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2014 Washtenaw County Candidates Survey Response

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Office Candidate Seeks: Washtenaw County Commissioner
District/Ward: District 7

Candidate's Full Name: Andy LaBarre
Party Affiliation (if applicable): Democrat

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Campaign Contact: Andy LaBarre, 734.945.1298

- 1. In regards to arts, culture and heritage, do you consider yourself any of the following:**
I believe that availability and access to arts, cultural and heritage offerings in our community make our community a great place to create, live, work, play, learn and visit.
I am a consumer of arts, culture and/or heritage products and programs.
I am personally a donor to arts, cultural and/or heritage organizations.
- 2. What arts, cultural or heritage activities have you and/or your family members attended, participated in or supported in the past year?**
Museums, libraries and film
- 3. Thinking back to your own K-12 education, what arts or cultural classes, programs or activities did you participate in? In what way, if any, do you believe your participation influenced or still influences you?**
Mrs. Clark (Nancy) was my elementary art teacher. She helped foster a love of drawing that I had through high school. I am still influenced by her efforts to have an open artistic mind.
- 4. What role do you think arts, culture, and the creative sector can play in supporting key education priorities such as closing the achievement gap, reducing the dropout rate, and preparing more students for college enrollment and the 21st century workforce?**
Art can be the connection to educational institutions and communities that keeps children from leaving. By leaving I mean both leaving the community and leaving their education process. Art can also help people connect to each other, leading to personal bonds that establish and keep relationships that are the core of a community. Basically, art can be good for everyone.
- 5. What role can arts, culture, and the creative sector play in Washtenaw's economic growth and vitality?**
The main roles are attraction, retention, and enhancement.
- 6. Do you support public investment in the creative economy? This includes arts, culture, heritage organizations and creative individuals.**
Yes

Please explain your answer:

There is a public good to be derived from these investments. They can be excellent uses of tax dollars when done properly.

7. If elected, what measureable action(s) will you take during your term to support public investment in our community's creative economy and support arts, culture, heritage organizations and businesses and creative individuals?

I'll continue the existing efforts of Washtenaw County and I'll try and be an advocate for new ways as they become available or feasible. The way to measure that is to ask members of the arts community if I have been accessible and responsive to their communications.

8. What is your position on public funding for arts and culture and, if elected, how will your position be reflected during the budget/planning process?

Arts and cultural activities have a place as recipients of public funding. They will not always be funded as well (if at all) as other services but they should always be considered as a good possibility and they should not be dismissed as frivolous. I think some have tried to claim there is a choice between either funding arts or funding basic services. I think that's not accurate. Basic services have to come first but we can't simply eliminate public funding of the arts as a consideration. When its possible (that definition will vary between people) I will advocate for arts funding. When it is not possible I won't criticize ideas about funding the arts as foolish or useless.

9. If you support public funding for arts and culture, what do you think are the best means of allocating funds?

Line item appropriations
Appropriations distributed via grant programs
Tax based (millages, accommodations, sales etc.)

10. If elected, would you accept an invitation to become a member in an arts, culture and heritage caucus?

Yes

If yes, from which caucus would you accept an invitation?

Washtenaw County Caucus
