

## **Lakeshore Karate -Partnership Report and Request for Reconsideration**

### **Mission Statement** "Teaching Self Esteem through Self Defense"

Through the practice of karate, you can enhance all areas of your life with greater self confidence, self esteem and physical conditioning. Our goals in Karate training are to develop and improve students' self discipline, confidence, self esteem, fitness, balance and coordination. Learning violence is a choice, confidence avoids conflict and supports society expectations. We teach and expect life skills such as responsibility for your actions, your family and your community. We expect students to be involved and be leaders within their schools and within our community.

### **Background**

Lakeshore Karate has been operating out of the Community Centre in Woodslee, since 2008. Lakeshore Karate operates as a partner program with the Town of Lakeshore. This partnership with the Town of Lakeshore allows for programming costs to remain low for students wishing to pursue Karate training. Students are charged \$20/month, this rate has not increased since day one. This extremely low-cost rate eliminates the obstacles and assists parents to find affordable cost programs for their children, to promote confidence, increase physical activity all in a safe environment. Classes are offered at the Town of Lakeshore, Libro Community Centre in Woodslee.

Lakeshore Karate program is run as a traditional dojo, that has one chief instructor and 8 additional blackbelt assistant instructors. These blackbelts volunteer their time to assist in karate/weapons instruction, guidance and act as role model examples to the students that attend our programing.

Lakeshore Karate program offers the following classes:

#### **Monday and Thursday**

(6-10 yrs) 5:00 pm-5:45 pm  
(6-10 yrs) 5:45 pm-6:30 pm  
(11-14 yrs) 6:30 pm-7:15 pm  
(11-14 yrs) 7:15 pm-8:00 pm  
(15+ adults) 8:00 pm-8:45 pm

#### **Saturday-Bonus classes (weapons/sparring)**

9:00 am-12:00 pm

### Historical Perspective of Creation of Karate Programming

We started our Karate program due to the need to save the Millen Community Centre/Library back in 2008. In the previous years the Essex County Libraries were looking at closing all small branch libraries, Woodslee was on the cutting block.

Working to save the library, we identified that no community programs were running out of the Millen Community Centre. The Town had a partnership rental with a Community Church for their School, but after the Church group left, there was a stagnant period. Several town programs tried yet failed to run at the Community Centre, citing lack of interest, instructors not wanting to drive out for programs and the community support wasn't there.

Woodslee community members identified that saving Community Centre/Library was the goal, (the building blocks of our Woodslee community), so we had to find more tenants to offer programs and help increase library usage.

Previously, when my children were young, I coached and was active within several community organizations both Woodslee Orioles Baseball and the St Joachim Athletic Assoc for Soccer and Baseball. Seeing a need and having a skill base as a Karate instructor with a desire to help. I offered to start a karate program that was based on not making revenue, but one based on giving back and making opportunities for young kids and teens. The Town agreed to this new start up program, identified its needs and created the foundation of the partner program.

Lakeshore Karate signed and started paying a monthly partner rate to offer programming to the area community. The spin off benefit to the karate program hours was the library was getting filled with users that were in the building (parents/students waiting for classes or during pickup and drop off of their children). As the program grew, the use of the library increased, thus the EC Library moved away from closure to maintaining the branch. Over the years while we continued to offer low cost programs in partnership with the Town, we always met with Town administrators to be involved in discussions relating to cost increases that would affect our program

Over those years, the Town was moving towards centralizing programming and were considering closure of the Millen Community Centre. This was something that wasn't going to happen, I worked alongside another community advocate, Donna Roubos, and we rallied the citizens, we organized petitions and worked through the budget processes with several different councils, many different administrators for over six years to prevent closure. We organized and campaigned a community grass roots movement to fight against closure and to encourage council to approve the building of a much-needed new community centre to replace the outdated Millen Centre. We were successful.

During this time, I got involved and became the Woodslee Representative on Lakeshore's Community Advisory Community, (previously named "parks committee") a position I held for

12 years and one I just vacated at the end of the term in 2018. I believe in programming for this community, I believe in the Libro Community Centre, I believe in Lakeshore.

There have always been other locations in Woodslee to locate and offer our programming from yet I have never swayed from my partnership commitment. Our program was first introduced May 2008 at the Millen Centre. During the tear down of the Millen Centre in 2013 and build of the Libro Community Centre, the Town brokered an interim location for us to continue to offer classes until we could move back into the new community centre. The Community Centre was built and we moved back into the Community Centre Aug 2014.

Since beginning our partnership in 2008; we have maintained a not for profit karate program within our community, we reinvest any profits back into the program and help families that need assistance with cost for attendance, equipment and uniforms. Since 2008, we have offered and provided classes to hundreds of local residents, and their families. We have continued to offer a low cost community-based program that uses the local community centre and supports the Library.

There are other aspects of the Lakeshore Karate program that also need to be discussed to understand what we stand for, what we provide to this community.

#### **Community Responsibility- Lakeshore Karate "Gives Back"**

- Supports the local Lakeshore Community Services each year with a canned goods and non-perishables food drives through-out the year to help those in need. This year (2020) we are participating in the monthly "Show You Care Campaign" needs are identified and collected by the parents and students to donate to this campaign.
- Annually donates backpacks and schools supplies to the Rotary International "Pack for Success" providing kids with the tools for learning campaign.
- Provides Free Women's Self Defence Classes with voluntary donations being collected for the Victim Services of Windsor Essex County
- Conducts Partner Programs for the Essex County Library (Lakeshore Branches -Stoney Point, Comber and Woodslee Branches -providing Free Women's Self Defence Classes for 13 yrs and up)
- Provides free karate and self defense demonstrations at community events or to groups as a means to promote the values of Karate-do. (Canada Day, Seniors Groups, etc)
- Participates in the District School Board (40 hour) Community Involvement Program, allowing high school students to volunteer around the dojo to complete their necessary hours.
- Community Spring Clean Up Day- students walk the neighbourhood to pick up and help clean up garbage or debris. This reinforces civic values and responsibilities.

- Student Leadership Development Awards for students mentoring, becoming engaged in the community and participating in our Give Back programs.
- Libro Community Centre (Ambassadors). The Town of Lakeshore staff refer potential renters or users to attend during our program hours to get facilities tours and to get details regarding rental questions addressed. We also cancel our scheduled classes when the Town requires the program room for events/functions. We monitor the Community Centre, we report any deficiencies or concerns (lighting issues, heating/cooling issues, damages to the Town, for report or corrections.

The reason I presented the above programs we participate in, is to help you understand the impact we have had within Lakeshore.

We have had students attend classes from all over Lakeshore (students have attended classes from Stoney Point, Light House Cove, St Joachim, Staples, Comber, Maidstone, Belle River, Maidstone and of course Woodslee).

We support our local businesses, organizations and services. We support making opportunities to make our community a reason, a place people want to live and raise their families within. Having community partners to strengthen core values is a bonus for the Town of Lakeshore.

Since starting classes in 2008, we are very proud to acknowledge that 46 of our students have tested and obtained their blackbelts (1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> degree levels). We have another group of teen student's moving towards this goal. I will note the process of obtaining a blackbelt is lengthy. A minimum of 18 years of age and 6 years of training for adults. (Youth blackbelts can be obtained if less then 18 years old). These students that obtained their blackbelts now form part of our team of other adult blackbelts that continue to run our programs.

We have provided classes and have helped hundreds and hundreds of residents and their children develop and foster a better citizen mentality versus a sometimes-destructive community attitude for over a decade.

#### **Current Issue Relating to Tariff of Fees -Bylaw**

In December, I was contacted by administration and advised that they were directed by Council to end the long-standing partnership, our previous grandfathered program. I was contacted to attend a meeting with The CAO and Director of Community and Development Services.

At this meeting I was presented 2 options. Furthermore, administration indicated they had no record of formal agreements or partnerships between the Town and Lakeshore Karate. Being quite surprised, I directed them to review their records back as the program was initially set up

with manager Romeo Beaulieu, all subsequent managers would have known, discussed and reinforced the long-standing practice of our partner programming. All would have been privy to many aspects of how this partner programming has benefitted both the Town and to the community.

Furthermore, I provided a program perspective which included the past practice of our working agreement, an acknowledgement of a decade plus relationship. I reviewed that we had made continuous monthly payments, attended discussions, meetings when requested and produced reports over the years. Thus, maintaining my partner responsibilities since 2008. I reviewed how rate increases had occurred over the years and the understanding of how increases could occur. In fact, Lakeshore Recreation Guides has in the past included and identified to residents (actually stating it as a partnership program) that our karate classes were being offered at the Community Centre.

The 2 options presented by Administration were:

1. Instructors start working for the town getting paid an hourly rate and let the Town take over running our program
2. Pay \$57/hr for each hour of programming

Through the review of our karate program, we discussed the opportunity to present an option for consideration, as the two options presented by administration were not being in the spirit of the past working agreements. We identified that we had previously agreed to fees increases over the years. We discussed we weren't opposed to an increase of fees, yet it would need to be something that was achievable and amendable for both parties. I was asked to present a business plan. I was asked to provide program information, and that an alternative to the tariff of fees could be explored.

### Request for Council Consideration

Currently, as previously identified we offer young children, teens and adult programs classes based on age groups for residents across Lakeshore. These classes are offered twice a week at minimum with an additional bonus class of programming as well. We offer year-round classes each class is 45 minutes and Saturday bonus class is 3 hours. We charge \$20/student, that equates to less than \$2.00/class.

We do not have yearly contracts for karate registration. There is zero guarantee students will remain month to month. Student interests change, life circumstances of parents change, we reflect the values of providing a program without the need to make revenue. Registration and class sizes vary as other activities may occur and students come and go throughout the year. If we seem to lose money operating these programs, we are okay as the goal is to offer opportunities, not to make money. We are not a commercial money-making business nor do

we want to become such an industry machine that waters down the meaning and lessons of community giving. We generally maintain 60-70 student year-round.

Since 2008 we have been charged a nominal partner rental fee, this rate has changed several times over the years. Currently the rental fee for use of space in the community centre is \$178.50/month which provides the Town with revenue of \$2142/year for the use of this space.

A simple breakdown of our operating expenses; include rent, insurance (building/equipment) (personal/injury and instructors' waivers), advertising (internet/webhosting and maintenance) and communication costs. Additional budgeted expenses; Equipment (required/replacement), hosting bi-annual/annual seminars and workshops (instructors from across North America), attending annual Tournament, hosting a Summer Karate Camp, instructor events and Christmas Party. Overall, approximately \$1160/month in identified expenses to operate a year-round program offering many learning and developmental opportunities for the students.

### Proposed Fee Considerations

Currently, we have 61 families, we normally maintain 68 students year-round paying \$20/month. 68 students paying \$20/month equals \$1360/month totalling \$16320/year. Any additional students that sign up throughout the year simply creates a buffer for losses as it would be put back into the program for replacement of equipment/other expenses.

Our operating and budgeted expenses are \$13920/year. Our revenues equate to \$16320/year. Currently we provide 11 hrs of total programming per week, providing 572 total programming hours per year (excluding the seminars, workshops and/or tournament hours). Students can attend 2-5 hours of instruction per week.

The option of turning our program over to the Town, with the volunteer instructors becoming paid instructors isn't something we believe in or feel comfortable in doing. Based on our numbers the other option of paying \$57/hour for use of space for our current 11 hours per week of programming equals to \$627/week, \$2717/month, totalling \$32604/year, this is just not achievable.

The fee for, use of space costs alone is twice the money generated, which is required for all programming expenses. We couldn't continue to operate, we would need to drastically change how we offer programs, requiring monthly increases, reduce programming, cut classes and age groups to our Lakeshore families. The only other option is to simply find another venue to deliver our program classes. Leaving zero revenue to be collected, leaving no programming or usage of the Libro Community Centre. An option we really do not support.

### **Proposed Alternative**

As a community partner with over a decade of programming being offered and delivered within our community, we are asking Council to consider and accept an additional fee increase for the use of space of versus the 2 options that were presented by administration.

Therefore, moving forward the Lakeshore Karate Program **will no longer be charged \$178.50/month**. The use of space agreement **will increase by \$196.50/month**. Lakeshore Karate **will now be charged \$375/month** for the use of space from community programming.

This increase of \$196.50/month will provide an additional \$2358/year in revenue. If accepted, the new use of space agreement would provide the Town with a total of \$4500/year in revenue collected from Lakeshore Karate.

This proposed alternative will increase revenue to the Town while maintaining a strong community partner program. (this will increase Lakeshore Karate's operating budget to \$16278.00 per year with a total revenue of \$16320 leaving \$42.00 of surplus to be put back into programming). We will find and reduce our expenses; we will make it work.

We will again, commit that our rates will not increase, and we will maintain the current level of programming to the families and students.

We are always open to reasonable fee increases. Gradual increases based on program reviews including understandings of how and when increases would occur.

We believe in being part of the solution, we believe in our philosophy of giving back, we are dedicated to the Lakeshore Community and support the continued choice of the Libro Community Centre to offer our programming. We hope you consider this alternative option to maintain a community partner that is committed to our youth, our future and to the community.

