



February 13, 2025

Dear Mayor and Council,

Re: VRF's 2023 security deposit to be held in trust by O'Keefe Ranch, and never returned

For Vernon Ribfest 2023, we chose O'Keefe Ranch as the organization to support. It was our way of supporting an organization in dire financial need. Although O'Keefe has not disclosed publicly or to VRF it is our understanding (from a reliable resource) that approximately \$15,000 was collected at the Vernon Ribfest through gate donations over the 3-day festival. O'Keefe never returned our security deposit. They said they were going to return the money shortly in an email written in July 2024 but did not follow through. We are writing this letter to request the City of Vernon to intervene.

We understand that the City of Vernon provides O'Keefe with ten thousand dollars per year. We are asking that the security deposit for our festival at O'Keefe Ranch in July 2023, \$7,500.00 plus interest and fees for a total of \$9,223.81 be redirected to the Vernon Ribfest Society.

We took a personal short-term loan to cover VRF's shortfall and if the money is not recovered it will go on our personal mortgage. This is a lot of money for pensioners, and it would be tough to handle, for us financially. We appreciate any help that you can give us, and we would certainly be very grateful.

Sincerely

Elaine Gallacher, Founding President

Vernon Ribfest Society

Maureen Sather, Founding Treasurer

Vernon Ribfest Society