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Laws of Local Interest Passed by Last Legislature

A Bill to be entitled an act to provide for the construction, improvement and maintenance of the Public Roads of Watauga County.

The General Assembly of North Carolina do enact:

Section 1. That the Board of County Commissioners of Watauga County, is hereby constituted the public road commission of Watauga county and as such commission the said board is authorized and empowered to construct, repair, improve and maintain and the said board is authorized, empowered and directed to levy, in addition to the five cents now levied and collected for the up-keep of bridges and roads in said county and collect annually at the same time and in the same manner that the other county taxes are levied and collected a special tax on all real and personal property in Watauga county not to exceed ten cents on the one hundred dollars valuation of said property and forty-five cents on the poll tax. The said tax so levied and collected shall be deposited with the treasurer of the fiscal agent of Watauga county to be kept separate and apart from other county funds, to be used for the construction repair improvement and maintenance of said public roads of Watauga county and in anticipation of the taxes to be collected under this act, said board is authorized to borrow money from time to time to carry on the work herein provided for: Provided, that the money so borrowed shall at no time exceed seventy-five per cent of the county road tax levied in Watauga county for the fiscal year in which said sums are borrowed. That the county commissioners are empowered to hold special meetings if it may deem proper in order to carry on the road work and its members shall receive the same pay as they now do for regular meetings.

Sec. 2. That the board of county commissioners of Watauga county at its meeting in April one thousand nine hundred and twenty three and annually thereafter, shall elect a competent person as road supervisor for Watauga county and said supervisor shall be paid a salary not exceeding one hundred and twenty-five dollars per month for such number of months or fractional part thereof as the commissioners may require and for the faithful performance of his duties said supervisor shall give to such board such bond as said board may require. It shall be the duty of the road supervisor as soon as it is practicable to classify the public roads now being kept up by free labor in such classes as he may deem proper and right so as to apply road funds where it would be the greatest benefit to the greatest number of people but he shall not discriminate against any township or section of Watauga county and shall put the road funds on all sections of roads now being kept up by free labor in an equitable proportion as is possible for him to do so to keep the roads of the county in good passable condition. That he shall have the right to amend or improve the public roads where he deems it wise to do so and the grade of said roads shall be as good as is possible to make them with the funds available.

Sec. 3. That the said road supervisor of Watauga county shall have authority and power to employ labor, let contracts for the up-keep, construction and improvement on said roads and the same are not being kept up by the State, or that may be hereafter kept up by the state. The supervisor must have the approval of the Board of County Commissioners for any contract for construction work. Said contract or contracts shall be let to the lowest responsible bidder after notice of the letting of said contract shall have been given for ten days by posting in two public places such notices in the vicinity of where said road is to be kept up, constructed, or improved is located. Said supervisor shall have the right to reject any all bids for said up-keep, construction or improvement if he deem proper. Said supervisor shall require of all contractors entering into contract for such work to give bond conditioned on the faithful performance of the contract in such amount as the supervisor may deem proper but the said supervisor shall withhold from such payment ten per cent of the

whole amount due under such contract and until completion of the terms of said contract.

Said supervisor shall have power to employ foreman to work on all the roads not worked under contract and to pay therefor the customary wage. Said foreman in working said roads shall give employment to any person or persons in the vicinity of the roads to be worked who may be able to do manual labor and a day's labor shall be construed to be ten hours. Said foreman shall not work at any time less than five men each unless they shall do equal labor themselves with the laborers each day, or unless it be in the case of emergency after storm or slide to remove obstruction from the public highway. Forms and record books for making reports to the county commissioners by said road supervisors shall be furnished by the board of county commissioners of Watauga county. The said road supervisor shall furnish to the board of county commissioners of Watauga county a quarterly report, which report shall show the amount of road work performed and completed, the amount of money expended in the performance of said work, the amount of money on hand and the amount of claims outstanding for work performed under the direction or control of said supervisor foreman or contractor shall receive payments in installments in such amount or amounts as said road supervisor deems necessary as the work progresses. Under the supervision of said board of county commissioners of Watauga county, the said road supervisor shall expend such bond issue money as is now or may become available and such money as is provided for in this act for work on the public roads of Watauga county. And the taxes collected according to this act shall be expended as the county board of commissioners may deem proper. The said board of county commissioners of Watauga county is hereby authorized and empowered to employ a road engineer to assist or to work in conjunction with said supervisor; and said board shall have power to discharge or dismiss said supervisor or said engineer, or both at its discretion. It shall be the duty of the road supervisor to have all roads under his control worked or constructed by contract or worked by foreman under his supervision, and he has the right to dismiss any foreman or contractor when he deems it proper and wise to do so.

Sec. 4. Where it is shown that it is necessary for the construction of a new road in any part of Watauga county, the citizens in immediate neighborhood where said road is to be constructed may ask the board of county commissioners to pay out and construct said road. Said supervisor or the foreman or foremen in his employ may have the right to go on said land over which said road is to be built, and use such timbers, stone or gravel, dirt or borrowing pits as is necessary for the construction of the said road, not to destroy more of the available timber, stone or gravel as are necessary. In case of damages arising from the construction of said road or roads, if an agreement cannot be arrived at with the parties concerned and the supervisor, then the same shall be taken up with the county commissioners and if they cannot agree, then the said county commissioners shall appoint one good business man and the aggrieved party shall have the right to appoint one man and they shall elect the third, to go over the said road or roads and settle the dispute, taking into consideration the value of the road to the said aggrieved party and report their findings with amount of damages to the county commissioners, they paying the same out of the road funds of the above levy. In the event any difficulty arises as to damages the same shall not conflict or stop the work on said road in any way, as the same shall be adjusted after completion of said road.

Sec. 5. The said board of county commissioners of Watauga county is hereby authorized to furnish all tools on roads that are not contracted and blasting material as may be required for the upkeep of said roads. The supervisor shall provide some suitable place to keep said road tools belong-

or chests with lock and key, at a reasonable cost.

Sec. 6. It shall be the duty of the road supervisor of Watauga county to visit the roads let out by contract or worked by foreman and to personally direct said work on public roads and shall not pay over the customary wages prevailing at the time of employment in Watauga county. The supervisor, foreman or contractor who shall fail to perform any duties required of him by this act shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction shall be fined in an amount not exceeding fifty dollars.

Sec. 7. That on or after the first Monday in April one thousand nine hundred and twenty-three, there shall be no free labor worked on the public roads of Watauga county. There shall not be any tax levied by the county commissioners except what is provided for in this act and the five cents that is now being levied for the upkeep of the public roads.

Sec. 8. That this act shall not in any way be construed as effecting the validity of any bond issue passed in said county, or the state highway road law, but all other laws conflicting with this act are hereby repealed.

Sec. 9. That this act shall be in force from and after its ratification.

A Bill to be Entitled An Act to Amend Chapter 125 Public-Local Laws 1921, Authorizing the Levy of Special Taxes and the Issue of Bonds for the Improvement of the Public Roads of Watauga County.

The General Assembly of North Carolina do enact:

Section 1. That section six of chapter one hundred and twenty-five of the Public-Local Laws, one thousand nine hundred and twenty-one be amended to read as follows:

"Sec. 6. That the county commissioners of Watauga county shall ascertain the proportionate amount due each township from the bond issue mentioned in the preamble of this act and thereupon it shall be mandatory for said board of county commissioners to issue the bonds of Watauga county as is provided for in section two of this act and direct the expenditure of the proceeds of said bonds upon the public roads of the townships in the proportionate amounts they are entitled to have expended on their roads under the direction of the road supervisor of Watauga county."

Sec. 2. That failure on the part of the county commissioners of Watauga county to carry out the provisions of this act within twelve months after ratification shall subject each of them to a penalty of one hundred dollars, the same to be paid over to the school fund of Watauga county.

Sec. 3. That this act shall be in force from and after its ratification.

A Bill to be Entitled An Act to Abolish the Office of Treasurer of Watauga County and to Provide Fiscal Agents for Said County.

The General Assembly of North Carolina do enact:

Section 1. That the office of treasurer of Watauga county be, and is hereby abolished.

Sec. 2. That the county funds of Watauga County shall be deposited equally by the commissioners of the said county with the banks or trust companies of said county, which shall be the fiscal agents for said county; and each bank or trust company for the protection of said county's funds in said bank or trust company shall give to said commissioners such bonds as said commissioners may require: Provided that said county funds shall be divided equally among the banks and trust companies of the said county only when and if such banks shall render similar service in connection with said funds and handle said funds on similar terms.

Sec. 3. That all laws and clauses of laws in conflict with the provisions of this act are hereby repealed.

Sec. 4. That this act shall be in force from and after the expiration of the present term of office of the treasurer of Watauga County.

A Bill to be Entitled An Act For The Protection of Fish in Watauga County.

The General Assembly of North Carolina do enact:

KEEPING HISTORY STRAIGHT

Gastonia Gazette.

The One Minute page of the Charlotte Observer has this item.

"Have you imagined a church with out collection plates?" asked Sister Register yesterday. "Picked up a paper today and saw where some preacher or up there in Pennsylvania asking for the doing away of the collection plates, calling it an unnecessary evil. He said the Church of Jesus Christ is not a police department nor a law enforcement bureau and he wound up by asking that his congregation abolish the collection plate system which he says is an unnecessary evil in the church where the members love the Lord.

"I only know one thing about that preacher, and that is that he ain't no Methodist preacher."

For the benefit of Sister Register and the one minute page of the Observer, the Gazette passes on to them the information that Gastonia has a church in which a collection plate has not been passed for more than three years, and it's a Methodist church at that. Under the pastorate of Rev. A. L. Stanford now pastor of Central Church Shelby, Main street, church of this city abolished collection plates entirely. In lieu thereof boxes were placed in the two lobbies of the church and the announcement was made that the church would be supported by the free-will offerings of the membership. No assessments were made. The idea of stewardship was stressed. During last conference year, ending last October, money was mentioned publicly in the church once or twice and the largest budget in the church's history something like \$17,000 was raised without a collection plate being passed.

At the time this system was inaugurated the idea was so new and novel that the New York dailies and other metropolitan papers printed stories about it. It is known far and wide as "the church where no public collections are taken."

Section 1. That it shall be unlawful for any person to place sawdust in any pond, lake or stream in Watauga county. Any person violating the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction shall be fined not less than ten dollars and not more than fifty dollars, in the discretion of the court.

Sec. 2. That it shall be unlawful for any person to catch, kill, take, or destroy any fish in Watauga county. Any person violating the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction shall be fined not less than ten dollars and not more than fifty dollars, in the discretion of the court.

Sec. 3. That it shall be unlawful for any person to catch, take, kill, or destroy any fish in Watauga county except with hook and line from April 30th until September 1st. Any person violating the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction shall be fined not less than ten dollars and not more than fifty dollars, in the discretion of the court. Provided, this section shall not apply to private water reserves.

Sec. 4. That all laws and clauses of laws in conflict with the provisions of this act are hereby repealed.

Sec. 5. That this act shall be in force and effect from and after its ratification.

A Bill to be Entitled An Act to Place the Sheriff of Watauga County on a Salary.

The General Assembly of North Carolina do enact:

Section 1. That the Sheriff of Watauga county shall receive a salary of twenty-five hundred dollars per annum, payable monthly, and in addition thereto, process fees, and for performing his services said sheriff shall receive no other compensation whatsoever.

Sec. 2. That all fees, excepting process fees, commissions, profits and emoluments received by the sheriff of Watauga County in performing his duties shall be faithfully collected by him and delivered to the Board of County Commissioners of Watauga County.

Sec. 3. All laws and clauses of laws in conflict with the provisions of this act are hereby repealed.

Sec. 4. That this act shall be in force from and after the expiration of the term of office of the present sheriff of Watauga County.

WAS UNUSUALLY TURBULENT SESSION

General Assembly Crowds Sixty Day Work into Six—Calendar are Cleared, Memebrs Go Through More High Water Than Any in Decade.

Two Weeks of Calm

Victory for Morrison and Administration Policies Bitter Pill for Antis to Swallow.

A dispatch from Raleigh under the date of March 4 gives the following of interest in regard to the closing of the stormy session of the legislature:

The legislature that got away to such a bad start is about to reach its bitter ending.

Crowding into the past six days the work of 60, it has handled in one way or another most of the important legislation proposed during the session and it leaves with its public and local calendars completely cleared.

It has been through more political high water than perhaps any legislature in a decade. It has had but two weeks of tranquility out of eight, the first and the last. It has received a degree of abuse unprecedented in legislative annals, and when the members return home they very likely will receive more. It has been the victim of influences seeking political preferment and advantages and it has been beset by divers and sundry disturbances ever magnified trifles. It has been for the most part a badly disorganized lot.

Displeased Everybody

It has displeased everybody some more than others. It may have intended to please them all. Certainly, it ran into every path that was beaten for it long enough to make all the conflicting elements and influences praise it for a time. But finally it made its own path, and followed it in the latter days with some degree of consistency.

The first week gave signs of a conspicuous session. The house wherein the disturbances seemed to center that at one time or another shook the entire state, was calm for the first week and quite enthusiastic. The grand old man of Alleghany R. A. Doughton, revenue commissioner, was at the helm and the chief mate Secretary of State W. N. Everett was in the next. The governor took these two away and thereafter the house jangled about on shifting sands.

There followed new leaders, who failed to get the hang of things; they came the Maxwell deficit controversy and the convulsion within the general assembly made the state tremble.

It ran into a courting spree with reactionism but wound up by voting half as much in bonds as the preceding session. It sought to manifest a wedded fancy for independence but developed into a chaotic and unorganized aggregation of men who could not figure out where or how they stood.

White complaining of the lack of revenue and the danger of high taxes the body was magnanimous in its generosity, exceeding the recommendations of its own budget commission. And this on top of mid-session indications of extreme reactionism, threatening the continuance even of the building programs and educational and charitable institutions.

What Was Accomplished

It may contend with a degree of positiveness that it reaches its "bitter ending" in a "blaze of glory," regardless of what has gone before and the mountains of abuse that have been heaped upon it. The bond issue it has authorized are conceded to be for wise undertakings, and even the most reactionary of reactionaries can not help but find a degree of justification in them. It has provided for constitutional protection of the state's bonded indebtedness and for safeguarding its financial standing through the limitation of the authority to contract indebtedness. It has passed considerable legislation of importance along reform and social lines. It took a step of extraordinary boldness when it struck from the laws the tax discrimination and exempted stock in foreign corporations held by residents.

The bond issues it authorized for undertakings recognized as in the public interest were proposed.

Millions for roads, ten millions for educational and charita-

ble institutions. Ten millions for a railroad into the lost provinces, a half million for the rehabilitation of the fish and oyster industry.

In addition it authorized the governor's water transportation commission and gave it \$25,000 to investigate and determine the feasibility of state owned shipping lines and the construction of terminal facilities. It provided increased appropriations for the schools. These things alone, in the opinion of several observers at this session constitute a record that will recompense for the indecisiveness of the legislature's early days, for its hesitancy and for its down right ridiculousness about the time Mr. Maxwell was in his political heyday.

Millions in Bonds

The millions in bonds pleased some and displeased others. To the progressive the legislature has "glorified" itself by its generosity. And the legislature can claim it has "glorified" itself as a martyr to progressiveness when the reactionary sneers on "extravagance."

Who came off victor among the influences that sought to guide the general assembly depends on who cost the less. For a considerable portion of the session it was a fight between the Morrison or administration forces and the anti-Morrison anti-administration forces. The governor's boldness in his advocacy of progressiveness was met by the determination of those who opposed progressiveness. The governor lost less than they did. But the legislature left undone enough the executive asked should be done to please for a while the antis, but it did enough the antis demanded it should not do to bring their wrath upon the body.

Morrison was asking for something the influences and elements opposing him were opposing something. And the fight throughout the session was a question of doing something or doing nothing; it was never a question of doing something the governor did not want and those opposing him did.

The generosity to the assembly to the schools and colleges and educational institutions was in keeping with the governor's request. He asked this in his biennial message. The "lost provinces" railroad fight had his moral support. The constitutional amendment proposals providing for the inviolability of the sinking fund and limiting the bonded indebtedness of the state were his proposals, announced far in advance of the session and recommended in his message; and the proposal for the creating of a sinking fund was advanced by him and recommended in his message. He had the bills introduced that made these provisions.

The Legislature refused him the \$2,000,000 bond issue for the operation of a state-owned line of ships and for the construction of terminal facilities but it gave him a commission and \$25,000—and more will be heard from the proposal at a later date. The loss of the \$2,000,000 pleased the governor's enemies they made it appear that the creation of the commission pleased them; events of the future are yet to prove their attitude as to the commission.

The governor recommended a banking department but he did not follow up this recommendation so that legislature and refusal of accession to the idea cannot be determined he also recommended a department of commerce and industry and it is hardly thought he will get that; loss in this case was due entirely to delay in getting the bill before the assembly.

Bitter Pill for Antis

As the record stands the governor lost on two proposals and partly lost on a third, though defeat of the ship bill may be only temporary and a special session may have to wrestle with this recommendation in the late summer or fall.

In his advocacy of the extension and "rounding out" of the program of progress, Governor Morrison was bitterly opposed by lobbyists and opposition organs. Fearing doubtless a bold stand against bonds, essential for the continuance of the program, they poked ridicule and warnings, advocating a "pay-as-you-go" called the street car idea-policy that has kept the state in an economic coma for a hundred years.

Only in the failure of the original Morrison idea as to the state-owned ship lines did the opposition find a particle of success.

Millions for roads, ten millions for educational and charita-

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