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28th Annual NCRC - June 8-13 2009
hosted by CKUT 90.3 FM Montreal

March 3, 2009

Re: Application No. 2008-1357-8, Tantramar Community Radio Society

Dear Secretary General,

1. The National Campus and Community Radio Association/l'Association nationale des radios étudiantes et communautaires (NCRA/ANREC) supports the application by the Tantramar Community Radio Society for a license to operate an English-language FM Type B community radio programming undertaking in Amherst, Nova Scotia.

2. The NCRA/ANREC is a not-for profit National Association working to recognize, support and encourage not-for profit, volunteer-based, public access campus and community-based broadcasters in Canada. We provide advice and advocacy for individual stations, and conduct lobbying and policy development initiatives with a view to advancing the role and increasing the effectiveness of our sector.

3. Amherst, Nova Scotia is an historic town of 9,500 people positioned near the New Brunswick border. The settlement's location in the geographic centre of the Maritime Provinces provides Tantramar Community Radio an opportunity to broadcast to communities in both provinces.

4. The Tantramar Community Radio Society is a not-for-profit organization supported by a strong core of volunteers who will enrich their community musically, supporting local musicians and artists and showcasing the considerable homegrown Maritime musical talent which contributes to the spirit of the region.

5. In addition to proposing excellent and unique music programming with a local focus, Tantramar Community Radio has stated intent to share programming with other regional community broadcasters, and to utilize the NCRA's Program Exchange to further diversify their spoken-word schedule, providing listeners with Third-Language and other programs not currently available in the area.

National Campus and Community Radio Association
L'Association nationale des radios étudiantes et communautaires

6. The Tantramar Community Radio Society is committed to providing citizens of the Cumberland and Westmoreland Regions with community access to the airwaves. They plan to do this by supporting local musical talent, sharing broadcast skills, and offering the community a training facility for aspiring announcers, news readers, writers and those with other radio and journalistic intentions. They will also provide citizens of the region with outlets to "voice their opinions, promote their events and activities and showcase ...home-grown talent." The society has stated that, in addition to access to programming and training opportunities, all society members will have a voice in shaping the station's direction and priorities at their Annual General Meeting.
7. Since its original application to the CRTC in 2008, Tantramar Community Radio has scaled back its expected sponsorship revenue, and, in keeping with its mandate to provide "people-to-people" radio, will fund a greater percentage of its operations through direct member support. The society has stated that they "are not obligated to shareholders, but to ... listeners and members", and that, unlike private commercial radio, profits accrued will either go back into the continued growth of the station or toward community projects. TCRS will also seek government economic development and arts/culture grants where appropriate.
8. The NCRA/ANREC believes that changes made to the TCRS's application signal the applicant's intent to adhere to the Community Radio Policy, and we believe that these changes will substantially further the society's ability to fulfill its requirements.
9. Community radio stations like Tantramar can play an extremely important role in their communities; facilitating communication on local issues, providing local information, exposure to local musicians, opportunities for training, access to the airwaves, and a venue for community members to come together in an environment where diversity is celebrated.
10. The NCRA/ANREC believes that, based on its furtherance of the stated objectives of the Community Radio Policy (PN CRTC 2000-13), we support the Tantramar Community Radio Society's endeavor to create an independent not-for-profit community-owned radio station.
11. In light of this, we encourage the Commission to approve the Tantramar Community Radio Society's application.

Sincerely,
Catherine Fisher
NCRA Board Member