

# Town of Litchfield, New Hampshire

## Board of Selectmen

TEL – (603) 424-4046

EMAIL – townhall@litchfieldnh.gov

FAX – (603) 424-3014

Meeting Date: 10/30/20

Call to Order: 4:02 pm

Meeting Location: Town Hall

**Meeting Called By**

Board of Selectmen

**Type of Meeting:**

Selectmen's Meeting

**Facilitator:**

Steven J. Webber

**Note Taker:**

Matthew Sullivan

**In Attendance:**

Troy Brown, Town Administrator  
Ben Sargent, Police Chief  
Frank Fraitzl, Fire Chief  
Doug Nicoll, Deputy Chief  
Kevin Brown, Road Agent  
Dr. Michael Jette, Superintendent  
Cory Izbicki, Business Administrator  
Brian Bourque, Chair of School Board  
Jenn Bourque, LYSL President  
Chris Lasara, LYSL Travel Coordinator

**Selectmen in attendance:**

1. Steven J. Webber, Chair
2. F. Robert Leary, Sr., Vice Chair
3. Richard W. Lascelles
4. Kevin A. Lynch
5. John E. Pinciario

**Rec Commission Members in attendance:**

1. Andy Collins, Chair
2. Peter Ames
3. Mike Boschi
4. Chris Burns
5. Steve Gannon
6. Andrew Ruggles

**Memo:**

Virtual Board of Selectmen and Rec Commission Emergency Meeting

**Agenda Topic:** Call to Order

**Presenter:** Chairman Steven J. Webber

1. 4:02 pm - Chair Steve Webber called the meeting to order and introduced everyone that was virtually present.

**Agenda Topic:** Business

**Presenter:** Chairman Steven J. Webber

**Police Chief Ben Sargent - LYSL Public Demonstration Permit Application:**

Police Chief Ben Sargent mentioned that on October 27, 2014, the Board of Selectmen updated the public demonstration ordinance. The purpose was for there to be a regulation on a public demonstration that would occur on municipal, common, and public highway property. A demonstration can include assembly, peace gatherings, protest marches, pickets, or parades. These types of demonstrations are prohibited without a permit issued by the Litchfield Board of Selectmen.

Chief Ben Sargent said that permits would be granted by the Board of Selectmen, subject to such terms, conditions, and restrictions as the Selectmen deem appropriate. This would include without limitation, reasonable time, place, and manner of restriction. The Selectmen may limit the total number of persons involved in the public demonstration and designate the physical limits or areas for which the public demonstration may be carried on.

The application for a public demonstration permit is a simple one-page document. The person filling out the application will need to provide the following:

1. Name of the group or organization
2. Primary contact person
3. Type of demonstration
4. Purpose of the demonstration
5. The proposed area for the demonstration
6. The time, date, and number of persons attending the demonstration

The application is turned into the town, and the application is reviewed by the Chief of Police, Chief of Fire Department, and the Superintendent of the Litchfield Highway Department. The three departments then participate in a department routing sheet.

Chief Ben Sargent said that earlier this month, the town received an application for a public demonstration from the Litchfield Youth Soccer League (LYSL). The primary person in charge is Jenn Bourque. The purpose of the demonstration is for the 7th Annual Halloween Jamboree Soccer Event at Sawmill Park. The demonstration was to have an estimated 280 participants and 300 spectators.

Chief Ben Sargent noted that he had spoken with Jenn Bourque and reviewed the event's safety plans. Part of the safety plan was to put up signage around Sawmill Park. The signage would remind the participants and spectators that masks are required. Everyone would be required to wear masks, except for the players actively participating in the field of play. If someone did not have a mask, the LYSL would provide a mask. The players would have their temperatures taken before the games, and hand sanitizer would be readily available. Only two spectators per child would be allowed at the event. All the teams would be from New Hampshire, except for a team from Peabody, MA.

Chief Ben Sargent provided the information at the Emergency Management Committee meeting. The committee still has some concerns with the number of participants and spectators that would attend the event. The committee also had concerns that the event would not comply with the Attorney General's Office and Homeland Security. Chief Ben Sargent commented that Peabody, MA, is now coded as a 'Red Zone.'

**Jenn Bourque - LYSL Jamboree Overview:**

Jenn Bourque, LYSL President, said that the Litchfield Youth Soccer League has been in existence for over 30 years. Ms. Bourque has been on the LYSL Board for nine years and three years as President. Ms. Bourque commented that the LYSL intends to provide a safe environment for children to play in our 7th Annual Halloween Jamboree. She added that the LYSL Jamboree fund proceeds help to provide three \$1000 scholarships to Campbell High School graduates each year.

LYSL follows all state recommended guidelines put forth by the NHSA, NHSL, US Soccer, State of NH, and CDC. The LYSL has seven travel soccer teams, U8-U14, who have successfully competed this fall throughout New Hampshire, without incident. The travel teams consist of 94 players that travel throughout the state. The LYSL also has 110 recreational soccer players.

Numerous changes have been put in place from previous years to include enhanced safety protocols to address Covid 19, reduced admittance, limited spectators, and countless other safety protocols. Ms. Bourque pointed out that lacrosse, softball, baseball, and soccer have all been involved in tournaments throughout the state. Usually, the Halloween Jamboree has 54 teams competing. This year, the number of teams was limited to 31 other teams. Because of potential Covid exposure, one team had to drop out.

The team breakdown by county:

1. Rockingham (11)
2. Hillsborough (14)
3. Merrimack (5)

#### 4. Essex (1)

Ms. Bourque mentioned that all the teams play three 25 minute games generally in a 90-minute window. The LYSL would schedule groups, each division by age/gender, and have spacing between divisions to allow for reduced crowds. She showed a schedule with breaks that would allow for safety.

Ms. Bourque presented the following enhanced safety protocols:

1. Masks requirement for all at the facility unless engaged in play on the field or eating/drinking.
2. Signage posted at each field to advise of mask guidelines.
3. Separate game balls for each field, and each official provided wipes to clean game balls between games.
4. Each coach is required to have sanitizer, and all players are encouraged to bring sanitizer.
5. All families asked to complete a home health check before leaving for the Jamboree. Litchfield families have coaches take temp upon arrival at the facility.
6. Wipes, sanitizer, 300 "extra" masks for distribution.
7. Limited spectators to no more than two per player.

Specific Concession Guidelines.

1. All volunteers involved with the concessions will be required to wear masks and gloves.
2. Wipes and sanitizer readily will be available at the concession stand.
3. Volunteers will role model safe physical distancing.
4. Concessions sold will be individually packaged.
5. Individual condiments (ketchup, mustard, salt, pepper, cream, sugar, etc.).
6. Volunteer slots will be set up individually to maximize distancing and limit cross-contamination (cashier, runners, grill cook, grill assistant, drink station, etc.).

Ms. Bourque noted that LYSL has been responsible throughout the pandemic. The LYSL canceled spring soccer, returned in the summer, and followed the state guidelines. The LYSL also did not play teams if there was potential exposure to Covid this fall. She reminded the Board that other leagues had tournaments through the summer and fall without an issue. Ms. Bourque mentioned that the attendance at the Halloween Jamboree would be less than at Nightmare New England. Ms. Bourque added that her job is to support eleven Home Depot stores. Five of the stores are in New Hampshire, and six are in Massachusetts. Her job is to make sure her associates work in a safe environment and the customer's shop in a secure environment. Ms. Bourque stated that she takes her job seriously.

Because of the recent weather conditions, the Jamboree would take place on Saturday, September 7. And Ms. Bourque informed the Selectmen that if a team from Peabody were going to be the reason for not approving the Jamboree, she would uninvite the Peabody team.

Chair Andy Collins asked how many teams show up to Sawmill Park on a typical weekend day. Ms. Bourque informed the Board that on Saturday, September 26, the LYSL had all seven home games at Sawmill Park. Fourteen teams, seven from Litchfield and seven from elsewhere, play at Sawmill Park between 7 am and 5 pm. Ms. Bourque noted that she would be able to list all the teams playing at Sawmill Park. Ms. Bourque confirmed that she knows the schedules for all 30 teams during the last two weeks.

Ms. Bourque added that the LYSL Board and volunteers would be acting as safety officers. She said that the staff would kindly ask spectators to put on face masks. If the spectator refuses to put on a face mask, the spectator will be asked to leave Sawmill Park. Ms. Bourque mentioned that if teams are not scheduled to play, they will not be allowed to be at Sawmill Park. The schedule is set up so that teams play their three slots, then leave the park. The next set of teams come in and play their three slots then leave the park.

**Fire Chief Frank Fraitzl - Emergency Management Director:**

Chief Frank Fraitzl mentioned that he reached out to Homeland Security and spoke to Director Harper. Mr. Harper was very hesitant about the whole concept and the numbers. Mr. Harper directed Chief Fraitzl to the Attorney General's Office. Mr. Harper believed that the Governor's Executive Order fell under the Attorney General's Office for enforcement responsibility.

Chief Fraitzl spoke with Senior Assistant Attorney General Bureau Chief Matthew Broadhead about the Governor's Guidance. Attorney Matthew Broadhead and Chief Fraitzl agreed that the LYSL had followed the Governor's Guidance for Youth and Amateur Sports. Attorney Matthew Broadhead was concerned that the number of Covid cases had increased in New Hampshire during the last two weeks. Attorney Matthew Broadhead informed Chief Fraitzl that he did not believe the event should be approved. At the same time, LYSL had done everything required of them to receive approval from the Litchfield Board of Selectmen.

Chief Fraitzl added that none of the members supported moving the event forward at the last meeting of the Emergency Management Team. A question was raised about whether the Board should postpone the vote until next week. At that time, the positive Covid cases may have decreased and would allow for the event to occur. Ms. Bourque and Chief Fraitzl agreed that the LYSL needed a decision today and not a week later. Ms. Bourque mentioned that the LYSL would be willing to get a police detail for the event.

**Deputy Chief Doug Nicoll - Health Officer:**

Deputy Chief Doug Nicoll responded to Ms. Bourque's comments about more people going to Spooky World than would attend the Halloween Jamboree. Deputy Chief Nicoll mentioned that Spooky World was located on private property, and if someone were unwilling to wear a mask, the person would be escorted off the property. Deputy Chief Nicoll added that the police would have no way of knowing if someone was attending the Halloween Jamboree from out-of-state. He agreed with Chief Fraitzl and the Emergency Management Committee that the event should not happen.

**General Discussion:**

Selectman John Pinciario asked if the LYSL would cut back on the number of spectators because they almost outnumber the players. Ms. Bourque noted that the LYSL had limited the number of spectators to two people per player, but she said that the LYSL would be willing to reduce the number of spectators to one person per player.

**Chris Lasara, LYSL Travel Coordinator:**

Chris Lasara asked the Board if there was a number that the Emergency Management Committee, Chief Sargent, and Chief Fraitzl would be comfortable with. Chief Fraitzl mentioned that there was no number that he could provide that would make him comfortable. He believed that the issue had more to do with the gathering of people at an event than the number of people who attended the event.

Mr. Lasara commented that he compared the tournament to any other Saturday at Sawmill Park. The LYSL Rec Soccer has events at Sawmill Park, and people come in and out of the park all day long. The LYSL has 4 versus 4, 7 versus 7, 9 versus 9, and 11 versus 11 soccer games. Mr. Lasara noted that he does not believe the Jamboree would be different from any other Saturday at Sawmill Park.

**Litchfield Public School District:**

**Dr. Michael Jette**

Dr. Jette pointed out that the Jamboree is not a school event, but he and the School Board want to keep the students safe. The Superintendent mentioned that the District has tried to enforce personal responsibility. He stressed that the parents and students need to be responsible for the events they decide to participate in. Dr. Jette mentioned that the Covid cases that occurred in Litchfield were partly caused by playing hockey in-doors. Selectmen Kevin Lynch agreed with Dr. Jette and mentioned the Jamboree would be an outdoor event. Andrew Ruggles stated that enforcing wearing a mask with regards to the players and spectators would be difficult. Mr. Ruggles noted that if the gathering caused the spreading of Covid, Litchfield would have a massive problem on their hands.

Chris Burns wanted to know if another situation of Covid within the School District was to occur and the school buildings closed, does Dr. Jette have a plan. Dr. Jette said that the District does have a reopening plan. The plan consists of the school administration meeting daily; the administration would decide how to limit the spread of Covid. The administration would receive guidance from Health and Human Services (HHS). Dr. Jette noted that Rockingham, Hillsborough, and Merrimack Counties have all turned red. The School District has to look at the situation day-by-day.

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**Agenda Topic:** Public Input @ 4:52 pm

**Presenter:** Chairman Steven J. Webber

1. No Public Input

Public Input closed at 4:53 pm.

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**Agenda Topic:** Business (Cont.)

**Presenter:** Chairman Steven J. Webber

**Recreation Commission Input:**

Chair Andrew Collins

Mr. Collins said that the Recreation Commission had deferred to the Board of Selectmen, in the past, when the Recreation Commission needed or wanted guidance from the Board of Selectmen. Selectman Steve Webber commented that the Recreation Commission is the recreation field's governing body, and the Selectmen would like to know how the Recreation Commission feels about going ahead with the Jamboree. Mr. Collins asked for a Recreation Commission member to make a motion for a recommendation.

**Discussion:**

Mike Boschi mentioned that the concern seemed to be over the enforcement of wearing masks, physical distancing, and health checks. He said that the athletic leagues have been doing this for months. He used LYSL and the state soccer leagues as examples. Mr. Boschi noted that he believed that the enforcement of the policies had been more strict in Litchfield than elsewhere. Mr. Boschi added that the numbers that Ms. Bourque discussed are the total numbers for the day. The way the schedule has been created, the total number of people should be divided by four. He has complete confidence in the LYSL.

Peter Ames said that he opposed the motion. He agreed with Mr. Collins that the Rec Commission has deferred to the Board of Selectmen in the past, and he believed that the majority of Selectmen are opposed to the event. He added that the state is also not supporting the event. Mr. Ames stated that he does not believe that the LYSL would adequately enforce the safety policies that would be put in place. He noted that society depends on people to be responsible, and some choose not to be accountable. Mr. Ames added that he could not support the Jamboree because if Covid is spread, the schools would likely be affected.

Mr. Gannon and Mr. Ruggles agreed with Mr. Ames. Mr. Collins said that his major concern was having the Jamboree, Halloween, and the election within four days of each other.

**Motion:** ( M. Boschi / S. Gannon ) I move to approve the Halloween Jamboree.

**Vote:** ( o-o-o ) No vote taken

## **Board of Selectmen Vote**

### **Discussion:**

Selectman J. Pinciario said that he was concerned about the ability to enforce physical distancing. Selectman R. Leary mentioned that the Emergency Management Team did not support the event, and he was going to follow their guidance. Selectman S. Webber agreed with the other Selectmen and said he would not support allowing the event.

**Motion:** ( Selectman R. Leary / Selectman J. Pinciario ) I move not to approve the Halloween Jamboree.

### **Roll Call Vote:**

#### **Board of Selectmen**

1. Selectman R. Lascelles - yes
2. Selectman R. Leary - yes
3. Selectman K. Lynch - yes
4. Selectman J. Pinciario - yes
5. Selectman S. Webber - yes

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**Agenda Topic:** Adjournment

**Presenter:** Chairman Steven J. Webber

**Discussion:** None

**Motion:** (Selectman R. Leary / Selectman J. Pinciario) Motioned to adjourn the meeting.

### **Roll Call Vote:**

#### **Board of Selectmen**

1. Selectman R. Lascelles - yes
2. Selectman R. Leary - yes
3. Selectman K. Lynch - yes
4. Selectman J. Pinciario - yes
5. Selectman S. Webber - yes

#### **Recreation Commission**

1. Chair Andy Collins - yes
2. Peter Ames - yes
3. Mike Boschi - yes
4. Chris Burns - yes
5. Steve Gannon - yes
6. Andrew Ruggles - yes

The meeting adjourned at 5:11 pm.

Approved by the Board of Selectmen:

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Steven J. Webber, Chair

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F. Robert Leary, Sr., Vice Chair

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Richard W. Lascelles

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Kevin A. Lynch

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John E. Pinciario