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Highways and Roads - Historical Notes

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We hope this information will be useful to you; reference to it will assist you with many of the questions that will arise in your tenure with county government. However, the *Tennessee Code Annotated* and other relevant laws or regulations should always be consulted before any action is taken based upon the contents of this document.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or comments regarding this information or any other CTAS website material.

Sincerely,

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The following is a listing of acts which once had some effect upon the county road system in Washington County, but which are no longer operative. Also referenced below are acts which repeal prior law without providing new substantive provisions.

1. Acts of 1801, Chapter 69, provided that the citizens of the counties of Washington, Jefferson and Greene help to clear and remove obstructions from the Nolichucky River. This act also authorized Washington County citizens to subscribe to said company.
2. Private Acts of 1820, Chapter 101, authorized Jacob Brown, at his own expense, to maintain the navigation of that part of Cherokee Creek between his grist mill and the point where the creek meets the Nolichucky River.
3. Private Acts of 1825, Chapter 124, appointed Jacob Brown, Sen. John Brown, Armsted Shelton, William Irvin and William Murry as commissioners to view and lay off a turnpike road which passed over Walnut Mountain to the North Carolina line.
4. Private Acts of 1827, Chapter 231, authorized Washington County to appoint an overseer and workers to maintain a road from the North Carolina line to Jonesborough.
5. Private Acts of 1829-30, Chapter 288, authorized Washington County to appoint some suitable person or persons to establish and keep a ferry on the Nolichucky River and to allow the county court to fix the toll rates.
6. Private Acts of 1857-58, Chapter 131, classified the roads in Washington County and authorized the county court to appoint road supervisors to superintend the upkeep of said roads.
7. Private Acts of 1859-60, Chapter 114, specified the manner in which road taxes would be collected and spent for the upkeep of roads.
8. Public Acts of 1901, Chapter 136, regulated the working and laying out of public roads in Washington County. This act was repealed by Private Acts of 1978, Chapter 198.
9. Acts of 1903, Chapter 160, authorized the voters of Washington County to vote upon the issuance of interest bearing bonds to be used in the making and improvement of macadamized and other public roads and bridges.
10. Acts of 1907, Chapter 101, provided how railroad companies may cross and occupy streets, highways, and private roads, and may take land for the purpose of substituting other streets, highways and roads in lieu thereof in Washington County.
11. Acts of 1907, Chapter 483, authorized Washington County to issue and sell interest bearing coupon bonds for the building of roads, macadamized roads, turnpikes and bridges, and the improvement of the public highways in said county.
12. Acts of 1909, Chapter 319, provided a system of highways for Washington County. This act was repealed by Private Acts of 1978, Chapter 198.
13. Private Acts of 1911, Chapter 560, prescribed the manner for opening, changing, or relocating roads in Washington County and provided for the assessment of damages in locating such roads. This act was repealed by Private Acts of 1978, Chapter 198.
14. Private Acts of 1911, Chapter 612, authorized Washington County to issue interest bearing bonds of up to \$60,000 for the purpose of locating and building public roads and bridges. This act was repealed by Private Acts of 1978, Chapter 198.
15. Private Acts, 1915, Chapter 124, authorized Washington County to issue and sell interest bearing coupons bonds for the purpose of building roads, macadamized roads, or other hard surfaced roads, turnpikes and bridges, and improving of the public highways in said county. A tax levy was provided to pay the principal and interest of said bonds and a board of road commissioners. This act was amended by Private Acts of 1915, Chapter 658, so as to call an election to vote upon the question of issuing bonds under said act at any time within one year from the date of the passage of said act. Private Acts of 1915, Chapter 124, was repealed by the Private Acts of 1917, Chapter 6.
16. Private Acts, 1917, Chapter 25, authorized a bond issuance of 750,000 dollars at a rate of interest not to exceed 5%, to build and maintain roads in Washington County. This act was amended Private Acts of 1917, Chapter 131, so as to provide that the Memphis/Bristol Highway be macadamized to the width of at least fourteen feet. Chapter 131 also provided that the bonds be negotiable and that the roads be macadamized in a uniform depth throughout

- Washington County. Private Acts of 1917, Chapter 25, was further amended by Private Acts of 1919, Chapter 306, which provided that the Washington County Good Roads Commission determine the reasonable and just cost of grading and macadamizing the roads in the county districts once the bonds were sold and the funds were available. Private Acts of 1921, Chapter 688, amended Private Acts of 1917, Chapter 25, so as to set the amount of money, from the proceeds of the sale of bonds, which was expended for actual construction on contractor's estimates. Private Acts of 1917, Chapter 25, was amended by Private Acts of 1978, Chapter 198.
17. Private Acts of 1919, Chapter 6, authorized the Good Road's Commission of Washington County to do construction and repair work by force account when in their judgment it is necessary and urgent, also to work county and state convicts in road building and the repair thereof. This act also used the funds from the taxation of automobiles and trucks to make the road system in Washington County as complete a system as possible. This act was repealed by Private Acts of 1978, Chapter 198.
 18. Private Acts of 1921, Chapter 23, authorized the Washington County Court to establish a county workhouse, and to levy a special tax for the purpose of grading and macadamizing the public roads in the county, to build bridges and culverts, and to elect a county workhouse commission. This act was amended by Private Acts of 1923, Chapter 14, by reorganizing the civil districts which were affected by the road law. Private Acts of 1925, Chapter 325, reenacted Private Acts of 1921, Chapter 23, as amended by Private Acts of 1923, Chapter 14. Private Acts of 1925, Chapter 325, was repealed by Private Acts of 1997, Chapter 36.
 19. Private Acts of 1921, Chapter 420, authorized all district road commissioners of the various civil districts in Washington County to contract with the county workhouse commission for the building and constructing of roads in the civil districts and to use the district road funds in conjunction, and on such terms, as may be agreed upon between the road commissioner and the workhouse commission. This act was repealed by Private Acts of 1978, Chapter 198.
 20. Private Acts of 1921, Chapter 421, created a road law for Washington County requiring all male citizens between the ages of 21 years and 45 years to work on the public roads five days in each year, or pay in lieu of said work the sum of 75 cents per day for five days, or for any number of days which they may have failed to work on said road. This act was amended by Private Acts of 1923, Chapter 58, so as to increase the pay in lieu of said work to \$1.50 per day for five days, or for any number of days which a person failed to work on said road. Private Acts of 1923, Chapter 58, was repealed by Private Acts of 1978, Chapter 198.
 21. Private Acts, 1927, Chapter 405, authorized Washington County to borrow money and issue negotiable interest bearing revenue anticipation bonds, notes or warrants, and apply a special tax levy of 20 cents on every \$100 for the construction, maintenance and upkeep of roads.
 22. Private Acts of 1929, Chapter 95, validated the issuance of \$30,000 in highway notes used by Washington County, dated October 3, 1927, and the proceedings of the quarterly county court which authorized said notes, and provided for the levy and collection of a tax on all taxable property in said county for the purpose of paying the principal and interest of said notes.
 23. Private Acts of 1929, Chapter 98, validated the issuance of \$25,000 in highway notes used by Washington County, dated October 3, 1927, and the proceedings of the quarterly county court which authorized said notes, and provided for the levy and collection of a tax on all taxable property in said county for the purpose of paying the principal and interest of said notes.
 24. Private Acts of 1931, Chapter 55, provided for collecting and expending \$2.00 which was collected from each person subject to "road time" in Washington County, in lieu of working the given number of days. This act was repealed by Private Acts of 1978, Chapter 198.
 25. Private Acts of 1937, Second Extra Session, Chapter 2, authorized Washington County to levy a tax upon all taxable property for the purpose of locating, grading, macadamizing, hardsurfacing, building, constructing, repairing and maintaining public roads, bridges and culverts in said county.
 26. Private Acts, 1941, Chapter 448, authorized Washington County to borrow money for the purpose of repairing and erecting bridges upon any of the highways or public roads in said county.
 27. Private Acts of 1959, Chapter 302, would have created a county highway department having authority to construct and maintain county roads, highways, bridges, culverts and public ways in Washington County; however, this act was rejected by Washington County and thus did not become law. This act was repealed by Private Acts of 1978, Chapter 198.

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