

AMES TRANSIT AGENCY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

AMES, IOWA

October 23, 2019

The Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees met on October 23, 2019 at 3:30 p.m. in CyRide's Conference room. President Bibiloni called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m. with Trustees Cain, Nelson, and Schainker present. Absent were Trustees Schrader and Jeffrey.

APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 16, 2019 MINUTES: Trustee Cain made a motion to adopt the September 16, 2019 minutes as presented. Trustee Schainker seconded the motion. (Ayes: Four. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

Public in Attendance: Hans Riensche, ISU Student Government/CALS (College of Agriculture and Life Science), Sarah Lawrence, and Cathy Brown ISU Facilities Planning & Management.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: President Bibiloni mentioned an email all transit board members received from Kyle Poorman. The email requested an update regarding a prior email sent to Sheri Kyras, CyRide Transit Board, and City Council in May of 2019 asking CyRide to provide no-cost transportation to low income disabled Ames residents. Director Neal explained the email received in May was acknowledged. She went on to explain there could be significant costs associated with providing no cost services for disabled residents on the fixed routes because fares for Dial-A-Ride would also be at no cost. After discussion, Director Neal said staff could look into the matter and report back to the board on the costs to implement a plan, if desired.

Hans Riensche, ISU Student Government Senator/CALS (College of Agriculture and Life Science), addressed the transit board on behalf of his constituents regarding the PETA advertisements that were placed on CyRide buses. He shared concerns about whether the ads were misleading and/or deceptive. Director Neal acknowledged that these advertisements were controversial, but when advertisements of this nature are challenged in the legal system, the first amendment and rights to freedom of speech typically prevail.

NEW BUS PURCHASE: Director Neal stated CyRide was recently awarded two grants, an ICAAP and Volkswagen Settlement Grant, which will cover 97% of the costs to purchase 3 new 40' buses. The ICAAP Grant award is \$1,221,960 and the Volkswagen Settlement award is for \$170,640, leaving \$45,000 or 3% that must come from local funding dollars. CyRide is able to use the Iowa Department of Transportation's statewide bid for heavy duty buses, which lists Gillig as an approved vendor. Director Neal explained that CyRide's fleet has been standardized to Gillig buses and that Gillig has provided a preliminary price of \$450,000 per bus.

Rich Leners, Assistant Director of Fleet and Facilities, stated that it can take approximately 18 months for a bus to go into production from the date a bus is ordered and that the specifications are not complete until approximately 6 months before production, which can affect the final pricing. Director Neal added that the not-to-

exceed amount of \$1,437,600 is listed for the board's consideration to account for the final pricing that will come late in the purchase process.

Trustee Nelson made a motion to approve award to Gillig Corporation of Livermore, California in the not to exceed amount of \$1,437,600 for the purchase of three new 40' standard diesel buses. Trustee Schainker seconded the motion. (Ayes: Four. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

COSTRUCTION PROJECT CLOSEOUT: Director Neal explained the pavement replacement project at Ontario and California for the Green Route endpoint project has been completed to the satisfaction of staff and is ready to be closed out.

CyRide received four bids and awarded the project to Jensen Builders, Ltd, who was the low bid at \$47,000. There was one change order for the project in the amount \$1,425 to pour a sidewalk to meet ADA requirements, for a total contract sum of \$46,669. As of October 10, 2019, all work was completed and CyRide would like approval to proceed with payment of the unpaid 5% retainage of \$2,456.

Trustee Schainker made a motion to accept completion and approve the release of retainage for \$2,456 to Jensen Builders, Ltd. for the completion of the 2019 Pavement Improvements CyRide Bus Turnarounds Project. Trustee Cain seconded the motion. (Ayes: Four. Nays: None.) Motion carried.

FY2018-2019 PRELIMINARY CLOSING BALANCE: Director Neal stated the purpose of this and the next agenda item is to bring attention to the fund balance for budget discussions and to ensure that the board's priorities are being addressed. The transit board has set the directive that the operating closing balance should be between 7 and 10% of the operating budget and any additional money could be reallocated, by the board, to either operating or capital expenses.

CyRide will not have a final number until the audit process is completed in December, by the City of Ames, but the uncommitted closing balance is currently estimated to be \$4.7 million. Director Neal presented the fund activity by listing projects the board has already committed to and explained that \$2,250,000 must be kept for cash flow purposes because federal funding is not always received in the same budget year. The estimated uncommitted closing balance above 10% of operating expenses is \$329,728. The transit board can decide how to use the uncommitted amount now or wait for the final audited amount. The transit board agreed to wait for the final audited amount.

FY2020-2021 SERVICE PLANNING: Director Neal stated as part of the budgeting process staff brings possible service proposals for inclusion in budget discussions. If the board choses to modify CyRide services next year based on customer requests or staff suggestions, these modifications will need to be included in the 2020-2021 budget options presented in December. She explained a list of service requests from both customers and staff,

including estimated costs, and asked the board for direction on which proposals they would like staff to refine and bring to future budget discussions.

Trustee Schainker said he did not think the board was in a position to increase services the year. Director Neal stated these services are being present to ensure customers' requests are heard but ultimately any service decisions need to reflect board priorities.

Trustee Schainker asked about funding party history and revenue splits between the three local funding partners. Director Neal explained the annual percentage increase between the local funding partners has not always been equal; however, in the last few years they have been. Neal went on to explain the assumptions CyRide presented to the Student Fee Committee and were using as they prepared the FY21 budget year, which was a 4% increase for all funding partners. Trustee Schainker asked if restoring the Student Trust Fund balance should be a higher priority than service increases. There was further discussion about the Trust Fund and how efforts were made in the past to build the balance more quickly, including unequal contributions by the funding partners.

Director Neal said the two routes CyRide staff believes need to be improved are the #3 Blue route and #14 Peach route as they do not have enough time in their schedules to run their routes as currently designed. Neal explained the #3 Blue route is detouring due to a road closure on Wallace Road, in front of Gerdin Hall. This detour shortens the Blue route from its CyRide 2.0 alignment. She went on to explain if the route goes back to its CyRide 2.0 alignment the cost would be substantial. Staff would like to modify the route, to follow the current detour when construction ends. Director Neal reminded the board if they approve this option CyRide would need to go out for public comment to comply with Title VI.

Director Neal stated the #14 Peach route is currently not able to maintain the schedule effectively either due to heavy vehicular and pedestrian traffic along the Stange, Osborn, and Pammel corridors. To address this issue in the short-term, CyRide has been operating this service in a mini bus. Additional, board-approved extra hours are being used to complete at least one trip most afternoons. Staff is recommending modifying this route from 30 minutes to 40 minutes. Trustee Cain asked if a second bus could be added to this route in the morning to help passengers trying to get to classes. President Bibiloni agreed with Trustee Cain and directed CyRide staff to look at opportunities to revise the #14 Peach route to accommodate 20-minute service in the morning and 40-minute service the rest of the day.

Following the discussion of other service requests, the transit board asked Director Neal to further refine three service proposals for consideration in the budget discussions:

- #14 Peach route – Modify the route from 30 to 40 minutes and add 20 minute service in the morning, to accommodate passenger traveling to campus.
- #2 Green route – Look at options to deviate the route by Ames High School for more trips in the morning and afternoon.

- #3Blue route – Modify the route to the current detoured route.
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Trustee Schainker asked about the successfulness of the EASE serve to the East Ames Industrial area. He inquired if ridership had increased due to this route being a newer service and a more curb to curb solution for customers in the East Ames area. Director Neal said the EASE route was down year to date but up significantly over the last 12 months. She followed up by stating several passengers are using the service to get to employment in the corridor but less rides are being taken to the DMACC area, than the previous year.

TRANSIT DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

1. **Student Fee Committee Request** – A brief update was given about the Student Government Finance Committee meeting. Director Neal shared the trust fund balance, assumptions made, and the fee increase requested.
2. **Agency Safety Plan Update** – A brief update was given about the Federal requirement for all transportation systems to have a certified Agency Safety Plan in place by July 20, 2020. Director Neal discussed the Chief Safety Officer position, previously approved by the Transit Board, will need to be filled as quickly as possible. Trustee Cain asked what the scope of the position would be. Director Neal said the position needs to be audited and finalized by Human Resources but one of the requirements is the position must have a direct line of authority to the accountable executive.
3. **Conferences** – A summary of two recent conferences was shared with the board. Director Neal attended the Midwest Transit Conference in Kansas City to advance legislative priorities of interest to CyRide. Rich Leners, Assistant Director of Fleet and Facilities, and Directory Neal attended the APTA Transform Conference. They attended sessions regarding the Agency Safety Plan requirements, informational sessions on passenger experience, and new integrating technology.
4. **Ridership Statistics First Two Weeks of Fall Semester** – Director Neal shared first and second week ridership was down 17.5% and 13.5% respectively. Rob Jennings, Transit Scheduler/Administrative Analyst, stated September ridership was also down 5%, despite having 21 class days compared to 20 class days last year.

FALL MEETING DATES/TIME:

- November 14, 4:15 PM
- December 12, 4:15 PM

Adjourn: Trustee Schainker made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:56 p.m. and seconded by Trustee Cain.

Juan Bibiloni, President

Joanne Van Dyke, Recording Secretary