Central Indiana Regional Transportation Authority (CIRTA)

October 17, 2023, 9:00am

CIRTA

320 N. Meridian St. Suite 920

Indianapolis, IN 46204

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Board Members Present:** | | **Board Members Not Present** | **CIRTA Staff Present** |
| Cam Starnes (v) | Jerry Bridges | Don Adams | Jennifer Gebhard |
| Larry Hesson | Greg Henneke | Linda Sanders | Amanda Meyer |
| Ron Deer  Andrew Klineman | Nathan Messer | Dr. Gabe Bosslet | David Krieg  Sarah Troutman |
| Christine Altman (v) |  |  |  |
| Robert Waggoner  Ann Sheidler |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

The board meeting was called to order at 9:04 am by J. Bridges.

J. Gebhard took roll call and ensured a quorum was present.

**Resolution #2023-10-17-01– Adoption of Consent Agenda**

*L. Hesson made a motion to accept the consent agenda items. N. Messer seconded. Roll call was taken.*

*Larry Hesson- yea*

*Ron Deer- yea*

*Andrew Klineman-yea*

*Robert Waggoner-yea*

*Jerry Bridges-yea*

*Greg Henneke-yea*

*Nathan Messer-yea*

*Ann Sheidler-yea*

*Cam Starnes-yea*

*Christine Altman-yea*

*No opposition, the motion was carried.*

**Resolution #2023-10-17-02 – Resolution to Approve American Structurepoint Invoice**

*N. Messer made a motion to approve American Structurepoint invoice, A. Klineman seconded. Roll call was taken.*

*Larry Hesson- yea*

*Ron Deer- yea*

*Andrew Klineman-yea*

*Robert Waggoner-yea*

*Jerry Bridges-yea*

*Greg Henneke-abstain*

*Nathan Messer-yea*

*Ann Sheidler-yea*

*Cam Starnes-yea*

*Christine Altman-yea*

*No opposition, the motion was carried.*

**Resolution #2023-10-17-03 – Resolution to Approve Contract for Public Relations Firm**

* CIRTA decided to terminate the contract for the current public relations firm, Hirons.
* JTPR is the CIRTA recommendation.
* Jen Thomas has done a great job in the past with CIRTA.
* This will be a 2-year contract at $48,000 a year.

*G. Henneke made a motion to approve the contract for public relations firm, R. Waggoner seconded. Roll call was taken.*

*Larry Hesson- yea*

*Ron Deer- yea*

*Andrew Klineman-yea*

*Robert Waggoner-yea*

*Jerry Bridges-yea*

*Greg Henneke-yea*

*Nathan Messer-yea*

*Ann Sheidler-yea*

*Cam Starnes-yea*

*Christine Altman-yea*

*No opposition, the motion was carried.*

**Resolution #2023-10-17-04 – Resolution to Approve Contract for Website Support**

* Yearly renewal.
* CIRTA recommends staying with Affirm.
* Contract not to exceed $13,200 per year for both websites.

*A. Klineman made a motion to approve the contract for website support; N. Messer seconded. Roll call was taken.*

*Larry Hesson- yea*

*Ron Deer- yea*

*Andrew Klineman-yea*

*Robert Waggoner-yea*

*Jerry Bridges-yea*

*Greg Henneke-yea*

*Nathan Messer-yea*

*Ann Sheidler-yea*

*Cam Starnes-yea*

*Christine Altman-yea*

*No opposition, the motion was carried.*

**Resolution #2023-10-17-05 – Resolution to Approve Extension of Royal Transportation Contract**

* This will extend the current contract as is for 2024.
* Will still have a 30-day termination clause.
* Suggesting no fares in 2024.

*L. Hesson made a motion to approve the extension of the Royal Transportation contract; A. Klineman seconded. Roll call was taken.*

*Larry Hesson- yea*

*Ron Deer- yea*

*Andrew Klineman-yea*

*Robert Waggoner-yea*

*Jerry Bridges-yea*

*Greg Henneke-yea*

*Nathan Messer-yea*

*Ann Sheidler-yea*

*Cam Starnes-yea*

*Christine Altman-yea*

*No opposition, the motion was carried.*

**Presentation: Draft Budget**

* 3% COLA increase
* 8.3% healthcare increase
* Will reduce advertising budget by $200,000 for next year to prepare for the transition from CMAQ grants to MPO in 2025.
  + Will continue to ask for the full amount after the transition.
  + Commuter Connect will cut their media buys.
* Partner Contributions are about where forecasted.
* Budget is in the positive and meets all of CIRTA/Commuter Connect’s needs.
* Will be voted on at the December board meeting.
* Commuter Connect is funded through 2026 and we are currently working on 2027 funding.

**Presentation: TransPro Consulting- Revised Service Recommendations for the Workforce Connectors**

TransPro was hired by CIRTA in April 2023 to assess two fixed-route commuter services (branded “Workforce Connectors”) funded primarily by Economic Improvement Districts (EIDs) in Plainfield and Whitestown, Indiana. The goal of each service is to connect workers throughout the Central Indiana region with jobs in each community via connections to the IndyGo bus network.

Proposed definition of success: “Plainfield and Whitestown Workforce Connectors should demonstrate value to EID employers by helping attract and retain workers with affordable transportation to jobs, that provides a positive customer experience.”

Stakeholder Outreach-EID Study

TransPro distributed a survey in July 2023 to better understand EID stakeholder priorities for service and identified the following goals.

* Improve Travel Time
* Increase Job Access
* Increase Ridership
* Keep EID Costs Low – New goal from meeting with Plainfield EID.

Revised Recommendations

There are three Mode Options: Taxi/Ride-Sharing Service Subsidy, Commuter Connect Vanpool, and Demand Response. TransPro recommendation is demand response.

* Taxi/Ride-Sharing Service: high cost per trip, Improved travel time & job access, limited potential for pooled trips, administrative burden to determine eligible customers and trips, risk of demand exceeding allocated budget, depending on subsidy level and distance customer fare could be expensive.
* Commuter Connect Vanpool: low cost per trip, improved travel time & job access, cost depends on mileage and fuel usage, requires coordination, works best where work schedules are fixed and regular, insurance challenges, no compensated drivers. Could have employers or EID provide the driver and van but would not be a Commuter Connect vanpool and would not receive subsidy.
* It was asked, “Has vanpool of this scale worked?” Kansas City Hallmark organized a vanpool this size and it was successful. It was also asked “Can a driver be on payroll while driving?” Not with the current Commuter Connect vanpool model. A paid driver can only happen if the EID’s purchase their own vehicles and hire drivers, which would add costs and liability concerns.
* Demand Response: improved travel time (with second vehicle), requires advance reservation, curb-to-curb or hub-to-hub, moderate cost per trip, inexpensive or free to customers (TransPro recommends free as a promotion to increase ridership), known costs, has potential to serve most customers, requires scheduling/dispatching technology.

Based on 2021 Cost Per Trip Comparison, CIRTA WFC cost $24.83 per trip, whereas Kansas City KCATA was $8.38 per trip and IndyGo was $20.14 per trip. The WFC cost per trip has increased since due to lower ridership. It is important to note in 2021 KCATA was zero fare. If introducing zero fare to the Workforce Connectors in 2024 ridership goes through the roof and brings the cost per trip down into the single digits, maybe the best option is to leave the service as is and not change to demand response in 2025 since higher ridership will hit most goals of this study.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

* Demand response service within the EID to improve customer experience and improve job access by serving all EID parcels.
* Request trips via mobile app, website, or phone. CIRTA will support trip requests by phone during business hours. No printed schedule-employees arrive by the designated time.
* Smaller vehicle (15 passengers or fewer). Non-CDL drivers to reduce costs. Dispatching technology platform determines route and customer pick up/drop off – vehicle may not stop at all bus stops. Technology allows to always answer the question “How many people are we serving?”

IndyGo and CIRTA had conversations regarding sharing software and/or vehicles. It was determined that neither would be a good fit.

There was a discussion about how small a vehicle can be use and the answer was not much smaller than a minivan or cutaway. It was also asked if the vehicles will be handicap accessible. If operating 1 vehicle it will need to be fully accessible; if operating 2 vehicles it would be possible that just one can be accessible if the customer can request, it via technology.

REVISED SERVICE AREA RECOMMENDATION

* Plainfield: customers can request a stop at the Downtown Transit Center (depending on scenario/time of day), Bridgeport Road and/or within the EID.
* Whitestown: customers can request a stop at the Downtown Transit Center (depending on scenario/time of day), Traders Point (connection to 38th Street & Lafayette Road might be possible with 1 demand response vehicle-still to be determined) and/or within the EID.
* Demand response service throughout each EID can serve employers and ratepayers that aren’t currently served by bus stops.
* TransPro is recommending 2 vehicles to serve downtown more frequently.

REVISED SERVICE ALTERNATIVES

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Assumptions:  308 service days  $99/service hour, subject to rebidding |  | **Base Recommendation**  **Maintain existing service hours with 1 smaller vehicle: negligible travel time improvement.**  5-10am; 1-7pm  Monday – Saturday  **Trips to/from Bridgeport Rd or Traders Point with 1 vehicle.** | **Two Vehicle Alternative**  **Maintain existing hours with 1 smaller vehicle**  **Add 2nd vehicle from 5-10am to further improve travel time**  5-10am; 1-7pm  Monday – Saturday  **Trips to/from downtown with 2 vehicles from 5-10am;** Trips to/from Bridgeport Rd and Traders Point with 1 vehicle from 1-7pm. |
|  | Projected 2023 Costs | Base-Demand Response | Two Vehicle Alternative- Demand Response |
| **Projected Vendor Costs** | $785,592 | $670,824 | $975,744 |
| **CIRTA Admin Fee (10%)** | $78,559 | $67,082 | $97,574 |
| **Total Cost (both routes)** | **$864,151** | **$737,906** | **1,073,318** |
|  |  | 0.85x current cost | 1.24x current cost |

There was a discussion regarding whether the costs are for both services or each service. The cost is total for both services. Both routes will be on the same time schedule so they would spilt the cost and admin fee.

2023 and 2024 Budgets

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Projected 2023 Budget | Projected 2024 Budget-  Existing Service $1 Fare | Projected 2024 Budget-  Existing Service Zero Fare |
| Expenses | Projected Vendor Costs | $785,592 | $796,491 | $813,774 |
| Expenses | CIRTA Admin Fee (10%) | $78,559 | $79,649 | $81,377 |
|  | **Total Expenses** | **$864,151** | **$876,140** | **$895,152** |
| Revenue | EID Contribution | $492,432 | $161,800 | $641,463 |
| Revenue | CARES Act | $117,645 | - | - |
| Revenue | ARPA/PMTF/5307 | $302,762 | $259,341 | $253,689 |
|  | **Total Revenue** | **$912,855** | **$876,141** | **$895,152** |

Assumptions: 308 Service Days; 11 service hours per day; $111/service hour, subject to rebidding

ZERO FARE RECOMMENDATION:

* Minimal Impact to overall cost
* Affordable for customers
* Potential to increase ridership, even if service doesn’t change.

Other Important Information

* Federal funds support ends September 30, 2024.
* Plainfield and Whitestown have been provided estimated budgets for October 2024 forward.
* Whitestown building reserves to pay bill every month.
* Plainfield projected and budgeting for next year.
* Working on legislation to expand EID in Whitestown in 2025.
* Possibility of investing in Wi-Fi on vehicles. $1,300 one-time investment and $50 - $80/month for data.

Next Steps

* Plainfield EID agrees to zero fares for 2024.
* Confirm zero fares with Whitestown EID.
* Present at Whitestown EID’s annual meeting.
* Meet with Plainfield and Whitestown to evaluate fleet options for 2025 and beyond.

**Presentation: David Krieg – My Freedom Program Relaunch**

My Freedom Program allows consumers the ability to receive cross county transportation in Central Indiana, or in county transportation within one of the 7 surrounding counties adjacent to Marion County, and Madison County.

History

* Began in 2012 through a competitive FTA program called New Freedoms.
* CICOA applied to and received funds for three years.
* The voucher-based program allowed CICOA to sell vouchers at a subsidized rate to clients.
* Was very successful.
* The FTA funding program dissolved and the My Freedom Program ran out of money.
* The Program was shuttered for 3 years until 2017.
* 2017 CIRTA & CICOA negotiated terms to restart the Program using CIRTA’s 5307 funds.
* The Program was intended for cross-county trips but was being used more frequently for Marion County.
* IndyGo was concerned that this program was a competitive service to their similar program. This made difficulties in getting the 5307 funds approved.
* The My Freedom Voucher Program was shuttered in 2020.

New Program

* This program is for seniors aged 60 years or older **OR** anyone of any age with a disability that makes it hard to utilize public transportation.
* Anyone of any age with any disability will need a completed medical verification form filled out and signed by the client’s doctor or licensed social worker, along with a completed application form.
* Seniors aged 60 or older do not need a medical verification form filled out, just the application form.
* Applications and medical verification forms can be found on the CICOA website.
* Fares can be used for any purpose-not just doctor’s appointments.
* Allows travel with one provider across one county line between Marion County and one of the seven surrounding counties as well as Madison County (Johnson, Shelby, Hamilton, Hendricks, Morgan, Boone, Hancock, & Madison).
* Active IndyGo Access Riders do not need a medical verification form, only an application. They will need to enter their certification date on the application.
* Application needs to be fully completed on both sides. Application can be filled out on behalf of the applicant.
* The current provider is Ztrip. 317-487-7777. Efforts are underway to add additional providers.

Electronic Fare Card System

* A loadable farecard will be sent to clients inside a welcome packet upon completing their application and medical verification form, if applicable.
* Card never expires.
* Clients will call Way2Go to add funds to their farecards. Uploaded fares are immediately available.
* Clients will call the provider (Ztrip) to schedule their transport.

Cost

* Clients are responsible for 25% of the total trip cost.
* Total trip will consist of round trip (two one-way trips)
* From Marion County across one county line: $5 pick-up fee and $2 per mile for each trip (i.e., round trip will be $10 pick-up fee)
* From one of the seven surrounding counties or in Madison County, there will be a minimum trip charge applied.
* Example: Client resides in Carmel. There is a deadhead mileage area in which Ztrip will have to get a driver from Marion Co. to Carmel. That fee is $40. The client travels 2 miles from their home; the fee for the one-way trip would be $40+$5+$4 = $49. The cost to the client is $12.25.

Other Information

* Each trip allows for a free companion rider.
* The county providers are excited about the relaunch of the My Freedom Program to help fill in their gaps in service.
* There was a short discussion regarding the deadhead cost of driving into the other counties. CICOA is working to find more providers to reduce that cost.
* The PMTF grant will be used to help fund this program. CIRTA will ask for the grant money again to keep funding My Freedom Program.
* CIRTA created a rack card in English and Spanish and is sharing all over their footprint. There has been some media coverage on the program as well.

**Legislative Update**

* Rick is excited to hear Jen Thomas is coming back on board as she understands the media affects the Statehouse. Good opportunity to educate.
* Entering the short session. It is starting later, around January 8, 2024.
* Bill request deadline is in December; filing deadline will be in early January.
* Interim Committee on transportation meeting discussing license plates, naming bridges, etc.
* Watching the funding of FIRSST.
* Working with Nate Messer on voluntary expansion of EID’s.
* There was a short discussion on Senator Holdman wanting to eliminate the income tax in Indiana. Rick doesn’t believe there will be any decisions before 2025 or even getting any traction.
* There were questions regarding Lebanon and their LEAP Project. Workforce Connectors are not the right model for this due to travel time from Indy. There has been consideration regarding Lafayette to Lebanon.

**Executive Update**

* 701 New Commuters added since last board meeting.
* Over 18 Community Events attended.
* 2 new Outreach Representatives, one who is bilingual.
* Sponsored and presented at INDYSHRM conference.
* Dave and Jen went to Orlando and attended the APTA conference.
* 1 new vanpool was added since the last meeting.
* Vanpool Pilot with Thrive Indy (City of Indianapolis Knozone Program)
  + $20,000
  + Promoted to employers that already have a relationship with CIRTA and are thinking about using vanpools already.
  + 1st month free with three-month commitment.
* Car Free Day was at Spark Space on the Circle this year. Fox 59 & WRTV 6 both provided coverage leading up to September 22nd.
* Plainfield Workforce Connector had ridership numbers of 986 in August and 868 in September.
* Whitestown Workforce Connector had ridership numbers of 753 in August and 662 in September.
* On October 5, 2023, CIRTA had its first FTA Drug and Alcohol audit. There are a few minor deficiencies that are administration related, but overall, it was a good learning opportunity.
* After polling, the Board dates for 2024 will stay on Tuesdays at 9am.
* As a reminder, the Board Retreat/Work Session will be November 14, 2023 at American Structurepoint at 10am.

**Adjournment**

*The motion was made to adjourn the meeting by N. Messer and seconded by G. Henneke at 11:08 am.*

*All in attendance agreed.*