

North Central Massachusetts'
WGAW  98.1 FM
AM 1340 
Local NewsTalk





History of WGAW - First Days

1946

Initial Construction

1946 was the year which laid the foundation for what is WGAW today. On April 9, 1946 a group of five individuals submitted an application for a standard broadcast station to be operated at 1230 Khz at 250 watts with a studio location of 39 Pleasant Street, Gardner MA with an unspecified transmitter location. For unknown reasons, a little over a month later on May 23, 1946, this construction permit application was amended to change the frequency to 1490 Khz. This construction permit was granted on August 1, 1946 for WHOB at 1490 with power of 250 watts. Two months later on October 1, 1946, construction permit was modified for approval of the official transmitter location at Green Street, Gardner MA, just 1800 feet north of Henry Heywood Hospital.

Transmitter Site and License Grant

In all of its 75 years, amidst all of the ownership changes and programming changes, the station later to be known as WGAW always transmitted from the same Green Street, Gardner MA location. Just before Christmas on December 23, 1946, an application was made to cover the construction permit for the station as modified and authority was sought to determine the operating power by direct measurement of antenna power. What a Christmas present this was to the region for the Christmas of 1946: A powerful means of communicating to the people of the region. The official license from the F.C.C. was issued on February 21, 1947, a few months after the station began operation in 1946.



History of WGAW - Changes

1951

Change of Frequency to 1340 KHz

In 1951, the first recorded ownership change occurred almost simultaneously with the change of frequency from 1490 Khz to the current 1340 Khz. The application filed January 17, 1951 was a voluntary transfer of control licensee corporation from David M Richman, Rose S. Richman, Owen A Hoban, M. Alan Moore, and Rex Reynolds to W.F. Rust Jr., H.S. Killgore, William J. Barkley, and Ralph Gottlieb. An application dated the next day 1/18/1951 and received by the F.C.C. on January 25, 1951 was an application for a construction permit to change the frequency from 1490 to 1340 and change the main studio location from 39 Pleasant Street, Gardner to Green Street, Gardner MA. W.F. Rust Jr., one of the owners was the engineer who authored the application.

1953

Colonial Hotel and Frequency Change Granted

On May 11, 1953, a modification to the license was granted to operate the transmitter by remote control from 4 Pleasant Street, Gardner, MA. This is actually the address of the building known as the Colonial Hotel. Over 2 years after the application was initially filed, a construction permit was granted to change the frequency from 1490 to 1340. On October 15, 1953, the application was filed to cover the construction permit to change frequency and the license for same was granted on November 23, 1953.



Changes including studio location

1954

Ownership Change

After the work undertaken to change the frequency to the current 1340 Khz, on May 5, 1954 a transfer of control occurred from the group led by W.F. Rust Jr. to a new single owner, Emilion R. Robillard.

1956

Ownership Change Again

An application was received on December 19, 1956 with an effective date of January 2, 1957 for a voluntary transfer of control from Emilion R. Robillard and William Engel to Television and Radio Broadcasting Corporation..

1958

On June 2, 1958 an application was received for modification of license to change the studio location and remote control point from 4 Pleasant Street, Gardner MA to Green Street, Gardner MA, 1800 feet north of Henry Heywood Hospital. This was granted June 5, 1958. Just over a month later on July 23, 1958 an application was received to modify the license to change the hours of operation from unlimited to Monday through Saturday from 6:30am to 7pm and Sunday 8am to 7pm. However, this modification of hours application was dismissed October 24, 1959 at the request of the applicant, who as it turns out, decided to sell the station.



Changes including more POWER

1959

Ownership Change

Ownership changed again. An application was received September 15, 1959 and granted October 21, 1959 (effective October 29, 1959) for voluntary transfer of control of licensee corporation from Television and Radio Broadcasting Corporation to Chair City Broadcasting Corp.

1960

Increase in Power

1960 literally brought a powerful change as a construction permit was granted October 5, 1960 to increase daytime power to 1kw and install a new transmitter. On November 21, 1960, a modification of the construction permit was granted to change to the type of transmitter to Gates BC-1T. On December 14, 1960, an application was received to cover the construction permit relating to the increase in daytime power and installation of a new transmitter. This application was granted on May 24, 1961. It was conditional in that the station had to accept interference from other stations which might also get an increase in power.

1961

Redundancy

On June 2, 1961, license was granted to use old main transmitter as auxiliary daytime and alternate nighttime transmitter. Conditional—accept interference of other class IV stations if power increases to 1000 watts.



Ownership Changes

1971

On June 1, 1971, the F.C.C. received and filed an application to change the corporate name to WGAW Inc. On June 28, 1971, this application was granted.

1970s

F.C.C. records show routine renewal of licenses for main and auxiliary transmitters. Under this licensee, WGAW Inc., the station had one of its longest periods of stability under the same licensee.

1980s

F.C.C. records show routine renewal of licenses for main and auxiliary transmitters. Under this licensee, WGAW Inc., the station continued one of its longest periods of stability of ownership

1999

On November 16, 1999—the assignment of license was finalized from WGAW Inc. to Willow Farm Inc.

2001

On July 6, 2001 there was a consent to assignment of license from William Farm Inc. to Anastos Media Group.



Further Ownership Changes

2003

On December 2, 2003, an assignment of license was finalized from Anastos Media Group to County Broadcasting Company.

2012

On January 1, 2012 County Broadcasting Company LLC sold the station to its present owner, Steven Wendell. The station began a period of utilizing quality talk programming along with a renewed focus on local news, sports, weather, and public service which continues to this day.

Technical Upgrade

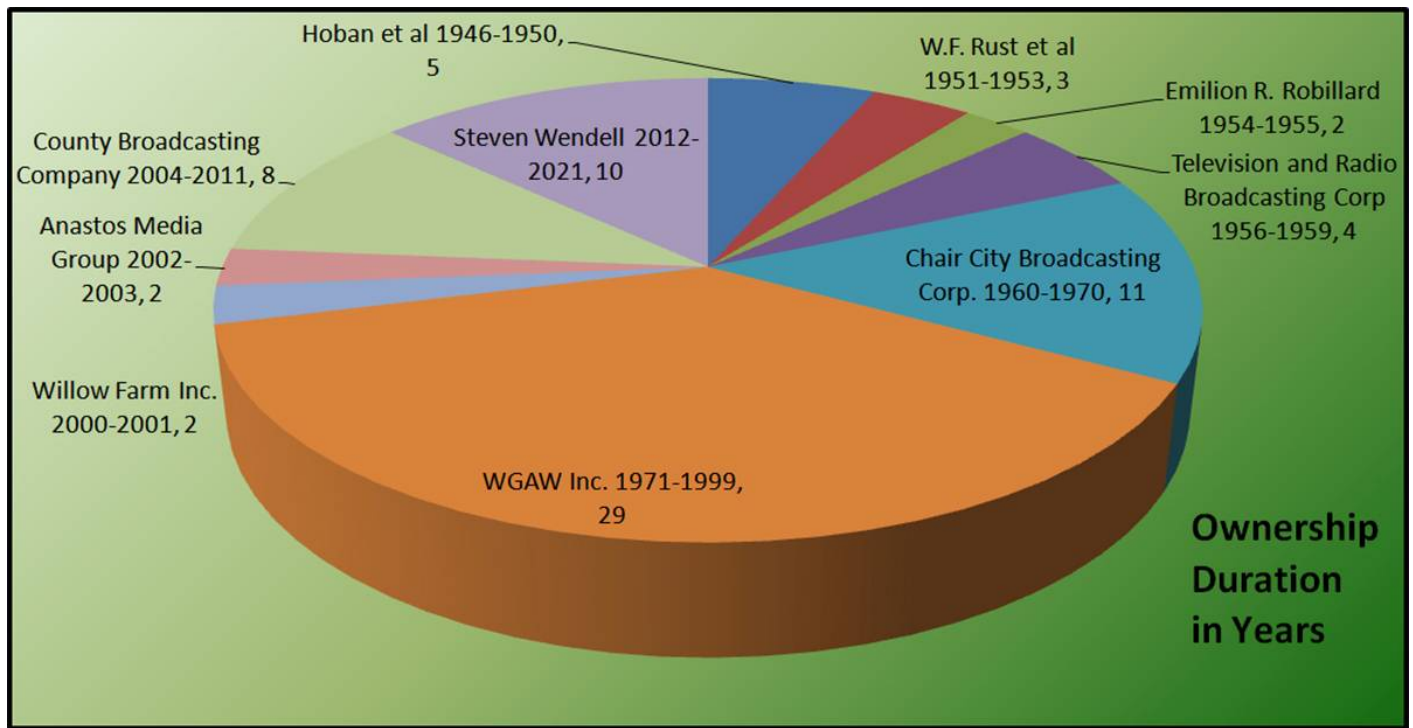
2020

Permit Granted for 98.1 FM

The first application in 6 decades for a technical upgrade occurs. An application for a construction permit is received June 22, 2020 and granted July 15, 2020 for FM translator W251CQ at 98.1 MHz with 250 watts effective radiated power. The same programming heard on 1340 AM will now be heard on the FM dial at 98.1 FM.



Ownership Duration in Years



Other Interesting Technical Facts

Antenna 150 feet (155 feet overall height) uniform cross section, guyed, series excited vertical radiator. The ground system consists of 120 equally space, buried copper radials 150 feet in length. The daytime power draws 5.76 amperes of current with a resistance of 30.2 ohms.

WGAW AM Transmitter site located at 42 degrees 35' 32.32" N, 71 degrees 59' 18.28" W
 FM Antenna at 42 degrees 35' 28.30" N Latitude, 71 degrees 59' 18.20" W Longitude

WGAW AM 1340 & 98.1 FM, 362 Green St. Gardner, MA 01440 (978) 632-1340

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The Future

Since the first day of 2012, WGAW is once again in a period of stable ownership for the long term. Steve Wendell is focused on providing quality programming including superior service to the community with a commitment to local news and public service. In addition, with the advent of the additional resource of 98.1 FM simulcasting, the radio station is made available to even more listeners.

