

§ 156-116. Modification of assessments.

(a) Relevy. – Where the court has confirmed an assessment for the construction of any public levee, ditch, or drain, and such assessment has been modified by the court of superior jurisdiction, but for some unforeseen cause it cannot be collected, the board of drainage commissioners shall have power to change or modify the assessment as originally confirmed to conform to the judgment of the superior court and to cover any deficit that may have been caused by the order of court or unforeseen occurrence. The relevy shall be made for the additional sum required, in the same ratio on the lands benefited as the original assessment was made.

(b) Upon Sale of Land for Assessments. – If any person, or any number of persons, claiming to have title to any tract or tracts of land subject to assessment or drainage tax shall fail to pay any annual assessment levied against such lands, and the sheriff or tax collector shall be compelled to sell such lands under the law for the purpose of making such collection, the net proceeds of such sale shall be paid to the treasurer, to be held by him and disbursed for the purpose of paying the current assessment and future annual assessments so far as the proceeds may be sufficient. When the fund in the custody of the treasurer shall be exhausted in the payment of annual assessments against such lands, or there shall not be a sufficient sum to pay the next annual assessment, the treasurer shall immediately give written notice to that effect to the chairman of the board of drainage commissioners of the district, and also to the clerk of the superior court, whereupon the board of drainage commissioners shall institute an investigation of such tract or tracts of land to determine the market value, and if they shall find that the market value is not equal to all the future annual assessments to cover its share of installments of principal and interest on the outstanding bonds, they shall proceed, with the approval of the clerk of the superior court, to make new reassessment rolls on all the remaining lands in the district and increase the sum in sufficient sums to equal the deficit thereby created and such new assessment rolls shall constitute the future assessment rolls until changed according to law, and shall be certified to the tax collector as herein provided in lieu of the former assessment rolls. However, the tract or tracts of land which have been so sold by the tax collector shall continue on the assessment roll in the name of the new owner, but reassessed upon the new basis, and the drainage tax collected at the same time and in the same manner as other lands as long as such lands may have sufficient market value out of which to collect the annual drainage tax, and when such lands shall cease to have such value, or shall be abandoned by the person claiming title thereto, the drainage commissioners may omit the same from the assessment roll with the approval of the clerk of the superior court, but such lands may in the same manner at any time in the future be restored to the assessment rolls.

(c) Surplus Funds. – If the funds in the hands of the treasurer at any time, arising under this section or in any other manner, shall be greater than is necessary to pay the annual installments of principal and interest, or the annual cost of maintenance of the drainage works, or both, such surplus shall be held by the treasurer for future disbursement for other purposes as herein provided or subject to the order of the board of drainage commissioners.

(d) Insufficient Funds. – If there shall be any impairment or destruction of the drainage works by any unforeseen cause or occurrence not anticipated, during the period of construction by the contractor, the contractor shall nevertheless repair and complete the works according to the contract and specifications and shall be liable therefor and also his sureties on his bond; but if the contractor shall make default and if there shall be a failure to collect all resulting damages from such contractor and the sureties upon his bond, and it shall thereby be necessary to raise a greater sum of money to complete the drainage works in accordance with the plans, or if for any other unavoidable cause it shall be necessary to raise a greater sum to complete such drainage works, the board of drainage commissioners, having first obtained the approval

of the clerk of the superior court, shall prepare new assessment rolls upon all the lands in the district upon the original basis of classification of benefits and increase the same in sufficient sums to equal the deficit thereby created, and the same shall constitute the new assessment rolls until changed according to law, and shall be certified to the tax collector as herein provided.

(e) Additional Bonds Issued. – If for any of the causes hereinbefore recited in this section, or for any other cause, a sum of money greater than the proceeds of sale of the drainage bonds shall become necessary to complete the drainage system, and the board of drainage commissioners shall determine that the amount to be raised is greater than can be realized from the collection of one annual assessment upon the lands in the district without imposing an undue burden upon the lands, or if it is advisable or necessary to raise the money more expeditiously, then and under such conditions additional bonds may be issued in such aggregate sum as may be necessary.

(f) Manner of Issue. – The proceedings for the issue of such additional bonds shall be substantially as follows: The board of drainage commissioners shall file their petition with the clerk of the superior court, setting forth all the facts which require the expenditure of more money and the issue of additional bonds to complete the drainage system, which shall be accompanied by the recommendation of the drainage engineer who was one of the original viewers, or some other expert drainage engineer selected by the drainage commissioners; whereupon the court shall issue a notice to all the owners of land within the district reciting the substance of the petition and directing each to appear before the court on a day certain, not less than 20 days after the service upon all the parties, and to show cause, if any they have, why the additional bonds should not be authorized, which notice shall be served personally on each such landowner by reading the same, and by leaving a copy, and if the same cannot be personally served, then it shall be served in the manner authorized by law. Any landowner may file an answer denying any material allegation in the petition or setting forth any valid objection to same before the return day thereof.

Upon the day when the notice is returnable, or on such day as to which the same may have been continued, the court shall proceed to hear the petition and answers. If the court shall find that the allegations of the petition are true, and that the issue of additional bonds is advisable or necessary, the court shall make an appropriate order authorizing and directing the issue of such additional bonds, fixing the amount of such issue, the date of same, the time when the interest and principal shall be payable, and all other matters necessary and appropriate in the premises. Any landowner may appeal from the order of the clerk of the superior court, and on such appeal only the issues raised in the answer shall be considered, and such appeal and the further procedure thereon shall be as prescribed in special proceedings, except as modified by this Subchapter.

After the court shall have ordered the additional issue of bonds, the further procedure as to the assessment rolls, the levying and collecting of the drainage taxes, the disbursement of the revenue therefrom for the payment of such bonds and interest thereon, and all further procedure shall be the same as required for the establishment of drainage districts. The additional bonds issued shall not exceed twenty-five percent (25%) of the total amount originally issued. The additional issue of bonds shall bear six percent (6%) interest per annum and may be made payable in 10 annual installments, or in lesser number of annual installments as nearly equal as may be, as recommended by the board of drainage commissioners and approved by the court. (1909, c. 442, s. 35; 1911, c. 67, s. 15; C.S., s. 5372; 1963, c. 767, s. 4.)