim Director Neal reviewed was on-time performance. She explained there are two standards in this category. Staff is recommending no changes to the percentage of trips always operated and minor clarification under percentage of trips not late. Staff recommends increasing the 3 minute late standard to 5 minutes to

be more aligned with the defined “on-time” category of other larger transit systems, with similar per capita ridership.

Interim Director Neal explained staff rationale for changing the standard for service availability, or the percentage of the population within a ¼ mile of CyRide routes. The previous standard stated 85%. Staff recommended changing this to 80%, based on GIS information. Interim Director Neal explained, after consulting with the City of Ames GIS department, the percentage has decreased due to the extension of the Ames City limits. She clarified, after reviewing other Title VI programs throughout respective transit agencies, 80% is still relatively high.

The last standard considered was vehicle assignments. Staff recommended no changes in the policy; however, there have been some modification in sizes of buses assigned to certain routes because of route elimination and safety considerations.

Trustee Schainker made a motion to approve the CyRide service standards and policies as recommended by staff for inclusion into the larger Title VI Program document. Trustee Cain seconded the motion. (Ayes: Six. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

TITLE VI PROGRAM UPDATE: Interim Director Neal explained this agenda item is the overall Title VI program. Part of the Title VI regulations requires the Transit Board to review and formally approve its program update, as well as sign an updated policy statement every three years. Interim Director Neal reminded the Board of the Safe Harbor threshold for individuals who speak Mandarin Chinese and speak English “less than very well.” Federal regulations require all vital documents in this document be printed in the language the LEP group speaks. Interim Director Neal explained the standards and modifications prepared by staff section by section, which are summarized in the board packet.

Trustee Schainker made a motion to approve CyRide’s Title VI Plan and policy for submission to the Federal Transit Administration by October 1, 2019. Trustee Jeffrey seconded the motion. (Ayes: Six. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

TRANSIT ASSET MANAGEMENT (TAM) PLAN & PERFORMANCE TARGETS UPDATE: Interim Director Neal explained to the transit board that FTA regulations require every transit agency have a plan, regardless of size. CyRide must create, maintain and update, communicate to Ames Area MPO and state DOT staff. Further, it must self-certify, submit annual data to the National Transit Database (NTD), submit an annual narrative report to NTD, and participate in oversight during the triennial review process.

Interim Director Neal went over the useful life benchmark (ULB) for each asset class. She then reviewed the differences between the FTA default ULB’s and CyRide’s locally determined ULB ages for each asset class category. Neal explained that currently discretionary grants are not hindered by different ULB’s; however, future conversations may warrant return to the FTA recommended levels. This is particularly true if

discretionary grants are dispersed according to a transit agency's ULB or if it hinders CyRide's ability to compete with other Iowa transit agencies within the PTMS process.

Interim Director Neal summarized the status of the FY19 Performance Targets and Status for each asset class and category. She continued to explain the importance of designating an Accountable Executive who is responsible for carrying out the TAM plan and Agency Safety Plan, as well as setting future performance targets for 2020 submitted in the National Transit Database (NDT) by October 31, 2019. In the past, this person was the Transit Director and staff recommends that Interim Director Neal be named as the Accountable Executive in the 2020 TAM Plan. Interim Director Neal summarized the recommended 2020- 2024 performance targets for each FTA required asset class and category developed by staff.

Trustee Jeffrey made a motion to approve CyRide staff's recommendation for the establishment of FY2020 TAM performance targets for submission to FTA and the approval of Barb Neal, Interim Transit Director, as the Accountable Executive. Trustee Nelson seconded the motion. (Ayes: Six. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

LOW OR NO EMISSION GRANT TIMELINE AND BUDGET Interim Director Neal reiterated that in July, CyRide received notification CyRide was awarded the federal funding for \$1,660,180 for a Low and No Emission Grant. To reduce the full local share commitment of \$477,620, staff discussed with the transit board the possibility of submitting an upcoming state grant for the second round of the Volkswagen Settlement funding, which could significantly reduce the local share. If the Volkswagen Settlement Grant, VW, was awarded for the application request, CyRide's local match could be reduced by \$390,000.

Interim Director Neal explained there are two areas of the original budget that needed to be revisited. First, there was a change to the original budget for the cost of the chargers and dispensers. CyRide was notified by the Center for Transportation & the Environment (CTE) that charger and dispenser costs have increased, and, as a result, were underestimated in the original budget. The consultants recommended increasing this amount by \$40,000, bringing the total from \$100,000 to \$140,000 for the purchase and installation of this equipment.

The second item was the submission of the Volkswagen Settlement Grant 2020. Neal explained two components, electric buses and depot charging stations, would qualify for this grant opportunity. She went on to explain staff had developed a revised budget, for submission in a VW grant, which could request \$390,000 for these two project activities.

Interim Director Neal provided a preliminary schedule of major activities the transit board would need to accomplish and approve for full bus deployment by summer 2022. CyRide staff asked the transit board to revise the electric bus budget to reflect current

equipment costs and direct staff to prepare and submit an application in the next round of grant opportunities on receipt of funding notices.

Trustee Schainker made a motion to approve the revised electric bus budget to reflect current equipment costs and state funding for inclusion in a VW Settlement grant and direct staff to prepare and submit an application in the next round of these grant opportunities. Trustee Schrader seconded the motion. (Ayes: Six. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

YEAR END RIDERSHIP UPDATE – INFORMATIONAL: Interim Director Neal provided ridership analyses for the end of FY2019. She stated that CyRide ended fiscal year 2019 with a ridership was decrease of 6.9% or 451,042 fewer rides. She analyzed several factors that may have contributed to lower ridership. She also provided an analysis of ridership trends by areas of town.

President Bibiloni asked if staff was surprised with the reduction in ridership from west Ames, down 14.7%, and Orange route ridership was not up a proportional amount. Trustee Cain stated a contributing factor for the west Ames decline may have been that ISU discontinued renting apartment complexes in this area, so there is less ISU student occupancy in that area.

TRANSIT DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- 1. Quarterly Report** – A chart was shared of key performance measures and a brief summary of the fourth quarter was graphically presented.
- 2. Title VI Equity Analysis Update** – A brief update was given on the public meeting held on September 5. The board was reminded the public comment period is open until September 23.
- 3. 2020-2021 ISU Student Fees and Trust Fund Balance** – A brief update was given about the Student Government Finance Committee meeting scheduled on September 24 to discuss the trust fund balance and a new student fee rate for 2020-2021.

FALL MEETING DATES/TIME:

- October 23, 3:30 P.M.
- November 14, 4:15 P.M.
- December 12, 4:15 P.M.

Adjourn: Trustee Cain made a motion to adjourn the meeting and motion seconded by Trustee Jeffrey. The meeting adjourned at 5:06 p.m. (Ayes: Six. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

Juan Bibiloni, President

Joanne Van Dyke, Recording Secretary