

2008 Questionnaire

Candidate: Mayor Jim Bernard

Contest: Clackamas County Commissioner Position #5

Date of Submittal: Sept 17, 2008

1. What role does arts and culture play in the life of a city and what do the arts mean to you?

The role of Arts in our community started many years ago when I was the President of the Milwaukie Downtown Development Association. We brought local sculpture into the community for the first time and it really had an impact. Since that time it has always been my goal to somehow bring it back and just this week City Council adopted the creation of an Art Committee and we already have 9 volunteers.

The importance for me is that it starts the conversation and it stimulates interest in the community, it gives a certain value or values that I feel creates pride in the community which I find difficult to explain. Every piece is an expression of what we hold dear such as the salmon we have on our riverfront, the fountain at the library, and the metal sculptures we have at the North Main project. They each create a sense of place and peace that says I am home.

2. What steps will you take to help significantly increase private sector funding for local arts organizations so that the community's arts organizations can present more high quality arts programs for all citizens?

As stated above we just created a City Arts Committee and I would like to see the same in Clackamas County. I would like to see a fee as a percentage of all commercial or town center projects that would pay for some form of art program or pieces to be determined and reviewed by an Arts Committee. This fee would not necessarily need to be spent at the site but could accumulate for development of a County wide plan for creation of art projects.

3. How much of an increase in ongoing arts and culture funding will you support for your jurisdiction? Please provide a specific amount.

I would propose a 1/4 a percent fee for any project exceeding \$500,000 where appropriate meaning commercial, town center, and main streets. This of course will depend on the current fiscal strength of the economy.

4. In addition to seeking more funding for arts and cultural endeavors, what other public policies would you pursue to strengthen the creative capacity of Portland and the region? Please include your thoughts about integrating arts and culture into the region's educational system.

I have would get involved in the process and support the process that Sam Adams has been making in moving arts and culture to the forefront. Milwaukie's theater group New Century Players has been successful in getting kids involved in the community and in outside activities as has the poetry series I supported at our Ledding Library. These programs create a creative outlet for students and provide a variety of positive experiences I believe are important for childhood development. It is hard to imagine under the current system of no child left behind how we could incorporate this into the schools but there are outlets such as the program at Sabin for video production.