



Mission Statement: The Sheldon Theatre entertains, educates, and enlightens the community and its visitors through the transformative power of the performing arts.

Statement of Intent: We gather today in this room as one people to discuss and attend to the matters of Red Wing. Together, as a government body and as community members, we agree to treat everyone with courtesy, dignity, and respect. We will listen to all sides of an issue, encourage participation, support each other, act with honor and accountability, and inspire pride in our community. This we commit as we open this meeting.

**Meeting Announcement and Agenda
Sheldon Theatre Board Regular Meeting
City Council Chambers, 315 West 4th Street, Red Wing, MN & Virtually
Tuesday, December 16, 2025, at 5:15 PM**

This meeting will be held in the City Hall Council Chambers and virtually via Webex at the same time. Members of the public can join this meeting either in person at City Hall or virtually. [Join the meeting via Webex here](#). To join via telephone, please dial (415) 655-0001. Enter access code 2550 111 2441 and password 2025 when prompted.

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Pledge of Allegiance**
- 3. Roll Call**
- 4. Approval of Agenda**
- 5. Oath of Office**
 - 5.A. The Mayor will be present to swear in Maria Haley for her first term on the Sheldon Theatre Board, expiring December 31, 2029.
- 6. Public Comment**

We now invite anyone to share their thoughts on a topic that is not on the agenda. We welcome all opinions and ideas. We appreciate you stating your name at the lectern, and please remember that personal attacks may be ruled out of order. You will have up to three minutes to comment, and we appreciate your time in coming tonight.
- 7. Consent Agenda**
 - 7.A. Motion to Approve November 7, 2025 Workshop Minutes.
 - 7.B. Motion to Approve November 18, 2025 Sheldon Theatre Board Meeting Minutes
- 8. Motions & General Business**
 - 8.A. Briefing on St. Paul & Minnesota Foundation Accounts by Tod Herskovitz, NonProfit Strategies Manager

8.B. Motion to approve Executive & Artistic Director Annual Review

9. Communication Items

9.A. Director's Report

9.B. Finance Report

9.C. Board Chair's Report

9.D. Committee Reports

9.E. Government Relations Report

9.F. Board Member Comments

10. Adjournment

Accommodations for signing interpreter, Braille, large print, etc. can be made. Call City Hall at 385.3600 seven days prior to the need. Hearing assistance devices are available during meetings.

**The Sheldon Theatre Board of Directors
Workshop
The Sheldon Theatre
November 7, 2025**

Members Present: Chap Achen, Dennis Brennan, Meredith Wardle, Laurie Bell, Susan Christenson, Art Kenyon, Glen Witham

Members: Absent: None.

Others Present: Jim Pence, Chris Heineman, Shantel Dow, Russell Johnson, Brenda Stewart, Samantha Whipple, Leah Adams

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chap Achen called the meeting to order at 8:30AM

2. Roll Call

Roll call was conducted.

3. Preparations for the Day

3.A. Reflections on the Sheldon mission and its significance to the Board
Pence re-introduced the Sheldon's mission. Discussion took place and emphasis was placed on "Enlighten" as a prominent word in the mission statement.

3.B. Board Stories of Satisfaction and Aspiration
Robust discussion of experiences at the Sheldon and stories shared from friends and other patrons.

3.C. Overview of the Agenda for Friday (fit and flow)
The agenda overview was directed by the facilitator, Pence.

3.D. Overview of Packet Materials
No discussion on content of packet materials.

3.E. On "sustainable prominence" and "strategic initiatives"
The attendees broke into smaller groups to discuss these topics. Sustainable prominence and strategic initiatives is an on-going discussion and more to come on final outcomes and direction for the strategic plan.

4. Analysis and Discussion of the 10-Year Data

4.A. Review the data, charts, and graphs prepared by Staff on Thursday
A brief overview of data collected by staff was discussed. Trends are improving over the last couple of years.

4.B. Discussion of "missing data" to be collected (if any)
No data discussion here.

4.C. Strategies to Ensure Financial Stability in data categories
There was discussion on selection of shows, ticket prices, audience trends and age demographics. Some input included the impression that ticket prices are modest.

5. Analysis and Discussion of "Strategic Snapshot" of Operations from Staff Workshop

5.A. Board review, additions/deletions/modifications

1. 2014-15 carry forward and initiatives
2. Leadership
3. Production
4. Marketing/Communications
5. Community Relations/Development
6. Audience Services
7. Entrepreneurial Opportunities

Participants appreciated the staff input in these areas but also commented that many of the strategic initiatives were not "measurable".

6. Determine Priorities for Strategic Initiatives

Some discussion on programming for younger audiences might be a good strategy. Ticket prices may need further discussion. Future look at inclusivity for all with regards to ticket prices is also important. Possibly researching how to reach those that cannot attend due to ticket prices.

7. Next Steps and Timeline

There will be a follow-up meeting with Pence and the Sheldon Board members in the near future. Pence will create and send summary documents as directed by the Board.

8. Adjournment

Chap Achen adjourned the meeting at 11:40AM

**The Sheldon Theatre Board of Directors
Regular Meeting
City Council Chambers
November 18, 2025**

Members Present: Board President Chap Achen; Treasurer Meridith Wardle, Member Susan Christenson, Member Art Kenyon, and Vice President Dennis Brennan

Members Absent: Member Laurie Bell (excused absence), Glen Witham (unexcused absence)

Others Present: Shantel Dow, Executive Director

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 Wardle, Christenson, Kenyon, and Brennan were in attendance.

Member Bell previously indicated she would be absent.

City Council Liaison Beth Snyder stated that Member Witham sent an email stating that he resigned, effective immediately.

4. Approval of Agenda

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

5. Public Comment

No one wished to address the Board.

6. Consent Agenda

A. Motion to Approve October 16, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes.

A motion was made by Member Kenyon, seconded by Member Christenson to approve the minutes as presented. 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 items to discuss.

8. Communication Items

A. Director's Report.

Director Dow provided updates and highlighted information from her report:

- Director Dow reported that the Sheldon Theatre is well into the holiday season, and things are going well.
- It was noted that Sheldon Gift Certificates are available, and they make excellent Christmas gifts.
- Director Dow stated that every artist sings the praises of the production crew.
- Director stated that the position for the Sheldon Youth Theatre Director is open, and as of the current report, there have been sixteen applicants from eleven different states. As of moments before the meeting, there are twenty-four applicants from twelve states. Director Dow stated that she is in the process of working with others to create the questions for the interview process. The deadline for applications is December 1, 2025.
- President Achen asked if a goal has been set for the first Production for next year. Director Dow stated that the goal is August 2026. The plan is for a smaller show in August and a larger one in December.
- Director Dow informed the Board that a succession plan is being reviewed and moving forward with replacing the Director of Production, who will retire in mid-June 2026. The open position will be announced on January 12, 2026.
- Block booking is underway. There are quite a few shows that have already been secured for the fall of 2026 and a few for the spring of 2027. In January of 2026, the Sheldon Theatre begins to look forward to scheduling in 2027 and 2028.
- Director Dow stated that a lot of shows are coming up, and there are quite a few larger events that will be taking place in December.
- Director Dow stated that at the time of the current report, the CCR (Creedence Clearwater Revival) show was sold out, and there were multiple positive comments from the patrons. A second bar was opened on the second floor, which helped with the flow and kept the lines shorter.
- President Achen stated that the additional bar made a tremendous impact.
- Director Dow stated that there have been discussions about where to put the Christmas tree because of the success of the additional bar. The two sets of doors at the main entrance are never used, so there is consideration for either putting the Christmas tree there or using that space for the additional bar.
- Member Christenson stated that she had positive feedback on the acoustics, and she asked if there were changes for this event.
- Director Dow stated that the band came with "in-ear monitors." Director Dow stated that the drawback to converting to this system is having people share earbuds.
- Vice President Brennan stated that purchasing additional earbuds is not cost-prohibitive.
- President Achen concurred that the acoustics were better than in past shows.
- Director Dow stated that there is a wait list in place right now for The New Standard.

- Director Dow stated that the winter postcards have been mailed, and holiday posters are beginning to go up around the City.
- Director Dow stated that the Sheldon Theatre did indeed receive a Community Outreach Program Grant for \$11,000, despite the stiff competition. This is an increase of \$1,000 from last year.
- Director Dow stated that there is an effort to produce a progress report on the Accessible Grant to the Minnesota State Arts Board.
- Director Dow stated that the Executive Director Reception was held at Jimmy's Pub on November 13, 2025. Donors at the Producer level and above received an invitation. There was a good turnout.
- Member Kenyon commended President Achen for a very good talk that he delivered.
- Director Dow announced that the Friends Holiday Party will be held on Friday, December 12, 2025, before the Mandy Gonzalez concert. Mandy Gonzalez was Elphaba on Broadway in Wicked. She was also in Hamilton. She was the lead last year in Sunset Boulevard on Broadway. She has performed with the Boston Pops, and she has performed at Carnegie Hall.
- Director Dow stated that the Year-End Appeal Letter will be sent to prospects for donor acquisition the week of December 1, 2025.
- Director Dow stated that AAUW rented the theatre for their fundraising film, "Mom & Dad's Nipple Factory," and they had a pre-show reception. The AAUW was pleased with the results and wants to continue the partnership. AAUW plans to come see the "Frederick Douglass and the Shadow of Slavery" production, and they plan to purchase additional tickets to donate to the Black Student Union from Red Wing High School.
- Director Dow reported that Red Wing High School 11th and 12th-grade students, along with Tower View students, attended Shakespeare for a morning matinee of "Twelfth Night" on October 31, 2025. Quite a few veterans and their families participated in the Vet Tix Program that same day.
- Director Dow explained that the Sheldon Theatre has a fun event on the Monday before Thanksgiving that includes decorating inside and out for the Holiday Stroll.

B. Finance Report.

Treasurer Wardle asked Director Dow to give an overview of ticket sales.

Director Dow stated that the revenue per ticket varies depending on the discount packages that are purchased. If a patron purchases eight or more shows, they receive a 25% discount.

Member Kenyon expressed his surprise at such a steep discount.

President Achen suggested that the discount be discussed before publishing the pricing for next year.

Director Dow stated that 12% to 15% is the average discount given by other theaters.

President Achen suggested that the Board examine the third quarter financials.

Treasurer Wardle directed the Commissioners to look at pages 10-12 of their packet.

Treasurer Wardle stated that the first column is the first-year budget, and she explained that there need to be \$1.4 million. On the expense side, there is also about \$1.4 million. The budgeted loss was about \$100,000. Based on the current estimates, it looks like the loss will be much less, and very close to breaking even.

Treasurer Wardle stated that going into Q-4, the Sheldon Theatre is looking very good.

Treasurer Wardle asked Director Dow when the transfer from the General Fund will be. The answer is right after Thanksgiving.

Member Kenyon asked why the transfer from the General Fund is later than last year.

Director Dow stated that no reason was given.

Member Kenyon stated that it would be nice if there were a standard time for the transfer each year.

Director Dow stated that last year, the transfer was split into two.

President Achen stated that the St. Paul Foundation will be present for the December Meeting. That question should be raised then.

Director Dow stated that this is a different thing. This is from the City.

Member Wardle stated that the Sheldon Theatre has assets of \$6.3 million and liabilities of just under \$400,000.

A motion was made by Vice President Brennan, seconded by Member Christenson to conditionally approve Q-3 2025 financials. A vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 5:0.

President Achen asked Director Dow to share the budget, and he further stated that it would be ideal to approve the budget tonight.

President Achen reminded the Sheldon Theatre Board that they are not a non-profit

organization; rather, they are a government organization, and the goal is to break even or generate a small profit.

Director Dow asked the Commissioners to refer to a document that she provided to them and explained that the orange highlights indicate the changes that were made.

Director Dow stated that the State Grants and Aids proposed budget was \$130,000, and it has been increased by \$15,000.

Director Dow stated that she had originally wiped the Gift Shop budget out completely because a Gift Shop is not the focus of the Sheldon Theatre, but she has since been convinced to add it back in with a budget of \$3,000.

Director Dow explained that the Sheldon Theatre receives 15% of anything that an artist sells at their show. This line item was increased by \$557 to balance the budget.

Director Dow stated that the Private Foundation Grants line item has a huge increase (amount not stated). There is a potential of four new granting organizations.

Director Dow believes there is a lot of room for growth in the Friends of the Sheldon line item.

Director Dow stated that the Corporate and Foundation Grants line item is another area that should increase by an additional \$5,000.

Director Dow lowered expenses to \$10,000.

President Achen asked about the increase from the City. Director Dow explained that she has no control over the largest portion of the budget because it comes to her from the City. Treasurer Wardle stated that it appears to be a straight 3% increase across the board.

Treasurer Wardle asked if the Merch Cost of \$12,500 in row 108 lines up with the revenue of \$3,000. Director Dow explained that this line item includes beer, wine, and pop.

President Achen asked if the expenses are in one line and the revenue is rolled into three lines. The answer is yes.

President Achen asked what the revenue is for the concessions. Director Dow stated that the revenue is about double the expenses.

Director Dow explained that there are several licensing companies that the Sheldon Theatre has to pay for music, along with a liquor license. If an artist comes in to do original music, there is no licensing fee.

Council Liaison Snyder asked about the housing allowance. Director Dow explained that when there is a conference out of town, this line item pays for lodging.

President Achen stated that the Main Stage Ticket Sales line item shows that the revenue will be raised by \$100,000 in 2026. The rationale is that there will be more shows, there will be a modest increase in the cost of tickets, the discounts will not be quite as high as they are currently, and the hope of a slight increase in the attendance rate.

President Achen recommended that Director Dow be allowed to complete the budget, and the Executive Committee review the work in a smaller meeting and provide any last guidance to Director Dow.

A motion was made by Member Christenson, seconded by Treasurer Wardle to conditionally approve the 2026 Budget based on Executive Committee final approval. A vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 5:0.

C. Board Chair's Report.

President Achen stated that it is necessary to reschedule the Strategic Planning Meeting. The goal will be for each Board Member to come in with a list of things that appear to be missing from the Plan that need to be discussed or a list of things that are in the Plan but don't actually belong in it.

Council Liaison Snyder asked how long the Strategic Plan would be in place. President Achen stated that it is to be determined. The length will be assigned once it is determined exactly what will be in it.

President Achen stated that there are four different dates during December that are possible dates for the Strategic Planning Meeting, and they are December 8, 10, 15, and 17.

Council Liaison Snyder stated that December 8, 2025, is a City Council Meeting.

Vice President Brennan will be out of town on December 17, 2025.

There was consensus to have the Strategic Planning Meeting on December 10, 2025, at 5:00 p.m.

C. Committee Reports.

There were no committee reports.

D. Government Relations Report.

Council Liaison Snyder stated that the City Council is totally focused on the 2026 Budget, which must be finalized by December 8, 2025. City Council is likely going to

come in between 3% and 3.25% for the levy, which is below the 5% levy that was voted on in August of 2025.

F. Board Member Comments.

There were no Board Member comments.

9. Motion to go into Closed Session

The purpose of the closed session is to evaluate the performance of Executive Director, Shantel Dow. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 13D.05 sub 3(a), the Library Board may go into closed session to evaluate the performance of an individual who is subject to its authority.

A motion was made by Member Kenyon, seconded by Member Christenson to go into closed session. A vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 5:0.

(1:11)

10. Motion to go into Open Session

State Law requires the Sheldon Theatre Board to provide a summary of its conclusions regarding the evaluation at its next open meeting. The City will comply with the State requirement by providing a summary regarding the evaluation of Executive Director, Shantel Dow, at the next Sheldon Theatre Board Meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner [REDACTED], seconded by Commissioner [REDACTED] to go into open session. A vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 5:0.

11. Adjournment

President Achen adjourned the meeting at [REDACTED] p.m.

A motion was made by Commissioner [REDACTED], seconded by Commissioner [REDACTED] to approve. A vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 5:0.



**Executive Director's Report
12/18/2025**

Submitted by: Shantel Dow & the Sheldon staff

Quick Summary:

- Youth Theatre Program: 50 applicants. 7 interviews next week. Highly qualified candidates from 14 states.
- Building: Thank you to public works and buildings & grounds for their support of the Sheldon! They helped to secure the Christmas tree for Holiday Stroll and keep our sidewalks clear for our staff and patrons.
- Other: Holiday shows have been well-attended. Patrons have been in the holiday spirit and seem to enjoy the performances.

Industry Sector:

APAP conference is next month. There will be several appointments with agents to finalize the 26-27 season and start to look ahead to 27-28.

Russell's Production Report

- Piano storage area has been completed. Big thanks to Public Works.
- December events coming fast and furious.
- Have begun meetings with 2026 visiting artists and groups.

Brenda's Marketing Report

- Season to date: Number of tickets sold is up 10% from 2024 (comparing all tickets sold from 5/30/24 - 12/31/24 and tickets sold to date for 2025 - 5/29/24 - 12/12/25 - more tickets will be sold from now til 12/31/25.)
- Missoula Children's Theatre Audition info was added to the website and sent home in backpacks at the beginning of December. Auditions will be Jan 5, 4-8pm.

Samantha's Development Report

- Notable community outreach from the Mandy Gonzalez performance included the Red Wing Holiday Chorus performing alongside Mandy with student soloist Hazel Perau. Tickets were gifted to local organizations Hispanic Students United from Red Wing High School and Hispanic Outreach of Goodhue County
- Missoula Children's Theatre will offer an assembly at Burnside Elementary during their residency in January
- Friends celebrated a holiday party on Friday before Mandy Gonzalez, with approximately 30 in attendance
- A 1,600 piece Friends acquisition mailing went out on December 1, inviting patrons to join Friends
- Over \$20,000 in renewal mailings went out on December 2, Friends is on track to hit budget
- An application to the MSAB General Operating program is underway and due in mid-January, as a reminder, this is an interim application year and funding varies based on legislative allocations to the Arts & Cultural Heritage Fund
- Preparing a Letter of Inquiry for the St. Paul Minnesota Foundation's Arts & Culture Grant Program, this will be a highly competitive program, awarding \$100,000 a year for 5 years

Leah's Box Office and Front of House Report

- Holiday decorating & soup supper for the decorators took place on Monday 11/24, with the Holiday Stroll Muppet movie & Santa on Stage, and the Sheldon Brass Band that same week. Coupled with end of the month accounting duties it was a very busy week.

- The Minne-Nutcracker was very well received; this abridged version was easier on the little ones, who typically conk out midway through the full version.
- Last week was hopping with Colleen Raye, Mandy Gonzalez, & Lorie Line in quick succession—Wed, Fri, Sat. The weather kept our 2 tour group operators from Owatonna for Colleen Raye's matinee on the edge of their seats, but they were both able to make it.

Sheldon Theatre Board

Financial Snapshot* - YTD November 2025

Revenue	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Variance
Main Stage Ticket Revenue	\$ 318,062	\$ 300,500	\$ 17,562
Phoenix Ticket Revenue	\$ 49,480	\$ 20,400	\$ 29,080
Education/Field Trip Ticket Revenue	\$ 28,542	\$ 11,000	\$ 17,542
Rental Revenue	\$ 40,333	\$ 41,250	\$ (917)
Retail Sales	\$ 36,119	\$ 35,888	\$ 231
Grants and Donations Revenue	\$ 483,672	\$ 416,216	\$ 67,456
Endowment Interest	\$ 164,313	\$ 170,000	\$ (5,687)
Totals	\$ 1,120,521	\$ 995,254	\$ 125,267

Main Stage	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Variance
Main Stage Ticket Revenue	\$ 318,062	\$ 240,210	\$ 77,852
Main Stage Artist Fees Expense	\$ 275,934	\$ 238,333	\$ (37,601)
Main Stage Income/(Expense)	\$ 42,128	\$ 1,877	\$ 40,251



*This report does not represent an actual financial statement regarding the Sheldon Theatre revenue and expenses and is used for performance.

Sheldon Theatre Board

Ticket Snapshot - November 2025

Main Stage Tickets Revenue	# of Shows	Tickets Sold	Occupancy %	Rev/Ticket
Twelfth Night	1	175	37%	\$ 44.59
CCR Fogerty Tribute	1	462	99%	\$ 29.44
Not the Right Mom	1	93	32%	\$ 31.27
Laverne & Lucy	1	125	27%	\$ 19.79
Atlanta Rhythm Section	1	438	94%	\$ 55.82
A Muppet Christmas Carol (Movie)	1	390	83%	\$ 5.93
Phoenix Ticket Revenue	# of Shows	Tickets Sold	Occupancy %	Rev/Ticket
Red Herring	4	383	20%	\$16.40
Education/Field Trip Ticket Revenue	# of Shows	Tickets Sold	Occupancy %	Rev/Ticket
\$0				
Rental Revenue	# of Shows	Tickets Sold	Occupancy %	Rental Revenue
Sheldon Theatre Brass Band	1	301	64%	\$5,779

SHOW	Proj. Tickets	Actual Tickets
Twelfth Night	\$ 10,000	\$ 7,804
CCR Fogerty Tribute	\$ 12,375	\$ 13,602
Not the Right Mom	\$ 4,950	\$ 2,908
Laverne & Lucy	\$ 3,800	\$ 2,473
Atlanta Rhythm Section	\$ 23,180	\$ 24,449
A Muppet Christmas Carol (Movie)	\$ -	\$ 2,311
Total	\$ 54,305	\$ 53,547