

D. Paul Sommerville, Chairman

July 11, 2014

City of Beaufort Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park – Welcome VMFA-501 Squadron

Good Evening, Beaufort! I am so happy to see so many of you here tonight to officially welcome the VMFA-501 squadron and their families to Beaufort South Carolina!

I spoke at the Air Station earlier today and had a chance to meet some of the pilots and marines already here. I conveyed to them that while it is always tough moving to a new base and a new town, the hospitality they will receive from Beaufortians is like no other they have experienced. Beaufort County is one of the fastest growing counties in the State but despite that growth, Beaufort still has that small town feel. We all look out for each other, help each other and make newcomers feel welcomed. Now that I have told all of the marines this, all of you out there need to back me up and make me look good.

I also want to remind the community what the military does for Beaufort County. When you combine all three military installations north of the Broad, the local economic impact is \$1.46 billion. Can you believe that? Soon, 180 new marines and their families will be here to contribute to the local economy, which should make all of you thrilled and excited. These men and women who are coming to Beaufort will secure our freedoms and enhance our community with their presence and values. I know all of you are excited to have them here as much as I am. There will be growing pains for everyone, but this is truly a win-win situation for those who already call Beaufort home, but also for the families moving, here because we can show them what Beaufort is all about, and why it is the best place to live.