

Village of Lyndonville Ordinance Proposal

Frequently asked questions:

a) Will each of these proposed ordinances decrease the amount of people who would attend said parks or events?

- It may actually have the opposite affect and we may gain spectators or park goes due to the clean air environment. But in my opinion (since there is no possible data to on any of this information) unless the community of Lyndonville has a smoking percentage of over 50% (Caledonia County is at a 18% adult smoking rate¹) and use the park frequently or hold events constantly, I do not foresee a mass amount of community members boycotting each of these proposals.

b) What will enforcement look like and who will be enforcing this?

- Each proposed ordinance has an enforcement section. It states that Law Enforcement may issue a Vermont Municipal Complaint and cite a person for an amount of dollars if that person was in violation of the municipal ordinance. What the proposed ordinance does not state is the ideology behind what an ordinance can in fact do. By having an ordinance it will give civilians, businesses, organizations etc. the chance to speak up if they so desire and be confident because they now have something to fall back on. It will be up to the community to enforce themselves and be willing to change the social norms for a healthier community. The PD will not waste valuable man, municipal and tax dollars on smoking violations unless it is a case where the person becomes combative and has threatening behavior will the PD step in. Another form of enforcement is the use of signage. The Vermont Department of Health offers free signs to anyone willing to go smoke/tobacco/vape/marijuana-free. NVRH can also help purchase custom signs if the village is looking for other options.

c) Would there be any liability issues?

- Since smoking is a global health concern, this proposed ordinance would be protecting the municipal government by not condoning the use of cancerous tobacco products within municipal parks and/or events. There is however an exception to the rule in the proposal. Any vendor may apply to purchase a license which waives the ordinance rule for the selected time of the event. The grant of such license and fee of purchase will be up to the trustees. If a license is granted, the liability will shift to the vender not the municipality.

d) Will there be extra work and money involved?

- Not from the village. There are programs which can assist with free signs and volunteers who can install the signs.

e) Where will the smokers go? And will it interrupt local business?

- Lyndonville is not populated enough to see a shift in where smokers will go. Even during our largest events you may only see a small shift. This shift may only be someone walking to a sidewalk to smoke or across the street.

f) What are the benefits? There may not be a smoking problem so why bother!

- There are many benefits to passing both ordinances. Yes it may take time to change the social norms of each but in the end it is worth it. For example; tourists, families, children, pets, environment etc. each one benefits. Even if there wasn't a perceived problem in any of the proposed areas, why would we not want to be proactive and add more security to our municipality? Smoking is not a right. It is a privilege but we want to be fair. I think not smoking around kids at parks is fair to the kids. If we can pass a state law ACT 135 making it illegal to smoke/vape in a car with children then why not in a park or event with Children?

g) Do people really care about this?

- I will not pretend to answer this but direct you to the Lyndon Opinion survey which I have attached.

References:

- 1, <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/vermont/2018/measure/factors/9/data>

Tennyson Marceau
Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital
Prevention Services