

## **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 (third quarter 2018) 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 North Carolina Department of Administration's State Property Office is working with Vertical Bridge Holdings, LLC to complete the lease agreement.

UNC-TV's project designer, McKim & Creed, Inc., has completed the space plan and construction drawings package for the WUNF-TV site. The construction drawings include necessary electrical and mechanical modifications. That package has been submitted to SCO for review. As previously indicated, SCO approval is required under the law of the State of North Carolina before construction can 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 soon after January 2019.

Pursuant to the applicable State of North Carolina project guidelines, UNC-TV is in the process of bidding the general contractor work that's outlined in the project package developed by McKim & Creed. The opening of bid responses is scheduled for January 15, 2019, with construction expected to begin in early February 2019, weather permitting.

Since the WUNF-TV Site #1 is a new site, this will allow the installation of both the main and auxiliary transmitters in one installation mobilization.

A structural analysis on the tower structure is required prior to any work commencing on the tower. The site owner / management company has requested a change in the structural engineering contractor hired to perform the requisite structural analysis. We are in the process of completing the required professional services contract with the new structural engineering contractor. We expect that the analysis will confirm that the tower structure meets the requirements of ANSI/TIA-22-G-2-2009 ("Rev G") as required by the North Carolina Building

Code. The work plan calls for the installation of the new main and auxiliary antenna systems at the same time, assuming the analysis confirms that the requirements of Rev G will be met. That installation work is currently scheduled to begin in late June 2019.

Progress continues to be made with the extension of the UNC-TV transmission network infrastructure to this new site for WUNF-TV. The frequency coordination and issuing of prior coordination notices have been completed for the required fixed location microwave links. Applications with the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau for the new fixed microwave licenses to effectuate the signal delivery infrastructure have been submitted. Two of the four licenses have been granted at the time of this writing in early January 2019. The other 2 remain pending in the Universal Licensing System (ULS). As previously reported, UNC-TV has been able to obtain access rights to a number of state owned communications sites that will allow UNC-TV to implement the required microwave radio link infrastructure without constructing additional communications sites.

#### 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 new WUNF-TV Site #2 antenna has already been acquired. The new antenna is a broadband antenna that can operate on both the pre- and post- transition channels. The transmitter has been ordered but has not shipped yet. It is frequency agile and can operate on both the pre- and post- transition channels. UNC-TV plans to submit in late 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2019 an Engineering Special Temporary Authority (STA) request for WUNF-TV Site #2 to allow it to operate the site with the new antenna (the new antenna azimuth pattern varies slightly from the existing authorized antenna). Once that STA is granted, the new antenna and transmitter will be installed and will begin operating on the current pre-transition channel. With only a few minor changes to the transmitter (which will cause only a very brief discontinuation of operations), operation on the post-transition channel can begin on the scheduled transition date.

UNC-TV will be submitting additional budget updates for FCC Form 399. Among other things, these updates will reflect the general contractor costs, revisions for transmitter installation costs, and revised professional services pricing. Further budget adjustments may be necessary as this project continues.

We believe, as of this early January 2019 filing, that the Phase 5 September 6, 2019, transition deadline remains achievable for WUNF-TV. To reiterate, WUNF-TV plans to begin its post-transition operations using an interim transmission system. (UNC-TV will timely file for a CP extension on or before the June 10, 2019, deadline for doing so.) This system will attempt to replicate as much as practically possible the population served by the proposed post-transition facility. When appropriate, UNC-TV will

be submitting a request for special temporary authority for WUNF-TV to operate the interim transmission system for its initial post transition operations.

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.