



NEWS

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FCC LOCALISM TASK FORCE ANNOUNCES PROCEDURES TO FACILITATE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT ITS RAPID CITY, SOUTH DAKOTA HEARING ON BROADCAST LOCALISM

RM-10803

Washington, D.C. – The Federal Communications Commission’s Localism Task Force today announced procedures to facilitate attendance and public participation at its May 26, 2004, hearing on broadcast localism in Rapid City, South Dakota. As previously announced, the hearing will be held at the Surbeck Student Center Ballroom, South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, 501 East Saint Joseph Street, in Rapid City. The hearing will begin at 5:30 p.m. (See Public Notice dated May 14, 2004, DA 04-1380.) The purpose of the hearing is to gather information from consumers, industry, civic organizations, and others on broadcasters’ service to their local communities. An important focus of the hearing will be to gather information and to conduct outreach for the ongoing nationwide round of broadcast station license renewals.

To avoid the need to line-up for admission to the hearing, general admission tickets will be made available on a first-come, first-served basis on the day of the hearing (Wednesday, May 26th) between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. in the Lobby of the Surbeck Student Center Ballroom at the School of Mines and Technology. One ticket per person will be issued. A ticket guarantees admission to the hearing. There are a substantial number of seats available and the Task Force does not anticipate that seating will be a problem. Therefore, those who do not get a ticket beforehand may still request one at the hearing and will be admitted until the capacity of the hearing room and overflow areas is reached.

The hearing will include a panel of speakers, as well as a small group of other community representatives and broadcasters who will be asked to speak briefly prior to the open microphone session. The designated speakers were selected to comprise a balanced and informative panel and include representatives from community and advocacy groups as well as broadcasters. As in past hearings, a substantial portion of the hearing will be dedicated to hearing from members of the public during an open microphone segment.

Opportunities to speak during the open microphone session will be made available through a random selection method to avoid the need for members of the public to spend long periods of time waiting in line and to ensure an equal chance for all to speak. Everyone entering the hearing will be asked to draw at random a card that will have a “Group Number” pre-printed on it (for

example: “Group 25”). There are a total of 10 cards for each group. During the open microphone segment, group numbers will be randomly selected and displayed on screens in the hearing room and overflow seating area. If a person’s group number is displayed, that person may proceed to the open microphone check-in area at the back of the hearing room. An FCC staff member will then direct them to the microphone at the appropriate time. These procedures, as well as additional details on participating in the open microphone segment and procedures for filing written comments, are provided in the attached “Public Participation” fact sheet. This fact sheet will also be included in the information packet given to each person upon entering the hearing.

To further assist members of the public in participating in the Rapid City hearing, the Task Force has prepared the attached “Consumer” fact sheet about broadcast localism and a list of “Five Questions” that the public might consider as they listen to the hearing and formulate their remarks. This material will also be included in the public packets provided to all who attend the hearing.

Open captioning will be provided for this event. Other reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities are available upon request. Requests should include a description of the accommodation needed, providing as much detail as possible, as well as contact information, should additional information be needed. Please make requests as early as possible. All requests will be accepted and every effort will be made to fulfill them, although timing considerations may make that impossible in some cases. Send requests via e-mail to fcc504@fcc.gov, or call the Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau:

For sign language interpreters, CART, and other reasonable accommodations: 202-418-0530 (voice), 202-418-0432 (TTY).

For accessible format materials (Braille, large print, electronic files, and audio format): 202-418-0531 (voice), 202-418-7365 (TTY).

A live audiocast of the hearing will be available at the FCC’s website at www.fcc.gov on a first-come, first-served basis. In addition, the hearing will be recorded, and the recording will be made available to the public. The public may also file comments or other documents with the Commission and should reference RM-10803. Filing instructions are provided at http://www.fcc.gov/localism/filing_instructions.doc.

For additional information about the hearing or the Localism Task Force, please visit the Task Force’s website at <http://www.fcc.gov/localism>, or contact the Task Force directly at 202-418-7777, or at localism@fcc.gov. Press inquiries should be directed to David Fiske at 202-418-0513, or Meribeth McCarrick at 202-418-0654.

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