

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

In the Matter of )
)
Amendment of Section 73.202(b) ) MB Docket No. 24-83
Table of Allotments, )
FM Broadcast Stations. )
(Mattoon, Illinois) )

NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING

Adopted: March 19, 2024

Released: March 20, 2024

Comment Date: May 13, 2024
Reply Comment Date: May 28, 2024

By the Assistant Chief, Audio Division, Media Bureau:

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Audio Division, on its own motion, proposes to amend the Table of FM Allotments, section 73.202(b) of the Commission’s rules,1 by downgrading the class of vacant Channel 245B to Channel 245B1 at Mattoon, Illinois. The existing vacant Channel 245B at Mattoon is not in compliance with the minimum distance separation requirements of section 73.207(b) of the Commission’s rules.2 In this Notice of Proposed Rule Making, we seek comment on that proposal.

II. BACKGROUND

2. Channel 245B at Mattoon is considered a vacant allotment resulting from the cancellation of the license for Station DWLBH-FM.3 A staff engineering analysis found that the vacant Mattoon channel is short-spaced to Station WHMS-FM by ten kilometers.4 The minimum distance spacing requirement is 74 kilometers. The staff engineering analysis indicates that there are no other Class B channels available at Mattoon.

III. DISCUSSION

3. We proposed the substitution of Channel 245B1 for vacant Channel 245B at Mattoon, Illinois. We find that the proposed Mattoon substitution results in the public interest under Priority (4).5 Notwithstanding that the proposed Channel 245B1 at Mattoon resolves the distance spacing conflict with

1 47 CFR § 73.202(b).

2 47 CFR § 73.207(b).

3 See Notice of License Expiration for Stations WLBH(AM) and WLBH-FM, Mattoon, IL to Mr. James R. Livesay II, from Albert Shuldiner, Chief, Audio Division, Letter Order, Ref. 1800B3-VM (MB April 9, 2018); see also, BROADCAST ACTIONS, Report No. 49214, Public Notice (MB April 13, 2018).

4 Station WHMS-FM is licensed on Channel 248B, Champaign, Illinois. See FCC Application File No. BLH-19911022KB.

5 See Revision of FM Assignment Policies and Procedures, BC Docket No. 80–130, Second Report and Order, 90 FCC 2d 88 (1982). The FM allotment priorities are: (1) First fulltime aural service, (2) Second fulltime aural service, (3) First local service and (4) Other public interest matters. Co-equal weight is given to Priorities (2) and (3).

Station WHMS-FM, it also maintains a second local FM service at Mattoon.<sup>6</sup> A staff engineering analysis indicates that Channel 245B1 can be allotted to Mattoon, Illinois consistent with the minimum distance separation requirements of section 73.207(b) of the Commission's rules, with a site restriction of 12.2 kilometers (7.6 miles) southeast of the community.<sup>7</sup> The reference coordinates are 39-23-17 NL and 88-17-21 WL.

4. Accordingly, we seek comment on the proposed amendment to the Table of FM Allotments, section 73.202(b) of the Commission's rules,<sup>8</sup> as follows:

<u>Community</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Mattoon, Illinois	245B <sup>9</sup>	245B1

#### IV. PROCEDURAL MATTERS

5. *Showings Required.* Comments are invited on the proposal discussed in this Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM). Any party that expresses interest in the allotment will be expected to answer whatever questions are presented in initial comments. Any requests by a proponent for withdrawal or dismissal of an allotment request must be filed with the Commission in accordance with section 1.420(j) of the Rules.<sup>10</sup>

6. *Cut-off Protection.* The following procedures will govern the consideration of the filings in this proceeding:

- (a) Counterproposals advanced in this proceeding itself will be considered, if advanced in initial comments, so that parties may comment on them in reply comments. They will not be considered if advanced in reply comments.<sup>11</sup>
- (b) The filing of a counterproposal may lead the Commission to allot a different channel than was requested in the NPRM.<sup>12</sup>

7. *Comments and Reply Comments.* Pursuant to sections 1.415, 1.419, and 1.420 of the Commission's rules,<sup>13</sup> interested parties may file comments and reply comments on or before the dates indicated on the first page of this document. Comments may be filed using the Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS).<sup>14</sup>

- Electronic Filers: Comments may be filed electronically using the Internet by accessing the ECFS: <https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/filings/standard>. Parties that choose to file electronically only need to submit one copy of each filing so long as the submission conforms to all procedural and filing requirements. Online filing is optional.

<sup>6</sup> Noncommercial educational station WLKL(FM) is currently licensed at Mattoon, Illinois. The community has a 2020 US Census population of 16,870 persons. United States Census Bureau, <https://data.census.gov/all?q=Mattoon%20city,%20Illinois>

<sup>7</sup> 47 CFR § 73.207(b).

<sup>8</sup> 47 CFR § 73.202(b).

<sup>9</sup> Channel 245B at Mattoon, Illinois is not currently listed in the Table of FM Allotments.

<sup>10</sup> 47 CFR § 1.420(j).

<sup>11</sup> 47 CFR § 1.420(d).

<sup>12</sup> 47 CFR § 1.420(g)(2).

<sup>13</sup> 47 CFR §§ 1.415, 1.419, and 1.420.

<sup>14</sup> See *Electronic Filing of Documents in Rulemaking Proceedings*, GC Docket No. 97-113, Report and Order, 13 FCC Red 11322 (1998); *recon. granted*, 13 FCC Red 21517 (1998).

- Paper Filers: Parties who choose to file by paper must file an original and one copy of each filing. If more than one docket or rulemaking number appears in the caption of this proceeding, filers must submit two additional copies for each additional docket or rulemaking number. Filings can be sent by hand or messenger delivery, by commercial overnight courier, or by first-class or overnight U.S. Postal Service mail. All filings must be addressed to the Commission’s Secretary, Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission.
  - Commercial overnight mail (other than U.S. Postal Service Express Mail and Priority Mail) must be sent to 9050 Junction Drive, Annapolis Junction, MD 20701.
  - U.S. Postal Service first-class, Express, and Priority mail must be addressed to 45 L Street, NE, Washington DC 20554.
  - Currently, the Commission does not accept any hand or messenger delivered filings. This is a temporary measure taken to help protect the health and safety of individuals, and to mitigate the transmission of COVID-19. In the event that the Commission announces the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions, a filing window will be opened at the Commission's office located at 9050 Junction Drive, Annapolis Junction, MD 20701.<sup>15</sup>

8. *Service.* Pursuant section 1.420 of the Rules,<sup>16</sup> all submissions by parties to this proceeding or by persons acting on behalf of such parties must be made in written comments, reply comments, or other appropriate pleadings. The person filing the comments shall serve comments on the petitioners. Reply comments shall be served on the person(s) who filed comments to which the reply is directed. A certificate of service shall accompany such comments and reply comments.<sup>17</sup>

9. *Ex Parte Notices– Restricted.* The proceeding this Notice initiates shall be treated as a “restricted” proceeding in accordance with the Commission’s *ex parte* rules.<sup>18</sup> For purposes of this restricted notice and comment rulemaking proceeding, members of the public are advised that no *ex parte* presentations are permitted from the time the Commission adopts a notice of proposed rulemaking until the proceeding has been decided and such decision in the applicable docket is no longer subject to reconsideration by the Commission or review by any court.<sup>19</sup> An *ex parte* presentation is not prohibited if specifically requested by the Commission or staff for the clarification or adduction of evidence or resolution of issues in the proceeding.<sup>20</sup> However, any new written information elicited from such a request or any summary of any new information shall be served by the person making the presentation upon the other parties to the proceeding in a particular docket unless the Commission specifically waives this service requirement.<sup>21</sup> Any comment that has not been served on the petitioner constitutes an *ex parte*

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<sup>15</sup> See *FCC Announces Closure of FCC Headquarters Open Window and Change in Hand-Delivery Policy*, Public Notice, 35 FCC Rcd 2788 (2020).

<sup>16</sup> 47 CFR § 1.420.

<sup>17</sup> See 47 CFR § 1.420(a), (b) and (c).

<sup>18</sup> 47 CFR §§ 1.1200 *et seq.*

<sup>19</sup> 47 CFR § 1.1208.

<sup>20</sup> 47 CFR § 1.1204(a)(10).

<sup>21</sup> 47 CFR § 1.1204(a)(10)(ii). In addition, an oral presentation in a restricted proceeding not designated for hearing requesting action by a particular date or giving reasons that a proceeding should be expedited other than the need to avoid administrative delay is permitted. A detailed summary of the presentation must be filed in the record and served by the person making the presentation on the other parties to the proceeding, who may respond in support or opposition to the request for expedition, including by oral *ex parte* presentation, subject to the same service requirement. 47 CFR § 1.1204(a)(11).

presentation and shall not be considered in the proceeding. Any reply comment which has not been served on the person(s) who filed the comment, to which the reply is directed, constitutes an *ex parte* presentation and shall not be considered in the proceeding.

10. *Availability of Documents.* Comments, reply comments, and *ex parte* submissions will be available for public inspection via ECFS (<https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/search/search-filings>). Documents will be available electronically in ASCII, Microsoft Word, and/or Adobe Acrobat.

11. *Paperwork Reduction and Regulatory Flexibility.* The Commission has determined that the relevant provisions of the Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980, as amended,<sup>22</sup> do not apply to a rulemaking proceeding to amend the FM Table of Allotments, section 73.202(b) of the Rules.<sup>23</sup> This document does not contain proposed information collection requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.<sup>24</sup> In addition, therefore, it does not contain any proposed information collection burden “for small business concerns with fewer than 25 employees,” pursuant to the Small Business Paperwork Relief Act of 2002.<sup>25</sup>

12. *People with Disabilities.* To request materials in accessible formats for people with disabilities (braille, large print, electronic files, audio format), send an e-mail to [fcc504@fcc.gov](mailto:fcc504@fcc.gov) or call the Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau at 202-418-0530.

13. *Additional Information.* For further information concerning this proceeding, contact Rolanda F. Smith, Audio Division, Media Bureau, at (202) 418-2054, [Rolanda-Faye.Smith@fcc.gov](mailto:Rolanda-Faye.Smith@fcc.gov).

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Nazifa Sawez  
Assistant Chief, Audio Division  
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<sup>22</sup> See 5 U.S.C. § 603. The RFA, *see* 5 U.S.C. § 601 *et seq.*, has been amended by the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (SBREFA), Pub. L. No. 104-121, Title II, 110 Stat. 857 (1996). The SBREFA was enacted as Title II of the Contract with America Advancement Act of 1996 (CWAAA).

<sup>23</sup> 47 CFR § 73.202(b).

<sup>24</sup> See 44 U.S.C. §§ 3501-3520.

<sup>25</sup> See 44 U.S.C. § 3506(c)(4).