

vided that any rule or regulation, other than one which deals solely with the internal management of the commission, shall not be effective unless and until filed in accordance with the law of the respective signatory parties applicable to administrative rules and regulations generally; and

2. Designate any officer, agent, or employee of the commission to be an investigator or watchman and such person shall be vested with the powers of a peace officer of the state in which he is duly assigned to perform his duties.

15.3—*Tax Exemptions.* The commission, its property, functions, and activities shall be exempt from taxation by or under the authority of any of the signatory parties or any political subdivision thereof; provided that in lieu of property taxes the commission, as to its specific projects, shall make payments to local taxing districts in annual amounts which shall equal the taxes lawfully assessed upon property for the tax year next prior to its acquisition by the commission for a period of ten years. The nature and amount of such payments shall be reviewed by the commission at the end of ten years, and from time to time thereafter, upon reasonable notice and opportunity to be heard to the affected taxing district, and the payments may be thereupon terminated or continued in such reasonable amount as may be necessary or desirable to take into account hardships incurred and benefits received by the taxing jurisdiction which are attributable to the project.

15.4—*Meetings; Public Hearings; Records, Minutes.*

(a) All meetings of the commission shall be open to the public.

(b) The commission shall conduct at least one public hearing in each state prior to the adoption of the initial comprehensive plan. In all other cases wherein this compact requires a public hearing, such hearing shall be held upon not less than twenty days' public notice given by posting at the offices of the commission, and published at least once in a newspaper or newspapers of general circulation in the area or areas affected. The commission shall also provide forthwith for distribution of such notice to the press and by the mailing of a copy thereof to any person who shall request such notices.

(c) The minutes of the commission shall be a public record open to inspection at its offices during regular business hours.

15.5—*Officers Generally.*

(a) The officers of the commission shall consist of an executive director and such additional officers, deputies, and assistants as the commission may determine. The executive director shall be appointed and may be removed by the affirmative vote of a majority of the full membership of the commission. All other officers and employees shall be appointed or dismissed by the executive director under such rules of procedure as the commission may establish.

(b) In the appointment and promotion of officers and employees for the commission, no political, racial, religious, or residence test or qualification shall be permitted or given consideration, but all such appointments and promotions shall be solely on the basis of merit and fitness. Any officer or employee of the commission who is found by the commission to be guilty of a violation of this section shall be immediately dismissed.