

ArtsAlliance

Arts & Culture and Candidates for Washtenaw County Local Elections

On November 2, 2010, elections will take place for candidates in the following races:

- State Senator: Districts 17, 18
- State Representative: Districts 52, 53, 54, 55
- Washtenaw County Commissioners Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11
- Ann Arbor City Mayor
- Ann Arbor City Council Wards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
- Saline City Mayor
- Saline City Councilmembers
- Ypsilanti City Mayor
- Ypsilanti City Council Wards 1, 2, 3
- Ypsilanti City Charter Commission
- Augusta Township Trustee
- Dexter Village Trustee
- Pittsfield Township Trustee
- Scio Township Trustee

As a public service, The Arts Alliance asked the candidates to respond to the following two questions about their positions on arts and culture in our community.

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?
2. If elected, what **measurable** actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? **Please be specific.**

Listed below are the responses we received from candidates in the above elections.

Thanks for your support of arts and culture, and don't forget to vote on November 2! (A list of polling sites is available at http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/clerk_register/elections).

The Arts Alliance is a non-partisan organization that endorses no candidate running for office. Please feel free to share this information with others who may be interested.

**Nov. 2, 2010 Washtenaw County Elections:
Candidates' Views on Arts & Culture in Our Community**

The Arts Alliance

202 East Huron Street, Suite 202

Ann Arbor, MI 48104

www.a3arts.org / 734.213.2733

How to Read This Document

- Candidate information is listed in the following order: State, County, City, Village, Township.
- Candidates are listed in alphabetical order by last name.
- Candidates' comments are provided as received, without editing.
- Party affiliations are abbreviated as: (D) for Democrat; (R) for Republican; (I) for Independent; (G) or Green; (L) for Libertarian

Candidates for State Senator

17th District

Randy Richardville (R)

No response

John Spencer (D)

No response

Ronald Muszynski (L)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

It is my position that it is unprincipled to forcibly confiscate money in the form of taxes, fees, fines or forfeitures from the public in order to redistribute it for any special interest uses.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

I would lower taxes and drastically reduce regulations in order to allow individuals and businesses to thrive and prosper. This increased wealth pool will in turn greatly increase demand for quality work from artists regionally. This increased demand for art and the ability of artists to make an excellent living wage will spur interest from students everywhere to further pursue the arts as a career. A thriving arts community can not exist without a strong economic base, unless there is active coercion by the government.

18th District

John Hochstetler (R)

No response

Rebekah Warren (D)

No response

Candidates for State House of Representatives

52nd District

Christine Green (D)

No Response

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Mark Ouimet (R)
No Response

53rd District

Jeff Irwin (D)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

I support public funding for the arts and I have a record of support for the arts as an elected official. A vibrant arts community is necessary to a successful community. Arts are crucial to attracting and retaining the kinds of businesses we want to grow in Michigan. Employers and business owners look for the same things we all look for when choosing where to locate – where will I have the highest quality of life? Further, a thriving arts and cultural scene is vital to tourism, Michigan’s third largest industry. Arts and cultural institutions and activities draw people to our state and spur the creation of ancillary businesses such as restaurants. Cultural facilities also enhance property values and can contribute to urban and rural revitalization. Of course, success cannot be judged only by financial metrics, genuine success as a community depends on a high quality of life. Arts and culture are a vital part of that calculation.

In 1997, the Wayne State University Commission on Arts and Public Policy (CAPP) conducted a study entitled, Arts and the Quality of Life in Michigan, Part I. The study showed that arts contribute measurably to improving the quality of life in our state. Other studies have shown that children who participate in the arts do better in “core” educational subject areas such as math.

As a Washtenaw County Commissioner, I was proud to contribute financially to the Arts Alliance Cultural Plan. Also, when the county considered increasing hotel room taxes, we created a committee to discuss how the Conventions and Visitors Bureau would handle this potential revenue. I sat on that committee and appointed a member from the Arts Alliance board to ensure that the CVB would provide advertising and marketing support to arts and cultural events. Washtenaw County has an important arts and cultural scene and the county has been a partner.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

Michigan’s support for the arts goes back more than 40 years to when the Michigan Cultural Commission was created. Until now, our state has continued to support the arts through successor institutions and state funding. This funding reached a peak of \$26 million in 2001, but since then has fallen dramatically. This year, state arts funding was only \$2 million. If this state funding is eliminated as Governor Granholm has previously proposed, we could be the only state in the country not funding ongoing arts programs.

If elected, I will support public funding for arts and culture. I believe that our message should be directed toward using arts and culture as a catalyst for economic development. A small investment in arts and cultural events and programs can produce big results for our citizens. Here are a few specific things we can do as a state to improve our quality of life and the economic value of our great arts and cultural offerings:

1. Increase awareness of Michigan’s many incredible arts and cultural organizations, activities, and institutions through Travel Michigan. For example, if Michigan spent a fraction of their golf marketing dollars on arts marketing we might not be talking about how to save the DIA and the Detroit Opera House.

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2. Protect funding for arts education. Many students find success and meaning through arts and music, we should make it our goal that Michigan's schools are the best in the nation. Great arts programming is a key part of meeting that goal.
3. Build real public transit. People have to get to arts and cultural events. Particularly with venues that feature live music, patrons want a safe and convenient way to get home. Transit investments create nodes of activity and commerce. Arts and cultural institutions will benefit from investments in transit.
4. Provide small matching grants to arts and cultural festivals statewide. When a community gets together and hosts a large event like the Sumer Festival or the Ann Arbor Film Festival, the state should be a small partner. In the past, the state did provide some matching funds for these events and the cost was tiny. Just as an example, instead of granting a \$37 million per year tax break to the satellite television industry, we should be investing in the quality of life of our communities.

Chase Ingersoll (R)

No Response

54th District

Richard C. Deitering (R)

No response

David E. Rutledge (D)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

I am an avid supporter of the arts in the Washtenaw County community. Further, I support public funding for the arts and culture because of the significant impact it has on our local and state economy and our quality of life. A strong arts and cultural environment can serve to attract residents as well as businesses to an area. The Ann Arbor Art Fair is an excellent example of the economic impact that a strong arts program can have on a community.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

If elected, the actions I will take to ensure that arts and culture offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County are:

- Increase grant opportunities through MCACA
- Propose incubators for nurturing arts entrepreneurs just like those that nurture high tech start-up companies.
- Link the arts more formally to school curriculum because of the documented benefits it offers to the student's willingness to learn.

55th District

Rick Olson (R)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

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I am a drama and music supporter, having performed in 5 musicals, including on the stage with the Ann Arbor Civic Theater. However, I am not informed enough at this point to express an opinion upon the appropriate level of public funding for arts and culture. Therefore, I have no specific or measurable actions to recommend at this time.

I remain open to hear the opinion of the voters of my district on the subject.

Mike Smith (D)
No response

Candidates for Washtenaw County Commissioner-District 1

Adam Zemke (D)
No response

Rob Turner (R)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

I have always believed the arts are a valuable part of our identity as a community and an important part in the viability and growth of our county. I believe in the public funding of the education of the arts to our children, but with the ever shrinking resources from the state and federal government the public funding for the arts needs to be focused on our youth. I believe in the private funding of the arts. My family has always supported the arts with our donations and our attendance. If elected I will work with the county administration to maintain our existing funding to the arts and will continue to personally support the arts and use my influence and presence to raise additional private funding.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

Candidates for Washtenaw County Commissioner-District 2

Ken Schwartz (D)
No response

Dan Smith (R)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

Being a trumpet player in the Washtenaw Community Concert Band (WCCB) and a founding member of a Whitmore Lake theater troupe, I thoroughly appreciate the value of the arts and culture. Both WCCB and the Lakeside Performing Arts Company are funded through the generosity of private donors and patrons; but without public institutions supporting many critical needs such as rehearsal sites, storage space and performance venues, these organizations would not exist.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

Mental recreation is an important complement to physical activity. A rich community of art and culture provide many opportunities to stimulate the mind; that's good for body, soul and business. If Washtenaw County can support parks, trails and pools it can do the same for theaters, galleries and auditoriums.

Candidates for Washtenaw County Commissioner-District 3

Alicia Ping (R)

No response

Candidates for Washtenaw County Commissioner-District 4

Wesley Prater (D)

No response

Robert Van Bemmelen (R)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

It is very obvious from your Top 10 Facts about Arts and Culture in Washtenaw County, that the economic and cultural impact on Washtenaw County from non-profit arts and cultural organizations is significant. I personally believe that the arts is something integral to the formation of us as whole well rounded human beings, able to express what we were created for, i.e., the ability to express the creative potential that resides in each and every human being, for their own personal fulfillment and the fulfillment and development of the culture we are part of. I lament the fact that those in the arts are not rewarded or should I say "provided for" in the same way as those in many other fields of endeavor, unless of course, they reach a high level of acclaim.

Choosing to participate in the arts, as any other endeavor, is a personal choice and comes with it's own set of rewards and liabilities. The rewards are mostly personal and not necessarily monetary.

Like any other endeavor those who choose for that hope to be rewarded based on their ability to "perform". Because the "arts" is not necessarily some thing that people feel they need or want, financial support is not always forthcoming, hence the saying: "Starving artists". The question arises, should the public be responsible to fund arts programs and cultural endeavors when not everyone feels that they benefit from them, whether or not this is the case is beside the point. Garbage collection is a necessary public service otherwise we all would have a major health problem.

Potable water delivered to every home does not only help to eliminate a potential health issue but of course raises all of our standards of living to one of a progressive civilized society. The same can be said for roads, which we all use, and many other public benefits.

While the arts does contribute, in a positive way, economically, to it's surrounding culture, so do many other volunteer type organizations which do not solicit public funds but survive on private contributions and donations. There are also fiscal considerations coming from an economy not flush with cash where priorities need to be set with available monies. These are always tuff decisions no matter what the issue is. The bottom line is that I do not support public funding for the arts, even though I believe it contributes extensively to the community. What I would do, is encourage those who believe they benefit from the arts and can afford it personally, to contribute as generously as they can.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

I would encourage the local news media to make available, as much as possible, information concerning arts and cultural events as they happen. I believe that this is currently being done, but I would encourage them to elevate this to a level of "public service" type announcements and emphasize the importance of community support in place of "public" financial support. Rather than relying on advertising revenue, which may not be readily available, offering this information could be a win-win situation for the

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media as well as the arts and cultural offerings. I would also encourage fundraising events sponsored by benefactors who are in a financial place to do this.

The "DownTown Development Authority" and "Think Local First" have been looking at the possibility of putting into play some type of barter currency to help stimulate local business. Something like this would also help to increase purchasing power and free up personal monies that could be spent for "non essentials" like the arts and cultural offerings.

I would also solicit ideas from the general public as to how they can contribute to the proverbial "stone soup". I am sure there are many ideas out there that have not yet been tapped.

Candidates for Washtenaw County Commissioner-District 5

Rolland Sizemore Jr. (D)

No response

Bill Emmerich (R)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

I am for the promotion of arts and culture, especially with introductions being made in the grade schools. I believe we should continue making the arts in schools a requirement. I particularly support those private organizations which assist in bringing arts and culture to the youth in the area. I have personally continued to give back to the community, with most recently providing substantial funding for the University of Michigan School of Music, which benefits many students, helping them following up on their talent and honing their skills. These programs impart the skills to get students "over the hump" to being a community success, as well as a commercial success - garnering the support of the appreciating public, not the government. I was lucky enough to be involved with these character and skill building programs, and worked hard to earn my support from our public performance ticket sales, and fundraisers.

Additionally, I would propose the making of public art appreciation areas available for consignment works and presentations by artists. These would be forums for artists to present their works publicly, and can assist in bringing forth quality, and appreciable funding partnerships between artists, organizations like yours and private parties wanting to see and own the artist's works.

I see the government as a facilitator to bring together culture and art to the people, however, I am not a supporter of government directly funding works with public dollars. This should be left to the appreciating public.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific

Candidates for Washtenaw County Commissioner-District 6

Ronnie D. Peterson (D)

No response

David H. Raaflaub (R)

No response

Candidates for Washtenaw County Commissioner-District 7

Kristin F. Judge (D)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

Part of what makes Washtenaw County so attractive to business and families is the rich cultural options. Young business professionals are looking for places to go after work and on the weekends for entertainment and enrichment. The impact on local economy has been studied and proven thanks to the work of those involved in the Washtenaw County Master Plan.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific

As an elected official, one of the best things I can do is to advocate for the arts and cultural activities and workforce in our county. I will continue to attend local events and speak of the important part our community artists play in our county. Funding is an obvious issue. The usual funders of the arts are not able to give as they once did. It is important to advocate for state and private funding for minigrants and art instruction in the public schools.

Sean Gray (R)

No response

Candidates for Washtenaw County Commissioner-District 8

Barbara Levin Bergman (D)

No response

Melinda Day (R)

No response

Candidates for Washtenaw County Commissioner-District 9

Leah Gunn (D)

No response

Mark Tipping (R)

No response

Candidates for Washtenaw County Commissioner-District 10

Conan Smith (D)

No response

Candidates for Washtenaw County Commissioner-District 11

Yousef Rabhi (D)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

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It seems self evident that every place would be the same if it were not for the uniqueness of art and culture. Unfortunately, in the toughest of economic times, funding for the arts often is perceived by public officials to have little tangible worth. Yet this shortsightedness omits the realities of what art provides to the community. Without arts and cultural activities many of our area businesses would not prosper and thousands would lose their jobs. Beyond this immediately tangible benefit, a community that values arts and culture is seen as a community that businesses want to invest in. By building a foundation in our community that supports arts, culture, education, a clean environment and functional human services, we can make our county an attractive place for an educated and motivated workforce. If for no other reason than the economic and budgetary impacts, it is evident to me that art must be sustained in our community. Because artists and their work are essential to our county, I am entirely supportive of public funding for arts and culture.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

Especially in rough economic times, it can be difficult for artists to find studio space to work. The government can play an essential role in helping to provide artists with affordable studios that can be used and shared by the arts community. Additionally, this would enable artists to provide interested citizens with a place to learn and create! It is important to note that any funding for arts and culture programs must not be narrowly distributed. Rather, all residents of the county regardless of what community they are from should have access to art studios, classes, exhibits and shows.

Joe Baublis (R)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

My position on so-called "public funding" arises in the light of recognition that the County, State, and Federal governments are broke and operating in financial deficits. As such, so-called "public funding" does not actually exist, but rather it is a fiction, a phantom, a trick. This year the Federal government cut funding of food stamps for poor people in favor of extending unemployment benefits. At the same time, Washtenaw County union employees agreed to significant pay cuts in order to assist the County in settling a \$34,000,000 deficit while the County government simultaneously resolved to waive it's own requirement to pay-off bonds due in the millions. Under these circumstances it is my opinion that nobody should be asking for anything from Washtenaw County, or for that matter from the State or Federal Governments.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific

If elected, it is my personal goal to commission artists to create and display in Washtenaw County buildings the plight of the People subjected to this County's rule. This includes but is not limited to portrayals of: homeless, crime victims, imprisoned convicts, families in foreclosure, unemployed, tax-payers, and more. I specifically want a clear rendering to the living conditions for the Ann Arbor Mission groups, and numerous other non-profit agencies. I will demand the removal from all Washtenaw County buildings any personal photography, and any rendering of any current or past government employee, or any plaque or monument glorifying any county employee or associate, this includes Judges, Prosecutors, Defenders, Administrators, and so on. It is now time for the County government to focus it's collective efforts on serving the People - not themselves. Towards this end I pray upon the blessings of my fellow artisans to motivate those in the County to faithful service and to remind them that Washtenaw County belongs to the People.

Candidates for Ann Arbor City Mayor

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John Hieftje (D)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

The arts play a huge role in supporting our city's award winning quality of life as well as contributing directly to the local economy. I have been and will continue to be a supporter of Ann Arbor's Art In Public Places program.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

I am currently working with the Arts Alliance to develop a Community Art Center and Greenway Art Park at the old city garage on W. Washington. We need more space in the city for developing artists. We are planning to have an art center that will nurture artists of all genres. It will provide interpretive artists with practice and performance venues and other artists with studio and gallery space at an affordable price. I will continue to be a strong advocate for the arts in our community and in the State Capital.

Steve Bean (I)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

I'm always interested in hearing other perspectives, so I don't really have a position on it. I have thoughts and questions, though, which I'll gladly share.

The data you provided clearly demonstrates the value of arts and cultural activities to our community. Given that situation, the most beneficial thing we can do might be to ensure that we don't unnecessarily interfere with what's already succeeding.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

I will propose that the Percent for Art program be replaced by a millage-supported fund that no longer limits the works by the type of funds from which the money is pulled. This would require a vote of the people. The current funding mechanism is likely illegal and is therefore at risk of a city resident *or a non-resident utility customer* suing the city.

Candidates for Ann Arbor City Council

WARD 1

Sandi Smith (D)

No response

WARD 2

Tony_Derezinski(D)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

It is a necessity! The public benefit provided by the various types of art and cultural activities is huge, and they are really one of the essential ingredients that make the Ann Arbor area so attractive, livable, and ambient. However, and especially in tough economic times, the private sector cannot sustain, by itself, the total burden of support, and thus public funding for a very public good, is not only necessary, but equitable and very defensible.

This came up at City Council when a resolution was introduced to reduce by half the percentage set aside for arts in public buildings. I not only voted against this reduction, but argued forcefully against it, saying that the vote to keep the funding intact really would define our support for Ann Arbor's commitment to the

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arts and culture, particularly when we continue our support through difficult times. The reduction was rejected.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

First, I will personally participate in our local arts and cultural offerings. Very specifically and timely, I will be one of the "Hosts with the Most" on October 26th for the dinner fundraiser for the Ann Arbor Art Center, the results of which will no doubt be measurable, and measured.

Second, I am working a lot with the local disabilities community to enhance its ability to participate in, and interest in, participation in our arts and cultural events, and we are specifically formulating a presentation to be made to the City Council to make it and the public aware of the barriers involved and how they can be overcome.

More generically, I will continue to speak in favor of the many cultural events which come before City Council and need various approvals, from getting streets closed, working with other civic and private organizations representing downtown, neighborhoods, and other areas for support and publicity, and again attending these events, and bringing friends here and from out of town to share in them.

Finally, I will use the numbers and statistics in your support letter to make the arguments as to the huge public benefit that our arts and cultural activities do to very concretely and financially benefit our wonderful community.

Emily Hopp Salvette (L)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

The creation and appreciation of art are highly individualized endeavors. Art is as varied and unique as each human being. That's why I don't believe public funding and the resulting politics make sense for arts and culture. Public funding means allocation of resources based on community consensus, which doesn't promote good art but rather good lobbying. It can also lead to censorship. Better to leave artists and their patrons as part of the private sector where freedom of expression can thrive without government interference. The best thing the city can do is to stand back and allow wealth to be created in our community so people have enough income to support the arts.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

First, I would cut city spending and taxes so residents had more of their own money to spend on artistic and cultural offerings. I would also ensure that those providing arts and culture in our community are free to do so without onerous regulations, permitting requirements, taxes and other city fees. I would also encourage the city to work cooperatively with arts groups on special needs they have, such as closing streets for festivals, shows, etc. And I would make sure artistic expression enjoys its First Amendment protection even when some in the community find a piece or performance offensive. In short, I would ensure all of us can create, encourage and appreciate the arts in our own way.

WARD 3

Christopher Taylor (D)

No Response

WARD 4

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Margie Teall (D)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

My position on public funding for arts and culture is that art is a fundamental aspect of our quality of life in Ann Arbor, or it needs to be. Like transit, roads and parks, arts and culture is an integral part of our community that needs public support in order to exist in the public realm, and thereby enrich our quality of life. Ann Arbor has been fortunate to have the University of Michigan to provide so much in the way of culture for the whole community. But I think we have, in the end, forgotten about arts and culture that a city can support and provide for its own residents.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

I have long supported the idea of a public space for local performance groups to utilize for rehearsals or even performances, in conjunction with studio and exhibit space for visual artists. To that end, I am working along with the mayor to find a way to transform the building at 415 W. Washington into an arts center for the community. We have a long way to go, but I am hopeful, and will continue working to keep this idea moving forward. In addition, I have been and will continue to be supportive of the City's new Percent for Art program. I voted against cutting the program from 1% to 1/2%, and am grateful to the Public Art Commission for its support of the storm water sculpture that will be constructed at the Police/Courts facility. I am on the board of directors of the Michigan Theater Foundation and FestiFOOLS, and have helped each organization cut through red tape at the City on a number of projects. If I am re-elected to the Ann Arbor City Council, I look forward to two more years helping our City become increasingly aware and appreciative of the value of accessible arts and culture in public spaces, and would welcome ideas to further that end.

WARD 5

John Floyd (R)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

In May I played incidental music for the Ann Arbor Civic Theater Jr, Theater (AACTJT) production of The Secret Garden. The performance was at Mathai Botanical Gardens. A year earlier, I played incidental music for another AACTJT children's play. "Blather, Blarney and Balderdash. That performance was at one of WCC's theaters. I donated my services for both performances.

Both shows were performed in publicly-owned spaces. Production funding was from ticket sales and donations. I think this gets local government's role in the arts about right: provide gallery/performance space (Artisan's market, for artisans), and let artists find their audience to fund them. "Audience" includes all the voluntary sponsors of an offering: ticket buyers, buyers of paid organization memberships, fundraiser attendees, volunteers, and business sponsors.

When we look at the various units of local government in our area that provide performance space – Ann Arbor Public Schools, as well as WCC the University of Michigan, and Eastern Michigan University, it is fair to say that there is much public support for the arts in our area.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

Art is not like the new sewer plant expansion: you don't draw up plans, raise public fees, sell bonds, select a contractor, get council approval, and build away. I'm not sure how we would "measure" art, or the vitality of an art scene, as if these were so many gallons of wastewater to be processed. I am reminded of Potter Stewart's definition of "Pornography": "I can't describe it, but I know it when I see it." I think it is the same with a thriving art scene: hard to describe, easier to point to.

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It is in the nature of art that its survival and thriving is in the hands of artist and their audiences. That is, for the arts to thrive, artists need some idea they burn to express – and their idea needs to resonate with other people. Whether or not an idea resonates with a wider public depends on the interplay of the idea itself, the manner, skill, and medium through which it is expressed, and the sensibilities of its audience. To me, this interplay between artist and audience is the hallmark of a vital arts scene.

Stepping into the space between artists and their audiences does not strike me as an appropriate activity for the Ann Arbor City Council. New art and art forms invariably arise on their own, out of the life experiences and imaginations of artists – established, or nascent. I don't think council's involvement can have much positive effect on that process – and in the end, I believe that such involvement would actually sap the life out of any true art scene.

As I noted above, public performance/gallery space, open to all city residents, strikes me as an appropriate government activity (I am skeptical of, but open to, arguments about creating public studio space, as well). Beyond that, it strikes me that the most effective way City Council can support the arts is to do what it can to keep Ann Arbor an attractive place to live, for both artists and their audiences. This has to do with things like the tax/fee burden on residents, public safety, historic preservation, street and sidewalk repair, park maintenance, natural areas, trees and other boring, non-artsy elements of a city's ambiance.

Measurable things to keep the arts vital, therefore, would include things like sidewalk café licenses issued, blocks of old neighborhoods preserved, number of trees planted, miles of bike lanes established, tons of waste materials actually sold to recyclers, number of farmers selling produce at the farmer's market, number of artisans selling at the artisan's market, park mowing frequency, taxes and fees levied per resident, miles of roads repaired, and other civic performance measures.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Council's involvement in the arts.

Carsten Hohnke (D)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

Ann Arbor should seek to be a leader in promoting community-based arts and culture. Arts and cultural offerings not only have a positive, and significant, economic impact on our community, but greatly benefit our quality of life, and the diversity of our community. I am fully supportive of the Percent for Art Ordinance passed by City Council in late 2007, and voted against an attempt to dilute it in late 2009. Additionally, I believe the city should favorably include public use, and the positive economic and quality of life impacts of arts and culture, into considerations of the disposition of underutilized city-owned property. I co-sponsored a successful resolution in February that has begun the process of identifying grant funding for establishing a public Arts Center at 415 W. Washington. Thanks to collaboration with the Arts Alliance and others, the first grant has been awarded. Finally, I support finding opportunities to strengthen our relationship with the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs to bring resources to our community—the Arts Alliance's administration of the Minigrant program is an excellent example.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

I'll work to increase space, programming, maintenance, and measurement. First, Ann Arbor's artists need affordable studio and performance space, ideally located near our city's cultural anchor—our downtown. That's why I fought for the resolution to renovate our abandoned maintenance facility on the edge of downtown for a public Arts Center. Second, I'll continue to work on identifying opportunities for public support for arts programming, which is currently not provided by the Percent for Art Ordinance. As a community we have to ensure that we have a sustainable infrastructure for educating and growing our future artists. Reducing the Percent for Art Ordinance would have been a step in the wrong direction. Third, we should take care of the great public art we already have in this community. I'll support the Ann

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Arbor Public Arts Commission in completing its inventory of city-owned art, determining the individual and collective condition of these pieces, and increasing the “health” of our community art each year. Finally, I’ll support regular measurement of the state and impact of arts and culture in our community. We should identify the key indicators that reflect a healthy arts and culture community and strive to include them in the overall discussion of the state of our city. Each of these initiatives is measurable, and each will add significantly to a sustainable arts and cultural presence that will support the economic well-being and quality of life in our community.

Newcombe Clark (I)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

It's non-negotiable. Michigan has a large priority problem when it comes to Arts Funding. Claims that difficult times call for difficult sacrifices fall on deaf ears when you compare what Ohio does with a very similar challenged economy. It's political will, or lack there of, that determines the amount of public arts funding. Sadly, our state as a whole, doesn't yet seem to get it, or has inexplicably forgotten that art (especially music) is something Michigan does well. Perhaps even better than making cars.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

-My entire council salary will be donated to downtown area Arts non-profit (approximately \$32k). I will do this by establishing a fund at the Community Foundation called Council Appreciate's Cultural Amenities (CACA) and urge other council members to add to the fund from their salary as well.

-I will protect and improve the current 1% for Arts program and will look for ways to expand it, ideally onto the private sector.

-I will look to establish artist in residency programs for all city departments. It will include performance art and the written word.

-I will finally get 415 W. Washington out of limbo and moving forward towards the goal of establishing a community Art Center.

Candidates for Saline City Mayor

Gretchen D. Driskell

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

I believe arts and culture are vital to a healthy community. I have actively participated in the arts alliance since it began and support the initiatives going on in the county. I support public funding for arts & culture as evidenced in our city budget.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

The city of Saline has developed an arts & culture commission that represents the arts, culture and heritage aspects in our community. I have worked with the chairs to develop a viable long term plan for a successful arts & culture committee by establishing stable bylaws and a diverse group of committee members. Additionally the city is providing funding for some public projects and staff support. The city provides events that promote artists in our community. Our committee has also developed a long range strategy that identifies needed resources and we are pursuing ways to fund or coordinate those resources for the long term.

Candidates for Saline City Councilmember

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Dean Benjamin Girbach

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

I support a balanced approach of public and private cooperation. I believe start-up funds, % matches or one time contributions for arts and cultural events can provide a catalyst for economic growth, encourage participation and lead to educational and constructive activities for children, adults and seniors. However, it will be increasingly difficult to provide any significant support or regular on-going support until the economy improves. Where we can fund, the outcome must demonstrate an ability to reach as many residents and provide a benefit to the public as a whole.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

I will continue to endorse the CARES (Cultural Arts, Recreation, Enrichment, and Senior Citizens) initiative. This millage provides a source of funds from the community at large, preserving and enhances activities otherwise not possible, without placing the entire burdon on the residents of the City of Saline.

I will encourage cooperation among our Planning Commission, city staff and developers to incorporate creative design, works of arts and partnering with local artists/organizations for enhancing projects.

I will continue to support downtown events (Summerfest, Winterfest, Harvest of the Arts) through our Chamber of Commerce and economic development arm of the city when funding is available.

Brian D. Marl

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

Arts and culture are integral to any thriving community, and I believe that adequate support for the arts contributes substantially to the quality of life of community members. Collaboration between public and private entities to support arts-based and cultural programs can have an extraordinary impact on communities, and can ensure the long-term success of such programs for future generations.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

The Saline community is fortunate to enjoy a rich and diverse artistic community, and I look forward to continuing to partner with Saline residents and community leaders to cultivate an environment that allows the arts to prosper. Since its opening a few years ago, the 212 Art Center has become a focal point around which the artistic community can grow and share ideas, and I have had the opportunity to participate in many 212 Center events. In addition, I look forward to working with the newly formed Arts and Culture Commission on recommendations for developing the arts and culture in our community.

David Rhoads

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

I am running for re-election to my third term as City Council Member in Saline and my actions show that I am a strong supporter of Arts and Culture. I was instrumental in obtaining funding to erect the first two pieces of public art in Saline. That is, if one doesn't count the sculpture in front of the Saline District Library which was purchased with funds from the Friends of the Library book sale.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

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When re-elected, I will continue to work to obtain funding, both public and private, to continue the installation of additional art pieces within the City. I am also a member of the Business Development Association and as such have recommended that a portion of the TIFA funds be set aside for the purchase of public art. I am also working with the 212 Art Center to obtain additional space for their programs to encourage the development of artists. I have also begun the construction of a Performance and Education Center at the Rentschler Farm Museum. That space is in a very large barn and I expect it to be available for smaller groups in 2011.

James Roth

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

I support art and culture. I have been an active member of the Saline Culture & Arts Committee and believe some public funding for arts and culture is necessary.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

I would encourage the council to support Saline's Cultural & Arts Committee and the Arts Alliance's Cultural Plan for Washtenaw County and Saline within the financial means available and encourage other ways to fund the arts and culture. Arts and Culture has been and remains an important to mankind.

Candidates for Ypsilanti City Mayor

Paul Schreiber (D)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

Cities and townships all across the state are grappling with declining tax revenues and budget cuts. Ypsilanti is no different. However, the Ypsilanti Downtown Development Authority has supported arts at the Riverside Arts Center through a generous property lease. The RAC is a non-profit organization that was formed by the YDDA and hosts many plays and art exhibits. As mayor, I have encouraged the partnership between RAC and the YDDA; I hope it continues to thrive.

Private funding for the arts is also very important. As a long-time patron of the University Musical Society in Ann Arbor, I know that funding from private institutions is essential for maintaining vital cultural programs in Washtenaw County. I encourage corporations and foundations to contribute to county-wide arts organizations like UMS. These contributions are the lifeblood for arts in Ypsilanti and Washtenaw County.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

When I ran for mayor four years ago, I pledged to create an Ypsilanti 2020 Task Force made up of local business, community, and neighborhood leaders charged with developing at least five innovative ideas for economic development, government efficiency, regional cooperation, and cultural expansion. After my election as mayor, the Ypsilanti 2020 Task Force was created by city council and produced a presentation and final report that included recommendations for the future of the arts in Ypsilanti. The arts recommendations included an Ypsilanti Arts and Culture Council, involvement with Eastern Michigan University, and a cultural arts inventory. As a next step, the 2020 Task Force will be presenting their ideas to the Ypsilanti Downtown Development Authority.

If I am re-elected mayor of Ypsilanti and continue as a member of the YDDA, I will encourage the YDDA to take up the 2020 Task Force arts initiatives. We must continue the transformation of Ypsilanti into a city of education, arts, and entertainment. Ypsilanti is an affordable urban city that can serve as a center for

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artists who can't afford to live and work in Ann Arbor or who want a smaller community with a number of energetic community groups.

Jeff Davis (I)
No Response

Candidates for Ypsilanti City Council

WARD 1

Ricky L. Jefferson (D)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

These are tough times and our tax base is declining which makes it difficult to secure public services. The arts and culture environment is essential to the creative growth and educational development of our children, the enjoyment and enlightenment of our residents and for the attraction of businesses and families searching for a vibrant and healthy society. Public funding is one way for government to candidly convey the first amendment of the United States Constitution.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

I would urge our Federal/State legislators and County commissioners to support legislation that would secure public funding for arts and culture. I would advocate retaining and creating city ordinances that improve the survival of arts and culture.

WARD 2

Daniel Vogt (D)
No response

WARD 3

Brian Robb (D)
No response

Candidates for Ypsilanti City Charter Commissioner

Cheryl Farmer
No response

William E. Fennel
No response

John Gawlas
No response

James Hawkins
No response

Karen Quinlan Valvo
No response

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Candidates for Augusta Township Trustee

Susan Burek (D)
No response

Brian Shelby (R)
No response

David A. McMahon (G)
No response

Candidates for Dexter Village Trustee

Jim Carson
No response

Donna L. Fisher
No response

Raymond C. Tell
No response

Candidates for Pittsfield Township Trustee

Andrea Brown-Harrison (D)
No response

Candidates for Scio Township Trustee

David S. Read (D)
No response

Candidates for Washtenaw County Commissioner-District 1

Adam Zemke (D)
No response

Rob Turner (R)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

I have always believed the arts are a valuable part of our identity as a community and an important part in the viability and growth of our county. I believe in the public funding of the education of the arts to our children, but with the ever shrinking resources from the state and federal government the public funding for the arts needs to be focused on our youth. I believe in the private funding of the arts. My family has always supported the arts with our donations and our attendance. If elected I will work with the county administration to maintain our existing funding to the arts and will continue to personally support the arts and use my influence and presence to raise additional private funding.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

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Candidates for Washtenaw County Commissioner-District 2

Ken Schwartz (D)

No response

Dan Smith (R)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

Being a trumpet player in the Washtenaw Community Concert Band (WCCB) and a founding member of a Whitmore Lake theater troupe, I thoroughly appreciate the value of the arts and culture. Both WCCB and the Lakeside Performing Arts Company are funded through the generosity of private donors and patrons; but without public institutions supporting many critical needs such as rehearsal sites, storage space and performance venues, these organizations would not exist.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

Mental recreation is an important complement to physical activity. A rich community of art and culture provide many opportunities to stimulate the mind; that's good for body, soul and business. If Washtenaw County can support parks, trails and pools it can do the same for theaters, galleries and auditoriums.

Candidates for Washtenaw County Commissioner-District 3

Alicia Ping (R)

No response

Candidates for Washtenaw County Commissioner-District 4

Wesley Prater (D)

No response

Robert Van Bemmelen (R)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

It is very obvious from your Top 10 Facts about Arts and Culture in Washtenaw County, that the economic and cultural impact on Washtenaw County from non-profit arts and cultural organizations is significant I personally believe that the arts is something integral to the formation of us as whole well rounded human beings, able to express what we were created for, i.e., the ability to express the creative potential that resides in each and every human being, for their own personal fulfillment and the fulfillment and development of the culture we are part of. I lament the fact that those in the arts are not rewarded or should I say "provided for" in the same way as those in many other fields of endeavor, unless of course, they reach a high level of acclaim.

Choosing to participate in the arts, as any other endeavor, is a personal choice and comes with it's own set of rewards and liabilities. The rewards are mostly personal and not necessarily monetary.

Like any other endeavor those who choose for that hope to be rewarded based on their ability to "perform". Because the "arts" is not necessarily some thing that people feel they need or want, financial support is not always forthcoming, hence the saying: "Starving artists". The question arises, should the public be responsible to fund arts programs and cultural endeavors when not everyone feels that they

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benefit from them, whether or not this is the case is beside the point. Garbage collection is a necessary public service otherwise we all would have a major health problem.

Potable water delivered to every home does not only help to eliminate a potential health issue but of course raises all of our standards of living to one of a progressive civilized society. The same can be said for roads, which we all use, and many other public benefits.

While the arts does contribute, in a positive way, economically, to it's surrounding culture, so do many other volunteer type organizations which do not solicit public funds but survive on private contributions and donations. There are also fiscal considerations coming from an economy not flush with cash where priorities need to be set with available monies. These are always tuff decisions no matter what the issue is. The bottom line is that I do not support public funding for the arts, even though I believe it contributes extensively to the community. What I would do, is encourage those who believe they benefit from the arts and can afford it personally, to contribute as generously as they can.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

I would encourage the local news media to make available, as much as possible, information concerning arts and cultural events as they happen. I believe that this is currently being done, but I would encourage them to elevate this to a level of "public service" type announcements and emphasize the importance of community support in place of "public" financial support. Rather than relying on advertising revenue, which may not be readily available, offering this information could be a win-win situation for the media as well as the arts and cultural offerings.

I would also encourage fundraising events sponsored by benefactors who are in a financial place to do this.

The "DownTown Development Authority" and "Think Local First" have been looking at the possibility of putting into play some type of barter currency to help stimulate local business. Something like this would also help to increase purchasing power and free up personal monies that could be spent for "non essentials" like the arts and cultural offerings.

I would also solicit ideas from the general public as to how they can contribute to the proverbial "stone soup". I am sure there are many ideas out there that have not yet been tapped.

Candidates for Washtenaw County Commissioner-District 5

Rolland Sizemore Jr. (D)

No response

Bill Emmerich (R)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

I am for the promotion of arts and culture, especially with introductions being made in the grade schools. I believe we should continue making the arts in schools a requirement. I particularly support those private organizations which assist in bringing arts and culture to the youth in the area. I have personally continued to give back to the community, with most recently providing substantial funding for the University of Michigan School of Music, which benefits many students, helping them following up on their talent and honing their skills. These programs impart the skills to get students "over the hump" to being a community success, as well as a commercial success - garnering the support of the appreciating public, not the government. I was lucky enough to be involved with these character and skill building programs, and worked hard to earn my support from our public performance ticket sales, and fundraisers.

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Additionally, I would propose the making of public art appreciation areas available for consignment works and presentations by artists. These would be forums for artists to present their works publicly, and can assist in bringing forth quality, and appreciable funding partnerships between artists, organizations like yours and private parties wanting to see and own the artist's works.

I see the government as a facilitator to bring together culture and art to the people, however, I am not a supporter of government directly funding works with public dollars. This should be left to the appreciating public.

2. If elected, what measurable actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

Candidates for Washtenaw County Commissioner-District 6

Ronnie D. Peterson (D)
No response

David H. Raaflaub (R)
No response

Candidates for Washtenaw County Commissioner-District 7

Kristin F. Judge (D)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

Part of what makes Washtenaw County so attractive to business and families is the rich cultural options. Young business professionals are looking for places to go after work and on the weekends for entertainment and enrichment. The impact on local economy has been studied and proven thanks to the work of those involved in the Washtenaw County Master Plan.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific

As an elected official, one of the best things I can do is to advocate for the arts and cultural activities and workforce in our county. I will continue to attend local events and speak of the important part our community artists play in our county. Funding is an obvious issue. The usual funders of the arts are not able to give as they once did. It is important to advocate for state and private funding for minigrants and art instruction in the public schools.

Sean Gray (R)
No response

Candidates for Washtenaw County Commissioner-District 8

Barbara Levin Bergman (D)
No response

Melinda Day (R)
No response

Candidates for Washtenaw County Commissioner-District 9

Leah Gunn (D)

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No response

Mark Tipping (R)

No response

Candidates for Washtenaw County Commissioner-District 10

Conan Smith (D)

No response

Candidates for Washtenaw County Commissioner-District 11

Yousef Rabhi (D)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

It seems self evident that every place would be the same if it were not for the uniqueness of art and culture. Unfortunately, in the toughest of economic times, funding for the arts often is perceived by public officials to have little tangible worth. Yet this shortsightedness omits the realities of what art provides to the community. Without arts and cultural activities many of our area businesses would not prosper and thousands would lose their jobs. Beyond this immediately tangible benefit, a community that values arts and culture is seen as a community that businesses want to invest in. By building a foundation in our community that supports arts, culture, education, a clean environment and functional human services, we can make our county an attractive place for an educated and motivated workforce. If for no other reason than the economic and budgetary impacts, it is evident to me that art must be sustained in our community. Because artists and their work are essential to our county, I am entirely supportive of public funding for arts and culture.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific.

Especially in rough economic times, it can be difficult for artists to find studio space to work. The government can play an essential role in helping to provide artists with affordable studios that can be used and shared by the arts community. Additionally, this would enable artists to provide interested citizens with a place to learn and create! It is important to note that any funding for arts and culture programs must not be narrowly distributed. Rather, all residents of the county regardless of what community they are from should have access to art studios, classes, exhibits and shows.

Joe Baublis (R)

1. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture?

My position on so-called "public funding" arises in the light of recognition that the County, State, and Federal governments are broke and operating in financial deficits. As such, so-called "public funding" does not actually exist, but rather it is a fiction, a phantom, a trick. This year the Federal government cut funding of food stamps for poor people in favor of extending unemployment benefits. At the same time, Washtenaw County union employees agreed to significant pay cuts in order to assist the County in settling a \$34,000,000 deficit while the County government simultaneously resolved to waive it's own requirement to pay-off bonds due in the millions. Under these circumstances it is my opinion that nobody should be asking for anything from Washtenaw County, or for that matter from the State or Federal Governments.

2. If elected, what *measurable* actions will you take to ensure that arts and cultural offerings survive and thrive in Washtenaw County? Please be specific

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If elected, it is my personal goal to commission artists to create and display in Washtenaw County buildings the plight of the People subjected to this County's rule. This includes but is not limited to portrayals of: homeless, crime victims, imprisoned convicts, families in foreclosure, unemployed, tax-payers, and more. I specifically want a clear rendering to the living conditions for the Ann Arbor Mission groups, and numerous other non-profit agencies. I will demand the removal from all Washtenaw County buildings any personal photography, and any rendering of any current or past government employee, or any plaque or monument glorifying any county employee or associate, this includes Judges, Prosecutors, Defenders, Administrators, and so on. It is now time for the County government to focus it's collective efforts on serving the People - not themselves. Towards this end I pray upon the blessings of my fellow artisans to motivate those in the County to faithful service and to remind them that Washtenaw County belongs to the People.

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