

Office Candidate Seeks: Ann Arbor Mayor
District/Ward: Ann Arbor

Candidate's Full Name: Sally Hart Petersen
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?

UMS Festifools Purple Rose Theater Neutral Zone "Live on Washington" Ann Arbor Inside Out Day at the DIA Allen Creek Greenway Williamstown Theater Festival

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?

I attended the Mary C. Wheeler School in Providence RI from 1970 to 1982. The school was founded in the 19th century as a girls' art school. Now it is run as a traditional K--12 college preparatory school. Music and studio art were part of our core curriculum and required courses through middle school. In upper school, I participated in the theater program. I also took Latin from 9th through 12th grade and we studied the Greek culture in addition to learning the language. I also studied French from 5th grade through my Freshman in college. Additionally, I played the piano, recorder, and sang in the Church choir during my childhood.

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?

Study of arts and culture in schools develops, grows and sustains our creative sector—from designers to performing artists. And according to the National Assembly of State Art Agencies, the fact that the arts are regarded by educators, businesses, parents and kids as essential to school curricula show how valuable the arts are in preparing students for the 21st century workforce. Finally, in cities and towns where support for the arts is championed, college admissions and lower dropout rates give us the evidence we need to establish a strong case for integrating the arts in all schools and education programs.

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

There are several ways the creative sector can contribute to city and county economic growth and vitality. First, artists offer local businesses, corporations and local government the creative skills required in today's economy to survive and thrive. Second, the creative sector actually attracts and brings in (imports) more "creatives." Artists are more likely to move to a place because of its quality of life rather than for a particular job. At the same time, artists tend to sell their work outside (export) the place they live. In exporting their work, creatives help the



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economy of the area. Finally, the creative sector improves civic engagement among residents through initiating and producing community gatherings and celebrations.

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

Yes

Please explain your answer:

Both indirectly and directly. Indirectly, the City should provide the infrastructure the arts community needs to flourish. This could include the use of open space downtown that could provide the stage for both performance and creative artists. For example, one use of the proposed open space on the library lot could be “Arts Carts”, or a gathering space for performance artists. The Covent Garden area of London is a good example of this. More directly, the City can follow the advice of City Council’s Public Art Taskforce and launch crowd funding initiatives for specific projects, such as with the Coleman Jewett chairs. And where appropriate, artistic elements can be “baked in” to certain capital improvement projects where the budget allows. Additionally, premiums could be offered to developers who include artistic elements in the design of their buildings.

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?

Potential measurable actions during my term as mayor: 1. Acknowledge and celebrate that arts and culture are a pillar of Ann Arbor's economy. Develop a city economic strategy that incorporates closer connections between the business community and artists. Recognize formal channels or a “market” to connect businesses with self-employed artists and designers. For example, support effective use of the A3Alliance artist listings to market local artists and designers to area businesses and corporations. 2. Spearhead public-private partnerships that expand offerings of cultural activities and heritage organizations downtown and in our neighborhoods. For example, more Sonic Lunch-type collaborations and expand the Parks & Rec concert series to include parks in neighborhoods across the city. 3. Develop opportunities for public participation in determining arts and cultural activities as well as their settings and open up nontraditional venues for arts-related activities. 4. Identify public monies (state and federal) for the arts that focus on supporting local, small and culturally diverse organizations, including public school programs, for funding.

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?

The results of the 2012 millage vote make it clear that today, citizens do not want their tax dollars going to public art. However, I favor hybrid funding for arts and culture such as public-private partnerships and crowd funding. A strategy to support the arts community should be part of an economic development task force. Ultimately, we should integrate a strategy for assisting the creative sector in refining entrepreneurial skills and growing their businesses into our economic growth policies. Further, the city can promote arts and cultural tourism, including cross promotion with the University of Michigan’s cultural events and museum exhibits-from the Botanical Gardens to the Art Museum. This is an example of working more closely with the U-M in areas of mutual interest and benefit. In addition, the city should ensure that developers of new

projects take into account the heritage and character of the neighborhood and the city. These standards should be integral to the planning process.

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

Appropriations distributed via grant programs
Public Private Partnerships and developer incentives.

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?

Michigan Caucus
Washtenaw County Caucus
