

POLK ARTS ALLIANCE
CANDIDATES' QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSE SUMMARY

CANDIDATES BY NAME: District eMail	Rick Wilson County Commission - District 2 rwi16262@gmail.com	Martha Santiago County Commission - District 4 Msant777@aol.com	Karen Cooper Welzel County Commission - District 4 Karen4PolkCounty@gmail.com	2 Candidates Did Not Responded
<p>QUESTION:</p> <p>1. In the past six months, how many local arts/culture/heritage-related events have you attended at a POLK County venue?</p> <p>2. In the past year, have you financially supported the arts in Polk through either purchase of a Florida Arts License tag, donations, volunteer work, memberships or sponsorships (either individually or as a decision-maker for your company/organization)?</p> <p>3. Through independent research, a direct link has been established between the arts and the following list of important community builders. Based on your understanding of the linkages, please rank the arts' contributions to each, using 1 - 4 where 1 shows the deepest connection, 2 the next deepest, etc. Please assign a rank to each.</p> <p>4. Two-part question: How do you feel Polk County arts/culture/heritage should be funded and what is your rationale for that position? (e.g, Private sector funding only; public/private partnership; publicly funded, etc.)</p> <p>5. If elected, would you advocate for and support the arts as part of the area's economic development/tourism and education mix?</p> <p>a. If you answered YES, would that support result in favorable votes/policy decisions on arts-related issues that come before the elected body on which you wish to serve? Or, alternatively, explain how you would support/advocate for the arts.</p> <p>b. If you answered no to question 5, please provide the rationale of your position.</p> <p>6. Would you be willing to publicly champion the arts, either as a celebrity host for arts-related events, as part of an arts-related speaker's bureau or other? Why or why not?</p> <p>7. Would you be willing to take a scheduled tour of Cultural Arts Council members and their facilities to better understand their role in community building and economic prosperity.</p>	<p>List of events attended: I attended the Bartow Bloomin Arts Festival, as I do every year. This year was special as my grandson was chosen to have his art displayed. He is a student at Bartow elementary Academy.</p> <p>NO, Other than purchasing quite a bit when I visit Bloomin' Arts Festival, I have not. This year required two trips to the car!</p> <p><u>1</u> Economic Development <u>4</u> Tourism <u>3</u> Education & Workforce Development <u>2</u> Quality of Life</p> <p>Funding: Arts are extremely important and should continue to be funded thru the TDC tax and Public/private partnering. Rationale: I firmly believe the Arts are extremely important to our culture, heritage and the education of our young people.</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>I would advocate that we continue to fund and support Arts and Cultural Events in our area. I believe they are important and worthy of support. Arts and Cultural events are an important part of our society and quality of life.</p> <p>Yes, I believe doing so would be part of my responsibility as a Commissioner and it would be my pleasure to do so.</p> <p>Yes</p>	<p>11 or more. Carols in the Park, PSC Winter Performance, Bok Towers Symphony, FSC Opera, LW Arts in the Park, LW Art show, WH Art Festival, Mayfair, WH Community Fest, Night of Gospel at Polk Theater, Lakeland Spring Obsession, PSC Art Exhibits, Fashion Show for Central Florida Speech and Hearing, SEU - Sinfonia, John McClure concert – Derry Down.</p> <p>YES</p> <p><u>2</u> Economic Development <u>4</u> Tourism <u>3</u> Education & Workforce Development <u>1</u> Quality of Life</p> <p>Funding: For citizens to continue to enjoy the arts, culture, and heritage provided in Polk County, the funding for these programs should focus on business and private partnerships as well as local and state revenues. For example, the Polk County designated Bed Tax revenue secures \$700,00 per fiscal year for arts organizations to use in marketing over 700 annual events to both local residents and tourist in Polk County. Rationale: In my career as a school administrator, the first programs eliminated because of budget constraints were programs relating to the arts. The elimination of art programs was based on the premise that art was not as important as reading, writing, math. This is a fallacy. A plethora of research indicates the opposite. There is also a belief that the arts only provide a "warm and fuzzy" feeling in people with no other value attached to it. However, the recent 2015-2016 economic development study identified that the arts in Polk County garnered \$46.6 million, and this continues to grow. It is evident that the arts prepare students for the 21st century, enhance the quality of life of our citizens, and make a significant economic contribution to our County's economy. As a future County Commissioner, it will be my responsibility to ensure funding, as well as advocate for additional funding.</p> <p>Yes.</p> <p>In my career, and as an engaged Polk County citizen, I support arts-related issues, programs, and non-profit organizations that have been supportive and favorable. As the former provost of Polk State College, the Arts Department expanded based on decisions and policy changes I made which garnered the support of staff, student and the community. Based on my passion for the arts, knowing firsthand the return on investment of the Arts in Education - S.T.E.A.M., and understanding the economic impact the arts have in our local economy, it is my goal as a future commissioner to support and advocate for the arts.</p> <p>Yes. I love, appreciate and support the arts. It would be an honor to publicly champion and share with citizens the positive impact the arts and creative industries have in our communities.</p> <p>Yes.</p>	<p>1-5 I am on the Board of Directors for Side Street Art Beat, LLC, a 501c3 that focuses on the needs of individuals faced with life challenges by providing opportunities for creative self-expression. I worked with Exec. Director, Tina Clark, to help produce the play, "Mars, Escape From the Meanies" based on a book she wrote, which was presented at Lake Wales HS. Students from Victory Ridge Academy were the stars in the play. In addition, I helped with the annual fund raiser, "1 with 100." My mother is an Alzheimer's patient and I took her to Side Street for her to interact with others in her situation. I have attended drumming sessions that are also presented by Side Street, both in studio and in the local park. During the holiday last December, the Theater Works group in Davenport needed artificial holiday trees for their stage. I had one and donated it. I also attend their season opening in Davenport, and attended the play, "Great American Trailer Park" My husband and I are also members of Bok Tower Gardens and attend the concerts and festivals as often as possible. A political group that I was President of recently made a donation of historical items to the Polk County Historical Museum in Bartow.</p> <p>Yes. See my comments above</p> <p><u>4</u> Economic Development <u>2</u> Tourism <u>3</u> Education & Workforce Development <u>1</u> Quality of Life</p> <p>I think there should be a partnership of public and private funding. Not knowing how it currently is divided, I can't say what it should be, but it is important to share that in order to assure continuity for the Arts and to continue to have public exposure and participation</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>I believe that the Arts are an important aspect in our quality of life. Obviously, every decision must be made after reviewing all the facts presented, but generally speaking, I am a supporter of the Arts and would vote for financial support when it is feasible.</p> <p>Yes I'm not an artist, but I appreciate the Arts in all its dimensions. I would certainly consider being a public advocate or speaker when appropriate.</p> <p>Yes I would love to do that</p>	<p>NO RESPONSE: Ms. Gates-Skipper County Commission District 2 & Jim Guth County Commission District 4</p>