

FCC MAIL SECTION

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20554

AUG 31 1999

SEP 1 2 45 PM '99

IN REPLY REFER TO:
1800B3-ALM

DISC

Jeffrey D. Southmayd, Esquire
1220 19th Street, N.W., Suite 400
Washington, D. C. 20036

IN RE: WPWB(FM), Byron, Georgia
Augusta Radio Fellowship, Inc.
ID Facility No. 3229
File No. BPED-981102IC
Request for Waiver of
47 C.F.R. § 73.1125

Dear Mr. Southmayd:

The staff has under consideration the above referenced application of Augusta Radio Fellowship, Inc. ("Fellowship") which requests a waiver of the Commission's main studio requirement, 47 C.F.R. § 73.1125, in order to operate WPWB(FM), Byron, Georgia as a satellite of its NCE station WLPE(FM), Augusta Georgia.¹ For the reasons set forth below, we will waive 47 C.F.R. § 73.1125 and grant Fellowship's application.

Section 73.1125(a) requires each broadcast station to maintain a main studio within the station's principal community contour to ensure that the station will serve the needs and interests of the residents of its community of license. *Amendment of Sections 73.1125 and 73.1130*, 3 FCC Rcd 5024, 5027 (1988). However, under Section 73.1125(a)(4), the Commission will waive this requirement where good cause exists to do so and where the proposed studio location "would be consistent with the operation of the station in the public interest." Each waiver request by an NCE station seeking to operate as the satellite of another NCE station is considered on a case-by-case basis. The Commission has recognized the benefits of centralized operations for NCE stations, given their limited funding, and thus found good cause exists to waive the main studio location requirement where satellite operations are proposed. *Id.* A satellite station must, however, demonstrate that it will meet its local service obligation to satisfy the Section 73.1125 public interest standard. *Id.*

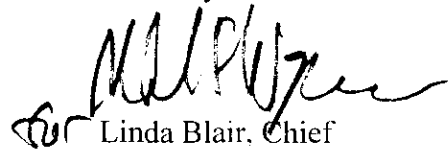
Fellowship's request is based on the economies of scale which would be realized by grant of its waiver. We agree and conclude that there is good cause to waive 47 C.F.R.

¹A "satellite" station meets all of the Commission's technical rules, however, it originates no programming and instead rebroadcasts the parent station's programming. See *Amendment of Multiple Ownership Rules, Memorandum Opinion and Order*, 3 RR2d 1554, 1562 (1964).

§ 73.1125(a)(4) under these circumstances. Fellowship proposes to operate WPWB(FM), Byron, Georgia as a satellite of WLPE, Augusta, Georgia, approximately 90 miles from Byron. Where there is a great distance between the parent and satellite stations, as here, we are particularly concerned that the licensee take adequate measures to maintain its awareness of the satellite community's needs and interests. To that end, University has pledged to: (1) ascertain the problems, needs and interests of Byron through a local citizens advisory board ("CAB") consisting of residents of the community which will meet periodically via conference call and hold at least one in-person meeting annually; (2) develop programming to be broadcast on WPWB(FM) through its ascertainment efforts; (3) include news inserts and segments regarding events of interest to the residents of Byron in the programming originating from WLPE(FM), Augusta; (4) supplement the CAB with a local Fellowship representative in Byron and through annual visits to the community by a management employee; and (5) maintain a toll-free telephone line from Byron to the WLPE(FM) main studio in Augusta, Georgia. In these circumstances, we are persuaded that Fellowship will meet its local service obligations and thus, that grant of the requested waiver is consistent with the public interest. We remind Fellowship, however, of the requirement that it maintain a public file WPWB(FM) at the main studio of the "parent" station WLPE(FM). *See Review of the Commission's Rules Regarding the Main Studio and Local Public Inspection Files of Broadcast Television and Radio Stations*, 64 Fed. Reg. 35941 (July 2, 1999).

Accordingly, the application of Augusta Radio Fellowship, Inc. (BPED-981102IC) for a waiver of 47 C.F.R. § 73.1125 IS GRANTED.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linda Blair", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Linda Blair, Chief
Audio Services Division
Mass Media Bureau