

Code of Maryland (1957 Edition) and any amendments, supplements or replacements thereof; references to sections alone are to this Article.

(c) *Construction.* This subtitle shall not be construed to alter, abridge or in any manner affect the rights of any person deriving title through any patent heretofore issued or to the present or future rights of any person under Article 57, Section 10, relating to limitations in bar of patents. Without in any way limiting the generality of the foregoing, the rights of owners of land bounding navigable waters and/or riparian owners as contained in Article 27, Section 485, and as contained in Sections 45-48 of this Article are confirmed and preserved.

(d) *Severability.* If any provision of this subtitle or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect the other provisions or any other application of this subtitle which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end, the provisions of this subtitle are declared to be severable.

14. *General powers and duties of Commissioner.*

(a) *Designation of Commissioner; seal.* The functions of the Commissioner under this subtitle shall be performed by the Archivist appointed by the Hall of Records Commission. When acting in such capacity, the Archivist shall be deemed to act independently of the powers, duties and responsibilities imposed upon him as Archivist. The seal used by him in the performance of any duty under this subtitle shall be the seal formerly used by the Commissioner of the Land Office.

(b) *Issuance of patents.* All patents shall hereafter be issued by the Commissioner in accordance with the provisions of this subtitle. In the exercise of such powers, the Commissioner shall have authority to issue warrants and summons, approve certificates of survey or resurvey, conduct hearings on any matter relevant to the issuance of patents, administer oaths in such proceedings, and determine the propriety of the issuance of patents pursuant to this subtitle. He may promulgate rules regulating the manner of the exercise of such powers to any extent not inconsistent with the provisions of this subtitle.

(c) *Records; certification.* The Commissioner shall have custody of and maintain all records relating to the issuance of patents, including all books, docketts, and papers relating thereto which were formerly in the custody of the Commissioner of the Land Office. He shall upon request and payment of any fees required by law, certify copies of such records; and such certification shall have the same effect as certification by the Commissioner of the Land Office had on January 1, 1967. He may adopt such rules as may be necessary for the use, preservation, repair and maintenance of such records.

(d) *Nature of proceedings.* All proceedings relating to the issuance of patents and all papers, docketts, orders and decisions therein shall have the same force and effect as proceedings of a court of record and shall be proved and established in the same manner as are proceedings in such courts. It shall not be necessary to record a patent in any place other than the records of the Commissioner.