

**The Sheldon Theatre Board of Directors
Regular Meeting
City Council Chambers
October 21, 2025**

Members Present: Board President Chap Achen; Board Members Laurie Bell, Susan Christenson, Art Kenyon, and Glen Witham

Members Absent: Member Brennan (excused absence) and Member Wardle (excused absence)

Others Present: Shantel Dow, Executive Director; Beth Snyder, Council Liaison

1. Call to Order

Board President Chap Achen called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

President Achen led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call

Roll call was conducted. President Achen and Board Members Bell, Christenson, Kenyon, and Witham were in attendance.

Member Brennan previously indicated he would be absent.

Member Wardle previously indicated she would be absent.

4. Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Member Christenson, seconded by Member Bell to approve the agenda as drafted. A vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 5:0.

5. Public Comment

President Achen reviewed the public comment procedure.

No one wished to address the Board.

6. Consent Agenda

A. Motion to Approve September 15, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes.

A motion was made by Member Witham, seconded by Member Kenyon to approve the minutes as presented/amended. A vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 5:0.

7. Motions & General Business

There were no motions or general business.

8. Communication Items

A. Director's Report.

Director Dow presented the Director's Report.

- The Board has exceeded the break-even point with net revenue from the first shows.
- The soiree was a big success, and thanks were given to Susan Christenson for her hard work.
- Director Dow reported on what is happening across the State.
- Events are ramping up in frequency, and ongoing maintenance is being accomplished in and around the seasonal event schedule.
- Season Packages totaled 181 last year, and this year they total 271. The new ticketing system made Packages easier to purchase online.
- A grant has been submitted to SEMAC for \$11,000 for community outreach. An additional grant was submitted for \$6,500 to Arts Midwest GIG Fund for Kevin Spencer's engagement.
- Invitations are going out this week for the Executive Director Reception, which will be held at Jimmy's Pub on November 13, 2025.
- The Friends Lapel Pins were unveiled at the opening show. The Pin is a vinyl record, commemorating the many artists in the season who were first heard on vinyl.
- Messersmith will do an artist talk and mini performance with students at Tower View on October 30, 2025.
- There was great success of the Manhattan Shorts with the library, having over 100 people attending.
- Hocus Pocus sold 206 tickets.
- He and Samantha met with Hispanic Outreach to work on funding and what the partnership for the Pre-Fiesta may look like in 2026.
- Samantha attended the Minnesota Citizens for the Arts tour with SEMAC and shared success stories from the Sheldon on the value of State funding for the arts.
- The Season Opener was not well attended, but it was an awesome show.
- There is a waitlist for the Duff Foundation Community Conversation.

Board President Chap Achen asked if the Board received feedback on the jazz performer. Director Dow stated that there was some controversy over what was expected in the performance and what took place. She explained the background, and anyone who expressed their disappointment was issued a credit for a future performance.

B. Finance Report

Director Dow gave a brief overview and called attention to the fact that the numbers are from September 2025.

Director Dow reported the following statistics:

- The Main Stage Revenue numbers are slightly behind by \$6,930.

- Phoenix Ticket Revenue is \$28,181 above budget because of Shrek.
- The Field Trip Revenue has soared to \$19,542 above budget.
- Rental Revenue is just about on target at \$2,698 above budget.
- Retail Sales Revenue is slightly down at \$2,424 below budget, but it is expected to take off soon.
- Grants and Donations Revenue is doing well at \$30,153 above budget.
- The Endowment Interest will end the year with a slight deficit, and it is currently \$5,687 below budget.
- Expenses for Main Stage Artists have increased and are \$45,728.
- Main Stage Income is currently \$52,658 above budget.

City Council Liaison Beth Snyder asked if the interest includes the newest donation. Director Dow explained that they won't see the major increase from the donation until 2030. The endowment gains interest over the years. She offered to obtain more information on how the process works.

C. Board Chair's Report

President Achen stated that the Members will receive an email from Alex Saxe with a Google Form survey for Director Dow's performance review. He requested that Members complete the survey on or before November 7, 2025.

President Achen stated that in the November Meeting, the Members will go into a Closed Session to review the output of the Survey and come to a consensus on Director Dow's performance. In December, the results will be delivered to Director Dow.

President Achen noted that there will be a Strategic Planning Meeting on November 7, 2025. The goal is to have the Pre-Read Packet ready by next week for the meeting. Jim Pence, the facilitator of the Meeting, will be sending the packet via email, and the Board should have about ten days to review it.

President Achen stated that during the last meeting, they authorized an investigation into storage options for the new piano. After some investigation, the Board has identified a non-load-bearing wall that will be removed. The City, at its own expense, will have some electrical work completed to support a commercial dehumidifier that the City will also purchase. President Achen indicated that two covers will add additional protection for the piano.

President Achen stated that, while the solution is not necessarily final, it is well on its way and not a tremendous financial burden.

Member Kenyon asked to what extent the City is absorbing the cost of the project. President Achen stated that Public Works is taking care of all of it.

Member Bell inquired about the organ. Director Dow stated that the organ is being tuned.

D. Committee Reports

City Council Liaison Beth Snyder stated that the City Council is currently focusing on the budget.

Liaison Snyder also reported that the Prairie Island Community signed a compact with the State for cannabis and was granted eight retail stores throughout the State. There is a certain amount of land that they are allowed to use for growing cannabis. The City will be working with the Community on the opening of a retail cannabis store in Red Wing.

Liaison Snyder reminded the Board that the City Council passed a law last year allowing a total of two cannabis retail stores in the City. The Prairie Island Community retail cannabis stores will not count among the two allowable retail cannabis stores in the City. Ultimately, there will be three retail cannabis stores inside the City. One is on the Reservation, and the other two are inside the City limits. There are ongoing discussions regarding the Baur Building and its potential use for cannabis sales.

Liaison Snyder announced that there will be a Housing Summit in November with the Port Authority, the City Council, and the HRA. The plan is to have a four-hour summit to delve into the needs of Red Wing. Multiple Members agreed that the City of Red Wing needs some affordable housing.

Liaison Snyder elaborated on the budget discussions that the Council is currently pondering. On Monday, the City Council will be discussing all the open positions and the possibility of adding additional positions, as they are working through the budget. Liaison Snyder noted that the current preliminary levy is five percent. The goal for the Mayor and most of the City Council is to have a three percent levy.

President Achen informed the Board that their budget would be discussed in November and slated to be approved at their December Meeting.

E. Government Relations Report

No Government Relations Report was given.

F. Board Member Comments

No Board Member Comments were given.

9. Adjournment

President Achen adjourned the meeting at 6:07 p.m.