



County Technical Assistance Service
INSTITUTE for PUBLIC SERVICE

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Highways and Roads - Historical Notes

Dear Reader:

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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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Highways and Roads - Historical Notes

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

1. Private Acts of 1829-30, Chapter 94, compelled the citizens of the towns and corporations in Sullivan County to work on public roads.
2. Private Acts of 1829-30, Chapter 303, provided for the upkeep of the Ford Road in Sullivan and Hawkins County.
3. Private Acts of 1831, Chapter 138, stated that it would be the duty of the solicitor general of the first and second solicitorial districts to give charge to the grand jury at each and every county and circuit court term of Hawkins and Sullivan counties to inquire if observers were regularly appointed for the Ford Road near Frederick A. Ross' bridge.
4. Private Acts of 1857-58, Chapter 131, Section 10, extended the benefits of this act to Sullivan County which called for the maintenance of public roads through taxation. This act was amended by Private Acts of 1859-60, Chapter 91, so as to make legal the result of the vote to tax the public for the up keep of roads and to appoint road supervisors.
5. Private Acts of 1859-60, Chapter 54, provided that the amount of road tax collected from each civil district in Sullivan County be used in the district where levied and collected.
6. Public Acts of 1883, Chapter 172, authorized Sullivan County to build a turnpike road from Bristol to Kingsport, and to issue bonds in denominations of \$50, \$100, \$200, \$500 and \$1,000, bearing an interest rate of 6%, payable annually.
7. Public Acts of 1899, Chapter 262, authorized the Sullivan County Court to issue bonds not to exceed \$100,000 for the purpose of building roads and bridges. These bonds were to mature from 10 to 30 years after issuance and to bear interest at a rate not to exceed 5% per annum. This act was amended by Private Acts of 1901, Chapter 476 and Acts of 1907, Chapter 336.
8. Public Acts of 1901, Chapter 136, regulated the working and laying out of public roads in all counties in the state except those having a population of 70,000 inhabitants and over according to the Federal Census of 1900.
9. Acts of 1903, Chapter 452, authorized Sullivan County, through its county court, to inaugurate general improvements in its public roads by the levy and expenditure of a special tax of 50 cents on every \$100 upon all taxable property, for the payment of the improvements so made.
10. Acts of 1909, Chapter 169, authorized the Sullivan County Court to issue bonds in the amount of \$300,000 to build public roads and bridges. These bonds were to bear interest at a rate not to exceed 5%. Actions taken pursuant to this act by the county court were validated by Private Acts of 1915, Chapter 56.
11. Private Acts of 1911, Chapter 620, was a bond issuance of \$200,000 for purposes of building, upgrading and maintaining roads and bridges in Sullivan County. These bonds bore an interest rate not greater than 5%; road commissioners were appointed to superintend the work performed under the act. This act was amended by Private Acts of 1913, Chapter 295, and Private Acts of 1915, Chapter 39, to extend the term of the road commissioners and clarify their duties.
12. Private Acts of 1913, Chapter 73, regulated the laying out and maintaining of a public road system in Sullivan County. This act was amended by Private Acts of 1915, Chapter 296, by providing that the refusal of any person to do road work, according to the provisions of the act, constituted a misdemeanor. Private Acts of 1913, Chapter 73, was repealed by Private Acts of 1929, Chapter 201.
13. Private Acts of 1913, Chapter 322, authorized and empowered Sullivan County to levy +and collect special taxes to repair, improve and maintain macadam roads.
14. Private Acts of 1915, Chapter 543, authorized the Sullivan County Court to issue bonds in the amount of \$100,000, at an interest rate not to exceed 5%, for the purpose of building, upgrading and maintaining roads.
15. Private Acts of 1917, Chapter 115, regulated travel over the county highways in Sullivan County and prescribed penalties for those who violated this act.
16. Private Acts of 1919, Chapter 409, authorized Sullivan County to issue \$200,000 for the purpose of locating and building all public roads and bridges. These bonds matured in a period from 10 to

- 30 years and bore interest at a rate which did not exceed 5%.
17. Private Acts of 1919, Chapter 530, authorized the county court of Sullivan County to create and elect a board of public road commissioners, and gave the county court full and complete power to fix the salaries of the commissioners and to make all rules under which said commissioners work. This act was repealed by Private Acts of 1923, Chapter 111.
18. Private Acts of 1921, Chapter 514, authorized the county court of Sullivan County to issue interest bearing county warrants to build and improve roads. The warrants were to be issued in the amount the county desired and bore interest at a rate which did not exceed 6%.
19. Private Acts of 1921, Chapter 536, provided for locating and building or re-building all public roads and bridges in Sullivan County by issuing \$700,000 in bonds for the purpose of building and improving roads. These bonds matured within 10 to 40 years and bore interest at a rate which did not exceed 5%. This act was duplicated by Private Acts of 1921, Chapter 892.
20. Private Acts of 1923, Chapter 542, authorized the county court of Sullivan County to issue \$25,000 in interest bearing county warrants to repair roads. These warrants bore an interest rate which did not exceed 6%.
21. Private Acts of 1927, Chapter 47, regulated traffic upon the public roads of Sullivan County.
22. Private Acts of 1927, Chapter 270, authorized the county court of Sullivan County to levy a special tax for the purpose of grading and macadamizing the public roads in the county. This act was repealed by Private Acts of 1967-68, Chapter 139.
23. Private Acts of 1927, Chapter 271, authorized the county court of Sullivan County to issue \$25,000 in interest bearing county warrants for the purpose of providing funds to cooperate with the citizens in grading, macadamizing and improving any of the public roads of said county, and provided a special levy to pay said warrants.
24. Private Acts of 1929, Chapter 597, authorized the Sullivan County Court to issue interest bearing warrants to pay off previously issued interest bearing warrants which were outstanding.
25. Private Acts of 1931, Chapter 67, authorized Sullivan County to issue and sell \$10,000 of bonds to build and upgrade roads. These bonds bore an interest rate which did not exceed 5%. This act was repealed by Private Acts of 1935, Chapter 274.
26. Private Acts of 1937, Chapter 309, fixed and regulated the compensation of the commissioner of highways for Sullivan County at \$3,000 per annum. This act was amended by Private Acts of 1947, Chapter 756, so as to increase the salary of the commissioner of highways to \$4,000 per annum.
27. Private Acts of 1937, Chapter 857, authorized Sullivan County to issue \$9,000 in negotiable, interest bearing tax anticipation notes for the purpose of acquiring rights of way for a road leading from Blountville via Tri-City Airport to the Johnson City to Kingsport Highway. These notes bore an interest rate which did not exceed 5% per annum.
28. Private Acts of 1943, Chapter 101, authorized Sullivan County to issue \$50,000 in bonds for the purpose of reimbursing the county for expenditures made through its highway department for the construction of roads in said county. These bonds bore an interest rate which did not exceed 3½%.
29. Private Acts of 1947, Chapter 262, authorized Sullivan County to transfer funds not in excess of \$50,000 from the general or ordinary fund of the county to the highway and road department and authorized the county officials to use the transferred money to purchase necessary machinery and equipment for the building and repair of the county roads.
30. Private Acts of 1947, Chapter 677, authorized Sullivan County to issue bonds in the amount of \$750,000 to improve the county roads. These bonds were required to be approved by the voters and bore an interest rate which did not exceed 5% per annum.
31. Private Acts of 1949, Chapter 432, fixed the salary of the Sullivan County Highway Commissioner at \$5,000 per annum. This act was amended by Private Acts of 1951, Chapter 703, so as to authorize the quarterly county court to increase the salary of the highway commissioner to \$6,000 per annum. Private Acts of 1953, Chapter 211, further amended Private Acts of 1949, Chapter 432, so as to authorize the quarterly county court to increase the salary of the highway commissioner to \$7,000 per annum. Private Acts of 1953, Chapter 211, was amended by Private Acts of 1961, Chapter 3, so as to increase the salary of the highway commissioner to \$8,200 per annum. Private Acts of 1949, Chapter 432, was repealed by Private Acts of 1967-68, Chapter 35.
32. Private Acts of 1949, Chapter 902, authorized Sullivan County to issue \$400,000 in bonds to build and improve roads and bridges. These bonds matured within 25 years and bore an interest rate

which did not exceed 3% per annum.

33. Private Acts of 1959, Chapter 238, would have amended Private Acts of 1953, Chapter 211, so as to increase the salary of the Sullivan County Highway Commissioner to \$8,200 per annum, however, this act was rejected or disapproved by Sullivan County and therefore never became law.
34. Private Acts of 1963, Chapter 10, would have amended Private Acts of 1923, Chapter 111, so as to provide for the election of the Sullivan County Highway Commissioner for a four year term from and after the next regular county election to be held in August, 1964; however, this act was rejected or disapproved by Sullivan County and therefore never became law.
35. Private Acts of 1967-68, Chapter 139, authorized the quarterly county court of Sullivan County to levy a special highway tax of 50 cents on every \$100 which was collected by the county trustee and paid into the county highway fund.

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