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Mark Your Calendar

IPTA Annual Meeting & Rodeo

June 18-21, 2014
Radisson Hotel
Davenport, IA

Substance Abuse Seminar

Hosted by HIRTA
August 27, 2014
9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Urbandale, IA

CTAA Conference

June 8-13, 2014
St. Paul, MN

APTA Expo

October 13-15, 2014
Houston, TX

From the President's Desk



The 2014 Session of the Iowa 85th General Assembly has ended with mixed results for transit. The Public Transit Infrastructure Grant Program (PTIG) receives another year of funding, 1.5 million for FY15 which is great news.

The Regional Transit Data Bill passed too. Two other initiatives were not as successful, the Employment Rides Initiative and our attempt to create a bus capital fund.

The first, Employment Rides Initiative was moving right along with support from both sides and was positioned to pass up until the last few hours of the session. Kay Fisk did a tremendous job in working with her area legislators in developing this bill and moving it forward. I personally know Kay spent a lot of time at the Capital working towards passage of this bill. I'm confident she will be at it again the first day of the next legislative session, and with our help, the outcome will be more favorable.

Also, thank you to everyone who sent a letter to the Governor and contacted your local legislators advocating for funds to replace our aging fleets. It's work, and does take time, but to be successful next year we must work even harder. We will need every transit manager and their transit riders to make contact with their legislators and express the need and request their support. It's very simple, without making contact we have no chance in being successful in receiving any funding.

Thanks everyone and we'll see you in Davenport!

Mark Little
IPTA President

Rebranding Project for Western Iowa Transit Complete!



Region XII Council of Governments and its' subsidiary, Western Iowa Transit, have been working with Blue Space Creative of Denison, Iowa on a "rebranding" project for the past two years. This project included new marketing ideas, a name change for the transit program, new wraps for our vehicles, a new system logo and redesigned uniforms. Some of the new marketing ideas we will be implementing are Store Kiosks, Window

stickers that will identify the business as a "proud destination" of Western Iowa Transit, new brochures, and a Marketing "Rollout Event" yet to be planned.



WESTERN IOWA TRANSIT
REGION XII COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Region 6 Update

By LeAnn Lynch, Region 6 Planning/Peoplerides

Hello from Region 6/Peoplerides –

It's been 10 months since I took over as Transit Manager, after spending my first five years with Region 6/Peoplerides as Operations Manager. Jeff Harris left in August 2013, and we added a new assistant in mid-September. In November our main scheduler/dispatcher left the company and that position was filled in January 2014. As the "seasoned veteran in the office", I spent the first several months trying to keep my head above water while training new schedulers/dispatchers and covering in dispatch.

Peoplerides covers Hardin, Marshall, Tama and Poweshiek counties. We have daily route service in each county and those services continue to grow.

We also have daily demand response service in Iowa Falls, Grinnell and Marshalltown and one day a week service in Tama/Toledo for shopping or appointments. In addition we have daily demand response medical coverage and all the TMS (Access2Care) rides we can take and we continue to go to Iowa City one day a week.

I'd like to thank everyone for the welcome I received – and for answering all those emails or phone calls from me asking "what does this mean?" I appreciate all the help and advice, especially from Rich Stone at MMT. Just when I think I may take a breath there is something new, like vehicle procurement or an IPTA meeting and Roadeo!

I'll leave you with this thought: *"But what if I make a mistake?" Will asked. Gilan threw back his head and laughed. 'A mistake? One mistake? You should be so lucky. You'll make dozens! I made four or five on my first day alone! Of course you'll make mistakes. Just don't make any of them twice. If you do mess things up, don't try to hide it. Don't try to rationalize it. Recognize it and admit it and learn from it. We never stop learning, none of us.'* — John Flanagan, Erak's Ransom

I'm learning something new every day!

Summer Fun Bus Returns

By Steve Bolie

The Southern Iowa Trolley once again will become Summer Fun Bus for the summer. This successful service is in its sixth year. Children and youth through age 18 may ride the bus to and from any destination approved by parent/guardian on the mandatory ridership form. Sue Privett, Scheduler for the agency, said, "Mostly it's about fun. In the five years the Summer Fun Bus has operated it has been a popular mode of transportation to the swimming pool, the Y, summer school, ball fields, and the library as well as friend's houses. It's up to the parents/guardians where the kids go."



The cost is 50 cents per trip or \$40 for an unlimited ride pass for the whole summer. The Fun Bus operates in six communities where daily bus services are provided plus one day per week in another town. Initially, rides were given free but resulted in kids taking multiple trips during the day seemingly without much forethought. The fifty cent fair seems to be about right for helping kids get where they need to go without abusing the service. Popular destinations are the swimming pool and skateboard park and summer school (frequent but not necessarily popular). Sometimes there have been comments that kids need exercise and should walk or ride bikes. We feel that we are enabling recreation and exercise by getting kids across town safely.

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Building A Solid Board Chair-CEO Alliance

By Doug Eadie, *Speaker at the IPTA Annual Meeting*

A True Story From The Field

When the board-savvy general manager (CEO) of the regional transit authority approached his board chair about the need for a better-designed process for board evaluation of his performance, suggesting that the board's governance committee devote a couple of work sessions coming up with a new approach, he got the gut response he'd expected: "If it ain't broke, why bother trying to fix it? We've got plenty going on already." No one on the board was pressuring him to improve the process, the chair pointed out; in fact, everyone seemed pretty satisfied with the questionnaire they'd been using for a decade or so. The GM didn't press the point at first, instead opting to educate his chair over the next few weeks. They were early in the new fiscal year, so there was time to re-design the process and actually use it at the end of the year. So over the course of a series of breakfast meetings, the GM convinced his chair that the current process, involving a questionnaire that essentially measured board members' opinions about the GM's functional competence in areas like financial planning and supervision, was dangerously subjective, missing the key outcomes piece and leaving both the board and GM at a disadvantage.

The next steps were for the chair and GM to reach agreement on the outline of a more outcomes-focused process and on the chair's playing the leading role in fleshing out the outline with the governance committee over the course of two work sessions, which the chair agreed to schedule. Naturally, the chair suggested that the GM, being the CEO and having a big stake in the outcome, take the lead in the work sessions, but he came around when the GM pointed out that it'd take the chair's influence to overcome the inevitable resistance from committee members who were pretty comfortable with the way evaluation had been done for as long as they'd been on the board. As the GM expected, the board chair's strong leadership did the trick, and the upgraded evaluation process was implemented during the current fiscal year.

What Board-Savvy CEOs Know

I could share many more true stories of successful board chair-CEO collaboration, but the reader can easily see what board-savvy CEOs well know: investing in the development of a rock-solid board chair-CEO working relationship can yield powerful organizational dividends. In fact, I would suggest that one of the preeminent priorities of a truly board-savvy CEO is to transform her board chair into a strong governing partner, a reliable ally, and when needed, an ardent change champion. The board chair makes an especially important partner for the CEO not only because of her formal authority as "CEO" of the governing board, but also the fact that board chairs are often major actors who wield tremendous influence in their communities, including in the profession or industry an association represents. I've seen board-savvy CEOs successfully employ five major strategies in building close and productive working relationships with their board chair:

1. Reach agreement with the board chair on the fundamental division of labor with the CEO.
2. Get to know the board chair really well.
3. Actively help the board chair succeed in her formal governing role.
4. Actively assist the board chair in having a richer, more satisfying experience beyond her formal leadership role.
5. And never miss an opportunity to provide the board chair with ego satisfaction, often in little but important ways.



A Closing Word On The Division Of Labor

“I’m not sure why you’re talking about CEOs reaching agreement with their board chairs on the division of labor. Isn’t it pretty obvious?” My response to this question, which came up last week in a nonprofit CEO seminar I was conducting, was an emphatic “Yes and no.” Yes, it’s true that the board chair is the formal leader of board deliberations, and normally organizational bylaws specify that she has the authority to appoint the chairs and members of the board’s standing committees and ad hoc task forces and committees and to refer matters to the appropriate committee. But when you think about it, even that seemingly clear responsibility must be shared with the CEO for the simple reason that board chairs, being part-time volunteers for the most part, can’t possibly play their board leader role alone.

Active collaboration with, and strong support from, the CEO is essential for their success. And in the realm of external relations, both the board chair and CEO are commonly viewed as major actors, so they’d better pay some attention to coordination and division of labor or they’ll be stumbling all over each other. So every board-savvy CEO I’ve ever worked with has made a point of sitting down with a new board chair to discuss in detail how they’ll be working together.

This article is excerpted from Doug Eadie’s 20th book, *The Board-Savvy CEO: Building a High-Impact Partnership With Your Board* (www.theboardsavvyceo.com). Doug is President & CEO of Doug Eadie & Company (www.dougeadie.com). To contact Doug: Doug@DougEadie.com.



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