



## Arts Commission

### Telephone of the Wind Donation

**Agenda Date:** 2/11/2021  
**Agenda Item Number:**  
**File Number:**21-0151

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**Type:** discussion **Version:** 1 **Status:** Filed

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#### Title

Telephone of the Wind Donation

#### Recommended Action

Move to review materials for **Telephone of the Wind**, by Corey Dembeck as conceptual art donation to the City Public Art Collection.

#### Report

##### Issue:

Whether to recommend donation of Telephone of the Wind to the City Manager for inclusion in the City's Public Art Collection.

#### Staff Contact:

Stephanie Johnson, Arts Program Manager, Parks, Arts & Recreation, 360.709,2678

#### Presenter(s):

N/A

#### Background and Analysis:

**Telephone of the Wind** was placed in Priest Point Park in November 2020. Inspired by a project in Japan, whereby those in grief could use a rotary telephone sited on an ocean bluff to communicate with people they lost (specifically following the 2011 tsunami), Olympia resident Corey Dembeck created a similar experience in a forest. In response to the sudden tragic death of a friend's four-year-old daughter, Mr. Dembeck created a telephone station affixed to a large cedar tree in the southeast section of the park, dedicated to Joelle Sylvester. While the Parks Department recognizes that the **Telephone of the Wind** has struck a positive chord in the community, nonetheless, the installation was not approved in advance. Specifically, the plywood board holding the telephone is screwed to the cedar tree, which is not considered best practice.

Ms. Johnson, Mr. Dembeck and Parks Stewardship Supervisor Amy Stull met on Thursday, January 28, 2021 to talk about the potential of retaining the installation with a new design that spares the tree while providing the same experience that has provided comfort in a time of loss. As the **Telephone of the Wind** functions as a conceptual artwork, Ms. Johnson provided Mr. Dembeck the Public Art Gift Policy and Form, to be completed and provided to the Arts Commission for review.

Staff will share proposal at the meeting.

**Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):**

See attachment below.

**Options:**

- 1) Review gift proposal of **Telephone of the Wind** and provide feedback for Mr. Dembeck, to amend and return proposal.
- 2) Recommend the gift of **Telephone of the Wind** to the City Manager for inclusion in the Public Art Collection.
- 3) Do not recommend the gift of **Telephone of the Wind**.

**Financial Impact:**

To be determined.

**Attachments:**

January 4, 2021 article on **Telephone of the Wind** in Seattle Refined.