

Progress Report - TPE

Section 1 – Usage of Space Statistics

Event Details – With the generosity of the municipality, which allows us to use our space at no cost, we have been able to keep the majority of our services free to community members of all ages.

Activities include the following:

- Family & Friends Gaming (operates bi-weekly)
- After-school and lunchtime gaming for students
- Monthly seniors gaming hosted by elementary school students

People of all ages have consistently used the room, with over 1,000 attendees utilizing the space since it opened in January of this year.

Most recently, we established a relationship with Laura Pye, a grade three teacher at River Heights. Her class takes a walking field trip once every month to use our space in the afternoon, and we have started building a game library for them at their school.

Our revenue streams include camp days for young people, private event space rentals, and an upcoming community investment initiative, which we will conduct annually. For private events, we have served the IODE, Kinsmen Club, and numerous families for birthday parties, as well as sports teams that want to host a function for team building or an end-of-year celebration.

Section 2 – Meeting Community Needs

The heart of our work lies in strengthening community ties through gaming, allowing anyone to play with anyone. Perhaps the most promising aspect of this project is seeing how young people are responding. Young people are garnering their leadership skills and building trust through helping to care for the facility. Our volunteers are welcoming to everyone who walks through our doors, and for that, it helps young people build upon their connections with their peers.

Families are rediscovering the gaming world, spending less time on devices at home, and using games for

Above all else, we are providing the community with a social platform that helps address the challenges of social isolation. A handful of young people have expressed deep appreciation for giving them a space where they feel safe and welcome. It is resonating with our motto – “Game on, community strong.”

Section 3 – Community Support

If you include our game leaders at school, our volunteer team sits at 82 people. Most encouraging is that, like our patrons, they range in age from 12 to individuals in their senior years.

We are actively involved in all our schools at this stage, with continued trust from principals and parent council leaders. With their help, they see that lunchtime gaming continues in their schools as an extension of what we offer in our community space.

Perhaps most encouraging is seeing how people have become tipping points, as word of mouth has undoubtedly played a significant role in our ongoing success, alongside Facebook posts that have frequently received over 100 likes.

Section 4 – The Future

Years before bringing this project to Dorchester, our vision was simple – Build, Sustain, and Grow. With the way Thames Centre has created latitude for us to do our best work, we now have the opportunity to grow and become a much-needed social program that, in the long term and with the right partnerships, we will be able to sustain itself financially.

It is commonplace— and rightfully so —for communities to offer athletic and senior services to their community members. The Playroom Experiment provides solutions to bridge the gap in social outlets and promote good mental health and well-being. We would appreciate the opportunity to expand further and present a business plan over the summer that will create even more gaming platforms. This would require maintaining the use of our current facilities while also utilizing the empty mezzanine area above to bring these new ideas into motion. We plan to survey the community for their thoughts on supporting these ideas, so that we can provide the municipality with evidence that our vision aligns with the values of those who live in Thames Centre.

We are incredibly proud of our volunteer team and thankful for the municipality's support thus far. From our vantage point, it is helping to garner something transformational for many.

Section 5 - Lease Extension Proposal

The adage goes – “We are better together.”

We intend to keep this project running in Thames Centre for many years to come, as long as we can maintain and then build upon the support from the municipality.

What this means for next steps is to review a business plan that we would like to submit for your consideration over the summer. It is very nuanced and comprehensive, but it will enable Thames Centre to offer a program that can sustain itself in the long term, requiring only an initial short-term investment. We believe we can provide evidence in the weeks ahead that it will not only be fully supported by community members, but also prudent for the municipality to be a partner with us in the future.