



County Technical Assistance Service  
INSTITUTE *for* PUBLIC SERVICE

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# Administration - Historical Notes

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Sincerely,

The University of Tennessee  
County Technical Assistance Service  
226 Anne Dallas Dudley Boulevard, Suite 400  
Nashville, Tennessee 37219  
615.532.3555 phone  
615.532.3699 fax  
[www.ctas.tennessee.edu](http://www.ctas.tennessee.edu)

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# Administration - Historical Notes

## **Budget System**

The following act once created a budgeting system for Dickson County, but it has been specifically repealed or superseded by current law.

1. Private Acts of 1929, Chapter 618, created a three member Budget and Finance Committee for Dickson County composed of the County Judge, or Chairman, of the County Court, and two other members. Act named Johnny Johnson and E. H. Stone as the other members to serve until their successors, elected in the general August election of 1930 could take office for four years. The other members must be residents of the County for two years and not members of the County Court. The Commission would meet at the Court House on the first Monday in May, 1929, and annually thereafter. They would make careful study of the financial condition of the County and purpose a budget for the year to come. All department heads were instructed to submit certain information to the Commission who would compute a tax rate and a tax aggregate from the data submitted for the ensuing year. The condition of the credit of the county and its bonded debt were to be investigated. At the July term of court the budget and the rate would be submitted which would then be published twice in a public newspaper. The tax set by the Quarterly Court must produce at least the amount of money specified by the Budget as it was adopted. The budget appropriation could not be exceeded lawfully. Commissioners would be paid \$6.00 per day up to 18 days in one year. This Act was superseded by the one published herein.

## **County Legislative Body**

The following acts once applied to the quarterly court or the county legislative body of Dickson County and are included herein for historical purposes. Also referenced below are acts which repeal prior law without providing new substantive provisions.

1. Acts of 1803, Chapter 39, set the terms of the Courts of Pleas and Quarter Sessions for several counties in Middle Tennessee. In Dickson County the court would assemble on the third Monday in March, June, September, and December.
2. Acts of 1806, Chapter 48, scheduled the opening dates for the terms of the Courts of Pleas and Quarter Sessions in the Robertson and Winchester Districts. In Dickson County the terms would begin on the fourth Monday in January, April, July, and October of each year.
3. Acts of 1807, Chapter 53, rearranged the terms of court for the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions in the Districts of Mero, Winchester, and Robertson. Dickson County in the Robertson District would convene the court on the second Monday in January, April, July, and October.
4. Acts of 1809, Chapter 93, set the term dates for the Courts of Pleas and Quarter Sessions for every county in Tennessee. In Dickson County the Court would open on the first Monday in January, April, July, and October.
5. Acts of 1817, Chapter 138, changed the terms of the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions for several of the counties in Middle Tennessee, but Dickson County's Court would continue to meet on the first Monday in January, April, July, and October.
6. Acts of 1827, Chapter 65, was the legislative authority for the Quarterly Courts of the counties of Dickson, Sullivan, Weakley, Hawkins, Hamilton, Smith, Henry, and Rhea, a majority of the Justices being present, on the first day of the first term of the year, to select three of their number to serve as a Quorum Court for the remainder of the year observing the same rules and regulations as the other courts did.
7. Acts of 1835-36, Chapter 6, authorized a County Court in every county of Justices of the Peace who would meet on the first Monday of every month and remain in Session until the business of the court was completed. Three Justices could be a court to hear the probate of wills and other matters related to the administration of estates but no jury trials were allowed. A quota of jurors for each county to select was also established in this law.
8. Acts of 1869-70, Chapter 6, repealed all laws, or parts of laws, which created a Board of County Commissioners for Hickman and Dickson Counties. All the offices of magistrate were restored and their jurisdiction reinstated.
9. Acts of 1869-70, Chapter 49, repealed an Act passed on March 12, 1869, which created a Board of County Commissioners for Madison County, and several other counties bringing themselves in with specific provisions making this Act applicable to them. All the laws which were repealed by the laws creating the Board of Commissioners were restored and re-enacted, making them in full

force and effect as if the repealing laws had never been passed.

10. Acts of 1871, Chapter 142, allowed the towns of Charlotte and White Bluff in Dickson County to have an additional Justice of the Peace who would be qualified, commissioned and exercise the same powers and authority as all other Justices of the Peace.
11. Private Acts of 1921, Chapter 290, amended Chapter 42, Acts of 1875, and Chapter 246, Acts of 1889, both general laws of the State, so as to increase the per diem pay of the Justices of the Peace from \$1.50 to \$3.00 for each day of their attendance at the meetings of the Quarterly Court.
12. Private Acts of 1921, Chapter 408, was a duplication of Chapter 290, Private Acts of 1921, Item 2, above.
13. Private Acts of 1931, Chapter 1, ratified, confirmed, legalized, and validated the prior actions of the Quarterly Court of Dickson County in ordering the County Judge, or Chairman, to issue interest bearing warrants to pay the interest on other warrants previously issued in several specified sessions of the court. They were classified as the legal debts of the County to which full faith and credit were pledged.

### **County Mayor**

The references below are of acts which once applied to the office of county judge, or county executive in Dickson County. They are included herein for historical purposes only. Also referenced below are acts which repeal prior law without providing new substantive provisions.

1. Private Acts of 1905, Chapter 92, repealed Section 15 of Chapter 404, Private Acts of 1901, Item 3, above, which required that appeals from the County Court presided over by the County Judge would go to the Supreme Court.
2. Private Acts of 1911, Chapter 90, amended Chapter 404, Private Acts of 1901, in Section 16, to provide that the County Judge, in addition to his salary, would be paid \$350 a year for clerical assistance in keeping up to date the work in his office as both County Judge and Financial Officer. These two sums were to be in lieu of all other compensation to the Judge. This Act was repealed by the one following.
3. Private Acts of 1917, Chapter 634, repealed Chapter 90, Private Acts of 1911, which provided for clerical assistance to the County Judge.
4. Private Acts of 1919, Chapter 13, amended Section 16, Chapter 404, Acts of 1901, to provide that in addition to the salary paid to the County Judge as the Judge and Financial Officer of the County of Dickson, the Judge would also be paid \$350 per annum to employ clerical assistance in keeping the work of the office up in both capacities. This plus other compensation mentioned, would be all the salary earned by the Judge.
5. Private Acts of 1919, Chapter 475, was the legal authority for the County Judge of Dickson County to invest any sinking fund which had been collected by the Trustee in the outstanding bonds of the County or in U. S. Government Bonds. If County bonds were purchased the amount could not exceed \$105 for each \$100. If Government bonds were bought they would be turned over to the County Trustee who would be charged with their net value.
6. Private Acts of 1927, Chapter 493, stated that the County Judge of Dickson County (identified by the use of the 1920 Federal Census figures) would receive as compensation for his services as financial agent the sum of \$250 per year in addition to his salary of \$750 per year as County Judge. The \$250 would be paid monthly along with the other compensation and would begin on the first Monday in September, 1925, or at the start of the current term of the County Judge.
7. Private Acts of 1937, Chapter 759, stipulated that the County Judge of Dickson County would be paid \$40.00 each month in addition to all other compensation for his duties in passing upon and looking after the Social Security laws. The extra money was to come out of the funds furnished to the county by the State for Social Security purposes.
8. Private Acts of 1939, Chapter 224, amended Chapter 404, Private Acts of 1901, above, in Section 16, to fix the compensation of the County Judge at \$1980 annually which would be paid in equal monthly installments on warrant from the county treasury. One hundred and fifteen dollars (\$115) would come from county funds and \$50 a month would be taken from Social Security funds. If the duties of the Judge under the Social Security Act ceased, then this portion of the compensation would terminate.
9. Private Acts of 1955, Chapter 33, amended Chapter 404, Private Acts of 1901, by striking out Section 16 and adding a new one. The annual compensation of the County Judge would be \$4,800 payable monthly on the warrant of the County Judge drawn on the county general funds

which amount would be in lieu of all other compensations to the Judge for his service as Judge, financial agent, and as Chief Accounting Officer, for secretarial aid and for his services under the Social Security System. This Act was not acted on by the Quarterly Court and therefore never took effect in Dickson County.

10. Acts of 1856, Chapter 253, established the position of County Judge in every county who must be learned in the law and who would be elected to four year terms by the people. The County Judge must be sworn into office and commissioned as were the other Judges. Quorum Courts and the position of Chairman were abolished and their duties given to the County Judge. All the jurisdiction, power and duties of the County Judge were enumerated in the statute. The County Court Clerk would serve as Clerk of the Court and the Judge was not prohibited from practicing law except in his own court. This Act was repealed by the one following.
11. Private Acts of 1857-58, Chapter 5, repealed Chapter 253, Acts of 1856, above, and restored the Quorum Courts and the Chairman of the Quarterly Courts to their former status.
12. Private Acts of 1901, Chapter 404, set up the office of County Judge in Dickson County. This Act is published herein with amendments.

### **County Register**

The following acts once affected the office of county register in Dickson County, but are no longer operative.

1. Acts of 1806, Chapter 1, divided Tennessee into the East and West Districts with one Register for each District. In the Eastern District the Register would be located at Knoxville and in the Western District at Nashville.
2. Acts of 1851-52, Chapter 119, provided that all the duties of the Entry Taker would hereafter be performed by the Registers in those counties south and west of the Congressional Reservation Line. For doing so the Registers would be entitled to the same fees as were formerly paid to the Entry Taker. The Entry Takers were directed to hand over their books, records, and maps to the Registers who could appoint a Deputy when the best interests of the office required it. Dickson County was listed among those counties exempting themselves from the application of this Act.

### **Purchasing**

The following acts once affected the purchasing procedures of Dickson County, but are no longer operative.

1. Private Acts of 1951, Chapter 666, amended Chapter 16, Private Acts of 1951, by making the County Judge an ex-officio member of the Purchasing Commission with power to vote on all matters and fixing the compensation for his services at \$600 per annum in addition to all other payments.
2. Private Acts of 1953, Chapter 489, amended Chapter 666, Private Acts of 1951, above, by increasing the pay of the County Judge on the Purchasing Commission from \$600 to \$1,200 per year.
3. Private Acts of 1959, Chapter 63, amended Chapter 16, Private Acts of 1951, by rewriting Section 1 and adding the second paragraph as it now appears.

### **General Reference**

The following private or local acts constitute part of the administrative and political history of Dickson County but are today no longer operative because they have either been superseded, repealed, or failed to receive local approval.

1. Acts of 1807, Chapter 5, increased the bond of the treasurer of the Robertson District to \$50,000 which must be secured with at least five securities due to the increased revenue of the State and to the probability of further additions in the very near future.
2. Acts of 1809, Chapter 17, recited that James Salmon, of Dickson County, was convicted of petit larceny in the Mero District Courts which has deprived him of the privileges of a citizen, and it appearing to the General Assembly that Salmon has since conducted himself in an honest and upright manner, this Act restored him to the full privileges and benefits of citizenship.
3. Acts of 1811, Chapter 42, declared it to be lawful for any person, or persons, to erect two warehouses on the Cumberland River, one on the north side of the River at Weakley's Ferry in Montgomery County, and the other on the south side of the River near Weakley's Ferry in Dickson County. The warehouses would be used primarily for the inspection of tobacco and other commodities offered for public sale.
4. Acts of 1815, Chapter 28, incorporated Michael Molton, Raford Crumpler, John L. McRea, Edward

Pearsall, Daniel H. Williams, Francis S. Ellis, Abiram Caldwell, Cyprian Farrer, and the rest of the shareholders, as the Dickson Library Company. The shareholders would meet in Charlotte on the third Monday in December, 1815, to elect the corporate officials and on the third Monday in December every year thereafter to elect five members of the Board of Directors. Regulations to be adhered to in the management of the corporation and a statement of the purposes for which it was formed were included in the Act.

5. Acts of 1817, Chapter 78, incorporated all the shareholders of the Dickson Library Company who would gather at the Courthouse in Charlotte on the first Saturday in January each year to elect five people from among the shareholders to be directors of the company. The Directors had the authority to select a Librarian, clerk, Treasurer, and any other needed official, to serve for one year. Violations of the requirement of this Act could result in fines being imposed from \$5 to \$20.
6. Acts of 1819, Chapter 124, invested John Read, and others who might want to assist him, with full power and authority to draw a lottery to help in the erection of iron works on Yellow Creek in Dickson County. Their bond would be double the amount of prize to be offered and made payable to the Chairman of the County Court. The amount to be raised by the lottery could not exceed \$10,000. Drawings must comply with the requirements of this Act and the money raised could not be used for any other purpose than the one stipulated.
7. Acts of 1820, Chapter 103, averred in the introduction that Isaac Walker, of Dickson County, had paid by mistake to the Clerk the cost of a license to retail merchandise in the county and it would be improper for the State to retain the said money, therefore, this act directs the Clerk to return the \$50 fee to Walker and to take a credit on his books when he did.
8. Acts of 1821, Chapter 164, page 159, permitted the owners of lots on the Public Square, or parts of lots, in Charlotte, in Dickson County, to erect or if already erected, to keep, on the front of their buildings bordering the Square, porticoes or piazzas, for their ease and convenience which would be considered as private property and not as public nuisances.
9. Acts of 1822, Chapter 142, instructed the Treasurer of West Tennessee to pay to Robert Weakley, of Dickson County, the sum of \$43.81 which was the cost of ferrying troops across the Cumberland River in the recent war. His receipt would be the same as a voucher properly issued.
10. Acts of 1825, Chapter 157, excused Alexander Wilkins, of Dickson County, from the payment of \$50 which was the amount of the State tax to sell groceries for which amount the said Wilkins had signed a note, because he only had a few groceries to sell. In the event Wilkins had already paid the tax, the Clerk was directed to return the money to him.
11. Acts of 1826, Chapter 18, was the authority for Alexander Campbell, of Dickson County, to hawk and peddle goods, wares and merchandise in any of the counties of this State without having to purchase a license.
12. Acts of 1831, Chapter 43, Section 6, ordered the Cashier of the Bank of Tennessee to place to the credit of the counties of Montgomery, Dickson, Robertson, Sumner, Davidson, Stewart, Humphreys, Perry, Hickman, Williamson, Lawrence, Wayne, Hardin, and Wilson, their pro-rata share of the \$60,000 set aside for the internal improvement of Middle Tennessee. The share of each county was based on the ratio of the population of that county to the population of the counties combined.
13. Acts of 1832, Chapter 104, Section 3, gave to Margaret Bardley, of Dickson County, the power to make contracts to acquire and hold any kind of property in her name, to sue and be sued, and to enjoy all the legal privileges of an adult and single person. She was the wife of John Bardley of Dickson County.
14. Acts of 1833, Chapter 34, established the Planter's Bank of Nashville in which city the main office would be located and several branches of the Bank would be located at other places, one of which was Charlotte in Dickson County. The Branch at Charlotte would be under the supervision of John Montgomery, George Smith, John C. Collier, John C. Napier, Benjamin A. Collier, and William Hightower. The Bank would be operated and managed under all the rules pertinent to corporate banking institutions which were repeated verbatim in this statute.
15. Acts of 1833, Chapter 93, extended the privileges conferred in the Third Section of an act passed on September 28, 1832, for the further time to two years so that Madison C. Napier could perform and complete the requirements of said Act for the benefit of himself and Epps Jackson, jointly. They would be entitled to and enjoy the privileges conferred by both acts.
16. Acts of 1833, Chapter 163, Section 2, was the authority for the county court of Dickson County, upon the petition of Samuel Smith, to emancipate a certain slave named Jack, the property of the said Smith, provided he entered into bond not to become a charge upon the State and further to

- guarantee his good behavior.
17. Acts of 1833, Chapter 188, was the legal authority for Richard Cook, of Dickson County, to hawk and peddle goods, wares, and merchandise in the counties of Hickman and Dickson without having to obtain a license to do so.
18. Acts of 1837-38, Chapter 21, recited in the preamble that because many records were destroyed by a violent storm in Dickson County in 1830, many people were unable to trace the title to land. This Act provided that on any land sold under the execution the Sheriff could issue a duplicate deed upon proof being presented by the parties that payment had been made or arrangements for payment would not affect any other title.
19. Acts of 1837-38, Chapter 87, was the enabling law for the County Court of Dickson County to lay out and expend the internal improvement fund belonging to the County in such manner as the Court deemed right and proper. Anyone having such funds in their possession must pay them over, or be subject to a fine for not doing so. This act repealed all prior acts relating to the disposition of the internal improvement funds in Dickson County.
20. Acts of 1841-42, Chapter 115, provided that the Town Constable, or tax collector, for Charlotte in Dickson County would have and could use the same power and authority in the collection of taxes that the Sheriff and other taxing collectors had, and, if levy were made on the property of anyone for back taxes, the same would be handled as any other delinquent tax sale.
21. Acts of 1847-48, Chapter 192, Section 2, attached Maury County and Dickson County to the Nashville Bank District and a Director on the Board in the Bank of Tennessee would be appointed for each county in the same manner and would have the same authority as other directors but would also be subject to the same restrictions.
22. Acts of 1869-70, Chapter 26, Section 101, incorporated the City of White Bluff in Dickson County under the Mayor-Alderman form of government, the area of the city being described particularly and the powers of the Mayor and Alderman being particularly prescribed. The people would elect a Mayor, six Aldermen, and a Town Constable for a term of one year. The Mayor would serve as the ex-officio President of the Board of Aldermen, and as the Recorder and Treasurer. Several details of organization and management of the city were contained in the act.
23. Acts of 1893, Chapter 71, abolished the Charter of the town of Charlotte in Dickson County, repealing the act which established the city.
24. Acts of 1897, Chapter 124, was a salary act wherein the compensation of certain county officials was determined according to the population classification of the county. These officials were deprived of their fees which became the property of the county, and would be paid only the salary stated. Although this statute was declared unconstitutional in Weaver v. Davidson County, 104 Tenn. 315, 59 S.W. 1105 (1900), yet it and some of those to follow became the pattern for the salary statutes under which the State now operates.
25. Private Acts of 1909, Chapter 570, was the legal authority for the Quarterly County Courts of Dickson County, Putnam County, and Franklin County to adopt a Resolution to contract with that Bank making the best bid on the amount of interest to be paid on the monthly balance of funds deposited in the Bank which belonged to the County. The County Judge was given the power to employ expert advisers, legal or otherwise, to assist him and the court in the furtherance of this program. Upon his compliance with the directors set out in the adopted Resolution, the County Trustee would be relieved of all liability regarding the deposit of county funds.
26. Private Acts of 1915, Chapter 588, amended Private Acts of 1909, Chapter 570, above, in Section 6, to provide that the contract bank would on or before the 15th day of the month submit a sworn, itemized statement to the County Judge, or Chairman, showing the correct balance of funds on hand in the Bank to the credit of the County Trustee, and the interest thereon due the county to the first day of the preceding month.
27. Private Acts of 1923, Chapter 695, stated that the Quarterly County Court of Dickson County (identified by the use of the 1920 Federal Census figures) would, at its regular July meeting, contract to lend all county money to the various banks at a flat rate of 4% interest as was stipulated therein. In order to qualify as a depository a Bank has to execute a bond satisfactory to the County Judge. County funds were to be deposited as nearly equal as possible among the participating banks. Banks were further required to furnish statements showing the status of the account upon the demand of the County Judge, or Chairman.
28. Private Acts of 1925, Chapter 71, was enabling legislation for the County Judge of Dickson County to invest any fund of Dickson County which might be in the hands of the County Trustee, or in a sinking fund to retire bonds, in any other interest bearing warrant, note, or warrant, with a due

- date later than the bonds for which the sinking fund was originated. Reinvestment of said funds would be in the discretion of the County Judge.
29. Public Acts of 1929, Chapter 88, declared in the introduction that a fitting memorial ought to be erected to the sons and daughters of Dickson County who had taken part in war, and such a memorial would be found in a building for the Lucien Berry Post of the American Legion in the town of Dickson. The officials of the Legion Post were to have the management of the building after its erection and the same would be suitable for public meetings and the meetings of the Post membership. A commission would be appointed to plan, design, and supervise the construction of the edifice. The State would appropriate \$15,000 and the City of Dickson would match that amount and furnish a lot in addition thereto for the building to be built on.
  30. Private Acts of 1931, Chapter 501, stated in the preamble that Florence McKinley Jordan, of Dickson County, desired to transact business in her own name as if she were 21 years of age, that her father died several years ago and she has been working and doing business for herself as an adult since that time, and her widowed mother joined with her in this petition, this act removed the minority of Miss Jordan and conferred upon her the legal status of an adult.
  31. Private Acts of 1931, Chapter 826, amended Private Acts of 1923, Chapter 695, Item 27, above, by reducing the percentage payments to be made by Banks on county funds deposited with them from 4% to 3%.
  32. Private Acts of 1933, Chapter 161, emancipated Etha Bell Deason, of Van Leer, in Dickson County, from all the disabilities of her minority so that she could manage and use her property in the same manner as any adult.
  33. Private Acts of 1933, Chapter 343, declared that from henceforth all the disabilities of infancy were taken away from Lorenzi Dowl Miller, of Dickson County, who would be treated legally as an adult in all respects.
  34. Private Acts of 1933, Chapter 518, relieved the enforcement of a decree rendered by the Chancery Court against H.T.V. Miller, an ex-Mayor of the City of Dickson, who incurred certain obligations as Mayor in accordance with instructions given him by the Aldermen of the city but was later compelled to pay the obligations from his own personal funds. The Chancery Court made no finding that the Mayor was lax in his duty and, therefore, this act found it to be right and proper that the city repay the money to Mayor Miller which he had paid out in this instance.
  35. Private Acts of 1935, Chapter 159, removed the infancy of John Edward Blackwell, in Dickson County, and granted to him all the privileges and responsibilities of adulthood.
  36. Private Acts of 1951, Chapter 15, created the position of County Auditor for all counties between the population brackets of 19,700 and 19,800 according to the 1940 census. These figures include Dickson County and Warren county. It is obvious from amendments and other evidence that, although this act is included in some publications as a Dickson County act, that the General Assembly intended it to apply only to Warren County.
  37. Private Acts of 1997, Chapter 84, created and established the Water and Wastewater Authority of Greater Dickson. This act was repealed by Private Acts of 1998, Chapter 178.
  38. Private Acts of 1998, Chapter 178, created and established the Water and Wastewater Authority of Greater Dickson. This act was repealed by Private Acts of 2001, Chapter 51.

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