

**The Sheldon Theatre Board of Directors  
Regular Meeting  
City Council Chambers  
March 17, 2026**

**Members Present:** Board Members Laurie Bell, Susan Christenson, Maria Haley, and Dennis Brennan

**Members Absent:** President Achen (excused absence), Member Wardle (excused absence)

**Others Present:** Shantel Dow, Executive Director

**1. Call to Order**

Member Brennan called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

Member Brennan led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. Roll Call**

Roll call was conducted. Board Members Bell, Christenson, Haley and Brennan were in attendance.

**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 4:0.

**5. Public Comment**

No one was present to address the Board.

**6. Consent Agenda**

**A. Motion to Approve February 24, 2026, Regular Meeting Minutes.**

A motion was made by Member Bell, seconded by Member Haley, to approve the minutes as presented. A vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 4:0.

**7. Motions & General Business**

**A. Add non-voting Student Advisory Member/s to the Sheldon Board.**

Director Dow stated that the Mayor is very excited about including a non-voting Student Advisory Member on the Sheldon Theatre Board.

Director Dow stated that there will be future initiatives to add voting young people to the Red Wing Boards and Commissions.

Director Dow expressed excitement about the prospect of gaining some fresh and different perspectives.

Member Brennan asked if there has been any indication of a particular term for this position. Director Dow stated that there was no such indication.

Member Brennan asked if this person would still go through the vetting process with the City. Director Dow was not certain and stated that she would inquire.

Members Christenson, Bell, and Haley all expressed their strong approval for the proposal.

A motion was made by Member Bell, seconded by Member Christenson, to approve the addition of a Non-Voting Student Advisory Member to the Sheldon Theatre Board. A vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 4:0.

## **8. Communication Items**

### **A. Director's Report.**

Director Dow provided updates and highlighted information from her report:

- Director Dow reported that it is an exciting time for The Sheldon Theatre.
- Director Dow stated that it became official today that Jordyn Foss has been approved to be the Youth Theatre Director for the Sheldon Theatre. Her first official day on the job will be April 6, 2026.
- Director Dow stated that the interviews have begun for the Associate Director of Production. Russell Johnson will be retiring on June 15, 2026. There were forty-one applicants, and seven were selected for virtual interviews. Three finalists were chosen to come for an in-person interview on April 8, 2026. Director Dow stated that an offer will likely be extended within the month of April, with an estimated start date of either the end of May or the beginning of June.
- Director Dow stated that all the bookings for the year are complete.
- Director Dow stated that Russell's retirement party will be on Monday, June 15, 2026, from 5:30-8:00 p.m. at the Elks.
- Director Dow stated that on June 5, 2026, there will be a small reception in the Sheldon Theatre with cake so that a lot of people who have worked with him over the years can just drop by to wish him well.
- Director Dow stated that the outreach programs have been amazing.
- Director Dow will be meeting with the Red Wing Fund Board on Monday, April 13, 2026, to give a summary about the Youth Theatre Program. Jordyn Foss, the new Youth Theatre Director, will also be attending.
- On Arts Advocacy Day, Director Dow went to the State Capitol, and it was an amazing event. There were 400 arts representatives who all had scheduled meetings with different representatives to thank them for their support of the arts and encourage them to continue their support.
- Director Dow stated that the Spring Phoenix show will be really exciting in April. Vignette performances will be fun and different.

- Russell is having early talks for the Red Wing Shoe Corporate Event in May.
- Director Dow spoke fondly of the decision to hire a photographer for the Keven Spencer show and the Takin' it to the Limit show. Director Dow is hoping to get a lot of use out of the incredible pictures from the full house shows.
- Director Dow stated that Minnesota Music Legends is the name of a show that will be performed on June 15, 2026, as a matinee show.
- Director Dow stated that 225 people participated in outreach activities, and 120 people attended the public event. There were 500 students at the school assemblies for Water Street Dance at Twin Bluff Middle School, and twenty-two dancers participated.
- Director Dow stated that Staff is pleading with the Sheldon Board Members to please assist with as many potential leads as possible for sponsorship opportunities. Director Dow will be emailing the Board a two-page document that outlines the steps for requesting sponsorships.
- Member Christenson stated that she would like to assist with the sponsorships.
- Director Dow stated that the Minnesota State Arts Board Artistic Evaluation is scheduled for April 3, 2026, during Phoenix's production.
- Director Dow touted that the Wings Foundation increased their support from \$3,000 to \$10,000 for sponsorship of the 2026-2027 season.
- Director Dow stated that the Red Wing Shoe Foundation generously approved a request for \$217,500 over the next three years for general operating support. Member Brennen voices his approval.
- Director Dow stated that in April, the Sheldon will be submitting a \$20,000 grant to the Minnesota State Arts Board for the Accessible Arts Program, which assists the local school district with a grant request to the Red Wing Public Schools Foundation for field trips, and submitting a proposal to the Red Wing Area Fund for annual operating support. This grant is renewable every other year. Director Dow intends to host an open house for staff and volunteers to try out all the accessibility options the Sheldon offers. Next, the plan is to have an open house event for the public so that the Sheldon can allow the public to check out the accessibility options for themselves.
- Director Dow stated that accessible restroom buttons are currently being explored. Public Works is in the process of getting some cost estimates.
- Director Dow stated that the Friends listing has been updated in the new playbill.
- Director Dow stated that the Sheldon is proceeding with a short movie series in parallel to Downtown Main Street's Late Night Thursdays.
- Director Dow reported that Big Turn was very successful with the Sheldon's bar, with \$3,400 in sales for the two nights and \$6,250 earned from rental revenue.
- The Pout Pout Fish and Click Clack Moo shows were very successful. Many of the ushers commented on the set.
- Director Dow reported that there are several tours upcoming.

- Director Dow stated that the Volunteer Appreciation Event is scheduled for Thursday, April 24, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. The Board Members are encouraged to come and say a brief thank-you to the volunteers.
- Member Brennan stated that he wears his name badge when attending a performance, and he usually attempts to introduce himself to the volunteers.

## **B. Finance Report.**

Director Dow stated that the February Financial Snapshot is very good. The Main Stage Ticket Revenue was \$253 above the predictions made last year. The Education/Field Trip Ticket Revenue was only \$98 under last year's predictions.

Director Dow stated that the timing for some of the financials will prove to be better at different times throughout the year. For instance, the Rental Revenue is \$3,174 below the prediction, but we're ahead of where we were last year at this time. Director Dow does not anticipate that the Rental Revenue will fall below projections at the end of the year.

Director Dow stated that Retail Sales had a huge increase of \$2,178, as a result of the Big Turn.

Director Dow stated that the Grants and Donations look like they are behind by \$38,945, but that's because of the timing. According to Director Dow, the Endowment is supposed to be coming in this month. It will be slightly higher than the budgeted amount by about \$6,000.

Director Dow reported that the Main Stage Ticket Revenue, as compared to the Main Stage Artist Fees and Expenses, was pretty much what was expected.

Member Brennan stated that the Peking Acrobats did very well.

Director Dow stated that usually the artists want a flat rate to come and perform. Working with the Fabulous Armadillos only want 75% of the ticket sales, so we know that we will never lose money by booking them.

Director Dow shared that she had the most wonderful comment from a patron at the Kickin' it Irish Show. The gentleman was from Baldwin, WI, who brought his teenage son, who had zero interest in performing arts, but they got tickets through the Vet Ticks Program. The gentleman made an effort to ask an usher who he could thank for his tickets. He explained that without the free tickets, his son would have never been exposed to such an awesome experience.

## **C. Board Chair's Report.**

President Achen was not present.

### **1. Strategic Plan Updates.**

President Achen was not present.

**D. Committee Report.**

There were no Committee Reports given.

**E. Government Relations Report.**

There was no Government Relations Report given.

**F. Board Member Comments.**

Member Brennan reminded the Board that they should be looking to add at least one, if not two, additional Sheldon Theatre Board Members. Member Brennan went on to say that it would be ideal to add someone who is not afraid of numbers because Member Wardle needs a backup.

**9. Adjournment**

Member Brennan adjourned the meeting at 5:58 p.m.