

WUNF-TV Transition Plan Progress Report

The University of North Carolina (UNC-TV), Licensee of WUNF-TV, Asheville, North Carolina, is a governmental agency entity of the State of North Carolina. As a state entity, it is legally required to comply with certain state requirements, restrictions, and policies regarding construction projects and the purchasing of goods and services. UNC-TV's repack transition project for 11 full-power television stations is no exception, and UNC-TV will be required to abide by the applicable construction, contracting, and purchasing requirements, restrictions, and policies for all 11 stations, including WUNF-TV. Significantly, as UNC-TV has previously reported—and bears reiteration here—while UNC-TV's project is considered 11 different projects by the FCC, to the State of North Carolina and its representative agencies it is considered one project. The two state government agencies that are extensively involved in UNC-TV's repack (the State Office of Purchasing and Contracts ["P&C"] and the State Construction Office ["SCO"]) are requiring UNC-TV to bundle together all 11 station repack transitions as one unitary project request to them.

Site #1

To update the previous transition report, the proposed site #1 for WUNF-TV is a new site for the station and is managed by Vertical Bridge Holdings, LLC. The terms of the lease for the site are under negotiation and nearly complete, but as of the date of filing this report, the lease agreement has not yet been finalized. UNC-TV projects that the lease will be finalized by August 2018. Even with the absence of a lease agreement, Vertical Bridge and the site owner, iHeart Media, have graciously allowed UNC-TV access to the site in order to perform various site surveys.

UNC-TV's project designer, McKim & Creed, Inc., has completed the field portion of the site survey. The resulting report will confirm the scope of work required for the project. As previously reported, the designer will be responsible for creating a construction drawing package for WUNF-TV's portion (and each of UNC-TV's other 10 stations' respective portion) of the project. These drawings include any modifications to the building including (but not limited to) those required for the electrical system to feed the new transmitters. Also included in the designer's "jurisdiction" will be the tower structural analysis showing that the tower still meets minimum structural specifications after the proposed load changes and tower modifications are performed. The designer's drawings will have to be reviewed by SCO, and only after receiving SCO's approval will construction be authorized under the law of the State of North Carolina to proceed. (The design/SCO review process is similar to a county or city planning / permitting process, but it occurs at the state level because these are state facilities. With this SCO process, city and county permitting is not necessary.) UNC-TV expects to receive SCO's approval in or around January 2019. Even without SCO's approval, however, other parts of the project can proceed, including the acquisition of certain equipment.

During the period since the last Transition Progress Report was filed, significant progress has been made on the project, including activities relating to the acquisition of certain equipment, including the transmitters and antenna systems. Following the State of North Carolina's

required purchasing guidelines, an Invitation for Bid (IFB) was released by UNC-TV on March 9, 2018, for all 11 of UNC-TV's repacked stations for the purchase of transmitters and installation services for the new transmitters, as well as removal and disposal services for the old (current, pre-transition) transmitters. The bid responses will be opened on April 24, 2018, with a purchase contract likely issued in mid-May 2018.

Another IFB is planned for the antenna systems, and UNC-TV hopes that it will be released in April with a planned bid response opening in June. UNC-TV hopes that the antenna system purchase contract can be issued in July.

After the contracts are awarded, UNC-TV plans to update FCC Form 399 so that it contains the correct manufacturer, model number, and pricing for the equipment being purchased. The intent is to incorporate all of these changes in to one submission.

Site #2

Fortunately, UNC-TV is able to handle the repack of WUNF-TV Site #2 a bit differently from Site #1. Site #2 is located on tribal land owned by the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians. The work at this site is able to be done as a "like-for-like" replacement, which simplifies and expedites the equipment and services acquisition process. At this time, UNC-TV believes, based on discussions with relevant authorities, the repack work at WUNF-TV Site #2 can be done without any permits.

The equipment required for WUNF-TV Site #2 can be acquired under different State of North Carolina purchasing rules than the equipment for WUNF-TV Site #1 (and for the other 10 UNC-TV repacked stations). For WUNF-TV Site #2, UNC-TV is merely required to obtain 3 quotes for like equipment and the purchase must be made from the vendor supplying the lowest quote. Following this procedure, the purchase order for the antenna was issued on April 3, 2018, with an expected delivery date of late May 2018. UNC-TV is waiting on one more transmitter quote, and once that third quote is received, the purchase order request can be submitted for the transmitter. UNC-TV tentatively believes that the purchase order for the transmitter for WUNF-TV Site #2 should be issued by the end of April 2018 with a delivery schedule on or around July 1, 2018.

The proposed new antenna is a broadband antenna that can operate on both the pre- and post-transition channels. The transmitter is frequency agile and can also operate on both the pre- and post- transition channels. Once all the equipment has arrived, UNC-TV will file an STA application for WUNF-TV Site #2 for permission to operate the site with the new antenna (the new antenna azimuth pattern varies slightly from the existing authorized antenna). The transmitter output power would also be adjusted so the site does not exceed its currently authorized ERP. Once that STA is granted, the new antenna and transmitter would be installed and would begin operating on the current pre-transition channel. Then only a few minor changes to the transmitter will be required to begin operating on the post-transition channel.

While off to a slow start, as is inherent in the mandatory legal state procurement/design/construction process, we believe, as of this early April 2018 filing, that the Phase 5 August 2019 construction deadline remains achievable for WUNF-TV. UNC-TV has already put a lot of planning into the repack transition for its 11 repacked stations, but, as referenced above, UNC-TV only controls a limited portion of the overall process.

In short, UNC-TV's compound, complicated lodestar for this entire repack enterprise is timely completion of the repack with full compliance of all applicable state and federal regulation while—most importantly—keeping the station operating with as much coverage areas as possible with the least possible negative impact to viewers.