

DEBATE
FROM PAGE 1

The precedents set by the administration, Fein said, were like weapons. Should they go long without rebuke, “this democracy does not have a long shelf life.”

Fein hammered away at the idea that politics should trump duty to the Constitution and referenced at least twice the non-partisan nature of the sacrifices at Valley Forge, Cemetery Ridge and Iwo Jima. Reciting a litany of recent abuses — CIA torture tapes destruction, torturing suspects, granting telecommunication companies immunity for their compliance with domestic spying — Fein said that taking impeachment off the table has only served to embolden the administration.

He called the “inside-the-beltway” reasoning against impeachment “unpersuasive.”

“The prudential arguments against impeachment are hollow,” he said.

Tomasky said he was trying not to make an inside-the-beltway argument, but was being realistic about the actual chances for impeachment. The votes are not there, he said, adding that he found many politicians’ pledge to put country ahead of political advantage “sadly optional.”

The debate was moderated by former journalist and Carter administration official and now



Michael Tomasky and Hodding Carter (center) listen while Bruce Fein makes a point during the debate.

UNC professor Hodding Carter III. It was sponsored by the Coalition for the Constitution and was streamed live on the WCOM website. It opened with a selection of gospel music provided by the St. Joseph AME Zion Church Male Chorus and was officially convened by County Commissioner Moses Carey, who noted that Orange County was among the local governments that have called on federal officials to take up the question of impeachment.

Though in disagreement of the direction to take, both debaters wasted no opportunities to condemn the Democratic leadership for not standing up to the challenge. Tomasky called the leadership “feckless” and more concerned with saving their majority than investigating the crimes of the administration.

The exchange, lasting about an hour and a half, was followed by questions from the audience.

Afterward, those filing out said that while the event and the turnout showed there might be hope for the spirit of public participation, the facts as laid out were not so uplifting.

Delores Graham said she was frustrated that impeachment proceedings had not begun, in part because they might restrain the administration from starting a war with Iran.

One couple, he a veteran of World War II, said the times were unfolding in an uncanny resemblance to Sinclair Lewis’s *It Can’t Happen Here*, adding that both parties have sold out the country to “nationless corporations.”

Still a bit taken aback at the size of the turnout, John Heuer, one of the organizers, said he was pleased with the evening.

“This was what we were hoping for.”

ALDERMEN
FROM PAGE 1

Alderman Jacquie Gist said she was concerned, since it has been reported that artificial fields still require a considerable amount of water. Gist also said she did not want to see the groups who helped pay for the fields have a monopoly over their use.

“For the sake of water and democracy, I’m against this,” she said.

Town Manager Steve Stewart said that since the town’s runoff requirement had changed since the fields were originally constructed, it will be hard to determine how much engineering will go into the project.

The board voted to ask the town’s staff to review the plan and come up with an additional estimate of costs as well as any rental policies that might need to be changed.

The board also reviewed the recently adopted updated master plan by the Orange Water and Sewer Authority, including the utility’s plans for recycling water.

During one brief exchange, OWASA planning director Ed Holland noted that a program that removes and processes “biosolids” from wastewater produced material that could be used in composting.

“It’s producing a material that looks very attractive,” Holland told the board.

After a pause, Mayor Mark Chilton deadpanned: “I don’t believe you.”

In other action, the board:

- looked over plans for its annual retreat on January 27 and 28;
- authorized the town manager to enter into an agreement with the American Red Cross to use the Century Center as an emergency shelter;
- agreed to a street-closing plan for the annual Carrboro Classic Endurance Sports Festival on Sunday, April 6;
- authorized the purchase of an aerial fire truck at a cost of \$9,11,854 and a solid-waste truck for Public Works at a cost (after trade in) of \$233,371.

MARKET
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vendors, asked commissioners to recognize his group as the official Hillsborough Farmers’ Market board of directors. Beverly Blythe, the market’s founder and co-manager, said most vendors opposed the takeover by the group.

Tuesday’s meeting was standing-room-only, with the two groups filling opposite sides of the F. Gordon Battle Courtroom.

Over the past several months, the county attempted to mediate between the two groups in order to form one board of directors to run the market at the Public Market House, but efforts were unsuccessful.

Last week, Goodrum’s group announced that they had officially incorporated as the Farmers of Orange and would run a farmers’ market, regardless of whether they were able to use the county’s space.

The county’s new Public Market House is located behind the county sheriff’s office on East Margaret Lane in Hillsborough. The Hillsborough Farmers’ Market has previously been held in the SunTrust Bank parking lot in downtown Hillsborough.

Following the mediation efforts, County Manager Laura Blackmon recommended that the county operate the market and hire a manager outside of the market’s vendors, so that they did not have to choose between the two groups.

However, several commissioners said they were hesitant about the county operating the market, citing concerns about spending tax dollars to fund management

or mediating vendor disagreements.

“This board never intended to have any operating interest in this facility other than to make it available to the community,” Jacobs said.

“This has been a sad spectacle,” he continued. “There’s been a notable lack of charity.”

“As someone who’s been going [to the market] for years ... I hate what I’ve heard and seen over the last few months.”

Commissioner Moses Carey said he did not support the county operating the market. However, he added: “We may be forced to do something we don’t want to do.”

Carey said that if necessary, the county could manage the market temporarily so that vendors could begin selling on March 1, as previously planned.

“Just about everybody I talked to, when I questioned them [about the market], they had a vision of vibrancy for the market,” he said. “It’s hard to understand how people can be divided when they really want the same thing.”

Several vendors spoke in support of Blythe, citing her efforts to build the market.

Blythe asked that the commissioners “not add another level of bureaucracy” by managing the market through the county.

“The vendors and citizens have waited so long [for the market house] and we just can’t believe that the day is here,” Blythe said. “We are ready to move forward.”

The commissioners said they will make a decision regarding who will administer the farmers’ market at the Public Market House on Feb. 5.

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