

# WPSC Continues FM license bid

By RICH DIKON  
Staff Writer

A plan now being orchestrated by Steve Dubin, general manager of WPSC Radio, to convert from AM to FM frequency would "dramatically change" the programming format of WPSC, according to Dubin.

The format would include "more community affairs programming" including "going into the classrooms" of WPC for educational programs, said Dubin. The musical format would be influenced by listener surveys now being done and would "encompass a little bit of everything" with less rigidity in programming. The news department would expand with a concentration on local area and campus news.

The planned switch would culminate with construction of an FM broadcasting station and a Federal Communications Commission license. So far, the plan has progressed to the point where Dubin will seek \$2,500 from the SGA this week to help get the station's FCC license application, form 340, completed and sent in for approval.

The plan began several months ago, with Dubin finding what looked like an available FM frequency. This was no easy task. According to Dubin, the search for a frequency has been going on at least since 1972. The problem, he said, was that the New York/Metropolitan area is an "old media area" with stations dating back to the 1920s and few available frequencies being sought by many people.

The next step was hiring an engineering firm to determine the maximum power available on the frequency and things like antenna size and interference caused and received by the frequency. Having already saved money by conducting his own frequency search, Dubin requested (and was turned down) a \$1,000 retainer fee for the engineering firm. He was forced to use equipment money from the station funds. That brings the plan to the present.

If WPSC gets the \$2,500 it is seeking from the SGA to finish the license application plus the additional \$25,000 to \$30,000 he "overestimates" it will cost for construction, including labor, he admits the station will need a lot of support. "Student support is going to be very big on this," he says. "It's going to be a station for them." He added, however, that they must also have the support of surrounding communities plus the public service organization which have gotten air time on WPSC.

Applications for FCC licensing have been "slowed tremendously" by Reagan budget cutting. To help speed up WPSC's application Dubin said he would enlist the help of Congressman.

Dubin and Program Director Gabrielle Ferrari have big plans for the station's future programming, from the current AM format to the still-being-planned FM format.

Ferrari is now undertaking a complete survey of WPSC's listenership, including campus listeners and listeners in the approximately 55 community areas reached

by UA Columbia channel P. The results of these surveys will affect the current AM music format as well as all future FM formatting.

Whatever the results of these surveys, Dubin has his own ideas about what the FM format should be like. He says he'd "like to see, within the confines of one show, somebody doing a rock piece, and being able to relate a jazz piece to that." Dubin's idea of relating all types of music, from rock to chamber music, differs dramatically from the strict formatting found on most area commercial stations. He says he'd like WPSC's FM format to be unique.

Another big part of FM programming would be devoted to community affairs. Dubin says this programming would "be a good chance for the station here and the college to open up to each other" by "going into classrooms or inviting teachers into the stations," to discuss controversial issues in the college and surrounding communities. This ties in the "ascertainment" required by the FCC for an FM station. This requires the station personnel to find out community problems and come up with a "solution sheet" that would show how the station will offer programs dealing with possible answers to community problems. Dubin says that "being an educational station in the middle of an educational community" was a big part of the FM programming.

Dubin also plans to get the rest of the campus involved in station operations. "There are so many different (college) departments that can contribute to a radio station." He gave examples such as possibly using physics majors in the engineering end of the station. Business majors are invited to work in AM advertising and sales at 15 percent commission, as well as marketing and accounting work that will be needed with the conversion to FM. He even invited the theatre department to do "a radio show live—40s style" in front of the studio mikes.

The FM conversion would also mean an increase in the news department with a greater focus on local community and campus news. He said he received many compliments on the news department's recent election night coverage. The coverage included using "every available source" they had plus stationing reporters in the election headquarters of the two candidates for governor. The coverage was about as good as any that night because they were getting their information "right from the sources," according to Dubin. More of this complete, extensive coverage, especially in the local surrounding communities, is a goal for the news department in the future.

Any future programming on FM,

especially music, will evolve from WPSC's present format. The current format, which Ferrari stresses "is experimental and subject to changes or rearrangement" will be changed to some degree in response to her listener survey patternship.

There has been some complaining from disc jockeys within WPSC that there is not enough freedom of song selection within program formats. Ferrari responded by pointing to a printed format sheet. According to the sheet the only

the "Classic Album" hour and "Guitar Power" hours. From noon until 2 pm there is "Album Oriented Rock." This show incorporates listener requests with a ratio of about 75 percent popular to 25 percent less played music plus a required five "new album cuts." The percentages switch to 60 percent older, less played AOR and 40 percent popular from 2 pm until 5. From 5 pm until 8 the percentages switch back to 75 percent popular and 25 percent less played with nine "new album cuts" required. The 8



Beacon photo by Mike Cheski

WPSC Disc Jockey cues up another hit.

requirements for any shows involve required percentages of popular and less played cuts and certain "new album cut" requirements. Local song selection, according to the sheet, is up to the DJ.

She said that complaints are probably coming mostly from DJs who haven't gotten what they wanted from WPSC in regard to air time, her commitment is to "try and do her best" to have the best people on the air. She has given many people air shifts this year because they scored higher on their voice tests and that is "bottom line" for who gets on the air.

For people who aren't familiar with WPSC's format, here is a general rundown:

Every day, Monday through Sunday, begins with the "Morning Edition" from 7:30 am to 11 am. It features wake up music, news and information, and features such as "Alarm Clock Rock" sets From 11 am till noon there is special programming including

pm to 11 pm time slot features a different, specialized show each night. Monday is "WPSC's Local Countdown" featuring the top ten albums in the listener area. Tuesday is "Jazz For A Tuesday Evening"; Wednesday is "R & B Beat" featuring soul, disco and blues; Thursday is "New Wave Night" and Friday features "Heavy Metal and Southern Rock."

The weekend consists of a "Listener Request Show" on Saturday night and "Talk of The Sound" featuring local artists, for the first hour, and "The Doctor Demento Show" for the last two from 11 pm to sign-off at 2 am. Monday through Sunday programming consists of a "Progressive" music show featuring less played albums both new and old, with nine new album cuts required each night.

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