

# Commissioner GReed Email to Katherine Adams, November 2, 2015

**Steve Brown**

---

**From:** Steve Brown <hsbrown360@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 03, 2015 3:47 PM  
**To:** Steve Brown  
**Subject:** Fwd: Mighty Wurlitzer

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Geoffrey Reed <[greed@lexingtonky.gov](mailto:greed@lexingtonky.gov)>  
**Date:** November 2, 2015 at 4:53:07 PM EST  
**To:** "Adams, Katherine" <[katherine.adams@uky.edu](mailto:katherine.adams@uky.edu)>  
**Cc:** Jamie Emmons <[jemmons@lexingtonky.gov](mailto:jemmons@lexingtonky.gov)>, Susan Straub <[sstraub@lexingtonky.gov](mailto:sstraub@lexingtonky.gov)>, Sally Hamilton <[shamilton2@lexingtonky.gov](mailto:shamilton2@lexingtonky.gov)>, Janet Graham <[jgraham@lexingtonky.gov](mailto:jgraham@lexingtonky.gov)>, "Council Members (Email)" <[CouncilMembers@lexingtonky.gov](mailto:CouncilMembers@lexingtonky.gov)>, <[willwebb4@windstream.net](mailto:willwebb4@windstream.net)>:, <[hsbrown360@gmail.com](mailto:hsbrown360@gmail.com)>, Jamshid Baradaran <[jbaradaran@lexingtonky.gov](mailto:jbaradaran@lexingtonky.gov)>  
**Subject:** **Mighty Wurlitzer**

Katherine:

The University of Kentucky and the city have been discussing how to deal with the long-standing effort to restore the Mighty Wurlitzer organ. As a result of all our discussions, the University of Kentucky decided not to renew the agreement with Kentucky Mighty Wurlitzer nonprofit, effective January 1st of this year. As you know, the 2002 contract gave any of the parties involved with the project the ability to cancel the agreement with 90 days notice prior to the end of the one-year contract extensions available to the group repairing the organ. The University of Kentucky made the decision not to go forward with this arrangement after consultation with the city, and I believe the action to be appropriate. After 13 years the project still has the need for a great amount of private funding in order to complete repairs, locate the organ in the Kentucky Theater, and make it operational.

After the cancellation, the city felt it best not to proceed with any action related to this project until the management contract of the Kentucky Theater was reviewed. With so much time elapsing since the Wurlitzer contract was entered into, the direction of the Kentucky Theater needed to be determined, so its management team could review this project and how it fits into future plans. The city's desire to resolve the management contract at the theater prior to addressing the Wurlitzer project was understood in our conversations. The review process was completed this summer in a timely fashion, and with the management team in place, we continued to review the Wurlitzer contract issues.

As you recall, our initial discussions involved the issuance of a new RFP by the city to determine who would continue the fundraising effort that began years ago. During our review it became clear to me that more fundamental issues needed to be analyzed. We have discussed the Mighty Wurlitzer project with representatives of Kentucky Theater management, Friends of the Kentucky Theater, Councilmembers and members of the Administration. Issues reviewed included whether sufficient funds can be privately raised to repair, install, operate and maintain the organ at the Kentucky Theater. How this project now fits into plans for the theater, 13 years after the fund raising efforts were launched, also have been weighed.

Based on our review we have determined that the city will not issue an RFP for the Wurlitzer Project and will no longer be involved in an effort to locate the organ at the Kentucky Theater. Over the last 13 years the needs of the Kentucky Theater have changed. The theater has undergone some major renovations and more are planned. There are concerns that sufficient funds may never be raised to place and operate the organ at the Kentucky. There has never been an appetite to provide public money to complete this project. The project may require additional renovations at the Kentucky to accommodate the organ. It is unwise to compromise our ability to move forward with other plans to improve the Kentucky Theater. Waiting any further on fund raising efforts and the uncertainties involved is not in the city's best interest.

Geoff Reed  
Commissioner of General Services  
Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government  
200 East Main Street  
Lexington, Kentucky 40507