



2010 Questionnaire Multnomah County Supplemental Primary

Please fill in your information and answer the five questions below. Return via email at oregonartpac@yahoo.com

Responses are due no later than March 21, 2010

Candidate: Tom Markgraf

Contest: Multnomah County Commission, district 2

Date of Submittal: March 21, 2010

1. 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?

I support looking at tax exemptions and incentives to increase funding local arts organizations. I understand these programs have worked, particularly in Chicago and New York, and have resulted in revenue neutral tax collections. So in essence, these incentives have resulted in more art, and not at the expense of lost revenue.

2. As you know, there is a movement afoot to create a new dedicated annual stream of **public funding** for the arts that will likely be established through a voter-approved tax measure. Can you commit to supporting this effort and if so, in what way?

Yes. Through the bully pulpit and endorsement.

3. Each year, you may have the opportunity to vote to approve an arts funding budget for the region. Will you commit to maintaining or increasing this funding level?

Yes, I believe the arts enrich lives and create a healthy, positive sense of community.

4. To increase regional funding for the arts through a ballot measure, there are several approaches that can be undertaken – a partnership with the Metro Council, a ballot measure proposed in all three counties in their entirety or the establishment of a new Metropolitan Arts District with the authority to tax the region, voted on county by county. Which of these approaches do you support and why?

I believe a Metro vote is most appropriate because I believe this is a regional issue. Practically, it will be difficult to pass a measure on a county by county basis. I believe Multnomah County would likely support it, but Clackamas and Washington counties are problematic. The three-county regional vote with Multnomah County's preponderance of votes, is most likely to succeed.

5. 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 how you and your board, council or commission could enhance the delivery of and support for arts education in the region's schools.

I believe teaching youth and exposing them to outstanding works of art is the best way to secure their appreciation and support into their adulthood.

I graduated from Oberlin College, and was nearly an art history major. (To be honest, the language requirement was too onerous by the time I discovered art history my sophomore year. Three years of German and three years of French! I could not do it.)

A program at Oberlin offered students "real works of art" to be in our dorm rooms per semester with was extraordinary. At various times, I had hung in my rooms, original Picasso drawings, a pen and ink drawing by Toulouse-Lautrec, a painting by Marc Chagall, or an illuminated manuscript page from the 14th Century. It made a difference to have that exposure to art.

Second, we had a fine college museums and it was used as a teaching experience. The understanding and discussions of works, taught me to appreciate and think about art works ever since. It has made me an art lover, but I question whether I would have this feeling, had I not been so aggressively taught to think critically and with appreciation.

If we are going to succeed in maintaining a support for the arts community, we need to begin teaching and discussing art with students at a very young age, Museum field trips when I was in Portland Public Schools, were just a walk through the building, passing by paintings without discussion of what we were seeing. We have to offer more than this.