

4-H Staff Meeting Announcement for Special Spending Proposal Meeting on April 18th, 2022

Hi Everyone:

After the April 4th Livestock Council Meeting ended, several 4-H members and volunteers had questions about what was discussed, especially regarding the total account balance for the Council as well as the proposed spending the Council Board would like to do prior to fair. I am hoping that we can clarify some of the recent changes made regarding finances and spending, and when I am done sharing these, we are happy to answer any questions you may have.

We 4-H staff have oversight over all of our county clubs and councils, and that includes financial oversight. Leelanau County has traditionally had oversight of the Council's financials, even before my time, and I am responsible for reporting balances in the bank accounts for the Council to MSU and to the IRS each year. In past years, our council members and officers (and we staff) typically focused on the balance of the account that held the money for our annual budget, but what was often not clarified for everyone was that we actually had three bank accounts, with separate balances. Often, after most, or all of, the auction checks cleared, the combined three totaled to about \$80,000 to \$90,000 each December. We have also had two unusual budget years, 2020, in which we had a virtual auction and almost no expenses, but we still had auction receipts and the commission, and last year, 2021, where we had a higher-than-average auction sales total, and thus higher commission totals. So, our account balances for the Council accounts have increased.

With the change of Treasurers this year, and realizing that we (4-H staff and the 4-H Livestock Council) could be providing clearer information about the Council's finances, Emily, Annette from my office, and I met with Kayce and Megan to think about ways to help with documentation using QuickBooks desktop and moving the three accounts into just one (which is what my own local council did with its multiple accounts to help with our reconciliation process.) None of our previous Treasurers were ever provided with so much information to help them get started in their roles, and so this was a way to do a better job of supporting our new Treasurer and our Board. It is also asking more of the Treasurer in their role, because Megan needs to do a lot more specific documentation to keep things clear. We think the financial meeting was beneficial, and we hope the Council membership feels like the reports are clear and helpful. We want to compliment Megan for agreeing to learn more about QuickBooks and take on some of these new tasks. Again, we did this because we have never provided much training for past Treasurers, and this should be our new standard practice for anyone who is new to their role on the Board.

Our past Treasurers provided information in their reports about all three accounts and the balances in them, but sometimes it was challenging to see what the Council truly had and what was actually auction receipts, before checks were deposited by youth. If you would like to look back at past documents, you can find financial records on the website. Look for the "Council Info" tab, scroll to the very bottom of the page, and you will find a link that says: "Livestock Council Meeting Agendas, Minutes, and Financial Statements can be found [HERE](#)".

As 4-H staff, just as with our 4-H Livestock Council volunteers, it is our goal to always try to be as transparent as possible, and work to find clear ways to communicate our policies and our total funds, as we are a non-profit entity, and we are under public rules and regulations when it comes to fundraising and spending. We also are not to have large amounts of money in our non-profit accounts. This means that having a total balance of over \$50,000 (and we have over twice that) requires us to have a spending plan. We want to support our council, and especially our Council Treasurer, as best we can by finding the best ways for her to document spending, run reports, and present budget information to the entire Council membership. We are trying to do a better job, as 4-H staff, to support our Board officers.

Thank you all for being here tonight, and does anyone have any questions?