Missouri

Tax Court Reduces AT&T Cell Tower Assessments By $1.75M

By Jim Fryer, Managing Editor, Inside Towers

Although the tax man is coming for many of us in a few days, AT&T Mobility got a reprieve Wednesday after a Missouri Tax Court ruled they were not responsible for $1.75 million in assessed property taxes. The ruling covers over two dozen towers sites the carrier owns across five counties in the north central region of the state. The court ruled the counties did not follow federal guidelines in evaluating the sites.

The case of AT&T Mobility vs the Boards of Equalization of Caldwell, Daviess, Harrison, Henry, and Mercer counties (BOEs), ruled in the carrier's favor after presenting, “substantial and persuasive evidence rebutting the BOE's presumption of correct assessment” and established the “true value in money” of their property. Litigation on the case began in 2016.

The Court said AT&T argued that the proper method for valuing the subject property in these appeals was the cost approach using the replacement-cost-new-less-depreciation (RCNLD) method as determined by the company’s appraisal expert. AT&T further argued that the counties presented no substantial and persuasive evidence to rebut their findings. The counties believed a correlation existed between AT&T's revenue from the operation and use of the subject property and the value of the subject property. They posited that a 15-year life should apply to the subject property resulting in values higher than those they had initially assessed. Continue Reading

Wyoming

PEER Group Pressures Telecom Plan for Grand Teton National Park

UPDATE Grand Teton National Park is planning to install more than one dozen new cell towers and an extensive fiber optic cable network to improve cellular and broadband services to meet mission-critical park operations, safety and emergency services, and visitor information needs and expectations in developed areas.
The park recently encouraged the public to comment on an environmental assessment regarding the improved telecommunications infrastructure in developed areas of the park and the Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER) responded.

In a letter to park Superintendent David Vela, PEER noted that the assessment does not provide sufficient justification for a project of this magnitude. The group outlined concerns with the plan including violating NEPA and RM-53 by failing to provide individual coverage maps and other fundamental information. They said the scope of the assessment conflicts with the purpose of the park, the EA improperly dismisses “wilderness” as an impact topic, and the public was improperly excluded from the National Historic Preservation Act’s Section 106 process. Continue Reading

O’Rielly: Many C-band Decisions Are ‘TBD’
By Leslie Stimson, Inside Towers Washington Bureau Chief

Many questions remain up in the air regarding re-purposing of a portion of the C-band spectrum for future wireless use. Chief among the issues the FCC is wrestling with is how much of the 500 MHz to re-purpose and how to ensure incumbent users are not stuck with the repacking bill.

FCC Commissioner Michael O’Rielly says he’d likely support repurposing, “somewhere” between 200 to 300 MHz of C-band initially. “I’d like to get as much as possible. Speed is important to me,” he told Inside Towers at Wireless Connect last week. Maybe after a first round, opening a second portion of spectrum for repurposing might be possible, he suggested. “Those are decisions to be made still,” O’Rielly said. Continue Reading

Apply to New FCC BDAC Job, Training Group by April 15
The FCC is looking for anyone interested in joining a new working group for its Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee. The Broadband Infrastructure Deployment Job Skills and Training Opportunities Working Group will help the BDAC advise the Commission and other stakeholders, on ways to make job skills training and development more widely available; the group will also make recommendations on how to boost opportunities for the broadband infrastructure deployment workforce.

The BDAC’s Job Skills Working Group will identify any gaps in broadband infrastructure deployment skills that could inhibit the pace of fixed and mobile broadband deployment. They will recommend scalable solutions to bridge skills gaps and attract more skilled professionals to join the broadband infrastructure deployment workforce. The Working Group will also identify existing training programs that could be a model in addressing any skills gap issues, and steps to improve the effectiveness of such programs. Continue Reading
Xperi, LG Developing Connected Radio Platform

Xperi Corporation (Nasdaq: XPER) and LG Electronics are working to integrate DTS Connected Radio™ technology into automobiles. The companies say the first implementation will arrive at dealerships in 2020 with a major global car brand, to be announced at a later date. Xperi will deliver to LG the DTS Connected Radio platform, which enables an engaging in-car radio experience combining over-the-air radio with IP delivered content.

The effort is an outgrowth of the longtime partnership between Xperi and LG. “The DTS Connected Radio system will be the first global system to enable car makers to create a common radio experience across different analog and digital broadcast systems deployed regionally,” said Jeff Jury, general manager, automotive at Xperi, in the announcement at the NAB Show this week.

Using an IP connection installed in a vehicle, DTS Connected Radio delivers an analog and digital (DAB and HD Radio) FM experience by pairing broadcast programming with IP-delivered content. DTS Connected Radio aggregates metadata, such as program, song title and artist data, as well as station contact information, from broadcasters to deliver an enhanced in-vehicle radio experience.
Kentucky Fried Wireless

The Ohio Valley is beautiful, mountainous, and full of people who cannot reliably connect to the internet, reports WFPL-FM. Sparse internet coverage makes it difficult, if not impossible, for rural residents to access broadband services.

Several different outfits offer assistance, but obtaining the funding can be a convoluted process. Kentucky residents, for example, are directed to programs named ReConnect and/or Kentucky Wired. An applicant could potentially use both programs, but with Kentucky Wired over budget by over $100 million, help is not likely from that quarter any time soon, according to the account.

ReConnect is a USDA Rural Development pilot program that launched in 2018. The administration added $550 million to the fund, Inside Towers reported. Eligible communities must indicate that 90 percent of residents, "lack sufficient broadband access."  Continue Reading
Residents, who opposed the tower, signed a petition to keep it out of their neighborhood. "There are appropriate places for cell towers, but they are an instrument of the past," said organizer Claire Willenberg. "I think we need to look forward and embrace the small cell facilities."

Those who live in the area where the tower is planned don’t want to see it when they look out their windows, reported KSCW. According to Kansas State. Rep. John Carmichael, “There were 22 properties that were identified in the applicant's 200-foot range. We were able to locate twenty of them. All twenty signed.” The city said recent changes to state and federal laws, limit its ability to govern where the towers go, but Carmichael disagrees, suggesting the law favors carriers.

Based on the petition against the tower and evidence presented concerning the adverse effect cell towers have on property values, the issue was sent back to the planning commission for reconsideration without a vote, reported KSCW.

Report: Small Cell Market to Reach $5.2 B by 2024
2018 was a strong year for the LTE small cells market; unit shipments grew 20 percent year over year. Revenue also grew 20 percent year over year, reaching $2.9 billion. That’s according to market analysts Mobile Experts, which released its 2019 update to the Small Cells Report Thursday.

"As the market transitions to 5G, we will see some challenges for small cells—especially in the outdoor segment. Overall, we do see growth drivers in private LTE and 5G, which are included in this forecast,” said Principal Analyst Kyung Mun. The group predicts the small cells market to grow to $5.2 billion in 2024.

According to Mun, "5G Massive MIMO will have a profound impact on C-band small cell strategies, and we will see a shift to a new approach. Also, private LTE and edge computing use cases will drive significant growth in the small cell market, with new customer groups aligning to drive growth. We also see substantial adoption for CBRS, LAA, and WiFi connectivity in small cells as a low-cost way to add capacity."

For more about this report, click here.
AT&T Adds 5G to More Cities
AT&T mobile 5G service is now live in parts of seven more cities, including Austin, Los Angeles, Nashville, Orlando, San Diego, San Francisco, and San Jose.

“Last December we officially introduced commercial mobile 5G service,” said Andre Fuetsch, President AT&T Labs and Chief Technology Officer. “We spent the early part of this year accelerating and advancing our 5G network with early adopters by our side. And now it’s time to offer this experience to more businesses and consumers in another seven cities.”

The carrier says its surpassed 1 gigabit mobile speeds on a live 5G connection. As AT&T continues to expand its 5G network, the carrier predicts that by early 2020 it will providing both the higher speeds available over mmWave spectrum and nationwide coverage available over “sub-6” spectrum.

A Close Call: Man Stops Arrow with Cell Phone
A good cell phone connection can save a life, though sometimes a good cell phone is enough. In an example of cosmic good timing, an Australian man chose the exact right moment to take a photo, reports unexplained-mysteries.com.

The Nimbin, New South Wales, resident raised his phone to take the photo and caught an arrow that was headed towards his face. Although the phone hit the man's face, the arrow did not and the man escaped with only scratches. The person firing the arrow was later apprehended and charged with armed assault.

Sperryville Has the Tower “Blues”
Three new 199-foot monopoles are causing quite a stir in Sperryville. One of the towers, which was erected just last week by Community Wireless Structures (CWS), was painted blue — which sticks out sorely against the backdrop of Shenandoah National Park, reported the *Rapp News*.

“I guess my question on the tower is it does not appear to me to be blue,” remarked Piedmont District Supervisor Christine Smith. “Is that the final color?”

Rappahannock County Administrator Garrey W. Curry replied, “Yeah, it’s Sky Blue. It looks very Sky White,” said Smith.

According to Curry, the county’s original approval of the steel tower allows for its color to be changed without holding any public hearings. “I have opened the discussion with CWS as to how we would go about doing that,” the administrator revealed. [Continue Reading](#)

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**White Paper Recap**

CommScope published three white papers over the last three months. We’ve had hundreds of downloads, due to the demand for information on these topics. Did you miss one the first time around? If so, here’s your chance to download them again.

- Small Cells, Big Challenges
- 3 Keys to Network Modernization
- Powering the Future of Small Cells and Beyond

Plus, CommScope is offering even more content regarding 5G because it's invested in what's next. CommScope can make your LTE-to-5G migration smoother and simpler. Learn about six topics to consider on your network’s path to 5G, by clicking [here](#).

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**Building Permits 4/1-to-4/8**
Magnolia, AR  Source: Magnolia Reporter

- U.S. 79, BRT Group LLC, cell tower, $180,000, December 11

Jacksonville, FL  Source: Jacksonville Daily Record

- Sprint, 5840 Timuquana Road, contractor is New-Tech Construction Corp., cell tower equipment upgrade, $65,000.
- Sprint, 10158 Joyce Road, contractor is Atlantic Tower Services Inc., cell tower equipment upgrade, $65,000.
- T-Mobile South LLC, 1350 Chaffee Road S., contractor is PWR LLC, cell tower equipment upgrade, $65,000.

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**TowerXchange Meetup Europe 2019 Was This Week**

The 4th Annual *TowerXchange Meetup Europe* took place April 9-10 at the Business Design Centre, London.

Keynote panels, interviews, working groups and over 40 roundtable discussions addressed the challenges and opportunities facing the European tower industry today. With an increased focus on the implications of 5G, convergence and futureproofing networks as well as analysis of all the latest deals, spin-offs and rollouts, everyone who is anyone in European towers was part of the conversation.

Attendees were joined by Cellnex, Wireless Infrastructure Group, INWIT, Global Tower, Deutche Telekom and more. This annual who’s who of European towers is a must-attend event. *TowerXchange Meetup Europe* will be in Barcelona May 19-20.
Inside Towers had a chance to pull some key industry execs aside last week at the Wireless Connect conference held at the University of Maryland in College Park.

Managing Editor, Jim Fryer and Washington Bureau Chief Leslie Stimson interviewed Alex Gellman, CEO of Vertical Bridge, Jonathan Adelstein, President and CEO of the Wireless Infrastructure Association (WIA) and Jennifer Fritzsche, Senior Analyst, Wells Fargo Securities.

Check out Tower Talks on iTunes here. Check out Tower Talks on Spotify here. If you don't have Spotify or iTunes, you can listen on our website.

Thoughts? Suggestions? We would love to hear from you. Email us.

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**FCC Recent Releases**

Latest posting from the FCC 4/3/19

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**SAC Wireless: Join the Largest Wireless Construction Company in the United States**

SAC Wireless is looking for experienced tower climbers across the US who are ready to join our fast-growing cell tower construction teams!

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- Up to $125 per day per diem
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- Best in class training program
APC Towers: Senior Director, Development
Raleigh, NC

Responsibilities include:

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- Work with the Carriers at the market and regional levels.
- Coordinate and manage vendors, including site acquisition, environmental, engineering, legal, construction.
- Forecast site budgets and development schedules.
- Generate and create budget/financial models for new sites using existing and historical data.
- Maintain and update files in the document and project tracking databases as required.
- Lead efforts with Business Development, Project Management, and Operations teams for site walks, general maintenance, incoming collocations, and general business operations.
- Provide direct oversight and maintain trackers for project milestones.

To review job qualifications and apply, click here.
Lebanon, MO contributed by Steven Runions.

Email your tower shots or upload them here. Please be sure to include the tower location. Remember to follow us on Instagram!

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