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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 Unicoi County, but which are no longer operative. Also referenced below is an act which repealed prior law without providing new substantive provisions.

1. Public Acts of 1901, Chapter 136, regulated the working and laying out of public roads in the state, except in counties of 70,000 inhabitants and over, according to the Federal Census of 1900. This act was amended by Acts of 1905, Chapter 478, in several minor areas but retained all the basic features of that act.
2. Private Acts of 1913, Chapter 197, authorized Unicoi County to issue coupon bonds in the sum of \$50,000 to build and improve the public roads and pay the incidental expenses thereto. The details of the sale and handling were specifically included. The county court appointed three commissioners to sell the bonds and supervise the work for three roads leading from Erwin to Flag Pond, Limestone Cove, and northwest to the Washington County line. Said bonds carried an interest rate of 5% and were 20-year bonds.
3. Private Acts of 1915, Chapter 248, created a board of road commissioners to lay out, build, repair and maintain public roads in Unicoi County and provided revenue, ways and means to build, repair and maintain said roads. This act was amended by Private Acts of 1923, Chapter 8, by granting the road commissioners their expenses which were lawfully incurred by them while discharging their duties, by raising the rate for commutation from \$5.00 to \$10 per day, and by making the foremen on various road jobs responsible for the tools and equipment assigned to them, a written list being required to be signed. This act was further amended by Private Acts of 1925, Chapter 115, which added a provision that the county court shall have a separate tax book prepared for the county trustee with a copy to be kept in the office of the superintendent of roads, which shall be called the "County Road Tax Book," made it a misdemeanor for any person to fail to pay the tax on roads or to perform his work on the same as the law requires, and the violator shall be punished as others who commit misdemeanors. Chapter 248, was again amended by Private Acts of 1927, Chapter 704, which required road foreman to make reports to the superintendent of roads, and authorized the county court to levy road duty and enforced the payment of same in labor or cash equivalent. Private Acts of 1937, Chapter 207, amended Private Acts of 1915, Chapter 248, by repealing Sections 5 and 12, and modifying Section 2, by letting the Unicoi County Court fill vacancies of commissioners. Private Acts of 1915, Chapter 248, was repealed by Private Acts of 1937 (3rd Ex. Sess.), Chapter 33.
4. Private Acts of 1917, Chapter 157, declared that the funds from a former bond issue and sale were not enough to complete the road system for Unicoi County, and this act authorized the county court to issue \$100,000 in 5%, 20-year bonds, for the purpose of completing this road system, with the general details included in the remainder of the act.
5. Private Acts of 1921, Chapter 637, authorized and validated the action of the county of Unicoi County and of the board of road commissioners of the county in issuing warrants and evidences of indebtedness of the county and of said board of road commissioners in the years 1918, 1919 and 1920 for road construction, for road machinery, and for borrowed money used in road construction in the county amounting to \$59,156.39. The act also provided for the payment of interest thereon and the ration of a sinking fund to pay the principal thereof.

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