

RECEIVED  
TIME  
JUL 19 2018  
CITY OF FT. PIERCE  
CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

Dear Nick Mimms,

We regret that we missed the recent Sunrise Theater meeting as we were out of the country.

Nick, I don't believe we've met but please know that we have lived in the Renaissance on the River 20 Orange Ave for the past 4 plus years. We moved to The Renaissance, and Harbor Isle before the Renaissance was built, after 20 years in Stuart. We located downtown because of the Sunrise Theater. We will quickly sell and leave town if the theatre ever closes as we believe the downtown will die and property values will drop.

We are proud members of the Sunrise and we are also members of the Lyric and the Kravis and at least 3 other theaters out of town. I grew up in New York hooked on theater. My husband and I have been major supporters of the Sunrise Theater for years and have been known to buy the most amount of tickets in a season in addition to our substantial contributions. We are also amongst the highest tax payers in the city of Fort Pierce and support all of our restaurants and yacht clubs, main street, the museums and markets.

Living in the neighborhood, we find it frightening that Downtown Fort Pierce is a ghost town any night that the theater is not lit unless there is an event at the Marina Square. The theater is the economic engine for downtown and has helped it to become vibrant on theatre nights. It brings a cultured group to the town with money they are ready to spend on more than beer.

A quick survey of all the local restaurants including those across the bridge on Seaway and the local retailers (that stay open in the evening), will quickly show their uptake in sales revenues and the number of people each establishment must additionally employ on any night that the theater is open.

We have never known a theater to be self-sustaining in any community and any theater to be viable needs some community tax support as well as strong membership and attendance.

Interestingly it has come to our attention (unless that has just changed as they may have been shamed into it at the last meeting) that none of the commissioners are members of our theater and nor have they attended theater performances unless they have been comped!

We strongly urge your full support of the theatre.

It has been the lack of support that resulted in a cheap malfunctioning telephone system that resulted in the theaters inability to access many phone messages, which got members so angry. True that a senior staffer notoriously didn't return calls even

internally, but that only applied to one of the otherwise exceptional and diligent employees.

John Wilkes enjoys huge contacts in the theatre industry and could attract talent despite the severe limitations of his budget and huge competition from larger theatres. In thinking about a new executive director theatre contacts are essential as well as managerial fiscal and fundraising ability.

I have run a national executive search firm for 30 years Tower Consultants, Ltd. And no I don't specialize in the entertainment industry and I'm not looking for business, but I do know enough about the search industry to help in any firm and candidate selection process should you go the route of a national search or not.

My sense is that a search firm is not affordable and nor is the heavy cost of relocating distant candidates and I do not believe that any current staffers could begin to do the job ahead.

While we enjoy our summers in Massachusetts I am always available by phone and happy to volunteer any advice or assistance.

I'd suggest polling the members and broader community for suggestions of suitable candidates. I'd suggest placing direct solicitation/ referral calls to all of Florida's theater Executive Directors. I'd try to access a directory of theatre directors and consider an advertisement.

We love our Sunrise and believe all the staff and particularly the box office crew do an awesome job. It would be helpful to make them partners in planning for the Theatre's future and not risk losing them.

The theatre needs tax dollars and membership but also active fundraising. Contributions now support the Missoula Theater but I am not aware of any fund that supports the actual theatre. Perhaps an endowment fund should be created. We would also suggest a (required) contribution from all the local restaurants and bars and retailers with evening hours that benefit from proximity to the theatre.

We were surprised that we could not find an email address for you on the city's website Glad to chat with you about any ideas and the pleasure of your reply is appreciated. [Donnaregan111@gmail.com](mailto:Donnaregan111@gmail.com) Please feel free to share this letter with all the Commissioners and appropriate personnel. Thank you.

Please don't let the sun go down on our beautiful Sunrise!

Cheers!  
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