



For Immediate Release

Date: February 08, 2021

Re: Fines Levied and Charges Filed in Knolls Halloween Party

The Utah County Attorney's Bureau of Investigation presented evidence collected thus far in their active investigation to senior executives of the Utah County Attorney's office in a lengthy briefing. It was determined the investigation, although ongoing, has reached a point where the evidence supports two actions.

The first action is a civil penalty in varying amounts up to \$10,000 to principal individuals, and businesses responsible for event organization. The violations are issued by Eric Edwards, Executive Director of the Utah County Department of Health. The following individuals and companies are issued a Notice of Violation of Public Health Order 2020-20:

- Branden A. Estrada of Sandy, Utah - Civil Penalty in the amount of \$10,000
- Eric Little of Sandy, Utah - Civil Penalty in the amount of \$10,000
- The Tribe Utah, LLC, Eric Little Registered Agent - Civil Penalty in the amount of \$10,000
- Samuel M. Nii, Orem, Utah - Civil Penalty in the amount of \$10,000
- Tanner G. Valerio of Bluffdale, Utah - Civil Penalty in the amount of \$10,000
- Young and Dumb, LLC of South Jordan, Utah - Civil Penalty in the amount of \$10,000

Utah State Public Health Order 2020-20(3)(c)(iii) states that an event host, defined as "a person that owns, operates, provides facilities for, or has formal oversight over any of the following where a social gathering occurs...[a] commercial event venue, commercial party venue, concert...[or] dance," of a social gathering, defined as "an in-person gathering of individuals from separate households..." shall:

- A. require each individual attending the social gathering to wear a mask;

B. complete the Event Management Template provided by the Department; and
C. require six feet of physical distance between individuals from separate households who attend the social gathering unless the event host receives a waiver of this requirement from the county executive in consultation with the local health officer.

Specifically, on the evening of October 31, 2020, Utah County Sheriff (UCSO) Deputies responded to information of a large gathering near the Knolls area on the west side of Utah Lake. Deputies observed and social media posts of the event depicted thousands of vehicles and people in attendance without masks and failing to physically distance.

“This is just the type of super spreader event we were all concerned about. In addition to supporting the civil penalty levied by the Health Department, we are also filing Class B Misdemeanors in the Utah County Justice Court,” said Utah County Attorney David Leavitt.

It is unlawful for any person, association, corporation, or officer thereof to willfully violate any state health order. Utah Code § 26-23-3(1). Violation of a state health order is a class B misdemeanor for a first-time offense, and a class A misdemeanor for a similar violation within two years. Utah Code § 26-23-6(1)(a). Furthermore, any person, association, corporation, or officer thereof, who violates a lawful state health order shall be assessed a civil penalty not to exceed \$10,000.00 per violation. Utah Code § 26-23-6(2)(b).

“Our estimates of nearly 10,000 people at this event represent a real danger to the health of our county, especially its more vulnerable population. While I fully understand the desire to gather, we have a responsibility to our neighbors, families, and friend’s health and welfare. Knowingly violating the laws and failing to comply with orders, won’t get a pass.” continues Mr. Leavitt.

Those who are charged with Class B Misdemeanors include:

- Tanner G. Valerio, Bluffdale, UT
- Andrew Ivie, Midway, UT
- Talifolaukovi Roger Foliaki, Pleasant Grove, UT
- Branden Abel Estrada, Sandy, UT
- Sadie Broooke Salisbury, Draper, UT
- James D. McCreynolds, Lindon, UT
- Samuel Mark Nii, Orem, UT
- Daniel Edward Mortenson, Eden, UT
- Erik Scott Little, Sandy, UT

“This is still a developing and ongoing investigation. We are cooperating with other agencies. The work done by our investigation’s bureau is significant in identifying factual

support for these actions taken," stated Patty Johnston, Chief, Utah County Bureau of Investigations.

David Leavitt continues, "Today we begin to act on the results of that investigation and in the interest of our residents. This matter hits right at the heart of the public's safety."

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