



City Council

Approval of an Ordinance Authorizing an Agreement to Accept Donation of "Telephone of the Wind" as a Gift of Art from Artist Corey Dembeck

Agenda Date: 7/13/2021
Agenda Item Number: 4.F
File Number: 21-0680

Type: ordinance **Version:** 2 **Status:** Passed

Title

Approval of an Ordinance Authorizing an Agreement to Accept Donation of "Telephone of the Wind" as a Gift of Art from Artist Corey Dembeck

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

The Olympia Arts Commission recommends the City Council accept the donation of *Telephone of the Wind*, to be installed at Priest Point Park.

City Manager Recommendation:

Move to approve an Ordinance authorizing an agreement to accept donation of "Telephone of the Wind" as a Gift of Art from Artist Corey Dembeck on second reading.

Report

Issue:

Whether to approve an Ordinance authorizing an agreement to accept donation of "Telephone of the Wind" as a Gift of Art from Artist Corey Dembeck on second reading.

Staff Contact:

Stephanie Johnson, Program Manager, Olympia Parks, Arts and Recreation, 360.709.2678

Presenter(s):

Consent calendar item only.

Background and Analysis:

Background and Analysis has changed from first to second reading. *Section 4. Effective Date*, was added.

Olympia Parks, Arts and Recreation Department (OPARD) received a donation offer from artist Corey Dembeck for the gift of art of *Telephone of the Wind*.

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's proposal creates 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. Parks staff and the Arts Commission have provided feedback to Mr. Dembeck on his evolving proposal and are fully supportive of the design.

If approved, Parks Maintenance would install the panel roughly 24^{1/2} inches across and 23 inches tall, mounted on a 6-foot-tall natural tree limb about 4^{1/2} inches in diameter. The panel will hold the telephone and a plaque, provided by the City, with the text:

This phone is for everyone who has lost a loved one.

The phone is an outlet for those who have messages they wish to share with their friends and family.

It is a phone for memories and saying the goodbyes you never got to say.

Dedicated to the memory of Joelle Rose Sylvester. Gift of Corey Dembeck.

City of Olympia Art in Public Places Program, 2021

The Olympia Arts Commission reviewed the proposed gift of art and recommends the gift and donation for approval by the City Council.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

This installation has received local and national attention.

Options:

1. Approve on first reading and forward to second reading, the ordinance accepting the Corey Dembeck donation of *Telephone of the Wind*.
2. Do not approve the ordinance and do not accept the gift of art donation.
3. Consider the ordinance at another time.

Financial Impact:

Although the sculpture will be donated, there may be future costs associated with maintenance and the ownership of the sculpture, including legal liabilities.

If the gift of art donation is approved by Council, the City of Olympia would receive the donation by agreement, transferring ownership to the City without terms, conditions or restrictions other than noted above in the final paragraph of the Background and Analysis.

Attachments:

Ordinance

Agreement

Article in Seattle Refined

