Keefe Auditorium Commission
Thursday, November 13, 2025
City Hall, Room 208
4:30 PM

The Keefe Auditorium Commission met on the above date, called to order by Vice Chairman Alicia Gregg at 4:32pm. In attendance were Alicia Gregg, Shawn Smith, Joseph Olefirowicz and Carl Dubois. Also in attendance were Tim Cummings, Liz Hannum and Jennifer Deshaies. Dennis Schneider and Daniel O'Donnell were on remote access.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

Approval of Meeting Minutes of November 6, 2025. Motion by Shawn Smith, seconded by Joseph Olefirowicz, to accept minutes. So Voted.

Meeting Overview

Alicia Gregg spoke with Corporation Counsel Bolton concerning whether her memberships on the Commission and the Aldermanic Board constitute a conflict of interest. Per Attorney Bolton, they do not. Alicia Gregg will be completing the term of Gloria Timmons before starting her newly elected term of at large Alderman in January. Alicia also noted that her survey of Commission members resulted in the first Thursday of every month at 4:30pm being decided on as the regular Commission meeting date and time.

Tim Cummings reported the contract with Icon Architecture has been approved and signed. Icon would like to meet with the Commission as soon as possible. After some discussion they will be invited to the December 4th meeting. December 11th is tentatively reserved as a follow-on meeting as well as the January 8th meeting. Icon would also like to tour the Keefe Auditorium.

The Commission then discussed the information presented by Peter Ramsey and Peter Lally at the last two meetings. The Commission's consensus is that a facility larger and more flexible than the Performing Arts Center is desired, with at least 1300 seats, to attract higher profile acts and generate sustained revenue. Improving acoustic quality is critical. The vision also includes rehearsal spaces, star dressing rooms, reception areas and backstage wing expansion to support touring shows and sponsor events.

The Commission then outlined a three-tiered scope of work with increasing complexity:

- Level 1: Code-compliant upgrade with minimal footprint changes, basic usability improvements.

- Level 2: Expanded facility to host traveling companies with enhanced backstage, technical, and audience amenities.
- Level 3: Complete teardown and rebuild behind preserved facade, targeting modern theater standards.

Dennis opined that Level 1's footprint is insufficient for practical theater operations without extensions, recommending an L-shaped addition behind the stage along Lake Street to house loading docks, bathrooms, and lobby spaces

The group agreed to provide ICON with a detailed list of needs rather than fixed footprint specs, trusting architects to translate these into spatial requirements. The following lists were then developed:

Basic

- Bathrooms (more)
- Lobby – ticketing/concessions
- HVAC – energy efficient priority
- ADA – access to auditorium/building access to seats
- Backstage –
    - Loading dock for sets.
    - Dressing rooms – two groups
    - Bathrooms for entertainers
    - 25 feet behind stage for sets.
    - Tech and control booth.
- Maintain existing parking numbers
- Additional storage.
- Light and sound systems – counter acoustic, mid-level problem.
- Utilities/safety minimums.

Upgrade

Basic above, plus:

- Star dressing rooms.
- Wing space for sets – remove left.
- Improved Seating.
- Additional parking.
- Truss supports (for items suspended from trusses, solar field on roof)
- Rehearsal stage.
- Utility upgrade – power.
- Reception area – caterers' kitchen.
- Orchestra pit flexibility/expand.

Action Items

- Tim Cummings to coordinate with ICON architects to confirm availability and finalize dates for meetings on December 4th and 11th, and January 8th.
- Tim Cummings to follow up on feasibility and scheduling for Keefe Auditorium walkthrough before or during upcoming meetings.
- Alicia Gregg to share summary notes with commissioners.

Next Commission Meeting(s)

The next regular meeting is scheduled for December 4th at 4:30 PM. Tentative meeting set for December 11th at 4:30 PM.

Adjournment

Joseph Olefirowicz motioned, seconded by Shawn Smith to adjourn the meeting. So voted at 5:51pm.

Respectfully submitted – Shawn M. Smith, Commission Secretary