COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Commonwealth Transportation Board

W. Sheppard Miller, III
Chairperson

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Richmond, Virginia 23219

(804) 482-5818
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Agenda item # 1

RESOLUTION
OF THE
COMMONWEALTH TRANSPORTATION BOARD

September 17, 2025

MOTION

Made By: Ms. Dunlop**, Seconded By:** Ms. Sellers
Action: Motion Carried, Unanimously

Title: Bridge Naming: "Sergeant Godfred Blankenship Memorial Bridge"

WHEREAS, in accordance with § 33.2-213 of the *Code of Virginia*, the Buchanan County Board of Supervisors has requested, by resolution dated August 4, 2025, that the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB), to honor and memorialize the life, service to his community and country, and ultimate sacrifice of Sergeant Godfred Blankenship, name the bridge on Route 611, Greenbrier Road, over Greenbrier Creek, Buchanan County, as the "Sergeant Godfred Blankenship Memorial Bridge"; and

WHEREAS, Buchanan County, by resolution dated August 4, 2025, has agreed to be responsible for payment of all sign costs billed by the Virginia Department of Transportation calling attention to this naming, which will include the costs to produce, place, and maintain the signs; and

WHEREAS, § 33.2-213 provides that VDOT shall place and maintain appropriate signs indicating the names of highways, bridges, interchanges, and other transportation facilities named by the CTB and requires that the costs of producing, placing, and maintaining such signs shall be paid by the localities in which they are located or by the private entity whose name is attached to the transportation facility so named.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, pursuant to § 33.2-213 of the *Code of Virginia*, the CTB hereby names the bridge on Route 611, Greenbrier Road, over Greenbrier Creek, Buchanan County, as the "Sergeant Godfred Blankenship Memorial Bridge".

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that VDOT is directed to produce, place, and maintain the signs calling attention to this naming, and secure payment from Buchanan County for these costs as required by law.

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CTB Decision Brief

Bridge Naming: "Sergeant Godfred Blankenship Memorial Bridge"

Issue: Commemorative naming, at the request of Buchanan County, of the bridge on Route 611, Greenbrier Road, over Greenbrier Creek, Buchanan County, as the "Sergeant Godfred Blankenship Memorial Bridge".

Facts: The Buchanan County Board of Supervisors enacted a resolution on August 4, 2025, to honor the life, service to his community and country, and ultimate sacrifice of Sergeant Godfred Blankenship.

According to that resolution, Sergeant Blankenship was born at Vicey, Virginia in Buchanan County on April 28, 1938. He enlisted in the United States Marine Corps and obtained the rank of Sergeant. His military occupation or specialty was a Riflemen in the 1st Marine Division, 1st Recon Battalion and 1st Force.

Sergeant Blankenship is remembered for his heroic achievement in connection with operations in the Republic of Vietnam from January 4 to March 25, 1967, as a reconnaissance platoon sergeant and patrol leader with the First Force Reconnaissance Company, Fleet Marine Force. He participated in numerous reconnaissance patrols deep into enemy territory, exhibiting an extraordinary degree of professional skill and sound judgment, which credited his unit with many significant sightings and gathering of valuable intelligence information.

His knowledge of the jungle, personal courage, and calm decisiveness, while on patrol in January 1967, contributed materially to the success of the venture, when his unit was hit by Viet Cong fire. Sergeant Blankenship's team returned fire, killing three of the enemy before they could withdraw. He then led part of his patrol further into the area, capturing weapons, documents, medical supplies and rations, after which he saw to the safe helicopter extraction of his team.

While on another patrol in the Danang area on January 11, 1967, while he and four other members of his team were wounded by a booby trap in the patrol landing zone, he assisted in control of his team and the medical evacuation of the more seriously wounded.

On March 25, 1967, Sergeant Godfred Blankenship was mortally wounded by an enemy mine while on patrol south of Danang. His outstanding courage and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Marine Corps.

During his brave and gallant service, Sergeant Blankenship received the following awards and decorations: Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Combat Action Ribbon, Marksmanship Badge, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Marine Corps Presidential Unit Citation and Vietnam Gallantry Cross.

Action Required by CTB: The *Code of Virginia* requires a majority of the CTB members to approve a resolution naming a highway or bridge, as appropriate. A resolution will be provided for the Board's consideration.

Result if Approved: The bridge on Route 611, Greenbrier Road, over Greenbrier Creek, Buchanan County, will be known as the "Sergeant Godfred Blankenship Memorial Bridge". In accordance with law, and by resolution dated August 4, 2025, Buchanan County agrees to pay the costs of producing, placing, and maintaining the signs calling attention to this naming.

Options: Approve**,** Deny, or Defer.

Public Comments/Reactions: VDOT has not received any public comments on this proposal.

BUCHANAN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Craig Stiltner, Chairman
Rocklick District
Tim Hess, Vice-Chairman
Hurricane District
Lee Dotson
North Grundy District
David Rose
Prater District
Jeff Cooper
Garden District
G. Roger Rife
South Grundy District
Trey Adkins
Knox District

Robert Craig Horn
County Administrator

Lawrence L. Moise, III Esq.
County Attorney

August 12, 2025

Erica Miller, Residency Administrator
Virginia Dept. of Transportation
P. O. Box 127
Lebanon, VA 24266

RE: Resolution

Dear Erica:

A regular meeting of the Buchanan County Board of Supervisors was held on Monday the 4th day of August 2025. Upon motion by David Rose seconded by G. Roger Rife and with a roll call vote of seven (7) yeas and zero (0) nays, this board did hereby adopt the attached Resolution requesting the (VDOT) naming the VDOT bridge on State Route 611 near the intersection of State Route 611 and State Route 608, located in the Prater Magisterial District in Buchanan County as the ***"Sergeant Godfred Blankenship Memorial Bridge".***

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Robert C Horn

Robert Craig Horn, County Administrator

Administrative Office, 4447, Suite 310, Slate Creek Road, GRUNDY, VIRGINIA 24614
www.buchanancountyonline.com
Telephone (276) 935-6503
Fax: (276) 935-4479

Resolution

RE: Highway Naming the VDOT Bridge on State Route 611 near the intersection of State Route 611 and State Route 608, located in the Prater Magisterial District *in "Buchanan County" as the "Sergeant Godfred Blankenship Memorial Bridge"*

WHEREAS, Sergeant *Godfred Blankenship was born at Vicey, Virginia in Buchanan County, Va. on April 28th, 1938; and*

WHEREAS, Sergeant. *Blankenship enlisted in the United States Marine Corps and entered the service via Regular Military. Sergeant Blanekshihp had the rank of Sergeant and his military occupation or specialty was Rifleman, unit/group 1st Marine Division, 1st Recon Battalion and 1st Force.*

WHEREAS, Sergeant Blankenship received the following awards and decorations during his service in the United State Marine Corps: Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Combat Action Ribbon, Marksmanship Badge, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Marine Corps Presidential Unit Citation and Vietnam Gallantry Cross.

WHEREAS, Sergeant Blankenship is remembered for his heroic achievement in connection with operations in the Republic of Vietnam from January 4th, to March 25th, 1967 as a reconnaissance platoon sergeant and patrol leader with the First Force Reconnaissance Company, Fleet Marine Force. Sergeant Blankenship participated in numerous reconnaissance patrols deep into enemy territory, Sergeant Blankenship exhibited an extraordinary degree of professional skill and sound judgment which credited his unit with many significant sightings and gathering of valuable intelligence information. His knowledge of the jungle, personal courage and calm decisiveness, while on patrol in January 1967 contributed materially to the success of the venture, when his unit was hit by Viet Cong fire. His team returned fire killing three of the enemy before they could withdraw. He then led part of his patrol further into the area capturing weapons, documents, medical supplies and rations after which he saw to the safe helicopter extraction of his team. While on another patrol in the Danang area on 11 January 1967, although he and four other members of his team were wounded by a booby trap in the patrol landing zone, he assisted in control of his team and the medical evacuation of the more seriously wounded. On 25 March 1967 he was mortally wounded by an enemy mine while on patrol south of Danang. Sergeant Blankenship's outstanding courage and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life for his country. *and*

WHEREAS, Section 33.2-213 of the *Code of Virginia* authorizes the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) to give suitable names to state highways, bridges, interchanges, and other transportation facilities and change the names of any highways, bridges, interchanges, or other transportation facilities forming a part of the systems of state highways; and

WHEREAS, Section 33.2-213 provides that the Virginia Department of Transportation shall place and maintain appropriate signs indicating the names of highways, bridges, interchanges, and other transportation facilities named by the CTB and requires that the costs of producing, placing, and maintaining such signs shall be paid by the localities in which they are located.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Buchanan County Board of Supervisors, in accordance with the requirements of Section 33.2-213 of the *Code of Virginia*, does hereby request that the Commonwealth Transportation Board name the VDOT Bridge on State Route 611 near the intersection of State Route 611 and State Route 608, located in the Prater Magisterial District *in Buchanan County, Va. as the "Sergeant Godfred Blankenship Memorial Bridge"*;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Buchanan County agrees to pay the costs of producing, placing, and maintaining the signs calling attention to this naming.

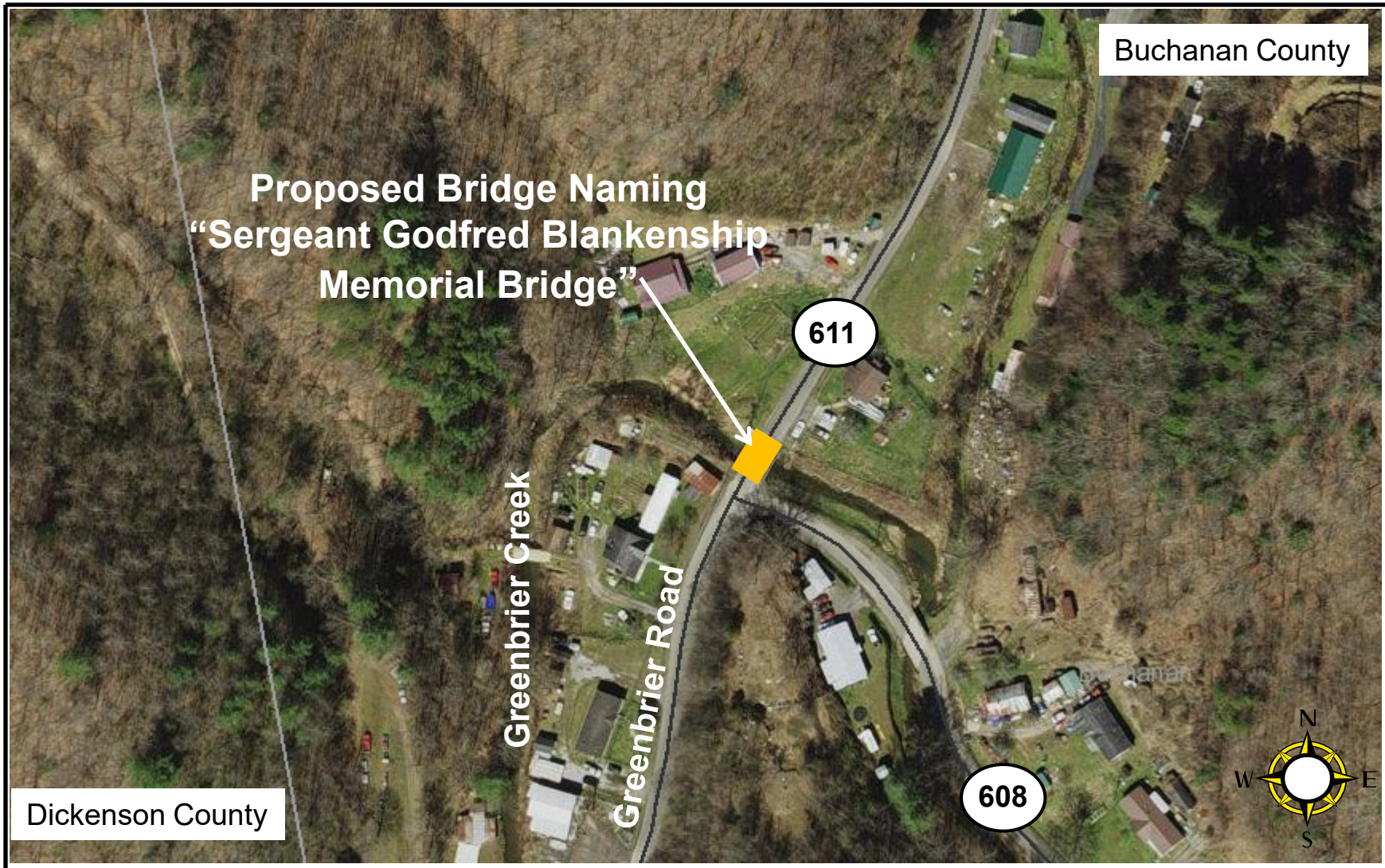
This resolution was adopted this the 4th day of August, 2025 by the Buchanan County, Va., Board of Supervisors.

Recorded Vote:
Moved by: David Bose
Seconded by: G. Roger Reese
Yeas: 7
Nays: 0

Craig Stiltner, Chairman of the
Buchanan County, Va. Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:

Robert Craig Horn, County Administrator



VDOT
Virginia Department of Transportation
Maintenance Division

CTB MEETING: September 17, 2025

Buchanan County

Proposed Bridge Naming:

"Sergeant Godfred Blankenship Memorial Bridge"