



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Commonwealth Transportation Board

Nicholas Donohue
Chairperson

1221 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

(804) 482-5818

Agenda item # 3

RESOLUTION OF THE COMMONWEALTH TRANSPORTATION BOARD

March 18, 2026

MOTION

Made By: Ms. Dunlop, **Seconded By:** Mr. Good

Action: Motion Carried, Unanimously

Title: Bridge Naming: “Francis Gary Powers 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 February 2, 2026, that the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB), to honor and memorialize the life and service to his community and country of Captain Francis Gary Powers, name the bridge on Route 609, Bull Creek Road, over Levisa Fork River, Buchanan County, as the “Francis Gary Powers Memorial Bridge”; and

WHEREAS, Buchanan County, by resolution dated February 2, 2026, 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 609, Bull Creek Road, over Levisa Fork River, Buchanan County, as the “Francis Gary Powers Memorial Bridge”.

Resolution of the Board
Bridge Naming: "Francis Gary Powers Memorial Bridge"
March 18, 2026
Page 2 of 2

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.

####

####

CTB Decision Brief

Bridge Naming: “Francis Gary Powers Memorial Bridge”

Issue: Commemorative naming, at the request of Buchanan County, of the bridge on Route 609, Bull Creek Road, over Levisa Fork River, Buchanan County, as the “Francis Gary Powers Memorial Bridge”.

Facts: The Buchanan County Board of Supervisors enacted a resolution on February 2, 2026, to honor the life and service to his community and country of Captain Francis Gary Powers.

According to that resolution, Captain Powers was a Buchanan County resident and a 1946 Grundy High School graduate. He was born August 17, 1929, in Jenkins, Kentucky, and was the son of Oliver Winfield Powers, a coal miner, and his wife Ida Melinda Powers. After graduating with a bachelor’s degree from Milligan College in Tennessee in 1950, he enlisted in the United States Air Force in October 1950.

Captain Powers was an American pilot in the United States Air Force and was a CIA employee. He was best known for his involvement in the 1960 U-2 incident, when he was shot down while flying a secret CIA spying mission over the Soviet Union. Captain Powers survived but was captured and sentenced to 10 years in a Soviet prison for espionage. He served 21 months of his sentence before being released in a prisoner swap in 1962.

After Captain Powers returned to the United States, he worked at Lockheed as a test pilot for the U-2 and later as a helicopter pilot for Los Angeles news station KNBC. Captain Powers died in 1977.

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 609, Bull Creek Road, over Levisa Fork River, Buchanan County, will be known as the “Francis Gary Powers Memorial Bridge”. In accordance with law, and by resolution dated February 2, 2026, 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.

RESOLUTION

Title: Bridge Naming on Route 609 – Bull Creek Road - over Levisa Fork River in Buchanan County as the “Francis Gary Powers Memorial Bridge”

WHEREAS, Captain Francis Gary Powers was a Buchanan County resident and a 1946 Grundy High School graduate. He was born August 17th, 1929 in Jenkins, Kentucky and the son of Oliver Winfield Powers, a coal miner and his wife Ida Melinda Powers. After graduating with a bachelor’s degree from Milligan College in Tennessee in June 1950, he enlisted in the United States Air Force in October 1950.

WHEREAS, Captain Powers was an American pilot in the United States Air Force Officer and a CIA employee. He was best known for his involvement in the 1960 U-2 incident, when he was shot down while flying a secret CIA spying mission over the Soviet Union. Captain Powers survived, but was captured and sentenced to 10 years in a Soviet prison for espionage. He served 21 months of his sentence before being released in a prisoner swap in 1962.

WHEREAS, after Captain Powers returned to the United States, he worked at Lockheed as a test pilot for the U-2 and later as a helicopter pilot for Los Angeles news station KNBC. Captain Powers died in 1977.

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, 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 on Route 609 Bull Creek Road over Levisa Fork River in Buchanan County as the “Francis Gary Powers 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 on 2nd day of February, 2026 by the Buchanan County Board of Supervisors.



Chairman of the Buchanan County Board of Supervisors

2/2/2026

Date

Buchanan County

Proposed Bridge Naming
"Francis Gary Powers
Memorial Bridge"

Riverside Dr.

Levisa Fork River

Bull Creek Road

Buchanan

708

609

US
460



Maintenance Division

CTB MEETING: March 17, 2026

Buchanan County

Proposed Bridge Naming:
"Francis Gary Powers Memorial Bridge"