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Central Indiana Regional Transportation Authority (CIRTA)

April 13, 2021 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM

Held virtually via zoom and on Facebook Live

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| **Board Members Present:** | | **Board Members Not Present** | **CIRTA Staff Members Present** |
|  |  |  |  |
| Cam Starnes | Mark Richards | Christine Altman | John Seber |
| Dan Woo | Andy Cook |  | Jennifer Gebhard |
| Andrew Klineman | Jerry Bridges |  | Justin Smith |
| Bill Ehret | Linda Sanders |  | Sarah Troutman |
| Robert Waggoner | Greg Henneke |  | Molly Oliver |
| Larry Hesson | Marta Moody |  |  |
| Don Adams | Nathan Messer |  |  |

The meeting was called to order by B. Ehret at 9:03 AM with a quorum.

**Introductions**

J. Gebhard completed roll call to confirm attendance of the above attendees. B. Ehret thanked everyone for tremendous attendance and the meeting began.

**Resolution #2021-04-13-01 – Adoption of Consent Agenda**

*J. Bridges made a motion to accept the consent agenda items. G. Henneke seconded. No oppositions, the motion was carried.*

**Resolution #2021-04-13-02 – Resolution to Approve Altman Poindexter & Wyatt Invoices**

*D. Adams made a motion to approve this resolution. J. Bridges seconded. No oppositions, the motion was carried.*

**Resolution #2021-04-13-03 – Approval to Award and Enter into a Contract for Administration Technology Consulting Contract with SRF Consulting**

B. Ehret requested J. Seber to provide additional information.

J. Seber noted that in January we put out an RFP regarding the Regional Administrative Capacity and Coordination Technology Initiative. We have been talking about bringing in a consultant to review all ten counties based on what they are currently using for software. There were three proposals that came through: Right Turn-Left Turn LTD, SRF and TransPro. We did a review on these and scored them on four key criteria points. We felt SRF prepared the best proposal and was the better company to provide this service for us. The total award amount would be $175,032 applied under the grants in the written resolution.

B. Ehret asked the Board if there were any questions?

J. Bridges asked where this company was from?

J. Seber confirmed Minneapolis, MN.

J. Bridges thanked John for this information and mentioned that he thought this info was shared before.

B. Ehret asked and confirmed there were no further questions. He then asked about motions to approve.

*L. Hesson made a motion to approve this resolution. R. Waggoner seconded. No oppositions, the motion was carried.*

**Resolution # 2021-04-13-04 Resolution for Approval to Award and Enter Into a Contract for Financial Management Services with KSM**

B. Ehret noted that KSM has been our long-time service provider in this area. He asked J. Gebhard or J. Seber if they wanted to add anything to this.

J. Seber explained that we had a couple of different proposers; Engaging Solutions, Thomas Reed LLC and KSM. We reviewed the scope based on qualifications, familiarity with systems that we deal with and costs. Considering all of these items, we request to award the selection to KSM to continue providing services. We are doing a two-year contract with three one-year options.

B. Ehret asked if the Board had any questions (there were none).

*J. Bridges made a motion to approve this resolution. G. Henneke seconded. No oppositions, the motion was carried.*

**Guest Speaker: Becky Allen with Access Johnson County**

B. Ehret turned the meeting over to J. Gebhard and J. Seber to introduce guest speaker Becky Allen from Access Johnson County.

J. Seber explained that one thing we are doing as we move forward with our Board Meetings, he is asking some of the transportation providers within the region to participate (one at each meeting) and provide some of the history of their program(s), where they are at and what they are doing.

Guest Speaker Becky Allen was introduced and welcomed. It was noted that the presentation she would be sharing was shared electronically with the Board members in advance.

Becky spoke about their public transit system and reviewed the Power Point presentation.

J. Seber thanked Becky for her time.

B. Ehret offered time for the Board to ask any questions they may have to Becky.

M. Moody asked who was doing the RFP and selection for the service provider in Johnson County.

Becky explained they were currently in a holding pattern. They raised all of the matching funds when they were a 5311. They are now being told they cannot do that, and same cannot be part of their RFP because it would give them an unfair advantage. The have been advised it has to be the county that raises the local match.

M. Moody confirmed with reference to Government if that was the county?

Becky confirmed it would be county commissioners and county council.

L. Hesson mentioned to Becky that was she presented was impressive and admirable. He asked to what extent they communicate with the operators of transportation providers in other counties.

Becky advised they were all on INCOST (Indiana Council on Specialized Transportation). She also said that years ago, they reached out to CIRTA and mentioned the missed transportation needs of rural areas – and now there is County Connect.

L. Hesson said that the reason he was asking was because… they were doing such a great job and he thought the operators in other counties could learn a lot from what they were doing, and possible vice versa.

Becky noted that she does reach out. She wishes more people could assist Veterans like their group does. She said a lot of people were worried about the money to do things like this.

M. Richards thanked Becky for joining us today and noted she gave a good presentation. He asked how far down they dropped last year, if they were on their way back, and where they were at now?

Becky said they dropped down to 25 people in a day (the lowest). They were lucky to break a thousand with 5 routes going (around 186 per day). Pre-Covid they were 350-400 per day.

G. Henneke mentioned that he agreed with M. Richards about this being a great presentation. He also said thank you for the services provided and willingness to work with CIRTA. He mentioned in 2015, rides/money started to drop off, wanted to know if they lost a funding source at that time?

Becky confirmed they lost JARC (Job Access Reverse Commute), a federal fund that had been available for 5 years she thought… it did not get renewed.

G. Henneke said that he inferred from all of this that there were a lot more rides that needed to be provided but due to being limited by how much money they could access.

Becky confirmed this was correct.

G. Henneke asked what Becky thought the demand was out there?

Becky said they are missing the boat early morning. They have a lot of manufacturers that start at 6am. They used to be open at 5:30am but that availability got cut. She feels they are missing the boat for third shift employees.

G. Henneke noted that with them missing a lot of rides for work, their base now rests with many rides to appointments and miscellaneous things like that.

Becky confirmed this was correct. She noted there was still a fair amount of work trips for those that work during the day but limited based on the hours they can afford to remain open and provide service with the funding available.

B. Ehret said he had one closing question. He asked Becky to remind us about their relationship with ARC of Indiana.

Becky said that Access Johnson County is a subsidiary of Gateway Services.

**Legislative Update:**

B. Ehret mentioned that we have had a lot of exciting things happen recently at the state house. He was going to turn the meeting over to Rick Cockrum to provide an update. Rick was not on the call.

**Commuter Connect Update:**

J. Gebhard mentioned two new marketing initiatives and partnerships: a bike mentors’ program with Bike Indianapolis and north split construction mitigation with INDOT.

**BIKE MENTOR PROGRAM**

To capitalize on the thousands of Americans who bought bicycles during the pandemic, we are starting a bike mentoring program with Bike Indianapolis. We will match new riders with experienced cyclists that Bike Indianapolis recruits and trains. The goal is to encourage more people to travel by bike.

We will be working with Damon Richards as a mentor for this program. J. Gebhard introduced Damon and had him provide more information about Bike Indianapolis.

Damon spoke and explained… he is the Executive Director for Bike Indianapolis. They are the bicycle advocacy group for central Indiana. Their mission is to get more people riding bikes. They do that through three different avenues within their group. The first one is advocacy. The second is education. The third is promotion.

J. Gebhard thanked Damon for this information. She noted that working with Damon and other individuals in this bicycle advocacy group, we saw an opportunity. Last year alone between January and October, there was $4.1 million spent on bikes in the United States. This does not include e-bikes. This is an increase of nearly 62% from 2019. Research revealed that other transit companies throughout the nation have bike mentorship programs.

How it works…

* Damon and Bike Indianapolis are going to recruit and train volunteer mentors.
* Interested cyclists can reach out to Commuter Connect to seek being matched with a mentor. At the same time, this provide Commuter Connect with a marketing opportunity to see if they would be interested in finding matches for other services we offer as well.
* Mentors and mentees will be required to sign a liability release form.
* The mentor and mentee will agree on a time and place to meet.

Bike mentors agree to:

* Attend an April 17th training session
* Plan a safe bicycle route in the new rider’s neighborhood
* Ride a minimum of four rides with their mentee
* Share the rules and regulations of bicycling
* Provide tips on bike parking and commuting with work items
* Attend training classes and sign liability releases

The goal is for new riders to venture outside of their neighborhood after four weekly initial rides with their mentor and begin using their bike for some kind of transportation activity – ultimately riding their bike to work at some point in the future.

J. Gebhard explained that we are working with Jen Thomas to create a promotion and then be ready to launch this program the week of April 19th in anticipation of bike month in May. A new flyer has been created and will be distributed in all local bike shops. The Commuter Connect website will be updated with a dedicated page for biking. In addition, we will seek out opportunities to partner with organizations such as IndyGo, IMPO, Bike Carmel, Health by Design, Cultural Trail, YMCAs, etc.

C. Starnes noted that he serves on both Boards (Bike Indianapolis and Commuter Connect). He applauded J. Gebard and Damon Richards for this collaboration.

J. Bridges noted that he felt this was exciting. He is going to share information about this new bike program with his bike group. He suggested to have people that participate in this program sign up to utilize Strava (a free app that can record movements and track trips that people do).

Damon Richards said that last year, Strava changed the rules on their release of data. Now, municipalities and non-profit organizations can get access to data for free.

**NORTH SPLIT CONSTRUCTION**

We are partnering with INDOT on a campaign that uses the North Split reconstruction project as a reason to try alternative commuting options. The campaign includes co-branded billboards and more.

J. Gebhard advised that both INDOT and CIRTA have been sharing information about the construction in their newsletters and social media pages.

We will also be looking to possibly get some billboards up to help with the congestion in Morgan County resulting in the I-69 project that is impacting the Martinsville to Indianapolis commute for many.

**NEW CIRTA EMPLOYEE**

J. Gebhard introduced Justin Smith, CIRTA/Commuter Connects new Office Customer Service Representative.

**RETURN TO WORK SURVEY**

Our return-to-work survey generated 47 responses, and while the number is not huge, we were happy to hear from several employers that we haven’t previously had a relationship with. Outreach reps have followed up with them and are busy scheduling presentations and providing commuting information for their employees.

**WEB TRAFFIC**

In March, 644 users – an average of 21 per day – visited commuterconnect.us. Most were new to the site. This is encouraging because it indicates we’re reaching people who are new to our program.

**COMMUNITY EVENTS**

As COVID vaccinations increase and events are being planned, we’ve been able to register for some in-person outreach events, including the following: Martinsville Chamber of Commerce meeting, Earth Day at Garfield Park, Spark Fishers and Madison County Farmers’ Markets.

J. Gebhard mentioned that she recently spoke with Roche Diagnostics. They reached back out to us as they are wanting to re-engage and share information about us with their employees as well as set up preferential parking for their employees as they start to return to work in June and July of this year.

B. Ehret thanked J. Gebhard and Jen Thomas for this information/presentation.

**Legislative Update (Cont’d):**

Rick Cockrum advised that the final adjournment to get the Senate Bill out of the House and the House Bill out of the Senate is the first part of next week.

From a government standpoint, House Bill 1437 codifies the governor’s executive orders and how units of government and public agencies conduct electronic meetings. It provides statutory guidelines on how often you can do them and the procedures to be followed.

RE: the budget, the public mass transit fund is at $45 million. It has not increased much since it was decoupled from the sales tax percent and made a separate line-item budget. It has been around $42 million for the past six to eight years.

The bill about enforcing the 10% private donations section, which Senator Freeman has said for the past two years was not targeted to hurt IndyGo, died in the House. As of yesterday, an amendment was put on 1191 to force IndyGo to pay for utility relocation of all of its projects. It appears this will be made retroactive. IndyGo says this will likely mean that will not be able to do some of the other lines they currently were planning because of the extensive expense this will create.

That 3417-amendment passed. We are going to be working with the Chamber and a coalition of others to try and get this stopped in the House.

B. Ehret and Rick Cockrum invited questions, there were none.

B. Ehret commented on how so many legislative things are fluid from time to time. Back in 2019, we had discussions that are still ongoing with IMPO about how they are reorganizing their stand-alone status outside of the city of Indianapolis. There have also been discussions relating to the 5307 and 5311 that guest speaker Becky Allen touched on… how this is still to be determined by county commissioners and elected officials.

**Executive Director Update**

**Consulting Firm**

J. Seber noted that he was excited about the consulting group/firm that we will be having come on board for our technology and capacity review. He feels this will open things for a more collaborative effort in the future for all of the providers within the region to share resources, have visibility, reduce wasted trips and time, and improve overall efficiency.

**CRRSAA Funding**

Regarding this year’s 5307… it is no longer CARES Act. It is now CRRSAA funding for 2021. We have completed two split letters this year. We did them separately to speed up the process. We do have some funding for lost revenue this year just because of COVID and some things happening there. We have CRRSAA funding that we will be utilizing for PPE/cleaning supplies to provide to our contractors, our vanpool program and a small amount for CIRTA.

**New Projects**

We initially had two and a half new projects planned for this year (one referred to as a half as it is a revitalization of the Whitestown service because of their growth). One had to end up being removed because West Plainfield did not end up being ready to go this year. We did receive our funding for these projects. One of them is Hancock County. They are in the process of working through some things now. They will be a new connector service for us.

**Johnson County Transit Study**

We have also been part of the Johnson County transit study. There is a lot of growth and potential in the area, it is a matter of finding out how we can get there. We met in December with the Franklin mayor to talk about our process and what we are doing. We have been on hold because of the study but are going to try to push for a connector to roll out next year.

**Brownsburg**

We have a meeting with the City of Brownsburg next week. They would like to discuss a potential connector there which we are excited about. We also have a newly scheduled meeting with Mayor Jensen and Deputy Mayor Light from Noblesville set for May 4th to discuss their needs and some possible new projects we might be able to assist them with. Our ultimate goal for 2022 is to roll out three new connector services.

**Financials**

Regarding financials… in January, cash flow was dug into to determine why there was such a fluctuation. One key thing creating a delay was the way we were billing. Starting in February, in effort to improve cash flow, billing started being based on a monthly basis. This will help with cash flow as we will not be supporting something longer than needed. We are also now charging our percentage/fee for resources that we provide to oversee contracts. This will result in a revenue of $40,000+ that we have been missing. Our accounting group has switched over to QuickBooks vs. the previous MIP program. We were paying $7,000+ a year for upkeep/support on the MIP program. With just the savings from these items, we should be able to pick up an additional $76,000 this year. December’s budget reflected that we were about $77,000 short on the general funds side.

**Employment Opportunity**

Our Mobility Manager, DeAndre’ Rhodes – his last day was this past Friday (April 9). He submitted a two-week resignation as he decided to move on to a new career. We wish him the best and will miss him. His position has been posted and we have about 16 decent candidates. Interviews will begin tomorrow. J. Seber will oversee DeAndre’s former responsibilities until a new candidate comes on board and is trained.

**Outreach Team**

We are very proud of our Outreach Team (Molly Oliver and Sarah Troutman) as they have been out more and more in the communities are things are starting to open back up a little bit. They have been pushing to get out in the communities even before now and their efforts are appreciated. New employee Justin Smith has been doing a great job expanding our customer service experience.

**Bridgeport Shelter**

Construction of the Bridgeport shelter that has been in discussion for nearly two years is going to start being constructed on Thursday of this week. It is scheduled to be completed on May 25th give or take a couple of days to take weather into consideration.

B. Ehret invited questions. There were not any. Today’s meeting was a little longer than usual, but a lot of good topics, great new initiatives. It was good to have report from our guests, Becky Allen and Damon Richards. We remind ourselves that CIRTA/Commuter Connect’s role is mobility… connecting people with opportunities.

B. Ehret requested motion to adjourn.

**Adjournment**

*Motion to adjourn meeting by G. Henneke and seconded by J. Bridges at 10:26am.*

*All in attendance were in agreement.*