



CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

CANDIDATE NAME: SHARON HURT

- 1) **CREATIVE WORKFORCE VALUE** - What impact does Nashville's creative workforce - actors, artists, dancers, musicians and the overall creative class - have on the city's identity and well-being?

Comments: Our artists and musicians are the core and soul of Nashville's identity. They are the entire reason we have the Music City moniker. Nashville is music. We have the Country Music Association Fest every summer and John Rich himself was a spokesperson for Second Harvest Food Bank because when he was a starving artist, they fed him. Nashville's creative class is deeply entrenched in the city's character and its value is invaluable.

- 2) **CREATIVE CULTURE CRISIS** - Do you believe Nashville is currently facing a crisis, in which its creative workforce can no longer afford to sustainably work and live here? If so, what strategies do you have for addressing the crisis?

- a. YES
- b. NO
- c. PREFER NOT TO TAKE POSITION

Comments: Nobody is feeling the city's affordable housing crisis like artists. How can you focus on your art when you need a business executive's salary to afford rent? That's why developing city-owned land in Bordeaux and the East Bank for affordable and attainable housing is one of the cores of my platform.

- 3) **CREATIVE WORKFORCE HOUSING** - Would you prioritize the development of creative workforce housing (for example, through an MDHA initiative such as the Ryman Lofts)?

- a. YES
- b. NO
- c. PREFER NOT TO TAKE POSITION

Comments: Absolutely. When we have all bright, genius minds together in a space collaborating and synergizing, what they can do together is incredible. That's the whole point of the existence of Nashville and I will make sure that this is a priority.

- 4) **CREATIVE SPACE** - Would you support publicly owned, unoccupied space to be transformed into creative development or presentation space for music and the arts in Nashville? What additional solutions to the lack of creative space would you explore as Mayor (such as preserving existing spaces through a land trust for historic venues and the like)?

- a. YES
- b. NO
- c. PREFER NOT TO TAKE POSITION

Comments: Absolutely. One of the worst issues we have in Nashville is unused space. We can develop these vacant buildings and lots into creative spaces.

- 5) **CITY ARTS FUNDING** - This city's arts budget has not kept up with the growth of the artists and arts organizations in Nashville despite the growth of the city. Would you support funding Metro Arts at 1% of the combined Metro and MNPS budget? (Roughly \$30 Million of support annually.)

- a. YES
- b. NO
- c. PREFER NOT TO TAKE POSITION

Comments: I have previously voted to increase funding for Metro Arts as Council Member and will continue to do so as Mayor. The arts help keep our city vibrant and I believe that musicians and artists are like prophets; they're necessary for the creation of the soul. When you have only commercial options, we lose the soul of the city.

- 6) **CITY RELIEF FUNDING** - The Arts & Business Council launched an Artist Relief Fund in 2020 to compensate for the cancellation of scheduled gigs or opportunities (such as a commission, performance, etc.), or due to layoff/furlough as a result of the March 2020 tornados and/or COVID-19 pandemic. It experienced such high demand that only half the applicants could be funded. Would you support the creation and funding of an ongoing emergency relief fund for Nashville's creative workforce (similar to the Austin Music Disaster Relief Grant)? If so, at what level would you fund it?

- a. YES
- b. NO
- c. PREFER NOT TO TAKE POSITION

Comments: The money for the Artist Relief Fund in 2020 came from the American Rescue Plan. I love the concept of a permanent fund, but we first have to look at the implications for our budget before committing.

(Forum committee clarification: The money for the Arts & Business Council's Artist Relief Fund in 2020 was a mix of individual, corporate, and foundation donations. It did not include money from the American Rescue Plan.)

- 7) **MUSIC EDUCATION** - Do you commit to working toward the establishment of fully funded music, visual art, and/or theater arts programs in every Metro Public School? If so, what strategies would you employ?

- a. YES
- b. NO
- c. PREFER NOT TO TAKE POSITION

Comments: Absolutely. I believe these programs are how you find our future geniuses. Even if most kids in the programs don't go into the arts, the arts programs can be the motivators to

keep them in school and help them see who they can be. I used to run a program called Instruments in the Inner City, where public school students took a field trip to Sony to learn about the variety of jobs in the music world. All the kids joined because they wanted to be singers and rappers, but we wanted to show them all the other jobs in the industry and it really opened up the students' worldview. I support these types of programs thoroughly.

8) What other strategies are you exploring to support the creative economy in Nashville?

Comments: I want to continue conversations with stakeholders in the music and arts arena to ensure that I am hearing what their priorities are.