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2014 Washtenaw County Candidates Survey Response

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Office Candidate Seeks: Washtenaw County Commissioner
District/Ward: District 4

Candidate's Full Name: Felicia Brabec
Party Affiliation (if applicable): Democrat

Candidate's E-mail Address: feliciabrabec@gmail.com
Office Candidate Seeks: Washtenaw County Commissioner
District/Ward: District 4
Party Affiliation (if applicable): Democrat
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- 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?**
Throughout the past year, we have attended several arts, cultural, and heritage activities including, but not limited to, Broadway in Detroit, Broadway in Chicago, Ann Arbor Civic Theatre, Art Institute of Chicago, Ann Arbor Art Fair, Top of the Park, African-American Festival, Food Gatherers Circle of Art, and Milan High School theatre production.
- 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?**
During my elementary school years, I was fortunate to experience arts and music as integrated parts of the curriculum. The arts and music education that I received throughout that time, along with a family culture that placed great emphasis on the arts (I played both the violin and piano), have all contributed to create the arts lover and supporter in me. In fact, the aforementioned influences helped to guide me as I achieved a double major in Sociology and Anthropology. Finally, as a parent, I try to instill, not only the importance, but the experience of arts in our children.
- 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?**
Involvement and emphasis in the arts provides students with a more well-rounded, engaged educational experience. It supports and challenges young people to think more creatively and critically as they address complex problems, academically, emotionally, and socially. Arts can

also serve as a connection to civic involvement. Each one of these possibilities can positively influence the achievement gap, dropout rate, readiness for college and the workforce.

5. What role can arts, culture, and the creative sector play in Washtenaw's economic growth and vitality?

As a County Commissioner, we have the opportunity to support local businesses. These businesses add value to our community by culturally enriching our residents' daily lives. We are also fortunate to have some of the best primary and secondary public schools in the state, an excellent community college, and two public universities that play a vital role in the development of our community. This educational foundation, which includes an investment in the arts, helps pave the way for future economic growth and vitality.

6. Do you support public investment in the creative economy? This includes arts, culture, heritage organizations and creative individuals.

Yes

Please explain your answer:

As alluded to throughout my responses, I believe that one of the major ways in which we publicly support arts, culture, and heritage is through investments in our educational system. I support a well-rounded curriculum which challenges, engages, and enriches students in many different ways on various levels. Our local schools and universities are the perfect conduit for sharing these values as they are home to many public art exhibitions, concerts, and theatre productions.

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?

Although the influence is limited at the County level, I will continue to support the investments that we make, particularly with Act 88 funding in the area of historic preservation. Through this preservation, we have the opportunity to realize and share our community's valuable historical cultural assets.

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?

As stated previously, I will continue to support the funding that enables us to preserve our local culture. This investment enriches our present and future generations.

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?

U.S.A. Congressional Caucus
Michigan Caucus
Washtenaw County Caucus
