



Arts Commission

Telephone of the Wind Donation

Agenda Date: 4/8/2021
Agenda Item Number:
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Title

Telephone of the Wind Donation

Recommended Action

Move to recommend **Telephone of the Wind**, by Corey Dembeck to the City Manager as a donation to the City Public Art Collection.

Report

To review the Gift of Art Proposal using the criteria included in the Gift of Art Policy (attached) and determine whether to recommend donation of **Telephone of the Wind** to the City Manager for inclusion in the City's Public Art Collection. Per the Gift Policy: "If the gift will have substantial community impact, the City Manager, at his discretion, may forward the proposed gift to the Olympia City Council for review and approval."

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. Ms. Johnson and Mr. Dembeck have continued to communicate to shape the attached gift proposal.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

See article attached below.

Options:

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

Financial Impact:

City installation and materials estimated at less than \$500.

Attachments:

Telephone of the Wind gift proposal

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