

VII. STANDING COMMITTEES

B. Finance, Audit and Facilities Committee

FCC License Assignment of KUOW-AM and KQOW-FM to the University of WashingtonRECOMMENDED ACTION:

It is the recommendation of the administration and the Finance, Audit, and Facilities Committee that the Board of Regents delegate authority to the President to: 1) execute the Assignment Agreement with Puget Sound Public Radio (PSPR) to seek Federal Communications Commission (FCC) approval for the transfer of the broadcast licenses for KUOW-AM at Tumwater, WA and KQOW-FM at Bellingham, WA from PSPR to the University of Washington; and 2) upon FCC approval of the license transfer, execute all instruments needed to complete the license assignment.

BACKGROUND:

KUOW-FM has been licensed to the University of Washington since 1952 and was a founding member of National Public Radio in 1970. In 2001, the University of Washington entered into an agreement with KUOW/Puget Sound Public Radio (PSPR), a nonprofit corporation established solely for the purpose of promoting and supporting the welfare of KUOW-FM, to assist the University in managing and operating the station. In order to expand the listening audience of KUOW-FM, PSPR acquired the licenses for two additional stations, KUOW-AM in Tumwater, WA and KQOW-FM in Bellingham, WA. Both stations broadcast the identical programming originating from the KUOW-FM studios in Seattle, thus expanding the reach of the station to a broader listening audience in western Washington.

Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rules require that each station maintain a studio in the community where it is located (47 C.F.R. Sec. 73.1125(a)). The FCC, however, may grant a waiver to this requirement when a station rebroadcasts the same programming as another public station, providing the licenses of the several stations are held by the same entity. After discussion with the FCC about this requirement as it relates to the University and its agreement with KUOW/PSPR, it was determined that the best way to meet this requirement would be for PSPR to transfer the licenses for KUOW-AM and KQOW-FM to the University. FCC approval is required for the transfer. Accepting the license assignment will not result in any additional financial or other liability for the University, since it already holds the license for KUOW-FM.

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REVIEWS AND APPROVALS:

At its March 11, 2011 meeting, the PSPR Board approved the assignment of the licenses to the University. The Associate Vice President for Media Relations and Communications and the Senior Assistant Attorney General have reviewed and approved this action.