

WUNM-TV Transition Plan Progress Report

The University of North Carolina (UNC-TV), Licensee of WUNM-TV, Jacksonville, 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 WUNM-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.

To update the previous (second quarter 2018) transition report, the execution of purchase contracts for major equipment is nearly complete. The transmitter purchase contract was awarded to GatesAir, Inc. The GatesAir systems engineers have been working with UNC-TV's project designer, McKim & Creed, Inc. as well as UNC-TV staff to develop a building space plan that will accommodate the installation of new transmitters while maintaining the current pre-transition operations.

The WUNM-TV transmission site is a multi-broadcast user site at which WUNM-TV is a tenant. Another tenant of the site, WYDO (FCC Facility ID #35582), is assigned to transition phase 5, the same as WUNM-TV. There is also a link dependency between WUNM-TV and WYDO that requires WUNM-TV to transition before WYDO can transition. UNC-TV is attempting to coordinate with the tower owner and the transition project manager for WYDO the transition process at the site to minimize off air time and optimize effort in order to achieve as favorable an outcome for all parties as is possible under the circumstances.

WUNM-TV is in the process of completing the acquisition process for the antenna and related installation services. The tower owner and WYDO have already contracted with Stainless Tower to perform any necessary structural modifications and antenna installation work at the site. As a result, WUNM-TV is also contracting with Stainless Tower to perform the required antenna / tower work necessary for the successful transition of WUNM-TV. This will allow the WUNM-TV work to be performed in coordination with the other stations and, it is hoped, will minimize WUNM-TV's off-the-air time. The antenna purchase is also being coordinated with the same vendor as WYDO to insure proper coordination of materials delivery to the site.

The WUNM-TV transition plan has been modified so that the new transmitter equipment can be permanently installed. WUNM-TV, at a time still to be determined prior to the transition date, will begin operating at reduced power on its existing auxiliary transmitter. This will allow the removal of the pre-transition main transmitter, clearing space inside the building as well as exterior equipment pad space. This open space will provide open area to install the new main transmitter. The reduced power operation is expected to be at about 76% of the current licensed power.

McKim & Creed, Inc., as the project designer is creating a construction drawing package for WUNM-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 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.

UNC-TV has also submitted budget updates for FCC Form 399. These updates reflect the correct manufacturer, model number, and pricing for the equipment being purchased. Submittals were also included to summarize pricing information to better explain the changes in antenna and transmitter manufacturers and models. Further budget adjustments may be necessary after the tower analysis and building construction drawings are finalized. These two documents will identify any additional items that must be addressed for the project to meet the mandated State Building Code requirements.

We believe, as of this early October 2018 filing, that the Phase 5 August 2019 construction deadline remains achievable for WUNM-TV. To reiterate, WUNM-TV plans to begin its post-transition operations using an interim transmission system. 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 WUNM-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.