

**Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of)	
)	
NIA BROADCASTING, INC.)	MB Docket No. 21-82
Application for Renewal of License)	File No. 0000094838
Station WSYL(AM), Sylvania, GA)	Facility ID No. 58752

HEARING DESIGNATION ORDER AND NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY FOR HEARING

Adopted: March 8, 2021

Released: March 9, 2021

By the Chief, Media Bureau:

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This *Hearing Designation Order and Notice of Opportunity for Hearing* commences a hearing proceeding designating the Administrative Law Judge as the presiding officer to determine whether the captioned application (Renewal Application) by NIA Broadcasting, Inc. (NIA) to renew the license of AM radio station WSYL, Sylvania, Georgia (WSYL or Station) should be granted or denied pursuant to section 309(k) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended (Act).¹ We are designating the Renewal Application for hearing based on WSYL’s record of extended periods of silence from the time NIA became the licensee of the Station (January 22, 2018) to the present.

II. BACKGROUND

2. A broadcast licensee’s authorization to use radio spectrum in the public interest carries with it the obligation that the station must serve its community, providing programming responsive to local needs and interests.² Broadcast licensees also are required to operate in compliance with the Act and the Commission’s rules (Rules). These requirements include the obligation to transmit potentially lifesaving national level Emergency Alert System (EAS) messages in times of emergency and to engage in periodic tests to ensure that their stations are equipped to do so.³

3. The basic duty of broadcast licensees to serve their communities is reflected in the license renewal provisions of the Act.⁴ In 1996, Congress revised the Commission’s license renewal process and the renewal standards for broadcast stations by adopting section 309(k) of the Act.⁵ Section 309(k)(1) of the Act provides that the Commission shall grant a license renewal application if it finds, with respect to the applying station, that during the preceding license term: (a) the station has served the public interest, convenience, and necessity; (b) there have been no serious violations by the licensee of the Act or the Rules; and (c) there have been no other violations by the licensee of the Act or the Rules which, taken

¹ 47 U.S.C. § 309(k). We will not use the (AM) suffix when referring to the Station herein, except in the caption and ordering clauses. There is also pending before the Bureau an application for consent to assign the license of the Station. *See* FCC file no. BAL-20201030ABB. The Bureau will take appropriate action on that application upon the completion of this proceeding.

² *See In the Matter of Broadcast Localism*, Report on Broadcast Localism and Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 23 FCC Rcd 1324, 1327 (2007).

³ *See* 47 CFR §§ 11.1 *et seq.*, particularly 11.51.

⁴ 47 U.S.C. § 309(k).

⁵ 47 U.S.C. § 309(k)(1); *see* Pub. L. No. 104-104, Sec. 204(a)(1).

together, would constitute a pattern of abuse. Section 309(k)(2) of the Act provides that if a station fails to meet the foregoing standard, the Commission may deny the renewal application pursuant to section 309(k)(3) or grant the application on appropriate terms and conditions, including a short-term renewal. Section 309(k)(3) of the Act provides that if the Commission determines, after notice and opportunity for hearing, that the licensee has failed to meet the standard of section 309(k)(1) and that no mitigating factors justify the imposition of lesser sanctions, the Commission shall issue an order denying the license renewal application for the station.

4. Section 312(g) of the Act, which Congress also added in 1996 and then amended in 2004, provides, in relevant part:

If a broadcasting station fails to transmit broadcast signals for any consecutive 12-month period, then the station license granted for the operation of that broadcast station expires at the end of that period, notwithstanding any provision, term, or condition of the license to the contrary, except that the Commission may extend or reinstate such station license if the holder of the station license prevails in an administrative or judicial appeal, the applicable law changes, or for any other reason to promote equity and fairness.⁶

5. Thus, section 312(g) has relieved the Commission of the need to conduct license renewal or revocation proceedings, with their lengthy and resource-intensive procedural requirements, including evidentiary hearings, for stations that remain silent for extended periods of time.⁷ However, in response to section 312(g), some licensees of silent stations⁸ have adopted a practice of resuming operation for a short period of time, in some cases as little as a day or less, before the one-year limit in section 312(g) applies and the station license automatically expires. Other stations have alternated between periods of silence and operations with minimal power levels—in some cases as low as five watts—that cover a small portion of their service areas and may be insufficient to allow them to provide service to their communities of license.⁹

6. These practices raise a question as to whether the licenses for such stations should be renewed pursuant to section 309(k) of the Act. In 2001, the Commission cautioned “all licensees that . . . a licensee will face a very heavy burden in demonstrating that it has served the public interest where it has remained silent for most or all of the prior license term.”¹⁰ This warning in *Birach* borrowed from the court’s language in *Office of Communication of the United Church of Christ*,¹¹ where the court stated:

⁶ 47 U.S.C. § 312(g); see Telecommunications Act of 1996, Pub. L. No. 104-104, 110 Stat. 56 (1996), and Consolidated Appropriations Act, 1995, Pub. L. No. 108-447, 118 Stat. 2809 (2004); see also *Eagle Broad. Group, Ltd. v. FCC*, 563 F.3d 543, 545 (D.C. Cir. 2009) (*Eagle*).

⁷ See *Eagle*, 563 F.3d at 545.

⁸ A “silent station” is a radio or television station that is authorized to broadcast but is not doing so. Any station that remains silent for more than 30 days must obtain special temporary authority (STA) to remain silent. See 47 CFR § 73.1740(a)(4). Similarly, a station that is operating with reduced power for more than 30 days must obtain an STA to do so. See 47 CFR § 73.1560(d).

⁹ As the Commission has stated on multiple occasions, “[T]he association of a broadcast station with a community of license is a basic tenet of the Commission’s allocation scheme for broadcast stations.” *1998 Biennial Regulatory Review – Streamlining of Radio Technical Rules In Parts 73 and 74 of the Commission’s Rules*, First Report and Order, 14 FCC Rcd 5272, 5278 n.24 (1999). See also, e.g., *1998 Biennial Regulatory Review – Streamlining of Radio Technical Rules In Parts 73 and 74 of the Commission’s Rules*, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Order, 13 FCC Rcd 14849, 14876, para. 57 (1998); *Amendments of Parts 73 and 74 of the Commission’s Rules To Permit Certain Minor Changes In Broadcast Facilities Without a Construction Permit*, Report and Order, 12 FCC Rcd 12371, 12381, para. 11 n.11 (1997).

¹⁰ *Birach Broad. Corp.*, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 16 FCC Rcd 5015, 5020, para. 13 (2001) (*Birach*), appeal dismissed sub nom. *New World Radio, Inc. v. FCC*, 294 F.3d 164 (D.C. Cir. 2002).

¹¹ *Office of Communication of the United Church of Christ v. FCC*, 359 F.2d 994 (D.C. Cir. 1966) (*UCC*).

“When past performance is in conflict with the public interest, a very heavy burden rests on the renewal applicant to show how a renewal can be reconciled with the public interest. Like public officials charged with a public trust, a renewal applicant . . . must literally ‘run on his record.’”¹² The *UCC* decision further stated: “A broadcaster seeks and is granted the free and exclusive use of a limited and valuable part of the public domain; when he accepts that franchise it is burdened by enforceable public obligations . . . a broadcast license is a public trust subject to termination for breach of duty.”¹³ Although *UCC* was decided long before section 309(k) was adopted, these principles aptly describe the public interest standard codified there.

7. In *Birach*, where the licensee was silent for all but 56 days of its initial four-year license term, the Commission acknowledged that the agency’s longstanding policy before the 1996 enactment of section 312(g) had been to encourage silent stations to resume broadcast operations rather than to terminate their operation.¹⁴ However, the Commission noted that section 309(k)(1) applies a “backwards-looking standard” that does not give any weight to post-term efforts to return a station to full-time operation.¹⁵ The Commission held that denial of the renewal application of the station in question in *Birach* would have been fundamentally unfair because the Commission had not provided sufficient notice of how the section 309(k)(1) renewal standard would be applied to silent stations.¹⁶ However, after noting that, given the lack of notice, it was renewing the license in question, the Commission provided the following clear warning to all licensees: “Although we have concluded that *Birach* is qualified to be a licensee and that grant of the renewal application was proper, it is equally clear to us that *Birach*’s conduct as a licensee . . . fell far short of the service commitment which most licensees fulfill to their communities of license on a daily basis.”¹⁷

8. The policy against allowing extended periods of silence or minimal operation by licensed stations is to ensure “that scarce broadcast spectrum does not lie fallow and unavailable to others capable of instituting and maintaining service to the public.”¹⁸ In addition to enforcing section 312(g) of the Act, the Commission has stressed its interest in promoting efficient use of radio broadcast spectrum for the benefit of the listening public in several different contexts since the enactment of section 312(g).¹⁹ These

¹² *Id.* at 1007.

¹³ *Id.* at 1003.

¹⁴ *Birach*, 16 FCC Rcd at 5019, para. 10.

¹⁵ *Id.* at 5020, para. 12 (“[C]onsideration of post-term developments is fundamentally at odds with this backwards-looking standard”); *see also* note 23 *infra*.

¹⁶ The *Birach* station’s period of non-operation commenced prior to the enactment of section 312(g). The Commission’s policy was that, for such stations, the 12-month period for purposes of section 312(g) would commence on that date of enactment, February 8, 1996. Thus, had *Birach* failed to resume broadcast operations by February 8, 1997, its station license would have expired the next day. *Birach*, 16 FCC Rcd 5018, n.16.

¹⁷ *Id.* at 5021, para. 13. *See also* *LKCM Radio Group, L.P.*, Memorandum Opinion and Order and Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture, 29 FCC Rcd 1045, 1048-50, paras. 10-16 (MB 2014); *Lazer Licenses, LLC*, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 30 FCC Rcd 6357, 6364, para. 21 (MB 2015); *Roger L. Hoppe, II*, Memorandum Opinion and Order and Notice of Apparent Liability, 31 FCC Rcd 8790, 8793, para. 11 (MB 2016).

¹⁸ *Family Life Ministries, Inc.*, Letter Order, 23 FCC Rcd 15395, 15397 (MB 2008).

¹⁹ *See Policies to Promote Rural Radio Service and to Streamline Allotment and Assignment Procedures*, Third Report and Order, 26 FCC Rcd 17642, 17645, para. 7 (2011) (citing the Commission’s “fundamental interest” in expediting new radio service and preventing “warehousing” of scarce spectrum); *1998 Biennial Regulatory Review – Streamlining of Mass Media Applications, Rules, and Processes*, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 14 FCC Rcd 17525, 17539, para. 36 (1999); *Lieberman Broad. of Dallas License LLC*, Letter Order, 25 FCC Rcd 4765, 4768 (MB 2010) (“continued warehousing of this spectrum by Susquehanna in the face of Lieberman’s long-standing competing demand is plainly contrary to the public interest”); *Great Lakes Community Broad., Inc.*, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 24 FCC Rcd 13487, 13489, para. 3 (MB 2009). *See also* *Roger L. Hoppe, II*, 31 FCC Rcd at 8793, para. 11,

(continued....)

concerns about efficient use of spectrum are also reflected in the Commission’s statutory authority to award licenses at auction.²⁰

III. DISCUSSION

A. WSYL Operational History

9. We designate the Renewal Application for hearing to determine whether the Station’s license should be renewed in light of the Station’s failure to operate for most of NIA’s tenure as licensee. NIA consummated the assignment of the WSYL license from Georgia Eagle Media, Inc. on January 22, 2018.²¹ WSYL’s operational history since that date through the end of 2020 is as follows:

Silent	Operating
License term record	
2/7/18-2/3/19 (362 days)	1/22/18-2/6/18 (16 days)
11/1/19-3/31/20 (152 days)	2/4/19-10/31/19 (270 days) ²²
Total = 514 days = 1.4 years (64%)	Total = 286 days = .8 year (36%)
Section 307(c)(3) record²³	
4/1/2020-10/24/20 207 days	10/25/20-10/27/20 (operation at 20 Watts under STA) 2 days
10/28/20-12/31/20 65 days	
Total = 272 days = .75 year (99%)	Total = 2 days (1%)

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citing Birach (“Silence instead of licensed operation is a fundamental failure to serve [a] station’s community of license, because a silent station offers that community no public service programming such as news, public affairs, weather information and Emergency Alert System notifications. Moreover, brief periods of station operation sandwiched between prolonged periods of silence are of little value because the local audience is not accustomed to tuning in to the station’s frequency.”).

²⁰ See 47 U.S.C. §§ 309(j)(3)(D) (obligation to promote the objective of “efficient and intensive use of the electromagnetic spectrum); 309(j)(4)(B) (auction rules shall include performance requirements in part “to prevent stockpiling or warehousing of spectrum”).

²¹ See FCC file no. BAL-20170728AFC.

²² The notice of resumption filed for this period stated that the Station resumed operation on February 4, 2019, at reduced power of 500 watts, which is 50% of the Station’s authorized power. As noted above, a station that is operating with reduced power for more than 30 days must obtain an STA to do so. See 47 CFR § 73.1560(d); *supra* note 8. No notice was filed indicating that the Station increased its operating power to the full authorized power, and no request for STA to operate with reduced power was filed, so it is unclear whether WSYL operated at its licensed power level at any time in 2019. In order to receive credit for this period of operation, NIA would need to show that the Station operated in accordance with its Commission authorization. See *Eagle*, 563 F.3d at 553.

²³ Section 307(c)(3) of the Act mandates that the Commission continue a broadcast license in effect while the license renewal application is pending. 47 U.S.C. § 307(c)(3); see *Fox Television Stations, Inc.*, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 29 FCC Rcd 9564, 9571 n.40 (MB 2014) (in acting on a renewal application, the Commission considers the licensee’s performance since the beginning of its most recent license term but gives less weight to improved performance during the pendency of the renewal application). For purposes of this chart, we will use the Station’s history through the end of 2020 for calculating days of silence.

Totals combined = 786 days = 2.2 years (73%)	288 days = .8 year (27%)

10. As depicted on the chart above, during NIA's tenure as licensee of WSYL from January 2018 for the balance of the license term ending in 2020, the Station was silent or operated at unauthorized power levels except for brief periods of operations.²⁴ In 2018, WSYL operated for 16 days, presumably at its licensed power level. In 2019, WSYL operated for 270 days, in whole or in part at an unauthorized power level of 500 Watts.²⁵ In 2020, WSYL operated for two days at an authorized power level of 20 Watts.²⁶

11. On November 25, 2019, NIA filed the Station's Renewal Application. Section 309(k)(1) of the Rules provides that grant of a renewal application is appropriate if we find that (1) the station has served the public interest, convenience, and necessity; (2) there have been no serious violations of the Act or the Rules; and (3) there have been no other violations that, taken together, constitute a pattern of abuse.²⁷ When such a finding cannot be made on the basis of the application, section 309(k) provides that the license renewal application will be designated for a hearing. Because of the Station's extended periods of silence during the preceding term, we are unable to find that grant of the renewal application is in the public interest. Accordingly, we designate this matter for hearing.

IV. PROCEDURES FOR HEARING

12. *Written Hearings Report and Order.* The Commission recently supplemented its formal hearing processes by adopting rules that, *inter alia*, expand the use of a hearing procedure that relies in appropriate cases on written submissions and documentary evidence.²⁸ These hearing proceedings shall be resolved on a written record consisting of affirmative case, responsive case, and reply case submissions, along with all associated evidence in the record, including stipulations and agreements of the parties and official notice of material facts. Based on that record, the presiding officer will issue an Initial Decision pursuant to section 309(k) of the Act and sections 1.267 and 1.274(c) of the Rules.²⁹ Based on the information before us, we believe this matter can be adequately resolved on a written record, and we therefore find that this is an appropriate case for use of those procedures.

13. *Initial Case Order.* After release of this *Hearing Designation Order and Notice of Opportunity for Hearing*, the presiding officer shall promptly release an Initial Case Order. The Initial Case Order shall inform all parties that they shall file timely Notices of Appearance in accordance with the Commission's rules,³⁰ and shall put all parties on notice that they are expected to be fully cognizant of Part I of the Rules concerning Practice and Procedure, 47 CFR Part 1, Subparts A and B. The Initial Case Order shall also set a date for the initial status conference and a date by which each party should file a

²⁴ WSYL is a Class C AM station licensed to operate with 1 kW of power from a site in Sylvania, Georgia. See FCC file no. BL-19851015AQ.

²⁵ *Supra* note 22.

²⁶ See FCC file no. BLSTA-20201022AAC.

²⁷ 47 U.S.C. § 309(k)(1).

²⁸ See *Procedural Streamlining of Administrative Hearings*, Report and Order, EB Docket No. 19-214, Report and Order, 35 FCC Rcd 10729 (2020) (*Written Hearings Report and Order*). These new procedures became effective on Nov. 5, 2020. See 85 Fed. Reg. 63166 (Oct. 6, 2020).

²⁹ 47 U.S.C. § 309(k); 47 CFR §§ 1.267, 1.274(c). That Initial Decision will be subject to review by the Commission pursuant to 47 CFR §§ 1.276-277 under the circumstances described therein.

³⁰ See 47 CFR § 1.91(c).

pre-conference submission that would include (a) whether discovery is expected in this case, and if so, a proposed discovery schedule; (b) any preliminary motions they are intending to file; and (c) a proposed case schedule. The parties' pre-conference submission should also indicate whether they request that a Protective Order be entered in this case.

14. *Requests for Admissions.* In accordance with section 1.246 of the Rules, any party may serve upon any other party written requests for the admission of the genuineness of any relevant documents or of the truth of any relevant matters of fact.³¹ Such requests shall be served within twenty (20) days after the deadline for filing a notice of appearance unless the presiding officer sets a different time frame.³²

15. *Initial Status Conference and Initial Status Conference Order.* During the initial status conference, the presiding officer shall set the case schedule, including any deadlines by which the parties should submit the motions they identified in their pre-conference submissions.³³ If discovery is anticipated, the presiding officer shall also set the discovery period. The presiding officer shall also set the deadlines for the parties' affirmative case, responsive case, and reply case submissions in accordance with sections 1.371-1.377 of the Rules.³⁴ If the parties have requested the entrance of a Protective Order, the presiding officer shall also set a deadline by which a joint proposed Protective Order shall be submitted for consideration. In accordance with section 1.248(b) of the Rules, the presiding officer may adopt a schedule to govern the hearing proceeding during the status conference or in an order following the conference.

16. Additional status conferences may be scheduled throughout the course of the proceeding at the request of the parties and/or at the discretion of the presiding officer. Any requests by a party for a status conference must be made in writing to the presiding officer and shall be copied on all other parties.

17. *Transcripts.* In accordance with section 1.248 of the Rules, an official transcript of all case conferences shall be made, unless the parties and the presiding officer agree to forego a transcript.³⁵ Transcripts shall be made available to the public as part of the official record in the Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) in MB Docket No. 21-82.

18. *Evidentiary Rules.* In the *Written Hearings Report and Order*, the Commission amended section 1.351 of the rules to adopt the evidentiary standard set forth in the formal APA hearing requirements. In relevant part, section 1.351 of the Rules now states, "any oral or documentary evidence may be adduced, but the presiding officer shall exclude irrelevant, immaterial, or unduly repetitious evidence."³⁶ The parties remain free to make evidentiary arguments based on the Federal Rules of Evidence.

19. *Petitions to Intervene.* Any person or entity seeking status as a party in interest in this proceeding must file a petition to intervene in accordance with section 1.223(a) of the Rules.³⁷ Any person or entity seeking to participate in this proceeding as a party may file a petition for leave to

³¹ See 47 CFR § 1.246.

³² See *id.*

³³ Section 1.294 of the Rules shall determine the deadlines for oppositions (and replies, if permitted) for most interlocutory motions submitted to the presiding officer. See 47 CFR § 1.294. The filing deadlines for oppositions (and replies, if permitted) to motions to enlarge, change, or delete issues made pursuant to section 1.229 of the Commission's rules and motions to intervene made pursuant to section 1.223 of the Commission's rules, for example, shall be at the discretion of the presiding officer.

³⁴ See 47 CFR §§ 1.371-1.377.

³⁵ See 47 CFR § 1.248.

³⁶ 47 CFR § 1.351.

³⁷ See 47 CFR § 1.223(a).

intervene in accordance with section 1.223(b) of the Rules.³⁸

20. *Motions to Enlarge, Change or Delete Issues.* Motions to enlarge, change, or delete issues to be considered in this proceeding shall be allowed, consistent with section 1.229 of the Rules.³⁹

21. *Restricted Proceeding.* This hearing proceeding is a “restricted” proceeding pursuant to section 1.1208 of the Rules and thus *ex parte* presentations to or from Commission decision-making personnel, including the presiding officer and her staff and staff of the Commission’s Media Bureau, are prohibited, except as otherwise provided in the Rules.⁴⁰

22. *Electronic Filing of Documents.* All pleadings in this proceeding, as well as all letters, documents, or other written submissions including discovery requests, and objections and responses thereto, except those containing confidential and/or other protected information, must be filed electronically in MB Docket No. 21-82 using ECFS. Written submissions that include confidential and/or other protected information shall be filed under seal with the Office of the Secretary, along with an additional courtesy copy transmitted to the presiding officer.⁴¹

23. *Case Caption.* The caption of any pleading filed in this proceeding, as well as all letters, documents, or other written submissions including discovery requests and objections and responses thereto, shall indicate whether it is to be acted upon by the Commission or the presiding officer.⁴² The presiding officer shall be identified by name.

24. *Service.* Service on the Enforcement Bureau shall be made using the following email address: EBHearings@fcc.gov.

25. *Confidential and/or Otherwise Protected Materials.* To the extent any party to this proceeding wishes to submit materials or information that it would like withheld from the public record, it may do so in accordance with the procedures set forth in section 1.314 of the Rules.⁴³ The parties may also enter into a Protective Order. As stated above, requests for a Protective Order should be made in the parties’ pre-conference submission in accordance with the schedule set forth in the Initial Case Order.

26. *Initial Decision.* The presiding officer shall issue an Initial Decision on the issues set forth herein, as well as any other issues designated for hearing in the course of the proceeding. This Initial Decision shall contain, at a minimum, findings of fact and conclusions of law, as well as the reasons or basis therefor, and the appropriate rule or order or policy and the sanction, relief or denial thereof, as appropriate.⁴⁴

V. ORDERING CLAUSES

27. **ACCORDINGLY, IT IS ORDERED** that, pursuant to sections 309(e) and 309(k) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, and pursuant to authority delegated under section 0.284 of the Commission’s Rules,⁴⁵ that the captioned application **IS DESIGNATED FOR HEARING** before the

³⁸ See 47 CFR § 1.223(b).

³⁹ See 47 CFR § 1.229.

⁴⁰ See 47 CFR § 1.1208 (“Proceedings in which *ex parte* presentations are prohibited, referred to as ‘restricted’ proceedings, include . . . all proceedings that have been designated for hearing . . .”). See also 47 CFR §§ 1.1202(b) (describing what constitutes an *ex parte* presentation), 1.1204 (exceptions).

⁴¹ See 47 CFR § 1.51.

⁴² See 47 CFR § 1.209.

⁴³ See 47 CFR § 1.314.

⁴⁴ See 47 CFR §§ 1.267, 1.274(c). The Initial Decision shall be subject to Commission review as set forth *id.* at 1.276-277.

⁴⁵ See 47 U.S.C. §§ 309(e), 309(k); 47 CFR § 0.284.

FCC Administrative Law Judge, at a time and place to be specified in a subsequent order, upon the following issues:

(a) To determine, with respect to station WSYL(AM), Sylvania, Georgia, whether, during the preceding license term, (i) the Station has served the public interest, convenience, and necessity, (ii) there have been any serious violations by the licensee of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, or the rules and regulations of the Commission, and (iii) there have been any other violations of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, or the rules and regulations of the Commission which, taken together, would constitute a pattern of abuse; and

(b) In light of the evidence adduced pursuant to issue (a) above, whether the captioned application for renewal of the license for station WSYL(AM) should be granted on such terms and conditions as are appropriate, including renewal for a term less than the maximum otherwise permitted, or denied due to failure to satisfy the requirements of section 309(k)(1) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. § 309(k)(1).

28. **IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that, pursuant to section 1.221(c) of the Commission's Rules,⁴⁶ in order to avail itself of the opportunity to be heard and the right to present evidence at a hearing in these proceedings, NIA Broadcasting, Inc., by an attorney, **SHALL FILE** within 20 days of the mailing of this *Hearing Designation Order and Order to Show Cause*, a written appearance stating its intention to appear at the hearing and present evidence on the issues specified above.

29. **IT IS FURTHER ORDERED**, pursuant to section 1.221(c) of the Commission's Rules,⁴⁷ that if NIA Broadcasting, Inc. fails to file a written appearance within the time specified above, or has not filed prior to the expiration of that time a petition to dismiss without prejudice, or a petition to accept, for good cause shown, such written appearance beyond expiration of said 20 days, the captioned application shall be dismissed with prejudice for failure to prosecute.

30. **IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that the Chief, Enforcement Bureau, **IS MADE A PARTY** to this proceeding without the need to file a written appearance.

31. **IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that, in accordance with section 309(e) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, and section 1.254 of the Commission's Rules,⁴⁸ the burden of proceeding with the introduction of evidence and the burden of proof with respect to the issues at paragraph 27 **SHALL BE** upon NIA Broadcasting, Inc.

32. **IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that a copy of each document filed in this proceeding subsequent to the date of adoption of this *Hearing Designation Order and Notice of Opportunity for Hearing* **SHALL BE SERVED** on the counsel of record appearing on behalf of the Chief, Enforcement Bureau. Parties may inquire as to the identity of such counsel by calling the Investigations & Hearings Division of the Enforcement Bureau at (202) 418-1420. Such service copy **SHALL BE ADDRESSED** to the named counsel of record, Investigations & Hearings Division, Enforcement Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, 45 L Street NE, Washington, DC 20554.

33. **IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that the parties to the captioned application shall, pursuant to section 311(a)(2) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, and section 73.3594 of the Commission's Rules,⁴⁹ **GIVE NOTICE** of the hearing within the time and in the manner prescribed in such Rule, and shall advise the Commission of the satisfaction of such requirements as mandated by

⁴⁶ See 47 CFR §§ 1.91(c), 1.221(c).

⁴⁷ See 47 CFR § 1.221(c).

⁴⁸ See 47 U.S.C. § 309(e); 47 CFR § 1.254.

⁴⁹ See 47 U.S.C. § 311(a)(2); 47 CFR § 73.3594.

section 73.3594 of the Commission's Rules.⁵⁰

34. **IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that copies of this *Hearing Designation Order and Notice of Opportunity for Hearing* shall be sent via Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested, and by regular first-class mail to NIA Broadcasting, Inc., Neal Ardman, President, PO Box 2525, Kingsland, GA 31548 and John C. Trent, Esq., 200 South Church Street, Woodstock, VA 22664.

35. **IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that a copy of this document, or a summary thereof, shall be published in the Federal Register.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Michelle M. Carey
Chief, Media Bureau

⁵⁰ See 47 CFR § 73.3594.