



Transparency, Community, & What's Next: Stage Left Town Hall Recap

On Sunday, July 26th, the Stage Left Theater board, staff, and community members gathered for a collaborative Town Hall meeting. Grounded in our mission **"To tell stories, build community, and pursue equity through the production of new and existing theatrical works"** we came together to discuss recent organizational shifts, address our financial landscape, outline our roadmap for the future, and listen to valuable feedback from our community.

Here is an overview of our discussion, where we stand today, and how we are moving forward.

High-Level Overview & State of Affairs

Staffing Changes & Restructuring

We recently experienced several leadership transitions as several team members stepped away for personal and professional reasons. All departures were on excellent terms, but these changes underscored a broader reality: our operational model needs to be restructured to be more sustainable and duties mindfully distributed to support the individuals in their given roles.

To build a stronger foundation, we are taking deliberate time to reevaluate and restructure our leadership model—including artistic oversight, business management, and operations—rather than rushing to fill roles. While we navigate this transition, our energetic board is stepping up to bridge operational gaps, supported by newly onboarded team members in key roles, including: Baker as our new Technical Director, Faythe Lloyd as our new Social Media Coordinator and Adrienne Neal as our new Festival Coordinator.

Additional open roles will be shared soon online and via social media.

Financial Landscape & The "Light What Comes Next" Campaign

Like many non-profit arts organizations nationwide, Stage Left is navigating a challenging financial landscape as corporate sponsorships and grant funding have significantly decreased post-pandemic.

Because ticket sales in an intimate 60-seat venue cover only a fraction of production expenses (approximately 35%), individual donations and sponsorships are vital to keeping our doors open and our ticket prices accessible.

- **The Goal:** We need to raise **\$15,000** by the end of August to cover essential operations (rent, bills, staff stipends) for the rest of this year and complete our 2026 season as is.
- **Progress:** Thanks to our incredible community, we have already raised over **\$3,500** toward this goal!

- **Where the funds go:** Donations directly support essential overhead—keeping the lights on, maintaining our space, paying licensing rights, and honoring worker/artist stipends. Every dollar helps fulfill our current season and positions Stage Left to be able to strategize for what comes next.

Future Plans: Quality Over Quantity

To ensure Stage Left thrives going forward, we are hitting pause on our next season:

- **Season 14 Postponement:** We are delaying our Season 14 announcement and taking a 3-to-6-month window to focus on thoughtful strategic planning, organizational restructuring, and board recruitment.
- **Returning to Our Roots:** We are refocusing on high-quality, thought-provoking, and artistically bold theater—emphasizing depth, authenticity, and community connection over raw volume.
- **Venue Rentals & Special Events:** During this transition window, our space will remain active through affordable venue rentals for local performers and organizations, masterclasses, and special fundraising events.

Community Feedback & Q&A Highlights

During the interactive feedback session, community members shared insightful questions, ideas, and reflections. Here are key takeaways from our open discussion:

Q: Where exactly will my donation to the "Light What Comes Next" campaign go?

A: Funds go directly toward essential fixed operational costs (utilities, rent, facility maintenance) and immediate production expenses required to finish our 2026 season, including Main Stage productions: Mad Underground by local playwright Sandra Hosking, directed by Preston Loomer, as well as our closing show, Riverwood, by WA-local Andrew Lee Creech, directed by Malcom Pelles. The other part of our season-ticketed 2026 season are the two returning Festivals, Fast & Furious - the 1-minute play festival, and Leftovers - the 24-hour play in a day festival, for which our new Festival Coordinator will be overseeing the consistency and quality to ensure a strong finish to our current season.

That said, restricted donations directed toward specific shows, needs or equipment are always welcome! Please let us know how to direct your funds and we will put them to work toward that specific cause.

Q: What kind of programming can we expect moving forward?

A: Attendees expressed a strong desire to see Stage Left embrace what it does best: bold, immersive black-box theater, devised original works, and productions highlighting marginalized voices that larger regional theaters might pass on. We are fully committed to bringing these exact types of challenging, meaningful, and conversation-starting shows to our stage.

Furthermore, as we look to the season ahead - delayed though it may be - we are starting back up a Play-reading Committee to help assist in the artistic vision and play selections for next season. We have added a question to our Volunteer sign-up form to share what committee interests, if any, new volunteers may have.

Q: How will Stage Left better support and recognize its volunteers and artists?

A: Volunteers are the heartbeat of our organization. Feedback highlighted the need for dedicated volunteer appreciation initiatives, clearer communication, and stronger support systems. We are also raising expectations for our Board Liaisons to be present at rehearsals to ensure cast and crew members feel fully heard and supported.

Q: How can community members get involved right now?

A: Beyond financial contributions, we are actively recruiting passionate individuals to join our work! You can get involved by:

- **Connecting to Resources:** own or have connections to a business that could offer in-kind donations? (concessions offerings, business services or advice, materials for set or costume construction, items for a fundraiser basket, etc.) - reach out to offer a non-monetary good or service (please include the fair market value (FMV) and we will happily provide a tax receipt!)
- **Joining a Committee or Volunteering:** Help shape our future on the *Play Reading*, *Marketing & Fundraising*, *Board Recruitment*, or *IDEA (Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity, & Accessibility)* committees. Help with Front of House (box office/bartending), set construction, production crew roles, or assist with a project like backyard cleanup or props room organization!
- **Becoming a Show Sponsor:** Sponsorships start as low as \$250 and come with tickets, playbill recognition, and special perks.

How You Can Help

Stage Left exists to tell stories that matter, and we cannot do it without you.

- **[Donate:](#)** Help us reach our \$15,000 goal by visiting our website (or sending in a check) to contribute to the "**Light What Comes Next**" campaign.
- **[Sponsor & Share:](#)** Connect us with local businesses interested in sponsorship, or simply share our campaign with your network.
- **[Get Involved:](#)** Reach out to join a committee, become a volunteer, or submit your interest for board leadership or volunteer staff positions.

Thank you for your continued passion, honesty, and belief in the power of live theater. Together, we are building a sustainable future for Stage Left and we are so thankful to have your support!