

Oregon artPAC — 2016 Primaries

Contest: **Portland City Council - Position 4**

Candidate Name: Stuart Emmons

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Candidate Web Site: www.stuartemmons.com

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In a 140-character “tweet” format, tell us why you are running for office.

I am running because I want to be a Commissioner, I think I'll be very good at it - I am a solutions based creative problem solver, I bring to Council a tremendous amount of experience and skillset to address our challenges, and I am a visionary, anxious to help lead Portland to a larger city that keeps our values and quality of life.

How many donors have contributed to your campaign?

about 100 to date

How much money have you raised for your campaign?

\$29k to date

What endorsements have you received?

Arts Leaders, Business Leaders, Artists, Musicians, Architects, Preservationists, Mayor Tom Potter - to date

What role do the arts and culture play in the life of our region and what do the arts personally mean to you and your family?

I AM the Arts candidate. I went to 2 art schools (RIT for wood and Pratt for architecture), and the arts have defined my whole life. I taught wood at OCAC. I have been on the board of PNCA, and been involved with PICA and am on the advancement committee of the Portland Art Museum. I was on RACC juries. I designed buildings that had wonderful works of public art. I am a huge advocate for the Arts in Schools. The health of Portland's arts and culture is incredibly important to me.

The arts and culture play a huge role in the life of our region. They are an economic driver, they help keep our kids in school. They are hope, they are inspiration.

How will you address the growing affordability crisis in our region for artists, arts organizations, and small arts businesses as it relates to housing and creative space?

Along with my other skills, I have a unique expertise in affordable housing. It is absolutely critical to have affordable housing for artists. I will consider dedicated affordable housing for artists. The sale of Towne Storage was another wake up call for the loss of spaces affordable to artists. I will prioritize this. I would also like to set up a program for some arts organizations to help broker parties to allow the organizations to buy their spaces so they can stay where they are as the pressures to grow escalate. The arts are the essence of our city, they provide a way of thinking, a way of opening minds. They provide hope. They help keep many kids in school. They bring joy.

How will you foster the growth of the creative economy in our region?

I was the co-curator for the Design Festivals in 2003 and 2004 at PNCA sponsored by the Mayor's office. Wow - the talent we found hiding in our city! This festival was just one way to showcase what gets designed in Portland, from the big firms, to garages across Portland. Our goal was to build the festival into a nationally prominent show, but red tape in City Hall ended the festivals in 2005. This is just one way City Hall can help foster the growth of the creative economy - and it would be restarted when I become a Commissioner. Other ways are to get more art and design into our schools and colleges, so we train our next generation of creatives in-house. It makes no sense for big creatives to have to go out of town for most of their creative talent. I will also be interested in listening to the creative economy for ideas on how to foster growth, and I will try to act on it. Creatives will absolutely have an ally in City Hall. I am a Creative, the Creative Economy is a personal passion of mine.

How will you enhance the delivery of and support for arts education in school and neighborhood settings?

I am the schools candidate. I am also a huge supporter of the arts in schools.

A personal story: the arts in school 'saved' me, kept me fully engaged in high school. I became a master craftsman in wood in high school, and I learned about life through wood: ethics, craftsmanship, care, joy in the making of things. The arts helped me define myself.

I will listen to the arts community and arts teachers for how City Hall can help support the arts in schools, and work to make those ideas a reality.

To start, I want to see every kid come to school from a warm safe and dry home, having eaten breakfast. We have a lot of work to do on that with other groups and government organizations. I will help promote arts shows and performances in schools and neighborhoods in coordination with our press and individual schools and neighborhoods. It will be my goal to increase participation and enthusiasm for the arts in my role as commissioner.

How will you further the values of equity and access to the arts and culture? What do you see as the biggest challenges to progress in this area?

I am a huge equity person, there are 2 Portlands, and I want to be the bridge builder to narrow the gaps. I have extensive experience with communities of color and schools, and this will help me build bridges. I

would like to see more free access to the arts for our kids. Good job Art Museum and other organizations! - let's do it in many more places by getting people to step forward and help out. The cost of access to some of the arts is a challenge for our higher poverty kids - and they are exactly the kids we need to excite! We need to give them hope, skills, so we can break the cycle of poverty. I would also help promote culturally specific arts.

What other public policies would you pursue to strengthen the creative capacity of our region?

Design Festivals. Help support Design Week. Get our creative firms more engaged in our city's arts. Support the arts in all city projects - be a leader and a source of inspiration. I will look to Visual and Performing arts leaders for good ideas - The arts will have a strong ally in City Hall with me.

The following question is for candidates in City of Portland contests only. Do you support the voter-approved Arts Education and Access Fund and do you commit to maintaining it? What changes, if any, would you make to improve its administration?

Yes. Definitely room for improvement at the Portland Revenue Bureau. The voters spoke with 62% of the vote.

The following question is for candidates in City of Portland, Clackamas County, Multnomah County, or Washington County contests only. Each year, you will have the opportunity to vote to approve a budget for arts funding through the Regional Arts & Culture Council (RACC). Do you commit to maintaining or increasing this budget allocation and funding level?

Absolutely I will commit to maintaining the RACC budget. I'd like to increase it if possible, but we have to get homelessness and affordable housing under control. I am the arts candidate.