

Where the Next Board of Supervisors Stands on the Arts

ARTSFAIRFAX asked candidates for Board of Supervisor to complete the following questionnaire in order to inform voters about their views on arts-related issues. Please note that ARTSFAIRFAX has contacted each candidate individually and submitted this questionnaire to the Fairfax County Democrats and the Fairfax County Republicans for distribution to their respective candidates.

The purpose of this information is to educate the arts community and encourage your active participation in the 2019 election.

ARTSFAIRFAX does not endorse any candidate or political party.

Question 1: The arts sector is equivalent to a top-five private employer in the County supporting 6,220 full-time equivalent jobs and generating \$19.3 million in local and state government revenue. The arts are a catalyst for community and economic development and play a significant role in the daily lives of Fairfax County's 1.2 million residents and 37,000 large and small, local, national and international businesses. Thinking in terms of economic development, as a core component of our community, how would you ensure that the arts and cultural sectors continue to meet the community's needs and demands, including having a reliable and growing funding source?

Gary Aiken (Mason - R) 1. Mason District is home to Ossian Hall Park and Mason District Park amphitheatres. I would ensure that the park authority has the money it needs, both operating and capital improvement, to ensure that these are safe, accessible, and operationally modern performance areas. 2. Mason District is home to four (4) Federal Opportunity Zones, the most of any district other than Lee (5). I believe that the redevelopment of either or both of Annandale and Bailey's Crossroads should include the incentives for developers to include performance space for live music and art exhibitions as part of the development plan - either outdoor or indoor for the benefit of the community or for another venue for artists to engage in their art forms for profit. 3. I would solicit donors in Mason District to commission sculptures or other outdoor art for permanent or temporary exhibition in an effort to beautify areas of our district that have been neglected for years and show signs of stagnation and decline.

Penny Gross (Mason – D) The arts should be a thrill, not a frill. The “arts plank” of the county's Comprehensive Plan can be an excellent tool to ensure that new or repurposed buildings incorporate architecture, design, public art, gallery and performance spaces if possible, and other amenities. I am a cosponsor of the original arts funding by the Board of Supervisors more than a decade ago, and that annual funding continues. An arts trust fund, supported by the business sector, could be considered as a new funding source.

Rodney Lusk (Lee – D) As a father of two daughters that grew up in the Fairfax County Public School System and the Director of National Marketing at the Fairfax County EDA, I recognize the vital role that the arts play in both our community and economy. As Lee District Supervisor, I will

work to ensure that our public schools have access to the resources they need to ensure that no child is left behind when it comes to pursuing their creative aspirations. And I will take steps to ensure that as we work to build new infrastructure and amenities across Fairfax County, as well as revitalize existing assets, that we are incorporating the arts in a way that continues to ensure that Fairfax County remains the most attractive jurisdiction possible for 21st Century employers.

Jeff McKay (Chairman, At-Large - D) Fairfax County has not always fully appreciated the role of arts and culture in both community and economic development. As we become more diverse, our opportunities to integrate these two sectors increase. I am personally committed to supporting these efforts.

Dalia Palchik (Providence - D) The arts sector is a major part of our community both economically and culturally. I have been thrilled to attend many productions in the area and am committed to ensuring that the arts continue to be funded in Fairfax County. In a system where arts are heavily funded through grants, I intend to advocate for ensuring that grant programs are fully funded by the Board of Supervisors, and to commit to an arts and culture budget years in advance so that a dependable stream of funding is available. I believe that if we invest in the arts, we will be able to see benefits to our County both from revenue boosts and job creation, as well as an opportunity to see more of our community represented through diverse artistic expression. I plan to support proposals that prod businesses to invest in the arts, by giving incentives to encourage developing the spaces that are needed to make art more accessible. Additionally, by fully funding our schools and understanding their arts-based needs, I hope to see a greater focus on the arts for our children to help make various art forms a part of our children's lives from a young age. The more we give to the arts, the more it gives back to us.

James Walkinshaw (Braddock- D) I believe firmly that the arts help to fuel a vibrant, creative, and economically successful community here in Fairfax County. In these times, the arts are a critical tool to connect people of different racial, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds. Additionally, as we continue to create true destinations of choice in Tysons, Merrifield, Springfield, and Fairfax Center, the arts and especially public art will be key to building a real sense of community. Fairfax County's funding for the arts and are a good investment of taxpayer dollars, providing both tangible and intangible returns. I look forward to working with the **ARTS** to continue the partnership.

Question 2: Fairfax is experiencing growing commercial development and revitalization projects across the County. However, the arts continue to struggle to find venues and spaces for creative civic engagement. Proffers have been one solution. Another proposed solution is more public-private partnerships. Question: What actions will you take to ensure that the arts reach all 1.2M residents in future County development, including broad strategic planning and local community redevelopment? What is your vision to meet the space needs of the arts? What are your thoughts on proffers and their use to support the arts? What incentives can the County provide to the business community to support public-private partnerships?

Gary Aiken (Mason - R) Revitalization of Annandale, Bailey's Crossroads, Seven Corners, and Lincolnia are key to the health of Mason District as a prosperous part of Fairfax County. I would look to include suggested amenities such as space for community art involvement (live arts and visual arts) as described in the previous question. These types of layouts are increasingly common in Mixed Use developments where an open space is constructed as a community gathering space. One of the more difficult things for many musicians is an available power source, appropriate lighting, and sound engineering. I would suggest to county planning staff that they should review the suggested amenities for those types of areas where they expect live performances and include those features in the Small area or Comprehensive Plan.

Penny Gross (Mason – D) As noted above, the county's Comprehensive Plan language must encourage and, in specific instances, mandate public arts opportunities. Proffers are helpful in large developments, such as Capital One, but most development and redevelopment is on a smaller scale, making space needs for the arts out of the realm of possibility. We need many spaces — large dance rehearsal halls, small experimental theatres, “messy” space for visual artists, etc. As noted above, consideration of an arts trust fund should be explored.

Rodney Lusk (Lee – D) As Lee District Supervisor I will be heavily involved in the implementation implantation of the Embark Richmond Highway project. Across the development of that project, and during the re-development of the adjoining areas I will be a strong proponent of exploring ways to incorporate public art into all projects in which it is practicable. I would also support the use of proffers in order to meet the space needs of the arts. For example, I would consider offering increased density to developers that agree to enter into public-private partnerships that create access to increased resources for the arts.

Jeff McKay (Chairman, At-Large - D) The variety of arts by definition defy any single venue that will serve every need. At the same time, our Government can ensure that public facilities support artistic and cultural activities. And, we can encourage by example private venues to do the same. I have a long record of supporting funding – both traditionally and unconventionally – for the arts and I will continue to support such action moving forward.

Dalia Palchik (Providence - D) Expanding the accessibility of the arts and ensuring artists have the physical space necessary for success will take a multifaceted approach. I plan on advocating for the arts in any new community development initiatives. I intend to ensure that when we make decisions on what to do with public spaces, that we consider and properly prioritize the needs of the arts. Similarly, by giving incentives to developers to build art spaces, community multipurpose areas, and other art physical space needs, I hope to create more opportunities for aspiring and experienced artists. I plan on working with the arts community to find out who they are engaging with and developing strategies to widen artistic engagement by talking with communities and learning what art appeals to them.

James Walkinshaw (Braddock- D) In the Braddock District, my focus will be on creating a true destination of choice at Fairfax Center, the area and neighborhoods surrounding the Fairfax County Government Center. A connected, transit-oriented, and walkable community will need

both public art and space for the arts. Recent changes made to the 2016 proffer law will reopen the door to a wider range of proffer tools and I would explore using those tools to ensure that all of our citizens have access to the arts.

Question 3: In 2016, the Board of Supervisors and the School Board adopted the One Fairfax Resolution which expresses that “Fairfax County takes pride as a great place to live, learn, work, and play . . . achieving racial and social equality are integral to Fairfax County’s future economic success, as illustrated in the Equitable Growth Profile and highlighted as a goal in the Strategic Plan to Facilitate the Economic Success of Fairfax County...” Question: Knowing that the arts and cultural sector contribute to the economic vitality of Fairfax County and given the resolution previously adopted, how do you envision the Board of Supervisors ensuring the arts are a core component of One Fairfax? How do we ensure accessibility to the arts for all our residents and visitors?

Gary Aiken (Mason - R) I understand the goals of One Fairfax and that policy framework does not impact my views. Mason District is the most diverse of all the magisterial districts and so we have the most to provide in terms of art in all forms from the cultures that call Mason District home. I will continue to promote and fund (directly/indirectly) the venues that currently exist and encourage additional facilities and venues (for profit or as community amenities) for residents and visitors to share their art and enjoy the art of our community members and visitors.

Penny Gross (Mason – D) The One Fairfax concept still is in development. The One Fairfax structure needs “meat on the bones,” so the time is right for **ARTSFAIRFAX** and other arts groups to participate in the discussions. As for accessibility for all residents and visitors, the free summer concerts in the parks have been providing those opportunities for more than 25 years. Those free concert venues should be full; unfortunately, they usually are not. It’s a good start, though, and a template to build on.

Rodney Lusk (Lee – D) One Fairfax is about creating equity across all aspects of our community, such as education, employment, housing, healthcare and quality life. The arts are a feature in all of these aspects, and should be seen as a vehicle for driving equality. I support the One Fairfax policy, and it will be the lens through which I think about all of these issues—including accessibility. We need universal accessibility across all our public amenities, including art. In my view, the best way to guarantee that equality would be to start in geographic areas of most need, and expand outward. Accessibility is about access, and we must meet those without appropriate access where they are. If that means taking those opportunities into the heart of underserved communities, then I am willing to be part of that effort.

Jeff McKay (Chairman, At-Large- D) One of my proudest accomplishments on the Fairfax Board of Supervisors is being a co-author of the “One Fairfax” resolution. I would not have worked hard to achieve this if I did not understand that we have to pay attention to ensure that we deliver all communities the programs, services, and opportunities they deserve and need. Some

communities in our County already have more programs and facilities devoted to art and culture than others. As we assess how to create greater equity, we will certainly consider how arts and culture belong in our future plans.

Dalia Palchik (Providence - D) The Board of Supervisors must make sure that we view arts as a key component of One Fairfax when we make decisions about budget, development and space. Artistic representation and helping communities feel that they are seen and heard is one of the most critical aspects of creating a community that we can all call home. By investing in the arts, we give all our communities and identities in Fairfax the opportunity to express themselves through artistic expression. A strong arts culture will be crucial to the success of one Fairfax's goals as it will expose all of our residents to new ideas and people. Additionally, I will make sure that when we invest in transportation initiatives and community development, we think about how we can ensure access to the arts for our entire County, wherever we may live. Investing in multi-modal transportation and thinking strategically about where we place new arts spaces will be just a few of the ways we can bring the arts to those who may not have previously had access.

James Walkinshaw (Braddock- D) We need to ensure that access to the arts for the entire community is part of our long-range planning. More specifically, the arts should be part of our revitalization efforts in older areas of the county like Annandale. Our Comprehensive Plan and localized Small Plans should include space for the arts and plans for public art. Then, development proposals before the County should be evaluated based on their consistency with those plans for the arts.

Question 4: There are more than 230 arts and cultural organizations, from large to small, and countless more artists in Fairfax County. Question: How does Fairfax County support the arts and cultural community to stand out in the Washington region for its art offerings? How can we raise the profile of Fairfax County's plethora of artistic offerings?

Gary Aiken (Mason - R) I don't think we need to have as a goal to "stand out". I think our goal should be that the number and type of venues for public and private exhibition of art in many forms is appropriate for the number of residents and visitors who will perform or consume the arts. We should aim to have excellent facilities in safe locations so that we can sustain local artists and invite artists from outside the area to perform or exhibit their work in Fairfax County.

Penny Gross (Mason – D) See my comments about the free summer concerts above. Communication, communication, communication, is key.

Rodney Lusk (Lee – D) As Lee District Supervisor I would make an effort to assess the art assets in Fairfax County, and especially in Lee District. With that information in hand I would leverage my platform as Supervisor to draw attention to those assets, and drive traffic and participation to them. This could be achieved through my regular mailings, digital communications and social media.

Jeff McKay (Chairman, At-Large - D) We cannot and should not feel that Fairfax County has to compete with every jurisdiction in our region. We have grown and prospered by doing what we do well. Having said that, Fairfax County Government can do more to create visibility and appreciation for the artistic and cultural activities here. I look to ARTSFAIRFAX to work closely with me to accomplish this, as we have done together since I was first elected Lee District Supervisor nearly 12 years ago.

Dalia Palchik (Providence - D) Fairfax County's arts and culture community deserves far more recognition that it receives. We are an incredibly well represented multicultural community, with a wide variety of art exhibitions, musical performers, dance and theater troupes and so much more. It is time that we put a spotlight on our own programs. We must ensure we are funding grant programs so that they may have money both for the arts as well as for arts awareness. The Fairfax County government will be more focused on publicizing the numerous opportunities for County residents to take part in art offerings and attending art exhibitions and performances. Funding the cost of marketing these opportunities and events in a way that residents realize how many different opportunities they have daily will be a necessary part of our support of the arts. Similarly, supporting our homegrown artists when they look to raise their profile regionally and nationally will be a top priority. Supporting them both with publicity and financially is crucial if we are to raise our arts profile in the region.

James Walkinshaw (Braddock- D) Fairfax County's artistic offerings should be a key part of our tourism promotion efforts through Visit Fairfax. Visitors to Fairfax County can enjoy connecting with our nation's history at sites such as Mt. Vernon and enjoy world class art at sites such as the Lorton Workhouse.

Question 5: How have the arts had an impact on your life personally?

Gary Aiken (Mason - R) I have played piano since I was 5. I am classically trained and competed and won piano performance competitions. I took up jazz and rock in high school and performed and composed in a variety of rock and jazz bands. I got involved in musical theater in middle school and performed in a variety of shows including as a lead (I was typecast as Seymour in "Little Shop of Horrors"!). I also was a musical director for a few shows including writing, transcribing, rehearsing the cast and leading the orchestra. I continue to write and play music at home or in charity events.

Penny Gross (Mason – D) Our eldest daughter is a professional dancer and actress; our younger daughter is a writer and a published poet. Both have college degrees in the arts — dance and theatre.

Rodney Lusk (Lee – D) Personally, I have a passion for restoration. I've often restored old furniture, or worked with wood in various creative ways. I'm also a fan of theatre and classical music.

Jeff McKay (Chairman, At-Large - D) The arts entertain. They allow us to express how we feel. They enhance the community around us. I have long supported the arts and feel as though they play an integral role in making Fairfax County the worldwide leader it is. I personally attend dozens of plays, art exhibits, concerts, and more each year and remain in awe of the talent and compassion that so many in our community display for us to see and enjoy.

Dalia Palchik (Providence - D) I grew up in a family that greatly values the arts, from visual, to culinary, to musical and beyond. As the niece of a sculptor, the daughter of an architect, granddaughter of a painter, and sister of a folklorist and a chef, I've always been inspired and understood the importance of art in our everyday lives. While in school, I played the viola, and then percussion from elementary school through high school. In college, I took a drawing class for "people who can't draw" in order to address my main art insecurity and found a new passion for drawing and charcoal that I've used to help activate that part of my brain. Following college, I've continued to enjoy attending musical shows, concerts, art openings, and theater. I believe that those are critical to a thriving and soulful community and have strongly supported arts funding in our public schools.

James Walkinshaw (Braddock- D) My wife is an artist and I've seen firsthand the positive role it plays in her life.

Question 6: Where, when, and what was the last arts experience you took part in or attended?

Gary Aiken (Mason - R) My wife and I went to see Jennifer Lopez with friends at Capital One Center this summer... I was scheduled to see the Grateful Dead at Jiffy Lube but couldn't go at the last minute. I attended a number of performances at Ossian Hall Park and Mason District Park this summer. Music and art are part of celebrations and prayer, too. Saints Festival bands at St. Anthony's and the choir and band at Mt. Pleasant Baptist have been highlights for me.

Penny Gross (Mason – D) Since 1991, I have hosted the free summer concerts at Mason District Park. This summer, I exceeded 92 percent of the concerts at Mason District Park, as well as the international concerts at Ossian Hall Park. Since 1996, my office has hosted the Art in the Mason District Governmental Center program, celebrating local talent. Shows generally change every quarter; currently we are displaying large colorful acrylics by French-Lebanese artist Georges Hayek.

Rodney Lusk (Lee – D) Unfortunately, the campaign schedule has kept me from partaking in the arts with the regularity that I would prefer. However, this summer I had a fantastic time exploring the art and vendors at Eastern Market in DC, which was a great family outing.

Jeff McKay (Chairman, At-Large - D) I just recently attended my daughter's dance recital. She's a competitive dancer with a dance school in the County.

Dalia Palchik (Providence - D) My latest arts experience was a performance by the Providence Players this summer at the Italian Cafe in Falls Church. I believe strongly in our local and community theater programs. Prior to that, I attended a concert of the Fairfax Chorale Arts program at Providence Presbyterian Church in June of this year.

James Walkinshaw (Braddock- D) My wife and I have visited the Lorton Workhouse Arts Center artist studios several times in the past year. We particularly enjoy being able to meet and connect with the artists there.