

Minutes
July 20, 2016
Executive Committee Meeting
South Carolina Military Base Task Force

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the South Carolina Military Base Task Force convened at 2:00 p.m. in Columbia, South Carolina.

The notice of the meeting was posted in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

Executive Committee Members present were William L. Bethea, Jr. (Chairman), Charlie Farrell (Executive Coordinator), Steve Creech (Sumter), Maj. Gen. George Goldsmith (Ret.) (Columbia), Mary Graham (Charleston), B. Gen. Van McCarty (on behalf of M. Gen. Bob Livingston) and Jim Wegmann (Beaufort).

Chairman Bethea called the meeting to order and welcomed MBTF members Dan Beatty and Ted Pitts, Executive Committee members, and guests MG Bill Hyatt and Haidee Stith. Charlie Farrell recognized the following media members: Jeff Wilkinson (The State), and Carson Mason and Bill Dubensky, both with SC Radio Network.

Charlie Farrell reported on the ADC Summit that he and Chairman Bethea and other MBTF members attended in Washington, D.C. in June. The consensus was that the summit was beneficial, especially the networking sessions. Sen. Lindsey Graham gave the keynote address and was awarded the ADC Congressional Leadership Award. Lt. Col. Ralph Taylor from Joint Base Charleston was awarded the ADC Military Leadership Award. Items of concern included: BRAC (could be anywhere from 2018 to 2021); the reuse of military installation buildings; and the Defense Industries Adjustment Program to help businesses with defense contracts diversify when they lose revenue because of defense cutbacks.

The next item on the Agenda was reports from the representatives of each of the military communities:

Jim Wegmann - Beaufort

- Beaufort contingent made a very beneficial trip to the Pentagon while in Washington at the ADC Summit.
- Congressional delegation is more amenable to BRAC than two years ago; more willing to discuss it, but concerns re the election.
- Transition: F35s ramping up while the F18s are ramping down.
- British pilots are transitioning out with Italian pilots coming onboard.
- Col. Buck extended to June 2017.

Mary Graham (Charleston)

- Hosted the Secretary of the Air Force in May; the Air Force wants BRAC.

- Transport Isolation Unit to address infectious disease such as Ebola is a unique mission located at Joint Base Charleston.
- P4 moving forward with pretty good success (\$900,000 savings). Five projects completed and three more are moving forward. The biggest is the 911 consolidated dispatch.
- Goose Creek and Joint Base Charleston are sharing athletic fields.
- Locality Pay Board in D.C. grants communities the ability to raise federal pay.
- SPAWAR – Executive Director Chris Miller returns after reassignment to the Pentagon.
- Encroachment/runways – working with the City of North Charleston to potentially develop a height ordinance to meet FAA and AF requirements.
- USAF is redoing the runway at North Field.
- Lack of available childcare at the bases is a big issue. The DoD has an allowance for parents to find off-base care. (**Chairman Bethea:** in 2015 Senator Alexander filed a bill regarding childcare facility inspections but it didn't go anywhere because no one pushed it. **Ted Pitts:** Suggested contacting a lobbyist with the Haynsworth Law Firm who has been involved with some bills over the past few years. Also, he will reach out to Rep. Shannon Erickson, a Beaufort member of the House who is also a daycare owner. **Steve Creech:** suggested offering a special accreditation for daycare facilities in DoD areas so that smaller, private daycares won't feel discriminated against.)

George Goldsmith (Ft. Jackson)

- Fort Jackson kicked off its Centennial Celebration in June. Wants to share its history as they promote events.
- Change of Command: BG Pete Johnson has replaced MG Roger Cloutier.
- Reception Station barracks will be renovated at one a year for three years.
- Plans to build a new, larger reception center.
- January 2017 – training for recruits will increase from 10 weeks to 11 weeks. Also, a new battalion will be established.

Steve Creech (Sumter)

- Shaw AFB is celebrating its 75th anniversary.
- Air Force ball is scheduled for September 16.
- Change of Command at AFCENT.
- New 9th Air Force Commander.
- Fighter wing – one squadron came home in April; another unit will be deployed in the fall.
- A road on the base has been renamed for two Tuskegee Airmen.
- A new park will be constructed on the base (public/military).
- Creech to Nellis to visit Air Combat Command.
- Col. Stephen Jost (current Wing Commander) will be headed to the Pentagon in August.
- Introduced MG (ret.) Bill Hyatt (former Wing Commander at Shaw).

BG Van McCarty (National Guard)

- New Command Sgt. Major
- Personnel to Kuwait in support of Iraq and Afghanistan.
- F-16s deployed to South Korea.
- Looking at significant deployment early 2017.
- Cyber protection ramping up.
- Arming Guard Units around the state for safety.
- First state job challenge graduation. Gov. Haley spoke; looking good overall.
- Two Milcon projects underway in the Upstate.
- State partnership program with the country of Colombia is going well.
- Soldier and family care program is progressing well.
- Currently 7 one-stop shops around the state.

The minutes of the March 16, 2016 meeting were approved.

Other items discussed:

DoD Top 10:

Started in 2013 and they have evolved over the past three years. Of the current ten key issues related to military members and their families, South Carolina has significantly complied with all but one (pro bono representation of military members on some matters in civilian courts) that just came on this year. SC is looking for ways to address this issue either through the S.C. Bar Association, the S.C. State Bar or the S.C. Attorney General. Jim Wegmann has offered to look into the State Bar as a possible avenue. Nevada has been the leader in this initiative through their Attorney General.

Legislation:

Mr. Bethea reported that about 90% of his time and energy were focused on H.3147 over the past six months. The bill started out as a full exemption of military retirement pay. It was reduced on the last day of the legislative session to phase in only about half that amount over five years. We will continue to press the issue. H.3147 came up 18 times in the Senate and was carried over 17 times. The retirement issue, the education of military children and childcare are some of the highest priorities.

The MBTF did not ask for funds from the General Assembly this year; all focus was on military-friendly bills. Steve Creech suggested taking delegations to the Pentagon and offer help to defray costs.

TAP:

Charlie Farrell reported on our efforts in connection with the various transition programs in the State. The MBTF was asked to look into assisting them in connecting job seekers with job finders. Recommended that we pass them over to OPE since both entities are trying to match up separating service members with jobs in SC.

Executive Session:

Mr. Bethea stated that there were certain contract matters that needed consideration relating to retention of certain professional assistance. Upon motion made by Mr. Creech, and seconded by Gen. Goldsmith, the motion was approved to go into Executive Session. The Executive Committee returned to open session and Mr. Bethea advised that no action had been taken in Executive Session.

Mr. Bethea stated that there is the need to update the SC Military Economic Impact Study to bring it more current using Fiscal Year 2016 numbers (i.e., September 30, 2016) and expanding it to include more veterans information and several other categories that were not included in the prior plan based on September 2014 data. He recommended that the plan be updated by Dr. Joseph Von Nessen and the Moore School of Business at USC for the sum of \$70,000, to be completed by January 1, 2017. Upon motion made and seconded, the Committee unanimously approved the employment of Dr. Von Nessen and USC to undertake the plan update and expansion.

Mr. Bethea next advised that there was the need to do a statewide strategic plan for our state efforts on behalf of the military, veterans and retirees. Many states are considerably ahead of SC in this and other formal organizational actions where military and veterans issues are concerned. If our state is going to be competitive in future BRAC and military reduction/expansion matters, it is imperative that we become better organized and better prepared. The combination of the updated/expanded economic impact study and, in conjunction with it, going through the time and study necessary to create a strategic plan for our military/veteran efforts, simply must be undertaken. Mr. Bethea proposed that the Task Force use a combination of several efforts to create the strategic plan:

- (a) Gather relevant base, financial, personnel and other relevant data for the dual purpose of the Economic Impact and the Strategic Plan; and
- (b) Contract with 3 Star Strategic Planning (Lt. General Jack W. Klimp (ret) et al) to conduct a planning exercise in accordance with their proposal dated 7/6/2016, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

The contracts were considered separately:

Upon motion made by Steve Creech and seconded by Mary Graham, the contract with USC for the update of the Economic Impact Study was unanimously approved.

Upon motion made by Steve Creech, seconded by George Goldsmith, the contract with 3 Star Strategic Planning was unanimously approved.

Mr. Bethea also advised that we will be engaging the services of On Point Services LLC (Haidee Stith) to assist with the data gathering and drafting in connection with both plans.

Mr. Bethea suggested to the Committee that funds were available to make grants to the military communities to assist them with their work on local military initiatives. Upon motion made and

seconded the Committee unanimously approved the disbursement of \$25,000 to each community – Beaufort, Charleston, Columbia, and Sumter.

Veteran' Study Committee:

For information, the Governor's Office is considering the issuance of an Executive Order to form a committee under the Task Force with similar objectives as those of the Veterans' Legislative Study Committee which expired June 30. MBTF will coordinate activities of the Veterans' Study Committee which will include members appointed by the Governor to the Task Force plus others such as Murrell Smith, James Smith, Tom Davis and another Senator, perhaps Senator Alexander.

On other matters on our to-do list, we recognize the need to upgrade our first generation website to make it more appealing and user friendly. We are also evaluating Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn, particularly in reaching younger supporters.

For upcoming meetings, we are trying to set up the next full MBTF meeting for September or October.

The next Executive Committee meeting is October 19th.

There being no other business, upon motion made and unanimously approved, the meeting was adjourned at 3:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Charlie Farrell
Acting Secretary

CEF/hf

Attachment