

**The Sheldon Theatre Board of Directors
Regular Meeting
City Council Chambers
September 16, 2025**

Members Present: President Chap Achen; Board Members Laurie Bell, Meridith Wardle, Susan Christenson, Art Kenyon, and Dennis Brennan

Members Absent: Board Member Glen Witham

Others Present: Brenda Stewart, Associate Director of Marketing and Communications; Beth Snyder, Council Liaison

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by President Achen at 5:15 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

President Achen led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call

President Achen reported that Member Witham was unable to attend the meeting.

4. Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Member Wardle, seconded by Member Brennan and unanimously carried, to approve the agenda as presented.

5. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

6. Consent Agenda

A. Motion to Approve August 19, 2025, Minutes.

A motion was made by Member Kenyon, seconded by Member Christenson and unanimously carried, to approve the meeting minutes as drafted.

7. Motions & General Business

A. Acceptance of Donations for the New Grand Piano.

President Achen asked the Board to consider a motion accepting the donations toward the new grand piano. He thanked Bob Behrens for driving the donation activity over the last few months.

President Achen acknowledged and thanked the donors for their generous gifts:

- Suzanne Blue - \$15,000.
- Annesco Project Fund - \$15,000.
- Albrecht-Poss Family Foundation - \$15,000.
- Wings Foundation - \$15,000.
- Behrens Family Foundation - \$15,000.

A motion was made by Member Bell, seconded by Member Wardle and unanimously carried, to approve and accept the donations toward the grand piano.

B. Motion to Begin an Investigation of a Potential New Piano Storage Area in the Sheldon Theatre.

President Achen suggested exploring storage options that would make storage of the new grand piano safer. He stated that there is external funding available toward this investigation. The current storage area was discussed. Member Brennan noted that temperature and humidity are important factors to consider when evaluating storage options.

A motion was made by Member Kenyon, seconded by Member Brennan and unanimously carried, to begin an investigation into potential options within the Sheldon Theatre for storage of the new grand piano.

8. Communication Items

A. Director's Report.

President Achen reported that Director Dow was unable to attend the meeting, as she was attending a conference. Associate Director Stewart provided a Director's report.

- The new grand piano was further discussed. Associate Director Stewart expressed gratitude to the generous donors who made this acquisition possible.
- Associate Director Stewart reported that the new show season will begin on September 20. She reported that a Toast to the Season event for Friends of the Sheldon is planned in the Studio.
- Associate Director Stewart reported that the recent pre-fiesta event in partnership with Hispanic Outreach was very successful.
- The top-selling shows were reviewed:
 - 1) Takin' It to the Limit (The Armadillos Eagles tribute show).
 - 2) Tribute to John Fogerty & CCR.
 - 3) Collin Raye.
 - 4) Orleans.
 - 5) Atlanta Rhythm Section & The New Standards Holiday Show (currently tied for the fifth top-selling show).
- Associate Director Stewart reported that Samuel Betcher has begun his new full-time position as the Lead Production Technician.
- A season package update was provided. Associate Director Stewart reported significant increases in package sales compared with last season.

B. Finance Report.

Member Wardle summarized the Finance Report, noting that August was a quiet month, as is typical. She reported that there was one educational show and three movie showings during August.

Member Wardle noted that the current Finance Report reflects very few changes. She reviewed year-to-date revenue and expense information, noting that the main stage numbers reflect a profit of nearly \$17,000.

C. Board Chair's Report.

President Achen provided an update regarding the strategic planning process. He noted that materials will be distributed to Board Members prior to a strategic planning workshop on November 8.

D. Committee Reports.

President Achen detailed the performance review process for Director Dow, noting that this will better coincide with her month of hire. He indicated that a survey will be sent to Board Members in October. He stated that a closed session will be conducted during the November Sheldon Board meeting for discussion of the performance review, with assistance provided by City of Red Wing HR staff.

E. Government Relations Report.

Council Liaison Snyder discussed the 2026 budget and levy planning processes. She noted that the preliminary levy and budget will be set during the September 22 Council meeting. She referenced proposed zoning ordinance changes that will provide more flexibility in terms of housing options.

Council Liaison Snyder reported that the School District recently conducted an RFP process to identify a developer for the former Jefferson School property, with no proposals being submitted. She stated that the Port Authority will be working with School District representatives to potentially acquire the property for the purpose of redeveloping the site for housing. She also discussed an upcoming Housing Summit in October.

Council Liaison Snyder provided an update from the Red Wing HRA relating to the former nursing home property. The zoning of this site was discussed.

F. Board Member Comments.

Member Wardle asked about ticket sales for the pre-concert soiree event on October 4, and Member Christenson provided an update. Promotion of this event was discussed.

It was reported that the David French presentation has sold out.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.