

# Sumter Little Theatre Policies & Procedures

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**Section 0: Welcome to the SLT Policies & Procedures**

**0.1 Policies & Procedures objective**

The purpose of the Sumter Little Theatre (SLT) Policies & Procedures is to provide both guidance and, in several cases, governance, for the employees and volunteers operating in the day-to-day activities on behalf of the theatre. In doing so, the Policies & Procedures will not, in some cases, attempt to establish exact protocols that must be adhered to precisely, but rather will present a foundation of standards and best practices expected by the organization.

**0.2 Approval and Revisions**

Before becoming official guidance, all portions of the Policies & Procedures are to be approved by the Sumter Little Theatre Board of Directors by a majority vote of the Board at a regularly scheduled meeting.

Once established, any section of the Policies & Procedures can be amended by a vote of the SLT Board of Directors, also by a majority vote. Proposed amendments apply only to the section being amended. For clarity, any failing vote by the Board of Directors to amend the Policies & Procedures does not make any previously approved portion of the Policies & Procedures invalid.

While no longer in effect, any sections that have been amended will be maintained at the SLT offices, but only for potential guidance should the board decide to revert to a previous version. Reverting to a previous version of the Policies & Procedures also requires a vote by the Board and should be considered an amendment to the document.

**0.3 Document Governance**

In creating the Policies & Procedures, the Board recognizes the potential for interpretation on how to implement the Policies & Procedures can be left to the person or persons acting on behalf of SLT. However, at no time should any portion of the Policies & Procedures be interpreted as to supersede or discount any rule or regulation established in the SLT By-Laws.

Moreover, once the Policies & Procedures is established, if it is determined that any rule, regulation or guidance established in the Policies & Procedures directly contradicts any portion of the SLT By-Laws, the Board will work to amend the Policies & Procedures to eliminate the contradiction at the earliest possible convenience.

**Section 0: Welcome to the SLT Policies & Procedures**

**0.4 Document retention and availability**

A printed copy of the current approved Policies & Procedures shall be maintained at the offices of Sumter Little Theatre, located at 14 Mood Avenue, Sumter, SC. Additional copies can also be printed by the theatre and distributed in a manner deemed necessary. However, at least one printed copy must be available at the theatre’s office for review by the public during normal business hours.

In addition, an electronic version will be also be maintained and available to Sumter Little Theatre Board members and titled personnel working on behalf of the theatre in a manner determined by the board.

The theatre’s Executive Director shall be responsible for maintaining an up-to-date version, both in hard copy and electronic form. In the absence of an Executive Director, the responsibilities shall be determined in accordance with the SLT By-Laws.

**0.5 Document Format**

All sections of the Policies & Procedures will, at the bottom of each page, contain the initials of the author of the section and the date the section was approved by the SLT Board of Directors. In addition, each section of the hard copy of the official document maintained at the SLT offices shall also have a signature of the President of the approving Board of Directors.

**0.6 Non-addressed issues and protocols**

If, in the course of operations, it is discovered that issues concerning SLT have arisen outside the current purview of the Policies & Procedures, any decision or action on behalf of SLT will be made in accordance with the SLT By-Laws. In addition, the person or persons discovering the oversight are responsible for informing the Board of Directors of the absence of guidance in the Policies & Procedures, and the Board of Directors will determine if an amendment or addition to the Policies & Procedures is required to address the issue.

**Section 1: Established positions**

The Board of Directors recognizes the necessity to select and hire personnel for the organization's operations. If an Executive Director is in place, this person will be responsible for the interview process for other positions within the organization. However, any formal offering of a position to a candidate can only be made after the Executive Director informs the Board of the decision.

**1.1 Positions, paid and volunteer**

In order for the daily operations of the theatre to run in an efficient manner, the SLT Board of Directors may grant titles to a person or persons for the following positions: Executive Director, House Manager, Technical Director, Costume Supervisor, and Prop Master. Unlike individual production positions, these positions will be considered permanent until the person leaves the position or until separation as determined by the Board of Directors, unless the board opts to enter into a limited-person contract with the person serving in their position.

Financial imbursement, if any, for those holding these positions will be determined by the SLT Board of Directors.

**1.1.1 Executive Director**

As established in the SLT By-Laws, the Executive Director will supervise, hire, and discharge all subordinate staff and be responsible for the operations of the theatre. In addition, any duties not delegated to a subordinate staff member will be the responsibility of the Executive Director.

**1.1.1.1 Executive Director and Board relations**

Serving at the behest of the SLT Board of Directors, the Executive Director, unless excused by the board, will attend at least a portion of each regularly scheduled board meeting to answer questions or concerns of the board and to update the board on current and future planned activities. When necessary, the Executive Director shall, no less than a week before any regularly scheduled meeting, also suggest to the President of the Board of Directors any actionable items they believe should be added to the board's meeting agenda to be considered by the board in its entirety.

No currently-serving member of the SLT Board of Directors can hold the position of Executive Director without resigning from their elected office upon his or her appointment to the position.

## Section 1: Established positions

### 1.1.2 House Manager

Answering directly to the Executive Director, the House Manager will be responsible for most secretarial and facility managerial duties for Sumter Little Theatre.

The House Manager will also be responsible for filing a front-of-house financial report at the close of each in-house production to the Executive Director, who in turn will provide the results to the SLT Board of Directors.

In addition, the House Manager is responsible for overseeing the facilities management and upkeep of audience portion of the Katie Damron Stage at Sumter Little Theatre, SLT offices, SLT Lobby and the SLT exterior foyer, otherwise known as Front Of House (FOH).

While currently serving Board members are eligible to serve as House Manager, they can only do so in an unreimbursed, volunteer capacity.

### 1.1.3 Technical Director

The Technical Director answers to the Executive Director, with primary duties involving the oversight of set design and construction as well as sound and lighting design for theatrical productions at Sumter Little Theatre, based on the guidance and designs presented to them by the Directors overseeing individual productions.

In addition, the Technical Director is responsible for overseeing the facilities management and upkeep of the SLT Workshop and the control booth at the Katie Damron stage, as well as the tools and equipment in these locations.

The Technical Director should also maintain updated schematics of the stage, lighting and sound equipment, and provide those schematics to production designers, if they are not themselves serving in that capacity on said production.

Other duties not described herein that are considered to be within the purview of a Technical Director can be assigned to this position by the Executive Director.

While currently-serving Board members are eligible to serve as Technical Director, they can only do so in an unreimbursed, volunteer capacity.

**Section 1: Established positions**

**1.1.4 Costume Supervisor**

The Costume Supervisor answers to the Executive Director, with their primary duties including the fabrication, allocation, procurement and maintenance of costumes and costume materials to be used for theatrical productions at Sumter Little Theatre; based on the guidance and designs presented to them by the Directors overseeing the individual productions of the organization.

In addition, the Costume Supervisor is responsible for overseeing the facilities management, upkeep and inventory documentation of the costume shop room and costume storage areas.

Other duties not described herein that are considered to be within the purview of a Costume Supervisor can be assigned to this position by the Executive Director.

While currently-serving Board members are eligible to serve as Costume Supervisor, they can only do so in an unreimbursed, volunteer capacity.

**1.1.5 Prop Master**

The Prop Master answers to the Executive Director, with their primary duties involving the fabrication, allocation, procurement and maintenance of properties and set pieces to be used for theatrical productions at Sumter Little Theatre, based on the guidance and designs presented to them by the Directors overseeing the individual productions of the organization.

In addition, the Prop Master is responsible for overseeing the facilities management, upkeep and inventory of any properties storage areas maintained by the organization, both at the Sumter Little Theatre facilities and at any outside storage locations.

Other duties not described herein that are considered to be within the purview of a Prop Master can be assigned to this position by the Executive Director.

While currently-serving Board members are eligible to serve as Prop Master, they can only do so in an unreimbursed, volunteer capacity.

**1.1.6 Youth Theatre Director(s)**

The Youth Director(s) are responsible for youth members who attend classes with the “Sumter Scenemakers”, The Sumter Little Theatre Youth Program. They are to work closely with the Executive Director to ensure the mission and vision of The Sumter Little Theatre are executed.

Youth Director(s) shall create, plan and teach youth theatre classes throughout the calendar year. Each class shall have a performance/showcase at its conclusion. Director(s) shall provide necessary direction, critique, support and encouragement to each student in their care. Attendance records for each class shall be kept and recorded. Director(s) shall purchase and maintain supplies for each class. Director(s) shall maintain cleanliness in the classroom during classes and showcases as well as any SLT space utilized by the Youth theatre during classes and showcases. Director(s) shall submit season youth production ideas as requested by Executive Director and Board of Directors.

**Section 1: Established positions**

**1.2 Code of Conduct**

Anyone holding a titled position with the organization, whether in a paid or volunteer capacity, is expected to operate in a professional manner while carrying out their duties on behalf of the theatre.

The use of alcohol by anyone, while carrying out activities on behalf of the theatre is prohibited; with the exception of preapproved social gatherings so long as the person in question is allowed to do so by law, and does so in moderation with professionalism and decorum in mind. The consumption of illegal substances on premises is strictly prohibited.

If a titled individual working on behalf of the theatre is deemed to be operating in an unprofessional manner, it is the responsibility of other titled individuals witnessing the activity to make the Executive Director aware of the situation. If, however, the Executive Director is the person believed to be operating in an unprofessional manner, it is the responsibility of other titled individuals witnessing the activity to make the President of the Board of Directors aware of the situation. In either situation, it may be incumbent upon the person reporting the unprofessional manner to make their observations available in written form.

In any instance, any person involved with the organization may report unprofessional activity of anyone to the Executive Director.

**1.3 Employment Review Process**

All paid employees of Sumter Little Theatre will receive a performance review at least annually. More frequent reviews may also occur, on a time period established by the Board.

In the case of the Executive Director, reviews will be conducted by delegates chosen by and from members of the Board of Directors. All other paid positions will reviewed by the Executive Director, with the results of these reviews provided to the Board.

A written copy of any performance review will be provided to the employee, using a template approved by the Board.

**1.4 Certification requirements and waiver agreements**

The SLT Board reserves the right to create certification requirements and/or waiver agreements to be approved by the Board for any position in which the Board determines these certifications and/or waivers are necessary.

If a certification and/or waiver agreement is deemed to be necessary for any given position, either paid or volunteer, anyone appointed to one of these positions must meet these requirements before acting on behalf of the theatre in these capacities.

**Section 1: Established positions**

**1.5 Position Guidebooks**

In the future, the SLT Board of Directors, working in concert with their Executive Director, may wish to establish guidebooks to further illustrate the standards and practices recommended for the various positions serving the organization, both for year-long positions and production-specific productions. These guidebooks could include, but are not limited to, the positions of Executive Director, Director, Stage Manager, Technical Director, Costumer and Prop Master. The maintenance and upkeep of these guidebooks shall be the responsibility of the Executive Director, with their contents being made available for review and possible revision by the board.

If established, while potentially providing a valuable asset to those serving the organization, nothing included in those guidebooks should supersede anything set forth in the Policies & Procedures. And, as is the case with Operations Manual’s relationship to the SLT By-Laws, anyone discovering a contradiction between these guidebooks and the Policies & Procedures (or SLT By-Laws) should make the Executive Director aware so that amendments can be facilitated in a reasonable timeframe.

**1.6 Creation of additional positions**

The SLT Board of Directors reserves the ability to create additional permanent titled positions to serve on behalf of the theatre, should said position be deemed necessary.

If an additional position is created, this position will follow the protocols of all other positions and be subordinate to the Executive Director, and the Executive Director will retain authority of supervising, hiring, and discharging this position.

**1.7 Expectation of Volunteerism**

SLT exists because of the dedication, action and expertise of our volunteers. In that vein, it is encouraged that any actor/director or other named position in any production act in a volunteer capacity on another production. These positions may be, but are not limited to: usher, concessionaire, tech support, backstage support. The fulfillment of this expectation may aid in determining casting and direction of future productions.



## Section 2: Facilities and Facility Management

### 2.1 SLT facilities

Located at 14 Mood Avenue, the facilities under the control of Sumter Little Theatre include the western wing of the former Edmunds High School building. In order to promote efficient use of the various areas of the space, various department heads and/or titled positions can be appointed to oversee the use and upkeep of various sections of the building.

While it is encouraged that the different titled positions have as much oversight of their areas as possible, in all instances the Executive Director has final responsibility in scheduling and management of the facilities.

#### 2.1.1 Katie Damron Stage at Sumter Little Theatre

The main performance space of Sumter Little Theatre is separated into two distinct sections – the audience area, or house, and the performance space, or stage.

The audience area is typically configured to house a seven-row, 112-seat audience, and this configuration is the primary design used for allocating tickets. Because of this, any changes to the configuration must be approved before tickets are allocated to audience members.

The performance area is a standard proscenium stage with off-stage wing space on both the stage left and stage right sides. The upstage portion of performance area also abuts the SLT workshop, with doors leading to and from both the backstage wings. Because of this, actors and stage crew often use the workshop to cross backstage from left to right, and occasionally use the workshop as an additional green room area during productions. If this is expected to occur, however, it should be verified by the Stage Manager before each production that the workshop area is clean and safe to use.

Both the performance space and the audience area should be cleaned between each performance during the course of a production, with the House Manager overseeing the cleaning of the audience area, and the Stage Manager overseeing the cleaning of the performance area.

## Section 2: Facilities and Facility Management

### 2.1.1.1 SLT Control Booth

Located in the loft above the audience seating of the Katie Damron Stage, this area houses the lighting, sound and projection controls for the theater.

As they are operated from the control booth, the various lighting, sound equipment and projectors are to be considered an extension of the booth.

This space, which falls under the responsibility of the organization's Technical Director (if one is appointed) should be cleaned by the technicians operating the equipment periodically, including a final cleaning by the production team at the end of each production's run.

While SLT is committed to providing opportunities to as many people as possible, anyone expressing interest in or recruited to work in the control booth should be made aware before taking on these duties that the space is not easily accessible and requires operators to climb a steep stairwell into a crowded space.

Printed copies of manuals and operation guides for the various equipment located in the control booth should be stored within the booth, as opposed to the SLT offices or library.

#### 2.1.1.1.1 Operational Requirements

Because of the expensive and delicate nature of the equipment located in the SLT Control Booth, the Board of Directors can, should they deem it necessary, require technicians and operators to illustrate a core competency with the equipment they plan to operate before they are allowed oversee the equipment.

In addition, anyone appointed to operate the control booth equipment during a production must first have the approval of the Producer of the production.

When possible, any new equipment operators will first receive a tutorial from a previous operator.

## Section 2: Facilities and Facility Management

### 2.1.2 Classroom facilities

Located in the Mood Avenue wing, the primary use for the classroom is for the educational efforts of SLT. While it is recognized the space plays multiple roles for the organization (i.e. cast call meeting room, audition room, occasional rehearsal space, black box performances, etc.), it is recognized that the primary use for the space is for educational efforts, and therefore the SLT Youth Theatre educational programs of, if underway, take precedence in scheduling for the space.

Also located in the classroom are the organization's kitchen facilities and food storage, so cleanliness for the space should be the responsibility of all who use it. Unless you place food in the refrigerator or pantry area, the items within those areas are not for public use. If it does not belong to you, do not use it. Usage of food, beverages and miscellaneous SLT property are at the discretion of The Executive Director and staff.

### 2.1.3 Office Space

Sumter Little Theatre currently houses two offices, one dedicated to House Manager operations and the other for the Executive Director. The House Manager's office will also serve as the theatre's box office during non-performance periods.

Neither office is for public usage. If a production team needs access to a computer, printer, etc. they must coordinate with Executive Director or staff prior to accessing the offices. At a minimum, phone lines will be maintained in the House Manager's office to conduct business with the public.

### 2.1.4 SLT Workshop

Located in the backstage area of the Katie Damron stage, the SLT Workshop is the primary location used for the construction of sets and set pieces for upcoming theatrical productions. While it is recognized the limitations of the space often requires construction to occur outside the workshop area, attempts should be made to house construction efforts within the workshop as much as possible. If a Technical Director, either on a permanent basis or for a specific production, has been appointed, this person is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the area during the tenure of their duties.

Whether or not a Technical Director has been appointed, in order to maintain safety and cleanliness, anyone working in the workshop area must properly store away any tools or equipment after their use, and the workshop area should be cleaned after any construction efforts, whether or not those construction efforts are completed or are expected to be continued at a later date.

## Section 2: Facilities and Facility Management

### 2.1.5 Costume Shop

Located in the Mood Avenue wing, the costume shop is the dedicated location to the construction of costumes for upcoming productions, and also houses the fabrics and materials needed to complete this task.

The Costume Manager is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of this area. Because of this, while it is recognized that at times this space can also have temporary secondary uses (e.g. dressing room, costume storage, etc.) any plans to use the costume shop for these purposes should be provided to the Costume Manager by the production team planning on using the space in advance.

### 2.1.6 SLT Lobby and exterior foyer

The SLT Lobby, which also houses the theatre's box office and public bathrooms, and the exterior foyer, located between the SLT lobby and Sumter Art Gallery, should be the only areas audience members should be allowed in before the house is opened on performance days. Smoking by patrons and personnel is limited to the exterior foyer.

These areas should be inspected and cleaned before each performance.

### 2.1.7 Storage Facilities

#### 2.1.7.1 Properties Storage Room

The primary property storage areas for SLT include the prop room located in the Mood Avenue side corridor of the facility, as well as the loft space located in the backstage left section of the Katie Damron stage. In addition, several closet spaces located in both the house and backstage portions of the Katie Damron stage are often used for storing larger set pieces (e.g. furniture). These areas are overseen by the Prop Master, and any production team using any of the items included therein should inform the Prop Master of said plans.

#### 2.1.7.2 Costume Storage Room

Located next to the Mood Avenue wing dressing room, the costume storage room is overseen by the Costume Supervisor, and any production team using any of the items included therein should inform the Costume Supervisor of said plans. It is the responsibility of the production team to neatly return any costumes taken from the costume storage room.

## Section 2: Facilities and Facility Management

### 2.1.7.3 Off-site storage

Any location used to store items belonging to SLT outside of the Mood Avenue location will be considered off-site storage, and clear agreements to ensure the organization has ready access to these locations should be reached before their use is agreed upon.

### 2.1.8 SLT Green Room

Located off the stage left backstage area of the Katie Damron stage, the green room is to be a dedicated space for cast members and other production personnel to use during performances, and as such any use of the space for storage, especially on days of performances, should be kept to a minimum.

Cast members and other personnel strongly encouraged to maintain the cleanliness of the green room during performances. The production team of each individual production is responsible for verifying the room's cleanliness after each performance.

An operational audio monitor of the stage to assist both the stage manager and cast members during performances should also be maintained and checked to be operational during the course of each production.

### 2.1.9 Dressing Room facilities

All wigs and house makeup is stored in this location. Unless a dedicated makeup artist is appointed, the wigs and makeup stored in this space should be reviewed by the Executive Director, and any unhygienic makeup should be disposed of promptly so as to prevent future use.

Included in this location is also an additional bathroom with shower, and periodic inspection should be conducted to ensure the facilities are in a clean, working conditions.

### 2.1.10 SLT Library

Located between to the two office spaces of the Mood Avenue wing of the SLT facilities, this room houses the scripts, periodicals, instructional books and other publications owned by the organization. This space should also be used to maintain the historical documents of SLT (past playbills, posters, etc.).

When possible, an inventory of the library should be maintained. If they so choose, the Board can instruct the Executive Director to establish policies and procedures to make the SLT Library available to the public.

## Section 2: Facilities and Facility Management

### 2.2 Facility Use and Scheduling

Falling primarily under the responsibilities of the House Manager with the oversight of the Executive Director, the use of all spaces, especially the use of the Katie Damron stage, will be organized and scheduled by the House Manager, who will maintain a calendar, broken down in hourly segments when necessary, for each of the section of the organization's facilities. A copy of this calendar will be made available to the Board, all titled personnel, and all production teams.

Requests to use the various spaces of the organization should be approved and confirmed several days in advance of the date they are to be used. Failure to do so can result in the loss of access to the space for those planning to use it, regardless of any notion that any group, production, class, etc. should hold priority access to the space.

Use of the SLT workshop will not be permitted during any scheduled rehearsal time on the Katie Damron stage without consent of the Director during said rehearsal.

If a space is unoccupied on any given day, it will be made available, if possible, during normal business hours, as long as a titled position holder is present at the time of use.

Any conflicts in scheduling should be resolved by the Executive Director, following the guidance of priorities established herein for each section of the facilities.

#### 2.2.1 Third-Party Rental

The Board of Directors has the option to grant the Executive Director authority to enter rental agreements with third party organizations to allow these third parties to rent spaces, costumes, properties and/or equipment from SLT.

The determination of rates, time periods allowed, deposits and any contractual agreement phrasing must be approved by the Board of Directors before entering any rental agreement. To be clear, the Board does not have to approve every rental agreement, but rather approves the parameters by which the Executive Director can operate.

The rental of any facility, properties or equipment is predicated on verifying the space and/or items have not already been reserved for SLT activities.

##### 2.2.2.1 Rental Agreements and Waivers

Any rental agreement in which an outside party gains access to SLT facilities and/or equipment must include waivers signed by the rentee which hold SLT harmless of any responsibility for damages and/or liabilities that come as a result from the activities of the rental agreement.

### **Section 3: Season Productions**

The bulk of the activity at Sumter Little Theatre consists of its annual season productions, and as such it is recognized these productions should not only be given priority in the allocation of the organization's resources, but should also have more rigorous protocols and standardized activities.

#### **3.1 Season Selection**

Per the SLT By-Laws, the selection of shows for any upcoming season will be made by the Board of Directors Season Selection Committee, with the slate of shows for an upcoming season being announced no later than opening night of the final production of the current season.

Once selected, the upcoming season should be announced via media platforms, and marketing materials developed by the Board's Marketing Committee.

In addition, all current season ticket holders (and anyone else the organization wishes to contact) should be informed of the upcoming season via mailed brochures.

#### **3.2 Individual Productions**

Each individual production will have a production team that oversees and facilitates each show. This production team will be made up of, at a minimum, a Director, a Producer, and a Stage Manager. In many instances, additional personnel will need to be appointed to the production.

And while the organization recognizes this will not always be conducive to operations, in order to promote opportunities for the community to participate in the activities of the theatre, when possible, no one person should be appointed to be part of production teams of sequential productions.

##### **3.2.1 Production Director**

Each in-season production will have a dedicated Director appointed to oversee the overall artistic vision and performance of each show.

Working in concert with the Producer, the Director will have the authority to recruit and develop the production team of each show, to which they will express their desires and concepts for the production. Any member of the production team, with the exception of the Producer, will serve on the production under the oversight of the Director.

The Director will also be in charge of scheduling and conducting auditions for the production, determining the production's cast, organizing a rehearsal schedule for the production, and conducting and overseeing rehearsals.

In addition, any facet of the production not allocated to another member of the production team (i.e. set design, lighting design, properties, etc.) will be the responsibility of the Director.

**Section 3: Season Productions**

**3.2.1.1 Show Director Selection**

Directors for each individual SLT seasonal production will be selected by the SLT Board of Directors with the consultation and recommendations of the Executive Director. Any stipend for the position, if any, will be determined by the Board before the position is offered to any candidate.

Once selected, the Show Director will meet with the Producer(s) (if any are named) of the production, as well as the Executive Director (if the Executive Director is not also serving as the production's Director), to receive scripts for the show, as well as to receive initial guidance and knowledge of the organization's expectations for the show.

And while the Director is welcome to receive advice or guidance from SLT officials at any time, future formal meetings between the Director and other officials within the organization will be part of the production meeting protocols.

**3.2.2 Show Producer**

The SLT Production Committee can, if they so choose, name an individual or to serve as Producer for each individual show of the SLT season. This person will be responsible for: oversight of a pre-production budget for the show as determined in concert with the Executive Director, scheduling and conducting production meetings as deemed necessary in coordination with the Director, Executive Director, Technical Director and Production Committee Chairperson, garnering approval for any non-budgeted expenses, and for organizing promotions and marketing for the show.

This Producer (or team of Producers) while not directly working in an artistic fashion on the production, will also, if necessary, work to provide guidance and mentorship for the Director and any other members of the production team.

**3.2.2.1 Show Producer Selection**

The Production Producer position can be filled by either a single person or a team of people. While not a requirement, it is recommended that at least one person from the SLT Board of Directors or the Executive Director serve in this capacity for each production, with the understanding that those serving as a production's Director cannot be the sole Producer for that production as well, but can serve as one of at least two people on a Producer team.



### Section 3: Season Productions

#### 3.2.2.2 Default Producer

Should the SLT Board of Directors opt not to choose specific producer(s) for any individual production, the responsibilities of the Producer position will fall to the SLT Executive Director. The exceptions to this come in the cases of a vacancy in the Executive Director position, or when the Executive Director is also serving as the production's Director. In these instances, the responsibilities of the Producer position fall to the SLT Board of Directors in its entirety.

#### 3.2.3 Stage Manager

Each production at Sumter Little Theatre, whether as part of an announced season or not, is expected to have a dedicated Stage Manager to assist the Director and to handle the duties expected of the position, including, but not limited to, the orchestration of activities backstage during performances.

Except in emergency situations, production Directors are not to serve as Stage Managers for their own production.

##### 3.2.3.1 Stage Manager selection

During the pre-production period for each production, a decided Stage Manager will be named, selected by the production's Director with the approval of the production's Producer. Should the Director opt not to name a Stage Manager of their choosing, it will incumbent upon the production's Producer to find someone to fill the position.

Neither the Director nor the Producer will be allowed to serve as a production's Stage Manager, with the exception being in an emergency acting role should a production find its Stage Manager position vacated shortly before performances begin. If this occurs, it is incumbent upon both the Director and the Producer to find a replacement Stage Manager in a relevant time frame.

##### 3.2.3.2 Stage Manager workspace

The desk space, drawer space and shelving units located in the off stage left wing of the theatre next to the doorway to the theatre's green room is to be reserved for use by stage managers working on theatrical productions underway at Sumter Little Theatre.

If multiple productions are underway at the same time, the stage managers assigned to each of these shows are expected to work together to ensure the space can be used efficiently by each stage manager.

### Section 3: Season Productions

#### 3.2.4 Other required positions

Based on the requirements of a show, it is possible that additional personnel will be required to perform specific functions in the production. These can include, but are not limited to: Production Technical Director, Set Designer, Musical Director, Choreographer, Dialect Coach, Hair and Makeup Stylist, Stunt Coordinator, Production Marketing Director, etc. Once appointed, any person serving in a position deemed to be required should be included in all production meetings.

#### 3.3 Production meetings

Scheduled by the Producer in concert with the Production Committee and Director, production meetings will be the time in which the entire production team can express desires, concerns and potential opportunities for upcoming performances.

These meetings are not intended to be the source for any artistic directives imposed on the Director, but rather to provide guidance on best practices and to ensure the production is developing in a smooth manner, and to ensure communication lines between the entire production team are clear and efficient.

There should be, at minimum, at least one meeting before beginning the audition process (the “pre-production” meeting), at least one meeting while the rehearsal process is underway (the “mid-production” meeting), one meeting within ten (10) days of the beginning of Tech Week and one meeting after performances are concluded (the “post-production” meeting).

In order to facilitate these meetings, each meeting should have a written agenda, created by the Producer with input from the Director and Production Committee if necessary. While it is recommended (for the convenience of all involved) that all production meetings take place at the Sumter Little Theatre facilities, only mid-production meetings are required to do so.

**Section 3: Season Productions**

**3.3.1 Pre-production meeting**

Held before the rehearsal process (and potentially before casting the production), the Pre-Production meeting is primarily to provide the Director the opportunity to express their vision for the upcoming production and to discuss the best ways to facilitate these ideas. As such, while facilitated by the Producer, this initial pre-production meeting should be led by the Director.

During this meeting, discussions of the initial expected budget for the production should be held, with this information be finalized and presented to the Board of Directors shortly thereafter.

This meeting should also be the time during which a preliminary rehearsal schedule should be established.

In addition, this meeting will also provide an opportunity for discussions between the Director, Producer and other production team members regarding potential recommendations to fill vacancies of necessary production positions.

**3.3.2 Mid-production meeting**

Mid-production meetings will be scheduled and conducted by the Producer, with input from the Director, to evaluate the status of the production as it progresses. While the number of mid-production meetings a production can have is not limited to one, at least one of these meetings should be dedicated to reviewing the rehearsal process as it stands at the time.

**3.3.3 Pre-Tech Preview**

This Pre Tech Preview shall be held with at least ten rehearsal days remaining on the production's schedule, with the meeting and discussions to occur immediately following a rehearsal.

Ideally, all core production team members will be in attendance including director, producer(s), music director and choreographer, with additional attendees being the discretion of the Producer and of the Director.

**Section 3: Season Productions**

**3.3.4 Post-production meeting**

At a time of earliest convenience for all those involved, preferably within three days of a production's closing, the production team will hold a post-production meeting (often referred to as a show's "autopsy") to discuss the dynamics of the production and to advise future productions on potential best practices moving forward.

After this post-production meeting, the Producer(s) will advise the SLT Board of Directors of their findings and conclusions at a regularly scheduled meeting.

In addition, the Director will submit a post-production self-evaluation to the Producer to be shared with the Board of Directors.

**3.4 Extreme Course Corrections**

If, during the course of a production, a person or persons are found to be acting in a highly inappropriate way, or if the production as a whole is deemed to be untenable, the Board and/or those in a position of authority, depending on the circumstance, reserves the right to take drastic actions for the overall well-being of the organization. To be clear, undertaking any of these actions should be considered a last option, exercised only after any and all reasonable resolutions are exhausted.

### Section 3: Season Productions

#### 3.4.1 Removal of a Director

Should, during the course of a production, the actions of a Director become too egregious for the theatre, in the eyes of the organization, to be allowed to continue their duties with the production, the Board of Directors can, by a two-thirds majority vote and the unanimous consent of the Producers involved in said production, remove a Director from their position. Once made, any decision to do so by the theatre, whether the decision occurs during a regularly scheduled or emergency meeting, comes into effect immediately following the decision.

To be abundantly clear, artistic disagreements, no matter how extreme those might be for those involved, are not justification for the removal of a Director, and any decision to remove a Director from their position should only occur in extreme circumstances of impropriety.

This vote by the Board of Directors can only be circumvented in extreme circumstances where either the Producer, the Producer team, or the Executive Director directly witnesses and/or verifies an incident involving, and is the direct result of, the actions of the Director in which either the Director and/or anyone else associated with the production is determined to be in immediate danger. In cases like this, both the Producer and the Executive Director are granted the authority to immediately relieve the Director of their position. In these instances, the Director will be ordered to leave the premises immediately, and once the conflict is resolved the person making the decision to remove the Director must immediately contact the President of the Board (or Vice President, if the situation involves the President of the Board) to inform them of the situation. In these instances of emergency removal, the Director will be provided the opportunity to explain the situation to the Board of Directors, who will at that time either confirm or rescind the Director's removal from the production, with the requirements for confirming the decision to remove the Director the same as stated above.

If a Director is removed from their position, the theatre's Executive Director will become the emergency acting Director of the Production (unless they are involved in the scenario leading to the dismissal) until the Board is able to convene in order to name a new permanent Director.

In any scenario of removing a Director, and in order to avoid any perceived conflict of interest, anyone serving as a Producer on the production will be eliminated from consideration to replace the Director.

### Section 3: Season Productions

#### 3.4.2 Removal of a Producer

Like the position of Director, should the actions of a Producer become too egregious for the theatre, in the eyes of the organization, be allowed to continue their duties with the production, the Board of Directors can, by a two-thirds majority vote, remove a Producer from their position. Once made, any decision to do so by the theatre, whether the decision occurs during a regularly scheduled or emergency meeting, comes into effect immediately following the decision.

#### 3.4.3 Removal of a Cast Member or Production Team

The Director has the right to replace a member of the production team or recast an actor with cause, and shall inform the Producer of their decision, along with their plans for replacement, shortly after making their decision. When possible, the Producer(s) should be consulted on the Director's plans before any decision is made.

#### 3.4.4 Cancellation or Postponement of a Production

While all reasonable efforts will be made to avoid the cancellation or postponement of a performance, it is recognized that on rare occasions there will be unforeseen instances that make the performance of a production impossible. If this occurs, the organization will make every reasonable attempt to reschedule the performances to a later date, if possible.

##### 3.4.4.1 Cancellation of a single performance

In the case of a single performance being cancelled, for whatever reason (cast sickness and/or availability, technical issues, weather etc.), the Producer of the production will have the final authority in making that determination.

In extreme situations, when a decision must be made whether to cancel a performance after the house has opened and audience members are being sat, the authority and sole discretion to do so falls to the Stage Manager to make that decision.

In either instance, both the public and all participants in the production will be informed immediately of the decision, and the Production team will meet with the Executive Director subsequently to determine if and/or when a makeup performance will be scheduled.

**Section 3: Season Productions**

**3.4.4.2 Cancellation of an entire production**

While an extreme situation that should be avoided until all other solutions are exhausted, the Board recognizes there is a possibility that some productions, for whatever reason, might become untenable. The decision to cancel a production is not taken lightly, however, and any decision to cancel an entire production should only come after it is determined that a postponement of the production or a change in production personnel will not remedy the issues facing the production. Once announced as part of the season, the steps required to cancel a production requires approval to do so by the Producer, Executive Director, and two-thirds of the Board of Directors.

Should cancellation occur, the members of the production will be informed immediately by the Executive Director, who will provide time to answer any questions those participating in the cancelled production might have.

When possible, a replacement production should be chosen by the Board with the input of the Executive Director to take the place of the cancelled production, with this replacement production now being considered a seasonal production.

### Section 3: Season Productions

#### 3.5 Production extensions

During the course of a successful production, it may be determined that the production warrants additional performances beyond the previously announced schedule. Any decision to extend the run of a production must be made by the Board of Directors with the consultation of the Executive Director.

If the Board approves extending a production, all those involved in the production (cast, director, stage manager, crew, etc.) will be informed at the earliest time possible. If anyone involved in the production declines to participate in the production's extension, the Director (in the case of cast members, crew or stage manager) or Producer (in the case of a Director) may opt to replace the person unavailable for the additional shows. However, no one currently involved in the production will be removed from their position before the end of their current agreement, and anyone currently involved in the production will be given the option to remain with the production during its extension.

*(Example: A show is scheduled for a two-week run, and during the first week it is determined there is enough audience demand to add an additional week of performances. The cast is asked to continue the production, but one of the actors says they will be unable to do so. In this case, the Director can recast the role for the extended portion of the run, but they are prohibited from removing the actor who said they cannot continue with the production until after the initial two-week run the actor already agreed to perform is completed.)*

Any production extensions must also take into consideration the scheduling of other upcoming productions. If a scheduling conflict arises between two separate productions, the Board does have the authority to postpone the upcoming production to a later date, but should only do so when there is a clear benefit to the organization. No previously announced production will be cancelled entirely to make room for an extended production.



**Section 3: Season Productions**

**3.6 Production Marketing**

Working in concert with the Producer of each production, the Board’s Publicity Committee will develop and distribute marketing materials to best promote upcoming performances. This includes, but is not limited to, press releases, social media posts, website updates, posters and playbills, and any advertising efforts.

*(In order to promote efficiency, it is highly recommended that the Producer(s) of each production be members of the Marketing Committee, either by being a standing member on the committee, or by being appointed by the Board for an interim period during the production’s activities.)*

**3.6.1 Advertising**

Paid advertising and marketing for each production should be included in the budget of the production during the pre-production period. If the organization decides to invest in advertising a production, a marketing plan to include expenses, timeframe and outlets should be developed by the Producer and approved by the Board during this pre-production period as well.

If it is determined during the production process that additional advertising beyond the scope of what has already been approved is warranted, the Producer will submit this request to either the Board of Directors for approval, or to the Executive Director, who may, but is not required to, use funding already allocated to them by the Board as part of their purchasing authorization.

**3.6.2 Social Media**

Although official posts on behalf of SLT will be made by the designees of the Board of Directors, all those wishing to help promote the production through their own accounts and channels are encouraged to do so. However, while social media can be a vital tool in the promotion of a production, it should be made clear to all involved in the production what is acceptable to be shared on any platform.

To this end, any individuals involved in any production are highly discouraged from sharing any media posts - whether they be video, photo or audio – that involve individuals unaware of the recording until those people involved are made aware and have given their consent.

In addition, anyone involved with the production should be informed at the earliest possible time in the production process that before any social media post is made, it needs to be confirmed that said post will not be in violation of any licensing agreement made by SLT.

**Section 3: Season Productions**

**3.6.3 Media Relations**

Working with the Executive Director, the production team is authorized to develop a strategic media plan to promote the upcoming production. This can, but is not limited to, traditional media (television, radio and print), podcasts, online programs and other theatrical organizations.

In these instances, the Director will be considered the de facto spokesperson for the production, while the Executive Director while remain the spokesperson for the overall efforts of the organization. Other members of the production can also be included when speaking to the media, if so desired.

**3.6.4 Posters and Playbills**

While highly recommended but not required, should the Publicity Committee choose to do so, posters and playbills will be created for each production.

Any poster created for a production will include, at a minimum, the name of the show, location, dates and times of performances, phone and website information for purchasing tickets, and the name of the production's Director. In addition, any information required by the licensing agreement must be included as well.

For playbills, the Stage Manager should submit the cast list, and any biographies or photos to be included to the Publicity Committee via email at least two weeks before opening night of the production. While the Publicity Committee will ultimately determine what will be included in the playbill, any biographies or photos not submitted by the deadline may not be included.

**Section 4: Revenue and Fundraising**

While the primary revenue stream for the organization is ticket sales, it's recognized that in order to maintain the theatre's financial viability, and to pursue projects for potential growth, Sumter Little Theatre must pursue funding streams beyond production and season ticket sales. These efforts should be continual, and those associated with the theatre who believe they are aware of a potential revenue source are strongly encouraged to inform the Executive Director and the Board of Directors of their idea.

**4.1 Ticket sales**

Tickets for upcoming productions will be made available both at the SLT Box Office during announced hours, as well as online via the theatre's website, with preferential seating treatment given to season ticket holders. Prices for individual tickets will be determined by the Board of Directors and announced during the pre-production period of each production at the latest. The House Manager will oversee ticket sales.

**4.2 Sponsorships**

Sumter Little Theatre is not opposed to receiving sponsorships for either individual productions, or for entire seasons. These sponsorships can be either financial or in-kind contributions.

The Board will establish the levels of benefits sponsors will receive for supporting various productions, which could include, but are not limited to: tickets for productions, recognition in advertising and promotional materials, private performances and opening night gatherings/meet-and-greets.

Both the Executive Director and Producers of individual productions are authorized to seek out these sponsorships.

**4.3 Grants**

The Executive Director has the authority to pursue the acquisition of grant monies to support the efforts of the organization.

While specific grant proposals submitted on the behalf of the theatre do not have to be reviewed, the Executive Director is expected to inform the Board of any grants they plan on pursuing prior to application. If received, no grant can be used to supplant the standard production efforts of the theatre, but rather should be used to expand or support the organization's production efforts.

While the Board can, if desired, make adjustments to the previously announced schedule of the theatre in order to facilitate the requirements of a successful grant proposal, any grant obtained by the theatre that is later discovered to require the cancellation of previously scheduled productions must be declined.

**Section 4: Revenue and Fundraising**

**4.4 Public Funding**

The Executive Director is authorized to pursue funding for Sumter Little Theatre via public funds. This holds especially true with Sumter County Government, who over the years has allocated funds to the organization through their annual fiscal budget.

In order to maintain this relationship, the Executive Director is instructed to respond to the annual informational requests of Sumter County, and to serve as a liaison for the organization with the County.

In addition, the Executive Director is authorized to reach out to other pertinent governmental entities to develop relationships and potentially develop additional revenue streams.

**Section 5: Purchasing**

**5.1 Authorization**

To efficiently support the effort of the theatre, the Executive Director is authorized by the Board to make purchases deemed necessary on behalf of the organization without receiving prior approval, as long as the cost of said expense is less than \$250, and as long as the cumulative expenses (including any pending purchases being considered by the Executive Director) do not total more than \$1,000 during any calendar month.

Purchases and/or expenses deemed necessary for upcoming productions should be itemized in the budget created for said production during the pre-production process, and approved by the Producer of the production. Any non-budgeted purchases and/or expenses deemed necessary for any production should be made by the Executive Director, and should be included as part of the monthly allotment authorized by the Board.

**5.2 Preferred vendors**

A list of preferred vendors for various supplies and equipment will be maintained by the Executive Director, and the list of these vendors will be provided to anyone authorized to make purchases using SLT funds. The list, however, should not be considered as exclusionary to vendors not appearing on the list, and should be updated when warranted.

**5.3 Purchasing Reports**

An itemized monthly report of all purchases made on behalf of the theatre will be provided to the Board of Directors by the Executive Director no less than one week before each regularly-scheduled monthly Board meeting.

If they so choose to, the Board can also establish an annual budget at the beginning of each Fiscal Year (starting July 1), with directions to the Executive Director on how these funds should be allocated throughout the year. If this is done, future purchases and/or expenses should be included in the monthly reports during which the funds are actually allocated.

**Section 6: Non-seasonal productions**

When the opportunity arises, Sumter Little Theatre may also attempt to produce non-seasonal performances as part of an effort to both raise funds and to provide additional performance opportunities to those wanting to participate.

These productions can, but are not required, to follow the production meeting protocols established for seasonal productions. The determination on whether or not production meetings will be necessary will be established before the show begins its pre-production period.

**6.1 In-house productions**

Non-seasonal, in-house productions fall into one of two categories: single night events or multiple night productions.

**6.1.1 Single Night Events**

Individual night events (e.g.: musical revues, tribute nights, award ceremonies, etc.) should be approved by the Executive Director with the consent of the Board. When scheduling these events, it should be noted that seasonal productions will receive priority for any rehearsal time on the Katie Damron stage, unless an agreement is reached with the production team of any production currently undertaking its rehearsal process. Single night performances, meanwhile, can occur during a seasonal production’s rehearsal process, but only when the production team of the seasonal production is informed at least a week in advance. No single night events will be held during the final rehearsal week of a seasonal production.

**6.1.2 Multiple night productions**

These non-seasonal productions could take the form of sequential-night productions or periodic productions (e.g., weekly/monthly improv performances, talent shows, etc.), but are also limited in stage access by the schedules of seasonal productions, which take priority. These scheduling limitations, and authorization, are the same as the parameters of single night events. Recurring non-seasonal productions, however, also hold precedence over single night events.

**Section 6: Non-seasonal productions**

**6.2 Third-party productions**

If it so chooses, SLT can decide to make their facilities available to productions not otherwise affiliated with the organization. Doing so, however, requires approval of the Board of Directors and these productions cannot interfere with the schedule of any SLT in-house production, either seasonal or non-seasonal.

Any rental agreements, waiver requirements or facility management agreements the Board of Directors deems to be required for a third-party to use SLT to house its production must be agreed upon in writing before any activity by the third party can begin in the SLT facilities. These documents are to be maintained by the House Manager, with the oversight of the Executive Director.

**Section 7: Emergency Policies**

While the hope is that none of these policies will ever need to be enacted, it's important for those involved in SLT's activities be aware of how to respond in an emergency and/or crisis situation.

And while it is hoped that anyone involved in an emergency situation will be able to maintain composure during the crisis and potentially resolve the situation, SLT does not expect any of its employees or volunteers to be ultimately responsible for resolving the situation and will not establish any policy that prevents anyone from contacting governmental safety officials (law enforcement, emergency medical services, fire and rescue services, etc.) whether or not other people present during the crisis feel contacting public safety officials is necessary.

**7.1 Injuries and Medical Treatment**

In no situation will anyone associated with SLT prevent someone from seeking medical treatment for an injury sustained by someone working on behalf of SLT, whether in an employed or volunteer capacity.

If the injured person believes they need transportation to receive medical treatment, the most senior personnel member on site at the time of the accident should take action, if possible, to provide and/or offer transportation, which can include contacting Sumter County Emergency Medical Services.

If a person becomes incapacitated to where they cannot provide input on their need for medical care, Sumter County Emergency Medical Services will be contacted for treatment.

For minor injuries that can be treated on site, a first aid kit will be maintained and stored at the Stage Manager's Desk, located on the off stage left wing of the Katie Damron Theatre.

**7.1.1 Injury of a Performer During a Performance**

If, during a production, a performer is injured to the point they feel they cannot continue performing, they will in no way be expected to do so, and any efforts that need to be made for said performer to receive medical treatment will be given immediate priority.

If this situation prevents the production from being able to continue, the Stage Manager will inform the audience of the unfortunate situation, using broad terms so as to not divulge the nature of injury or identity of the person, and the remainder of the performance will be cancelled. Audience members will also be informed that they may request the cost of their tickets be refunded, with the option of being offered tickets to a later performance being provided as well.



## Section 7: Emergency Policies

### 7.2 Theatre Evacuations

For the safety of patrons and theatre associates, signage indicating routes for evacuating the theatre will be posted both on the wall next to the door leading to the control booth of the Katie Damron Stage, as well as backstage in the Stage Manager's desk area.

If an evacuation occurs and governmental officials are called to the location to respond to the incident, no one will be allowed to reenter the facilities for any reason until responding authorities make it clear it is safe to do so.

In the case of an evacuation, both the Executive Director and the Board President should be contacted with the expectation that, if it can be done safely, at least one of them will respond to the facilities to provide any information public authorities responding to the scene might need.

### 7.3 Active Criminal Activity

If at any time someone associated with the organization witnesses a perceived criminal activity being committed against the theatre, whether the perceived act is committed by a patron or an associate of the theatre, the witness should at the earliest moment inform the Executive Director of the situation, or the Board President if the perceived criminal activity involves the Executive Director.

In extreme cases causing a perceived emergency situation, those witnessing the perceived criminal activity should contact local authorities immediately, and inform the Executive Director of the situation as soon as it is safe to do so. In addition, if the perceived criminal activity is severe enough to pose an immediate physical threat to patrons and/or associates of the theatre, an evacuation of the theatre should be undertaken, if one can be conducted safely and without placing others in harm's way, even before local authorities arrive to the location.

### 7.4 Power Outages

Any power outages occurring while the facilities are occupied should be reported to the power company in a timely manner and any estimated timeframe for restoring the power, if provided, should be relayed to all those at the location. If this occurs during a performance, a decision on whether or not to continue once the power is restored will be made by the production's Stage Manager. If it is determined there will be a delay lengthy enough to warrant cancelling the performance, attendees will be informed and offered the possibility of receiving a refund or admission to a future performance.

If a power outage is caused by inclement weather, anyone inside the facilities at the time will be permitted to shelter in the location until the weather clears, should they choose to do so.




# UPDATED SLT Operations Manual 072623

Final Audit Report

2023-07-26

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