



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## *Commonwealth Transportation Board*

Shannon Valentine  
Chairperson

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*Agenda item #18*

### **RESOLUTION OF THE COMMONWEALTH TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

**June 23, 2021**

#### **MOTION**

**Made By:** Mr. Stinson, **Seconded By:** Mr. Rucker

**Action:** Motion carried, unanimously

#### **Title: Bridge Naming: "Sergeant Major Walter L. Shumate Memorial Bridge"**

**WHEREAS**, in accordance with § 33.2-213 of the *Code of Virginia*, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors has requested, by resolution dated May 4, 2021, that the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB), to honor and memorialize the dedicated life and service to his Country and fellow soldiers of Sergeant Major Walter L. Shumate, name the bridge on Route 747, Old River Road, across from Pocahontas High School and over Laurel Fork Creek, Tazewell County as the "Sergeant Major Walter L. Shumate Memorial Bridge"; and

**WHEREAS**, Tazewell County, by its May 4, 2021 resolution, has agreed to pay the cost of producing, placing, and maintaining the signs calling attention to this naming; and

**WHEREAS**, § 33.2-213 provides that the Virginia Department of Transportation (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 747, Old River Road, across from Pocahontas High School and over Laurel Fork Creek, Tazewell County as the "Sergeant Major Walter L. Shumate Memorial Bridge"; and

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

####

## CTB Decision Brief

Bridge Naming: “Sergeant Major Walter L. Shumate Memorial Bridge”

**Issue:** Commemorative naming of the bridge on Route 747, Old River Road, across from Pocahontas High School and over Laurel Fork Creek, Tazewell County as the “Sergeant Major Walter L. Shumate Memorial Bridge”.

**Facts:** Tazewell County enacted a resolution on May 4, 2021 to honor the life of dedication and service to his Country and fellow soldiers of Sergeant Major Walter L. Shumate of Pocahontas, Virginia. Mr. Shumate was born in Pocahontas, Virginia in 1934 and began his military career in February 1952 contributing three decades of service to his Country including service in the Korean War and seven tours in Vietnam.

An original member of the Army’s legendary Delta Force, Sergeant Major Shumate held numerous positions during his distinguished career in the Army, including positions as an Airborne Infantryman, and Airborne Jumpmaster School instructor, a Squad Leader, a Recon Team Leader in Project Delta, an instructor of the HALO Committee, an Underwater Operations Course instructor, an Operations Sergeant of a SCUBA Team, a Company Sergeant Major and as a Selection and Training instructor for 1<sup>st</sup> SFOD-D where he participated in Operation Eagle Claw.

He was the driving force behind gaining approval from the U. S. Navy to allow the Army to utilize their facilities in Key West, Florida in support of Special Forces dive training. This accomplishment led Shumate to the design and implementation of a program that is known today as the Special Forces Underwater Operations Course. Having served in Delta Force for eleven years after his retirement until his death in 1993, the Free Ascent Dive Tower at the Special Forces Underwater Operations School was named in his honor.

Sergeant Major Shumate’s long list of awards and decorations include a Defense Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm, Korean Campaign Medal with three Bronze Stars, United Nations Service Medal, Vietnamese Campaign Medal, Master Parachutist Badge, Combat Infantry & Expert Infantry Badges, Combat Diver Badge, Master Freefall Badge and the Special Forces and Ranger Tabs.

**Recommendations:** The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) recommends this request be approved.

**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 747, Old River Road, across from Pocahontas High School and over Laurel Fork Creek, Tazewell County will be known as the “Sergeant Major Walter L. Shumate Memorial Bridge”. In accordance with law and by resolution, Tazewell 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 is not aware of any opposition to this proposal.

## SERGEANT MAJOR WALTER L. SHUMATE MEMORIAL BRIDGE RESOLUTION

Bridge Naming across from Pocahontas High School on Route 747 "Old River Road", in Tazewell County as the "Sergeant Major Walter L. Shumate Memorial Bridge".

**WHEREAS**, Walter L. Shumate was born in Pocahontas, Virginia in 1934 and began his military career in February 1952 dedicating himself and his life to freedom and duty contributing three decades of service to his country including service in the Korean War and seven tours in Vietnam; and

**WHEREAS**, an original member of the Army's legendary Delta Force, Sergeant Major Shumate held numerous positions during his distinguished career in the Army, including positions as an Airborne Infantryman, an Airborne Jumpmaster School instructor, a Squad Leader, a Recon Team Leader in Project Delta, an instructor of the HALO Committee, a Underwater Operations Course instructor, an Operations Sergeant of a SCUBA Team, a Company Sergeant Major, and as a Selection & Training instructor for 1<sup>st</sup> SFOD-D where he participated in Operation Eagle Claw; and

**WHEREAS**, Sergeant Major Shumate was the driving force behind gaining approval from the U.S. Navy to allow the Army to utilize their facilities in Key West, Florida in support of Special Forces dive training. This accomplishment led Shumate to the design and implementation of a program that is known today as the Special Forces Underwater Operations Course; and

**WHEREAS**, Sergeant Major Shumate's long list of awards and decorations includes a Defense Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm, Korean Campaign Medal with three Bronze Stars, United Nations Service Medal, Vietnamese Campaign Medal, Master Parachutist Badge, Combat Infantry & Expert Infantry Badges, Combat Diver Badge, Master Freefall Badge, and the Special Forces & Ranger Tabs; and

**WHEREAS**, Sergeant Major Shumate retired in 1982 and continued to serve in Delta Force as a civilian until his death in March 1993. In 1994 the Free Accent Dive Tower at the Special Forces Underwater Operations School was named in his honor; and

**WHEREAS**, Sergeant Major Shumate's true legacy lies in the profound effect he had on the countless troops he taught and mentored throughout his career. A man of great dedication, bravery, and sense of duty, Sergeant Major Shumate served his country and his community with uncommon courage and integrity; and

**WHEREAS**, The Board of Supervisors of Tazewell County Virginia wishes to memorialize the life and contributions of Sergeant Major Walter L. Shumate; 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 Tazewell County, 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 bridge across from Pocahontas High School on Route 747, "Old River Road", in Tazewell County as the "Sergeant Major Walter L. Shumate Memorial Bridge";

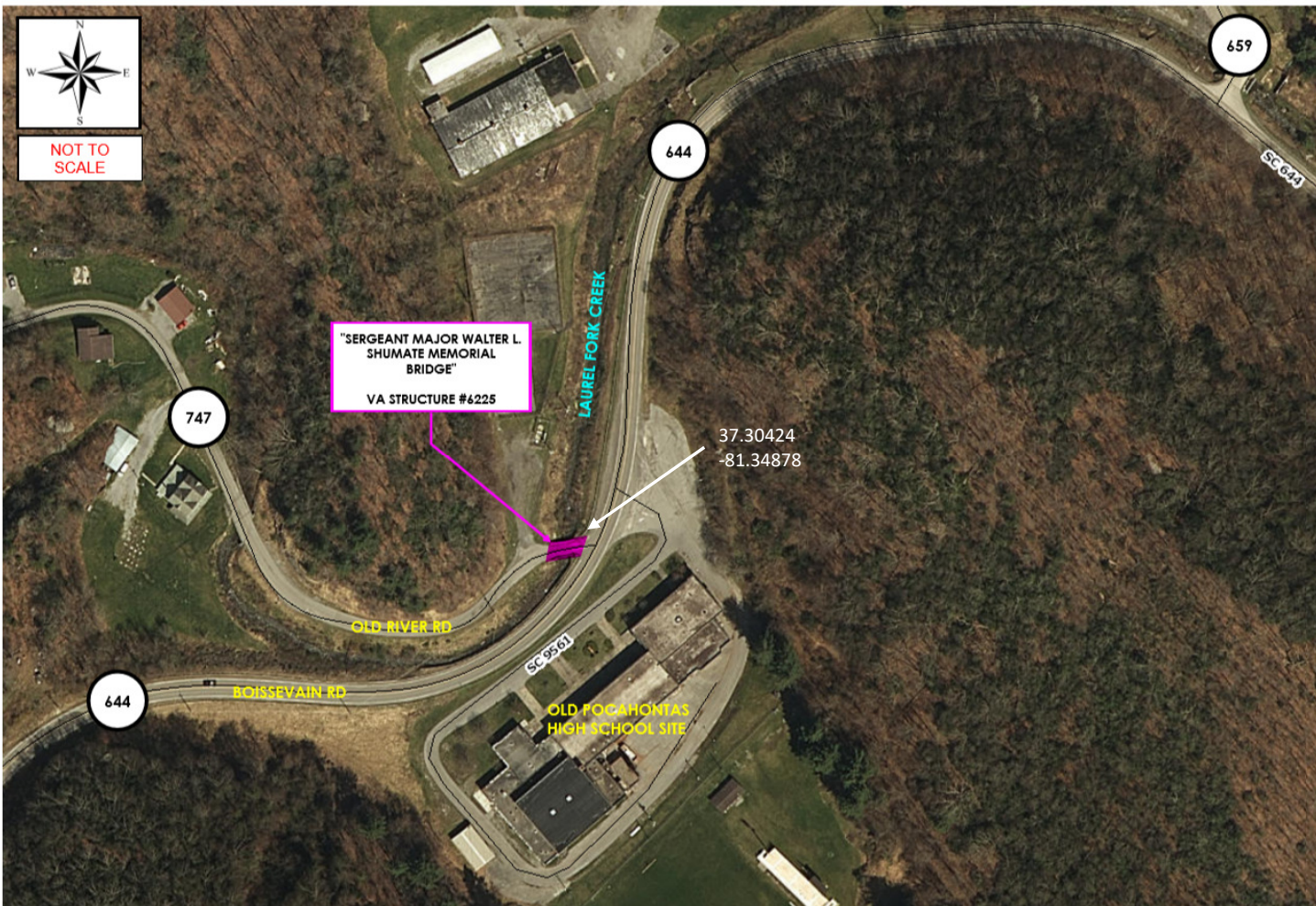
**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that Tazewell County agrees to pay the costs of producing, placing, and maintaining the signs calling attention to this naming.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, the Board of Supervisors have caused this Resolution to be duly executed on its behalf by its Chairman and attested by its Clerk.

**IT IS RESOLVED** this the 4<sup>th</sup> day of May 2021.

 Thomas A. Lester, Jr.; Its Chair





NOT TO SCALE

"SERGEANT MAJOR WALTER L. SHUMATE MEMORIAL BRIDGE"  
VA STRUCTURE #6225

37.30424  
-81.34878

TAZEWELL COUNTY (092) BRIDGE NAMING  
"SERGEANT MAJOR WALTER L. SHUMATE MEMORIAL BRIDGE"  
ROUTE 747, OLD RIVER ROAD  
VA BRIDGE STRUCTURE #6225  
BRIDGE OVER LAUREL FORK CREEK

