

Request for Extension of Construction Permit Deadline

WCNC-TV, Inc. (“Licensee”), licensee of WCNC-TV, Charlotte, North Carolina (Facility ID 32326) (“WCNC”), hereby requests a 180-day extension of WCNC’s construction permit for its main post-Incentive Auction facility (File No. 0000063810) (the “Main CP”) – through March 4, 2020 – due to construction delays caused by the high demand on the tower crew Licensee has engaged to complete the facilities authorized by the Main CP.¹

WCNC is a Phase 5 station, and the Main CP accordingly is scheduled to expire on September 6, 2019 (the Phase 5 completion deadline). WCNC’s new primary antenna has been mounted on top of the tower, but none of the necessary transmission line has yet been run. On August 27, 2019, Steve Kiser, Director of Technology for WCNC, was notified by Bill Allen of Stainless Towers that the tower crew would need to depart Charlotte for several days to assist with a helicopter install scheduled for September 4 in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.² Given the timing of this work interruption, Licensee believes it will not be feasible to complete work on WCNC’s primary antenna by September 6.

In light of the short time remaining before the Main CP’s deadline, the potential for weather-related delays, and the possibility of other unforeseen delays relating to the change in construction plans, Licensee therefore requests a 180-day extension of the Main CP to ensure that the station’s permanent facility can be timely constructed and licensed notwithstanding the possibility of further unforeseen delays.

In the meantime, Licensee has filed a request for special temporary authority to allow WCNC to commence operations on its post-Auction channel as of September 6, 2019, using an interim antenna.³ WCNC has obtained its interim antenna and has run most of the transmission line necessary to operate the interim antenna, and the station accordingly anticipates the interim antenna will be complete by the Phase 5 deadline. WCNC will, in any event, cease operations on its pre-Auction channel on or before September 6, 2019.

Because WCNC will timely cease operation on its pre-Auction channel, granting the requested extension of the Main CP would have no effect on any party’s ability to complete its post-Auction transition. The extension thus would serve the public interest by facilitating the orderly completion of WCNC’s main post-Auction facility without impacting the broader repacking schedule.

¹ See 47 C.F.R. § 73.3700(b)(5)(ii).

² To the extent necessary, Licensee thus requests that the Commission waive the requirement that requests for additional time to complete construction be filed at least 90 days in advance of the construction permit deadline, as Licensee did not learn of the change in the tower crew’s schedule until August 27, 2019. See § 73.3700(b)(5)(iv). For the reasons set forth herein, grant of this waiver would serve the public interest by allowing WCNC to complete construction of its permanent post-Auction facility in an orderly fashion, without affecting any other party’s repacking.

³ See File No. 0000080712.