

November 28, 2023

Dear Friends,

After months of careful and thoughtful consideration, the Town Hall South board has determined that the 2023-2024 season will be the final season for the speaker series. With continuing increases in speaker fees and related expenses, as well as a persistent trend of decreased ticket sales accelerated by the pandemic, we will not present a 2024-2025 season.

As many of you are aware, THS started our corporate sponsorship program several years ago in an effort to combat rising speaker fees and avoid escalating our ticket prices. Although we have received immense support from local businesses, more than doubling corporate sponsorships over the past two years, we are still experiencing great difficulty meeting a budget that continues to include exceptional speakers while fulfilling the philanthropic aspect of our mission -- to donate a percentage of profits to charities in need. With the goal of expanding our audience, our board substantially increased our marketing efforts, raising Town Hall South's profile in the community by participating in USC Community Day and forming partnerships with local community-driven organizations, such as the Community Foundation of Upper St. Clair. Despite our best efforts, ticket sales have not rebounded to the level necessary to meet the demands of our budget.

Many speaker series and cultural events across the country have experienced similar declines in ticket sales, particularly following the pandemic. Some organizations are riding out the storm and waiting for numbers to increase. But as a small, non-profit outreach run solely by the time and effort of volunteers, the board believes it would be most prudent to end the series on a high note and use the remaining funds to benefit charitable organizations in furtherance of Town Hall South's mission.

This announcement does not mean that Town Hall South is gone forever. The speaker series may return in a different, more sustainable form. But for now, we must determine how best to move forward and ensure Town Hall South concludes the 2023-2024 season in a manner that celebrates the mission of Town Hall South and the generosity our subscribers have exhibited for over 50 years.

We hope you will carry forward Town Hall South's efforts to encourage education, community fellowship, and engagement on important issues of the day. We thank you for your support and hope you continue to enjoy the current season!

With gratitude,

*The Town Hall South Board*