

(b) Unless the Commission determines that due and timely execution of its functions requires otherwise, presiding officers shall be designated, and notice thereof released to the public, at least 10 days prior to the date set for hearing.

(5 U.S.C. 556)

#### § 1.243 Authority of presiding officer.

From the time he is designated to preside until issuance of his decision or the transfer of the proceeding to the Commission or to another presiding officer the presiding officer shall have such authority as is vested in him by law and by the provisions of this chapter, including authority to:

- (a) Administer oaths and affirmations;
- (b) Issue subpoenas;
- (c) Examine witnesses;
- (d) Rule upon questions of evidence;
- (e) Take or cause depositions to be taken;
- (f) Regulate the course of the hearing, maintain decorum, and exclude from the hearing any person engaging in contemptuous conduct or otherwise disrupting the proceedings;
- (g) Require the filing of memoranda of law and the presentation of oral argument with respect to any question of law upon which he is required to rule during the course of the hearing;
- (h) Hold conferences for the settlement or simplification of the issues by consent of the parties;
- (i) Dispose of procedural requests or similar matters, as provided for in § 0.341 of this chapter;
- (j) Take actions and make decisions in conformity with the Administrative Procedure Act;
- (k) Act on motions to enlarge, modify or delete the hearing issues; and
- (l) Act on motions to proceed in forma pauperis pursuant to § 1.224.

(5 U.S.C. 556)

[28 FR 12425, Nov. 22, 1963, as amended at 41 FR 53022, Dec. 3, 1976]

#### § 1.244 Designation of a settlement judge.

(a) In broadcast comparative cases involving applicants for only new facilities, the applicants may request the appointment of a settlement judge to

facilitate the resolution of the case by settlement.

(b) Where all applicants in the case agree that such procedures may be beneficial, such requests may be filed with the presiding judge no later than 15 days prior to the date scheduled by the presiding judge for the commencement of hearings. The presiding judge shall suspend the procedural dates in the case and forward the request to the Chief Administrative Law Judge for action.

(c) If, in the discretion of the Chief Administrative Law Judge, it appears that the appointment of a settlement judge will facilitate the settlement of the case, the Chief Judge will appoint a "neutral" as defined in 5 U.S.C. 581 and 583(a) to act as the settlement judge.

(1) The parties may request the appointment of a settlement judge of their own choosing so long as that person is a "neutral" as defined in 5 U.S.C. 581.

(2) The appointment of a settlement judge in a particular case is subject to the approval of all the applicants in the proceeding. See 5 U.S.C. 583(b).

(3) The Commission's Administrative Law Judges are eligible to act as settlement judges, except that an Administrative Law Judge will not be appointed as a settlement judge in any case in which the Administrative Law Judge also acts as the presiding officer.

(4) Other members of the Commission's staff who qualify as neutrals may be appointed as settlement judges, except that staff members whose duties include drafting, review, and/or recommendations in adjudicatory matters pending before the Commission shall not be appointed as settlement judges.

(d) The settlement judge shall have the authority to require applicants to submit their written direct cases for review. The settlement judge may also meet with the applicants and/or their counsel, individually and/or at joint conferences, to discuss their cases and the cases of their competitors. All such meetings will be off-the-record, and the settlement judge may express an opinion as to the relative comparative standing of the applicants and recommend possible means to resolve the proceeding by settlement. The proceedings before the settlement judge