

Item Title: Resolution Supporting a Request to the North Carolina Department of Transportation to Dedicate a Bridge in Honor of Fallen Wake County Sheriff Deputy Ned P. Byrd

Specific Action Requested:

That the Board of Commissioners approves a resolution supporting a request for the North Carolina Department of Transportation to dedicate the Auburn Knightdale Road bridge over the Neuse River in honor of Wake County Sheriff Deputy Ned P. Byrd.

Item Summary:

Purpose: Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute §136-18(8), the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) may name roads, including designating names to transportation infrastructure such as roads and highways, bridges, ferries, and interchanges. The NCDOT coordinates the naming process, which requires the requester to collaborate with local governments to consider a resolution supporting the name designation. Local resolutions are part of NCDOT's vetting process and must pass with unanimous support for a request to move toward full consideration from the North Carolina Board of Transportation.

Background: The proposed bridge dedication is located on Auburn Knightdale Road (State Road 2555) at the Neuse River. If approved, this bridge will be named in honor of Wake County Sheriff Deputy Ned P. Byrd. This designation request is coordinated by Wake County Sheriff Willie Rowe.

The NCDOT bridge name designation request process is distinct and separate from North Carolina General Statute §153A-239.1, which establishes that counties may name or rename any road within its county and not within a municipality. If NCDOT approves the request, the bridge name designation will not impact public safety emergency responses, and no residents will be impacted by address changes.

Strategic Plan: This action supports standard County procedures and business.

Fiscal Impact: This action does not require an additional appropriation from the County.

Additional Information:

Deputy Byrd began his Wake County Sheriff’s Office career as a Detention Officer in July 2009 and was promoted to Sergeant in August 2015. He began law enforcement in September 2017 and graduated from the Basic Law Enforcement Training Academy in March 2018. Deputy Ned P. Byrd was killed in the line of duty on August 11, 2022, by an armed assailant.

Prior to joining the Sheriff’s Office, Deputy Byrd honorably served in the United States Air Force. He established a legacy of service through work in the community as a canine handler, Brazilian Jui Jitsu, cross-fit, and as a local peace officer.

In 2024, Wake County Sheriff Willie Rowe began the NCDOT process to dedicate the bridge on Road (State Road 2555) at the Neuse River in honor of fallen officer Deputy Ned P. Byrd. If approved by NCDOT, a dedication ceremony will be planned for the bridge.

Approximate Location of the US Highway 401 Bridge at the Neuse River.



In accordance with NCDOT’s “Road, Bridge or Ferry Naming or Designation Request Process,” the requester must coordinate with local governments to unanimously pass resolutions in a public forum supporting the designation request.

If approved by NCDOT, this bridge could be the sixth designation in Wake County. The others include:

- Marshall Watson Bennett Bridge, Old Milburnie Road over I-540 (designated May 31, 2006)
- Trooper Robert R. East Bridge, US 1 North at the Neuse River (designated December 5, 2007)
- F. Donald Rohrbaugh Bridge, Timber Drive Extension over Mahlers Creek (Garner, designated November 30, 2011)
- Officer Ryan A Hayworth Bridge, Knightdale Boulevard over I-540 (Knightdale, designated May 3, 2023)
- Dr. William Weston Hedrick Bridge, United States Highway 401 and the Neuse River (designation will be considered by NCDOT in 2024)

Attachments:

1. Wake County Board of Commissioner's Resolution
2. North Carolina Department of Transportation's Road, Bridge or Ferry Naming or Designation Request Process
3. Map of the Bridge Location at Auburn Knightdale Road and the Neuse River