

Town of Litchfield, NH
Board of Selectmen
Special Meeting
April 19, 2021
Litchfield Town Hall

In Attendance:

Selectmen: F. Robert Leary, Sr., Vice Chairman (virtual); Richard W. Lascelles; Kevin A. Lynch; and Kimberly M. Queenan

Town Administrator: Troy Brown (virtual)

Also in Attendance: Fire Chief Frank Fraitzl, Police Chief Ben Sargent, and Chairman Matt Lepore

Absent: Chairman Steven Webber

Note: Special Meeting for the continuation of the mask mandate within the Town of Litchfield

1. Call to Order:

- a. 7:00 pm - Vice-Chairman Robert Leary called the meeting to order, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Business:

a. Continuation of Face Mask Mandate:

Fire Chief Frank Fraitzl mentioned that the Emergency Management Team met on Thursday, April 15, and the Team discussed that the State Mask Mandate would end at midnight on Friday, April 16. He noted that the Safer at Home guidelines from the State of New Hampshire expires on May 7. Chief Fraitzl expects that the policies will be updated and probably relaxed after May 7. The State will no longer have a mask mandate, but this does not stop municipalities and businesses from creating a mask mandate.

Chief Fraitzl stated that most of the Town Hall staff had received their second Covid-19 vaccinations on Saturday, April 17. The Litchfield Police and Fire Departments received their second vaccinations previously. He noted that the timeline for the full efficacy of the vaccine is 14 days, and 14 days from April 17 is Saturday, May 1.

Chief Fraitzl commented that the Emergency Management Team desired that Town Hall and the other town buildings continue to use physical distancing and the wearing of masks to protect the staff. He mentioned that Dave Mellen would talk to his team about wearing masks and maintaining social distancing. Chief Fraitzl said that the Emergency Management Team was only talking about Town Hall and the Transfer Station. He added that Talent Hall had not been opened, the lobby at the police station is still closed, and the same for the fire station.

Vice-Chair Robert Leary asked if Chief Ben Sargent had anything that he wanted to add to the discussion. Chief Sargent mentioned that he agreed with Chief Fraitzl and added that the Board would need to pass an ordinance to allow the police department to enforce a town mandate to wear masks. Chief Sargent noted that if a resident was currently on town property, the police could only ask the resident to put on a mask and not require the resident to wear a mask. He mentioned that Covid fatigue has set in, and he was not going to ask the Board to pass an ordinance requiring residents to wear a mask. He noted that two weeks would allow town employees to receive their vaccination shots.

Vice-Chair Leary commented that the Board and Town Administrator had received emails from residents regarding a mask mandate within the Town of Litchfield. He acknowledged that he does not enjoy wearing a mask but is willing to wear a mask to protect others. Selectman Richard Lascelles mentioned that he believed the Selectmen were in a no-win situation and added that the Selectmen should be ready for conflicts with Litchfield residents.

Selectman Kevin Lynch stated that he knows people who are not going to get the Covid-19 vaccine, similar to the flu shot. He noted that there are people who just do not believe in vaccinations, and he asked that they think of the people around them. He pointed out that if someone went to the supermarket, that person is not there alone; there are workers and other shoppers.

Selectman Kim Queenan mentioned that confrontation had been a topic of discussion with residents. She asked that the Board keep in mind that residents may prefer to keep the Town Meetings virtual, and she requested that the drop-box continue to be an option. She added that residents should feel comfortable wearing their masks in town buildings, even after the town mandate ends. Selectman Rich Lascelles noted that the town could place a sign that reads wearing masks is optional but recommended.

Town Administrator Troy Brown commented that by Monday, May 3, all the town employees would be inoculated by the vaccine and allowed to walk around Town Hall without having to wear a mask.

Discussion: The Board discussed when the town employees would be considered fully inoculated. May 1 was considered the 14th day from the April 17 vaccination. Town Administrator Troy Brown advised using the date of May 2
Motion: (Selectman R. Leary / Selectman K. Lynch) I move to continue to enforce the town building mandate for mask-wearing within the town buildings and at the Recycling Center, as stated in the email from Mr. Brown.
Vote: (0-0-0) No vote was taken.

Discussion: None
Motion: (Selectman R. Leary / Selectman K. Lynch) I move to continue to enforce the town building mandate for mask-wearing within the town buildings and at the Recycling Center until May 2, as directed by the Emergency Management Team.

Roll-Call:

- a. Selectman R. Leary - Yes
- b. Selectman R. Lascelles - Yes
- c. Selectman K. Lynch - Yes
- d. Selectman K. Queenan - Yes

Vote: (4-0-0) The motion carried

3. **Public Input at 7:35 pm:**

- a. None

Public Input closed at 7:36 pm.

4. Conservation Commission:

Chairman Matt Lepore of the Conservation Commission requested permission from the Board to build a bridge on the Boulder Dash Trail. Mr. Lepore mentioned that the trail crosses a stream about two feet wide, and the Conservation Commission built a bridge and would like to place it over the stream. He stated that the Boulder Dash Trail is located between the State Forest and Musquash on the White Lot. Mr. Lepore said that the bridge is about four feet in length. Selectman Lynch mentioned that the White Lot was Town property and not State property.

The Board gave Mr. Lepore permission to install the bridge.

5. Adjournment:

Motion: (Selectman R. Lascelles / Selectman K. Queenan) motioned to adjourn the public meeting at 7:43 pm.

Roll-Call:

- a. Selectman R. Leary - Yes
- b. Selectman R. Lascelles - Yes
- c. Selectman K. Lynch - Yes
- d. Selectman K. Queenan - Yes

Vote: (4-0-0) The motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,
Matthew Sullivan
BOS Recording Secretary

Approved by the Board of Selectmen:

Steven J. Webber, Chairman

F. Robert Leary, Sr., Vice Chairman

Richard W. Lascelles

Kevin A. Lynch

Kimberly M. Queenan