

Litchfield Chamber of Commerce Quarterly Newsletter



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Chamber News

Food Truck Ordinance approved by Litchfield City Council

Written by Jim Timpe, Chamber Board Member

The Litchfield City Council meetings are open to the public and held every other week at City Hall. Typically, business at these meetings is centered primarily on approval of expenditures and discussion of grants and other initiatives. However, over these past few months, the council had the opportunity to also focus on an issue that relates directly to the Chamber of Commerce – business in Litchfield, and in this case, specifically food truck businesses.

The topic was originally brought up around the need for the passage of a food truck ordinance to better manage and control the use of food truck businesses as well as mitigate their impact on brick-and-mortar food service businesses (restaurants). Mayor Dougherty was especially concerned about the impact of these businesses on the long-term integrity of restaurants in the area, the impact on businesses and taxes, as well as health and traffic control concerns. Food truck owners in the area testified several times at council meetings, naming their concerns about the proposed 13-page ordinance and its impact on their businesses.

The Chamber was contacted by a few of our members and asked for our assistance. The Board of Directors discussed how best to assist, and the decision was to give all our members a chance to provide us their voices with a survey. The survey had an astounding return rate of over 50% of our membership! The result was clear. Ninety-eight (98%) percent of all respondents, and eighty-six (86%) percent of our food service members, were in favor of having food truck businesses in Litchfield. The overwhelming majority felt they should pay an annual fee to do business here, and a large percentage

Questions	Notes: 62 respondents, 9% >50 employees, 91% <50 employees			
Do you Support Food Trucks in Litchfield?	98% Yes	2% No		
If Yes, How Far Should they be from a Food Service Establishment?	10% 10 Feet	25% 50 Feet	10% Greater than 150 Feet	55% No Limit
Should Food Trucks be Charged a Fee?	68% Yes	32% No		
If Yes, What Type of Fee?	57% Annual Fee only	29% Per Occasion Fee Only	14% Both Annual and Per Occasion Fees	

wanted there to be some distance required from existing food service establishments. There was also strong support from the respondents to permit individual businesses to allow a food truck on their private property for events like fundraisers, colleague boosters, or sales promotions. These results were shared with the council members and a representative spoke about the results at the council meeting to make sure your voices were heard. Our ability to present these survey results sparked debate on the council about the requirements in the ordinance and how to ensure that these businesses can be supported to allow for growth of commerce in the community.

We would like to hear back from our members on news and information they would like to know or learn more about. Please feel free to send an email to the Chamber with your feedback.

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