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# Highwire Improv

## Community First

All Community Meeting - January 31st, 2026

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# Meeting Agenda

1. Welcome and Core Values
2. Introducing our New Board Members!
3. 2025 Impact Report
4. 2026 Budget
5. Volunteer Opportunities and Committees
6. Open Q&A

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# Mission

Highwire Improv's mission is to steward a community of artists committed to growth, collaboration, joy, and justice – in Baltimore and around the world – through improvisational theater.



# Core Values

## Transparency

Clear, honest information helps everyone work better together!

## Safety

Physical, psychological, and artistic safety for everyone.

## Community

Here to serve the collective good, we all win together!

## Action

An imperative to make changes, solve problems, and iterate.

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Introducing our  
New Board Members

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# Meet the Highwire Improv Board



Emily Marvin (new)



Kristen McKenzie



Brian Shea



Aaron Thomas (new)



Geoff Taylor (emeritus)



Jess Robey (new)



Barry Wright



Cory Anotado



Brian James O'Connell



Katie Overbey (emeritus)

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# 2025 Impact Report

# Final 2025 Programming Stats

The opening of the Highwire Center greatly increased our show volume and performer payments! Average audience sizes are down, but total attendees per evening are up.

	Shows	In-Person Attendees	Avg. In-Person Audience	Payments to Performers	Highwire Margin
Season 18 (Jan-Mar 2025)	22 in-person 36 online	529	24.1	\$2,678	-\$72
Season 19 (Apr-Jun 2025)	28 in-person 35 online	452	16.1	\$3,585	-\$986
Season 20 (Jul-Sep 2025)	31 in-person 32 online	520	16.8	\$3,383	\$229
Season 21 (Oct-Dec 2025)	66 in-person 28 online	914	13.9	\$6,143	-\$1,130
2025 Totals	147 in-person 131 online	2415	16.4	\$15,788	-\$1,958

# Marketing Stats - Accelerating Growth

	Oct 2024	Dec 2024	Mar 2025	Oct 2025	Dec 2025	Jan 2026
Facebook Followers	1,487	1,505	1,538	1,656	1,695	1,726
Instagram Followers	1,610	1,675	1,848	2,237	2,424	2,515
TikTok Followers	302	302	406	524	596	734
YouTube subscriptions	733	739	760	777	811	843
Email List	1,388	1,506	1,770	2,213	2,371	2,421
Eventbrite Followers	866	971	1,076	1,361	1,886	2,213
Google Reviews	-	-	-	11 (5.0★)	13 (5.0★)	18 (5.0★)
Eventbrite Reviews	-	-	-	66 (4.9★)	78 (4.9★)	87 (4.9★)

# Final 2025 Financial Overview

**Income**      - **Expenses**      = **Net Income**  
**\$228,371.10**      - **\$231,495.83** = **-\$3,124.73\***

## *Top Categories*

Grants:	\$90,622.60
Donations:	\$76,345.51
Core Classes:	\$26,445.72
Applied Improv:	\$17,459.65
Show Tickets:	\$15,393.42

## *Top Categories*

Renovations:	\$109,473.39
Instructor Payments:	\$54,246.93
Rent:	\$27,976.18
Performer Payments:	\$14,078.68**
Venue Fees:	\$8,867.87

\*Note, approximately \$9,000 in grant payments earned in 2025 are still outstanding.

\*\*Some additional performer payments processed via Highwire Venmo.

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# 2026 Budget and Strategy

# Highwire Improv Budget Overview - 2026

**Income** - **Expenses** = **Net Income**  
**\$213,660.00** - **\$209,945.92** = **\$1,314.08**

## *Top Categories*

Grants:	\$28,000.00
Donations:	\$8,000.00
Classes:	\$45,960.00
Workshops:	\$28,800.00
Applied Improv:	\$45,000.00
Shows:	\$41,400.00
Space Rental:	\$16,500.00

## *Top Categories*

Instructor Payments:	\$107,220.00
The Highwire Center:	\$52,349.92
Performer Payments:	\$29,160.00
Admin:	\$11,076.00
Marketing:	\$6,000.00
Venue Fees:	\$4,140.00

# Strategic Pillars for 2026 - Classes

Historically, classes have been a loss leader for Highwire. We've prioritized building the community and delivering an exceptional experience with dual teachers and a significant free workshop -> scholarship program.

In 2026, we still expect Classes and Intro Workshops to lose ~\$16,000, but this is a much smaller percentage compared to previous years, as we will run more advanced classes (1 teacher).

- *Our January class term was actually profitable (+\$1,179)!*
- About half of our budget grant funding is allocated to intro workshops, which basically covers the losses here.

# Strategic Pillars for 2026 - Shows

2026 will be a year of dramatic expansion for our show programming, with our first full year running shows out of The Highwire Center.

We are focused on developing strong artistic programming, great marketing within and outside of Highlandtown, and a best-in-class performer experience. These efforts together aim to raise our average audience size significantly, to the point where people are incentivized to buy advance tickets because shows sell out often enough for that to matter.

# Strategic Pillars for 2026 - Applied Improv

Applied Improv workshops remain the highest margin component of earned income. With our own space to offer, plus multiple clients working with us for consecutive years, we aim to nearly triple the revenue from 2025.

Referrals and marketing for applied improv will be a major focus, as this programming is critical to the organization's financial growth.

In many ways, shows, intro workshops, and classes are sales funnels for potential applied improv clients (hence our willingness to operate those lines of business at zero or negative margin).

We already have \$8,200 in bookings for 2026.

# Strategic Pillars for 2026 - Space Rental

A new opportunity to rent the Highwire Center has the opportunity to drive significant revenue for very low costs, if we can develop the market.



## Listings



### Improv Theater that Can Be Anything You Need!

Address, Parking, Arrival instructions, Wi-Fi, Cancellation policy, etc.

Customize for different activities

We're actively booking The Highwire Center for space rentals; focusing on private workshops / parties, corporate training, sketch/content filming.

# Strategic Pillars for 2026 - Development

2025 included a transformative, but unusual grant with Project Restore.

In 2026, we aim to lay the groundwork for more typical, yet substantial development efforts including general operating grants, project-specific grants, fundraising campaigns, and donor development.

While we do not expect significant returns of federal arts funding, we do believe that foundation, state, and local grant support is possible, though it represents only 13.5% of our planned revenue in 2026, with donations being 3.5%.

So far, we have **\$9,000** in grants won for 2026, with more in review.

# Strategic Pillars for 2026 - Org. Growth

As always, we seek to deepen our commitment to our mission and values, while doing work which advances the art and administration of improv worldwide.

Priority areas of focus include:

- Review and update our Code of Conduct
- Open Source portions of our improv curriculum
- Expand teacher training to include more improv instruction instruction (not a typo) in addition to delivery of inclusion and safety training to more folks
- Develop neighborhood partnerships and integrated community programs

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# How to Get Involved: Volunteering

# Volunteering at Events

Volunteering at our shows is currently the most frequent need:

**Hosting Shows:** Be part of the show, set the vibe for our crowds!

**Front-of-House:** Each show could use assistance with checking people in and managing the space.

**In-Person Tech:** Run the lights, sound, and recording for shows!

**Online Tech:** We can always use help managing the Zoom for online shows on Monday or Tuesday nights or Sunday afternoons.

***Volunteer training not required - just sign up and we'll train you!***



# Want to do More?

A few other opportunities are in the works:

- *Facilities help* - we're building checklists for cleaning and maintenance that folks can help with. Possibly some monthly cleaning days.
- *Committees* - looking to restart some monthly committees on grants, marketing, education, programming.
- *Suggestion Box* - we've launched a new form for idea submissions, so we can track any ideas from the community and respond to them publicly!



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# Q&A

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