



Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

September 4, 2019

North Carolina Broadcasting Partners
c/o Beverly Poston
One Television Place
Charlotte, NC 28205

Re: Request for Extension of
Construction Permit
WCCB, Charlotte, NC
Facility ID No. 49157
LMS File No. 0000080455

Dear Licensee,

On August 19, 2019, North Carolina Broadcasting Partners (NCBP), the licensee of Station WCCB, Charlotte, North Carolina (WCCB or Station), filed the above captioned application seeking an extension of the Station's construction permit expiration date and waiver of the 90-day construction permit extension filing deadline. For the reasons below, we grant NCBP's requests and extend WCCB's construction permit expiration date 180 days to March 9, 2020.

Background. Pursuant to Section 73.3700(b)(5) of the Commission's rules, a station may request a single extension of its construction permit deadline of up to 180 days to complete construction of its post-auction facility.¹ Grant of an extension of the construction permit deadline does not alter the deadline by which a station must cease operating on its pre-auction channel. A station anticipating the need for an extension must submit an extension application using FCC Form 2100, Schedule 337, not less than 90 days before the assigned construction permit deadline.² For Phase 5 stations, such application was due by June 10, 2019. The application must demonstrate that the station is unable to complete construction on time due to circumstances that were either unforeseeable or beyond the station's control.³ In addition, a waiver of the application filing deadline is appropriate where the particular facts would make strict compliance inconsistent with the public interest and deviation from the general rule would relieve hardship, promote equity, or produce a more effective implementation of overall policy on an individual basis.⁴

¹ See 47 CFR § 73.3700(b)(5). All subsequent requests for additional time to construct are subject to the Commission's tolling provisions, 47 CFR § 73.3598(b).

² 47 CFR § 73.3700(b)(5)(iv).

³ The *Incentive Auction R&O* provides examples of six circumstances that might justify an 180-day extension of a station's post-auction construction permit: (1) weather related delays; (2) delays in construction due to the unavailability of equipment or a tower crew; (3) tower lease disputes; (4) unusual technical challenges; or (5) delays caused by the need to obtain government approvals, such as land use or zoning approvals, or to observe competitive bidding requirements prior to purchasing equipment or services; and (6) financial hardship with sufficient supporting evidence. See *Expanding the Economic and Innovation Opportunities of Spectrum Through Incentive Auctions*, GN Docket No. 12-268 et. al, Report and Order, 29 FCC Rcd 6567,6804-05, paras. 581-2 (2014) (*Incentive Auction R&O*); 47 CFR § 73.3700(b)(5)(ii) and (iii).

⁴ See *Northeast Cellular Telephone Co. v. FCC*, 897 F.2d 1164, 1166 (D.C. Cir. 1990) and *WAIT Radio v. FCC*, 418 F.2d 1153, 1159 (D.C. Cir. 1969), *cert. denied*, 409 U.S. 1072 (1972); 47 CFR § 1.3 (waiver for good cause shown).

WCCB was repacked from channel 27 to channel 18 and assigned to transition Phase 5, which originally had a phase completion date of September 6, 2019. All repacked stations for Phase 5 were issued a construction permit with an expiration date of September 6, 2019. On September 3, 2019, the Incentive Auction Task Force and the Media Bureau extended the phase completion date and the construction permit expiration date for Phase 5 stations to September 11, 2019.⁵ The Station pledges to cease operation on its pre-auction channel by the phase completion date and operate an interim facility on its post-auction channel while it completes construction of its permanent post-auction facilities.⁶

NCBP states that it initially planned its transition to repurpose an older antenna but was unsuccessful and ordered a new antenna in February 2019. NCBP states that the new antenna will not be available for installation by the Phase 5 completion date but expects to be able to complete construction of its permanent post-auction channel facilities by Thanksgiving. NCBP is requesting an extension for the full 180 days out of an abundance of caution. NCBP also requests a waiver of the 90-day construction permit extension filing deadline because it did not know for certain it would require an extension at the time the deadline passed.

Discussion. Upon review of the facts and circumstances presented, we find NCPB's request to extend the construction permit deadline to construct WCCB's post-auction facility meets the requirements for a construction permit extension. NCPB has demonstrated that an extension is needed because of a delay in delivery of its new antenna. We also find that grant of this extension request is not likely to negatively impact the overall transition schedule. WCCB will cease operations on its pre-auction channel by the Phase 5 completion date and will operate an interim facility on its post-auction channel. To the extent some viewers are unable to receive WCCB's signal while it operates its interim facility, we believe that NCPB has every incentive to ensure viewers are fully informed about the Station's transition plan. Finally, we find that waiver of the 90-day construction permit extension filing deadline is in the public interest and consistent with the Commission's general waiver standard because NCPB was unaware at the time an extension request was due that an extension would be needed.⁷

We remind NCPB that pursuant to the Spectrum Act, the Station is eligible for reimbursement from the TV Broadcast Relocation Fund (Fund) of costs "reasonably incurred . . . in order for the licensee to relocate its television service from one channel to the other."⁸ Additional expenses incurred, for instance, as a result of the grant of changes in the Station's transition plan that are not related to the post-incentive auction channel change, may not be reimbursable from the Fund.

The above facts considered, North Carolina Broadcasting Partners application for extension of construction permit expiration date **IS GRANTED**. The construction permit (LMS File No. 0000067979) for WCCB, Charlotte, North Carolina, **IS EXTENDED 180 days to March 9, 2020**. Grant of this extension does not permit WCCB to recommence operation on its pre-auction channel after ceasing operation or after September 11, 2019, whichever occurs first. We also remind NCBP that any

⁵ See *The Completion Date For Phase 4 of the Post-Incentive Auction Transition Is Extended To September 11, 2019 Because of Hurricane Dorian*, Public Notice, DA 19-866, rel. September 3, 2019 (IATF/MB).

⁶ See LMS File No. 0000080348.

⁷ See *supra* note 4.

⁸ See *Media Bureau Finalizes Reimbursement Form for Submission to OMB and Adopts Catalog of Expenses*, GN Docket No. 12-268, Public Notice, 30 FCC Rcd 11701, 11701-02 (MB 2015). See also Incentive Auction R&O, 29 FCC Rcd at 6821, para. 622 ("The appropriate scope of 'costs reasonably incurred' necessarily will have to be decided on a case-by-case basis.").

subsequent requests for extension of its construction permit deadline will be subject to the Commission's tolling provisions.⁹

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barbara A. Kreisman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Barbara A. Kreisman
Chief, Video Division
Media Bureau

cc (via electronic mail): Anne Swanson, Esq.

⁹ See 47 CFR § 73.3700(b)(5)(i) (referencing 47 § CFR 73.3598(b)).