

GMCR - FAQ / Frequently Asked Questions

What is Community Radio?

Community Radio is an inexact term and is defined a bit differently by every station. In technical terms, a community radio station operates under an FCC issued NC/E - Non-Commercial / Educational - license in the "Reserve Band" of frequencies that are predominantly on the lower frequencies of the FM dial.

Community Radio - as used by most stations that describe themselves as such - means the ownership, management and operation of the station are all local to the area it serves. It provides music, arts, culture educational, news and public affairs programming. It prioritizes the interests of community members and promotes and encourages community members to create programs and participate in governance and operation.

Wikipedia - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community_radio - defines it as follows...

Community radio is a type of radio service, that offers a third model of radio broadcasting beyond commercial broadcasting and public broadcasting. Community stations can serve geographic communities and communities of interest. They broadcast content that is popular and relevant to a local/specific audience but which may often be overlooked by commercial or mass-media broadcasters.

Community radio stations are operated, owned, and driven by the communities they serve. Community radio is not-for profit and provides a mechanism for facilitating individuals, groups, and communities to tell their own diverse stories, to share experiences, and in a media rich world to become active creators and contributors of media.

In many parts of the world, community radio acts as a vehicle for the community and voluntary sector, civil society, agencies, NGOs & citizens to work in partnership to further community development as well as broadcasting aims.

What is Gila / Mimbres Community Radio?

GMCR is a New Mexico non-profit corporation with Federal 501(c)(3) tax-deductible status. It is governed by a local board of directors.

When was it established?

A group of Grant County residents began to meet in April 2005 to investigate the possibility of establishing a community radio station here. Regular public meetings took place through the spring and summer and GMCR incorporated in October 2005.

Why was it established?

Those who established GMCR did so to address the very narrow range of choices and opportunities in the "Media Eco-System" of Grant County. We asserted - and received agreement from a broad cross-section of the community - that a large segment of the population were unhappy with the existing outlets and desired much more diverse sources of information and entertainment. We also asserted that commercial outlets - by their nature and

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by very strong and obvious trends in business practices - would not meet the needs of this significant segment of local residents. Finally we asserted that existing outlets would not permit meaningful contributions from community members to speak in their own voice and address local issues, concerns and preferences.

What is GMCR's mission?

GMCR seeks to establish and operate a non-commercial / educational, non-profit, volunteer-based community radio station located in Silver City, NM.

GMCR shall provide programming and media access to segments of the community that are underserved.

GMCR shall provide educational programs and services, including but not limited to programs of educational merit including those concerned with scientific, cultural, historical, and humane studies; adult education, distance learning, programs in support of K-12 and higher education; programs incident to for-credit instruction and general interest programs.

GMCR's news and public affairs programming shall provide a forum for the community, as well as unpopular, controversial, or neglected perspectives on important local, national, and international issues, reflecting GMCR's inclusive values of peace, justice, democracy, human and civil rights, multiculturalism, environmentalism, freedom of expression, and social advancement.

GMCR's arts, cultural, and music programming shall cover a wide spectrum of expression from traditional to experimental, and reflect the diverse cultures that GMCR will serve. GMCR shall strive for spontaneity and programming excellence, both in content and technique.

Why are there two community radio projects?

Both GMCR and KOOT FM - operated by Community Access Television of Silver - filed their respective applications for NC/E licenses in the "window" of October 2007. KOOT filed four applications for different frequencies. GMCR filed a single application. While GMCR had extensively publicized its intentions to file an application and invited others to join its efforts in community radio, KOOT/CATS applications only became known after the "window" had closed and the FCC publicly announced all applicants.

Why is KOOT on the air while GMCR is not?

The application process is competitive. Of the 4 applications filed by KOOT/CATS, three had several strong competitors while the 4th had only two competing applications. In keeping with FCC rules and policies, applicants are encouraged to negotiate between themselves to arrive at a "settlement." KOOT pursued the application with the fewest competitors. They were able to arrive at a settlement within a year in which the 3rd party withdrew and KOOT and the 2nd party arrived at a "time share" agreement such that KOOT only broadcasts from midnight to

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noon. Further, KOOT broadcasts at only 2000 watts with a tower location which limits their coverage to Silver City and it's immediate environs.

GMCR filed for a higher - and thus more desirable and more highly contested - frequency at 10,000 watts with a proposed tower location that would serve essentially all of Grant County. This resulted in over 40 competing applications. A settlement agreement was not possible with the large number of applicants and thus GMCR was forced to wait until the FCC arrived at a decision in GMCR's favor, finally in December 2010.

How can I participate?

1st and foremost, you can become a member / supporter of GMCR. You can volunteer for a wide range of tasks include member of the Board of Directors, Citizen Advisory Board, Committee Member, Station Staff -once we have an office! - DJ, producer, announcer, Citizen Journalist, Event Organization and many others. Depending on your time and interests, you could volunteer for various tasks from time to time as you find convenient, on a regular schedule or a looser ongoing basis. Feel free to contact us to discuss your interests, skills, experience and availability.

How much will it cost?

In preparing our application we consulted closely with our engineer and attorney and arrived at budget estimates to build the studio and acquire and install the equipment. Of course, many radio stations are multi-million dollar projects however we are projecting startup costs of approximately \$150,000 and an operating budget of about \$75,000 - \$85,000. Initially we may have a single employee - a general manager - but would seek to hire two additional 1/2 time employees as we get up to speed.

How will you pay for it?

A large part of the startup cost is the equipment. We are presently pursuing equipment donations from a number of sources and to the degree that we succeed, our cash startup requirements might be significantly reduced. Likewise, we will seek donations of office equipment, building materials and time and energies of skilled carpenters, electricians, engineers, consultants and others to get us going. With a bit of luck, the initial estimate of \$150,000 my be reduced by 50% or more.

The number of residents within our service area is approximately 30,000. We will set an initial goal of 1,000 paying members at the \$60 annual base membership level. While all memberships provide similar benefits, we invite and expect those with greater means to contribute at a higher level. In our efforts so far, we have staged a number of successful fund-raising events and we will continue with similar events. A robust Underwriting program will also be part of our a fund-raising strategies, While we will seek grants from private and public sources, we will be cautious in relying upon them for basic operations as they are subject to a number of variables including the winds of economic, political and social change. Once we are on the air, there will be many promotional opportunities.

And what would a community radio station be without on-air pledge drives?

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Where will it be located?

We are currently finalizing design and technical specifications for the transmitter site atop W Mountain and we intend the studio to be easily accessible within beautiful, downtown Silver City.

When will it be on the air?

We do not have a firm date set to begin on air broadcasting but it must be done by December 2013 under FCC requirements. We are projecting from 1-2 years from July 2011. Maybe sooner!

In the meantime, we are planning to secure all music licensing and present 24/7 Internet Radio by sometime this fall. Once that is in place we will immediately begin to acquire programming from local and national sources.

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