

YATES
FROM PAGE 1

Concerns have been raised about the police's response to the occupation, which began the night of Nov. 12 – led, reportedly, by attendees of the Carrboro Anarchist Bookfair – and resulted in a dramatic encounter with police the afternoon of Nov. 13, with seven arrests.

Residents have questioned the police's failure to attempt to communicate with those inside the building prior to the raid, in which police brandished long-range rifles and detained those on the sidewalk outside the entrance of the building – including a *News & Observer* reporter covering the occupation – before rushing inside.

The council also voted 5-4 on Monday to issue an apology to the press detained in the incident, with Bell, Czajkowski, Kleinschmidt and Pease dissenting.

"As reporters, sometimes they put themselves in dangerous spaces, and sometimes they have to put their heads down until the

smoke clears," Bell said. "I don't feel like I want to apologize for our police following security measures."

Stancil's report

In his report regarding the incident, released on Friday, Stancil stated that, "The actions of the on-scene police commanders on Nov. 13 were the best decisions that could be made given the information available at the time."

According to the report, the decisions were made by the police chief and assistant chiefs and there was no consultation with, or decision-making by, any state or federal agency.

The report states that police made one unsuccessful attempt to communicate with the occupants of the building when Assistant Chief Leo Vereen approached the building and was "met by individuals wearing masks who partially surrounded him and chanted anti-police rhetoric."

The occupants were also addressed once by members of the Downtown Partnership, according to the report.

Chapel Hill Police Chief Chris Blue said Monday that representatives from the partnership attempted to communicate with the occupants to ensure that they weren't those involved with the art exhibit now on display at the Yates building, which at the time hadn't yet been installed.

However, Carrboro Board of Aldermen member Dan Coleman on Monday released a memo citing another police interaction with the occupants, in which an officer "came up to the driveway entrance, sat on the ledge by the building and conversed with the protesters for 20-30 minutes."

According to Coleman, who said he'd heard about the interaction from a number of witnesses, "The officer's attitude was described as casual and conversational. He reportedly asked those present about their plans and activities and connection to Occupy Chapel Hill. At no time did he ask them to leave, tell them they would have to leave or advise them of any impending police action. When asked directly about police interest in the

event, this officer is reported to have replied that they were 'just curious.'"

Blue said the officer involved was someone who had just come onto work that day.

"They told him they intended to stay," Blue said. "That didn't inform my decision-making."

At the council meeting, Storrow questioned why that interaction wasn't included in the report, saying that he found the omission "disheartening."

Stancil's report on the incident is available on the town website, townofchapelhill.org

Response

On Monday night, a group led by the Chapel Hill Prison Books Collective and Croatan Earth First! staged a protest against the findings.

Protesters marched from Peace and Justice Plaza on Franklin Street to Town Hall, holding signs that read "Expect Resistance," "Demilitarize the Police" and "Accountability=Independent Review."

According to a statement from the groups, the report "demon-

strates that the town government is dangerously out of touch with the people of Chapel Hill" and "minimizes the widespread outrage and condemnation of the police response, referring to it only as 'interest,' and refuses to endorse an independent review of the incident."

Also on Monday, a number of residents spoke to the council either in support of or against the police actions.

Harold Horne, a former Chapel Hill police officer and a longtime resident, told town and police officials that they did a "good job" responding to the Yates building occupation.

"You drew a bad hand that day. Civil disobedience doesn't allow you to go occupy somebody else's property. I'd like to commend you for the job you did," he said. "Does that mean that we can't learn from the incident? No; we can, and we can do a better job next time."

Amanda Ashley, a member of

the Occupy Chapel Hill movement, said the report still leaves questions unanswered.

"Why was there such a rush to judgment to put people's lives in danger over a rotten building?" she asked.

Alex Kotch, who grew up in Chapel Hill, noted a nationwide trend in the increased militarization of police since 9/11 and questioned the use of weaponry in the Nov. 13 raid.

"What if someone had reached for a cell phone in a front pocket? What if someone had fought back? Would one of those many assault rifles have been fired?" he said. "I fully support the CPAC. However, it is no substitute for an external review. ... This is a chance for the government and the law enforcement to regain that trust of its citizens – not to lose even more of it."

The CPAC was scheduled to meet Wednesday night after *The Citizen's* press time.

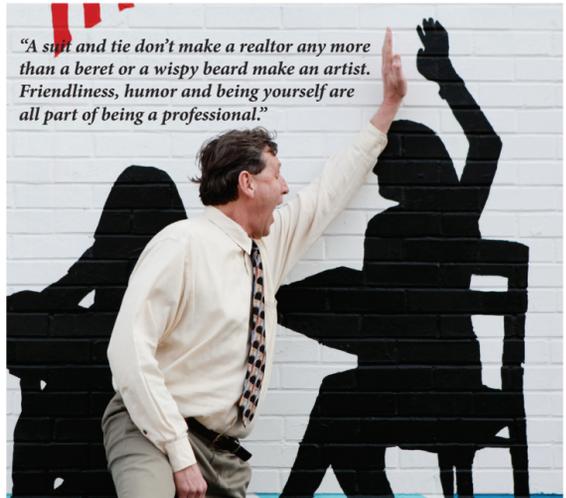
FARMERS' MARKET

What's at Market

WINTER MARKET HOURS
Saturdays
9am-Noon

MEAT: pasture-raised chicken, pork sausage, brats, various other cuts of pork, lamb, various cuts of beef and more
VEGGIES: Brussels sprouts, arugula, cilantro, parsley, sorrel, escarole, radishes, carrots, turnips, beets, cabbage, ginger, fennel, potatoes, lettuce, kale, bok choy, Swiss chard, collard greens, rapini, mustard greens, spinach, frisee, fresh herbs, scallions, white and purple sweet potatoes, green beans, pumpkins/gourds and more
CHEESES: an assortment of goat and cow cheeses
FLOWERS: paperwhites, tulips, hyacinths
SPECIALTY ITEMS: wine, breads including breadcrumbs, pies, cakes, tortes, jams, jellies, pickles, local hotdogs, fermented foods, vegan and gluten-free options and more

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PET OF THE WEEK

ORANGE COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES — Meet **Freddy** and **Tess**! These sweet kitties have been sponsored as a two-for-one adoption by a good Samaritan who would love to see them stay together.

That means you can adopt both of these sweet babies for \$95! Freddy and Tess are a bit shy with new people or fast movements but warm up quickly when given a little time to mellow out. They came in as a bonded pair and seek comfort in the presence of the other, especially when things get a bit uncertain. They don't require much – just the company of each other and a nice home where they can lounge and cuddle together. Come visit these love bugs today at Orange County Animal Services, 1601 Eubanks Road, Chapel Hill. You can also see them and other adoptable animals online at www.co.orange.nc.us/animalservices

