

Bob Burtman
President, Hillsborough Community Media
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To whom it may concern,

I am writing on behalf of Hillsborough Community Media (HCM), a non-profit organization formed in March of 2010 in the hope of procuring a broadcast license for a community radio station serving Hillsborough and northern Orange County, NC. We strongly urge the FCC to maximize the opportunities for community radio both here and across the nation.

The need for a community radio station in this area is perhaps best underscored by the high level of community enthusiasm and participation in HCM's planning and preparation phase. More than 40 talented and skilled people have already volunteered to assist HCM as board members and with such key functions as IT, marketing and communications, programming, development and engineering. Both the town of Hillsborough and Orange County have pledged their support for the endeavor. And we field new inquiries from potential volunteers on a daily basis.

The primary reason for this intense interest is that the local media outlets have only minimal focus on local news, music and public affairs. The local NPR affiliate has virtually no local content; most commercial radio broadcasters whose signals reach this community have no local content at all. Hillsborough and northern Orange County are served only by a single weekly newspaper. This despite the fact that Hillsborough is the county seat in one of the fastest-growing regions in the United States, the Research Triangle area, which encompasses the counties of Orange, Durham and Wake.

The area is also home to a vibrant cultural community of national repute that includes authors, musicians and artists. Yet they have almost no access to the local airwaves.

The programming mission of HCM would be to fill those major gaps in local news, music and public affairs coverage. To that end we have already recruited an experienced and committed group of program hosts who are willing to volunteer in part because they have no other place to go. HCM will also partner with local educational and community institutions to encourage the training and development of young broadcast talent, and will generally serve as an incubator for area youth to hone their communications skills.

We thank the FCC for its interest in expanding the reach of community radio by creating opportunities for new and innovative stations such as that proposed by HCM. The need is clear. Sincerely,

Bob Burtman
President, Hillsborough Community Media