

March 17, 2024

Dear Mr Mayor and Brock Township Council Members,

My name is Jennifer McLeod and I am the resource coordinator for our local Durham West 4-H Association. We are hosting a “rally” or sign-up day on Saturday March 30 2024 at the Cannington Arena. We offer our current membership and invite new members to come and skate with us from 1-2 pm and from 2-3 pm there will be an informal meeting in which our current president- Heather Moore will welcome everyone to another exciting year of 4-H in Durham West. The leaders of the clubs that will be offered this year will be in attendance, to explain what this year’s clubs will look like, and answer any questions that our members and parents may have. This event is an important event, especially post pandemic, so that we can enjoy fellowship and get back to in person events and try to get our membership back to the previous, post pandemic numbers.

We are requesting the township consider a rate reduction for our event, or, if possible, to waive the fees completely. 4-H is a not-for-profit organization, and we do seek community support for many of the events that we have throughout the year, as well as doing our own fundraising to help to keep the cost of our events low. Some of our events throughout the year include rally, Judging Night, Go for the Gold, local achievement programs at the completion of clubs and we end our year with our Awards night. We encourage and invite any of you to attend any of our events to see what a wonderful group of youth we have participate, as well as meet the volunteers who organize and oversee these events.

For anyone who is not aware of the 4-H program, let me explain. The 4-H program has been in Canada since 1913. It primarily focused on crops and livestock. The 4-H moto is “Learn to Do by Doing” and encouraged youth engagement and hands on involvement. The 4 H’s stand for Head, Heart, Health and Hands. Today’s 4-H programing may look different than it did in 1913, but the moto and benefits remain the same. Agriculture, food and the environment will always be in important aspect of the 4-H program, but 4-H has evolved to include non agriculture topics that are important to today’s youth.

It is not just local clubs, like gardening, or vet science, or dairy clubs that is what 4-H is all about. Members who join 4-H are also invited to apply for scholarships, attend provincial events- such as Future Leaders in Action, or Leadership Camp, or attend National events, including in participating in exchange programs with other provinces and National Members Conference. 4-H is available to youth ages 6-25.

The 4-H program builds strong community leaders as we give our youth an opportunity to be a part of a meaningful, positive experience that builds confidence, skill, a sense of responsibility and purpose. We are shaping our youth to become active participants in our community. The Honourable Lisa Thompson, Senator Robert Black and Ken Knox are active 4-H supporters and alumni. Other notable 4-H alumni include US president Jimmy Carter, Vice President Al Gore, Luke Bryan, Julia Roberts and Roslyn Carter. This supports the strong leadership that the 4-H program offers our youth. The 4-H program creates successful individuals with strong work ethic and leadership skills which will stay with them during their lives.

Thank you for the opportunity to be presented to the Brock Township Council meeting and I ask that you consider our request for a rate reduction or waiving the fee for our 4-H rally.