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Disposition of Surplus Property in the Highway Department

Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the CTAS electronic library known as e-Li. This online library is maintained daily by CTAS staff and seeks to represent the most current information regarding issues relative to Tennessee county government.

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 e-Li material.

Sincerely,

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Disposition of Surplus Property in the Highway Department

Reference Number: CTAS-942

Under the County Uniform Highway Law (CUHL), the road superintendent has “supervision and control over and is responsible for all the machinery, equipment tools, supplies, and materials owned or used by the county in the construction, reconstruction, repair, and maintenance of county roads and bridges.” T.C.A. § 54-7-112. This is a basic grant of custodial power over equipment to the road superintendent. The county legislative body has general control over county property and its disposition. T.C.A. § 5-7-101. Road superintendents often transfer/trade surplus equipment with other counties, with the approval of both governing bodies, pursuant to T.C.A. § 12-2-420 (formerly T.C.A. § 12-3-1005). If the authority of T.C.A. § 12-2-420 is not used, in counties that have elected to be governed by the provisions of the County Purchasing Law of 1957, it is the duty of the county purchasing agent under T.C.A. § 5-14-108 to sell by public auction or sealed bid any surplus county property (both personal and real property) when the county legislative body declares the property surplus. The county purchasing agent, with the assistance of the county purchasing commission, may adopt rules for requiring reports from county departments (including highway department), of surplus equipment and supplies, and the transfer of surplus equipment and supplies that may be used by other county departments, and rules for the sale, after receipt of competitive bids, of surplus equipment. T.C.A. §§ 5-14-107(5) and 5-14-107(6).

In counties that have adopted the County Financial Management System of 1981 (CFMS of 1981), it is the duty of the county purchasing agent under T.C.A. § 5-21-118 (b) to conduct public sales of county property (including highway department) when the county legislative body declares the personal property surplus, and public sales of real property owned by the county. T.C.A. § 5-21-118(b).

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