

Request for Extension of WPPT Channel Sharing Construction Permit

Lehigh Valley Public Telecommunications Corp. ("LVPTC"), licensee of noncommercial educational television station WPPT (TV), Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, hereby requests a three month extension of its outstanding construction permit (LMS File No. 0000056769) authorizing new channel sharing facilities for the station. The CP expires July 23, 2018. LVPTC seeks an extension of the CP through October 23, 2018.

This brief extension would serve the public interest in facilitating the move of the channel sharing stations to the final facilities which the parties have planned and which are currently being constructed. In the meantime, WPPT has already commenced channel sharing, and the other stations in the channel sharing arrangement will implement shared operations by July 23, 2018, at FCC-approved auxiliary transmission facilities.

By way of background, LVPTC is a party to a Channel Sharing Agreement with Sonshine Family Television, Inc., licensee of WBPH-TV, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, which is the sharer station, and Maranatha Broadcasting Corporation, licensee of sharee station WFMZ-TV, Allentown, Pennsylvania. LVPTC's other noncommercial educational television station, WLVT-TV, Allentown, Pennsylvania, is also a sharee station in this four-way channel sharing arrangement, and a request for extension of the WLVT-TV construction permit is being filed separately.

The channel sharing stations have construction permits to implement channel sharing at a broadcast tower owned by Maranatha and now used for WFMZ-TV. The parties anticipated that the facilities would be constructed and operational at that site by July 23, 2018, which is the deadline for WLVT-TV and WFMZ-TV to cease operations on their pre-transition channels and commence channel sharing. Due to delays in delivery of equipment, however, it is now apparent that the new facilities will not be ready by that date. The parties are confident, however, that they will be ready prior to October 23, 2018.

The parties plan to satisfy their obligation for WLVT-TV and WFMZ-TV to commence channel sharing on July 23, utilizing auxiliary transmission facilities on the nearby tower owned by Sonshine, which auxiliary facilities have just been authorized by the Commission for the Sharer in LMS File No. 0000055342. Thus, those stations will cease operation on their pre-transition channels and begin operating on the shared channel on July 23. Station WPPT, however, began channel sharing with WBPH-TV on January 5, 2018, using the WBPH-TV existing facilities that have now been authorized as the auxiliary facilities for WPBH-TV and the other stations. Thus, WPPT, in effect, is already channel sharing on the auxiliary facilities, and will be joined there by WLVT-TV and WFMZ-TV on July 23, 2018.

When the authorized final transmission facilities for all four channel sharing stations are completed, the parties will transition their operations to those facilities and file appropriate license applications at that site.

Additional information concerning any of these matters can be provided at the request of the Commission.