



MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and City Councilors
From: Rich Olson, City Manager
Date: February 21, 2013
Re: Consideration – Authorization to Seek Funding for Music Park

BACKGROUND:

The City has been approached by ECDI to incorporate into our park system a musical component. This effort is being made to help expand our creative economy, which we are developing with Arts of the Albemarle, the Museum of the Albemarle and Port Discover.

The project will initially include three instruments with attached mallets; colored/stamped concrete base; and attractive iron fencing to secure area. The 20' by 20' area includes space to expand another three instruments, if desired in the future. The Music Park will be open to the public except nights and during park events, such as the Mariners' Wharf Film Festival, when it would interfere with the event. The musical instruments can be a learning tool as well as a public art piece.

ANALYSIS:

A quotation from the Freenotes catalog reads: "Freenotes are true musical instruments that make a substantial contribution towards learning, self-esteem, socialization and overall well-being. Freenotes aspire to enrich learning and lifelong enjoyment of music. Used for science, language, math and performance, the instruments are suited for both free-play and directed use. The best way to enhance a child's learning through music is to encourage listening, learning and participation during their developmental years in ways that are enjoyable and fun. When children play an instrument, or learn a new dance move, they experience a unique integration of body and mind. Sensory integration is crucial to a child's readiness for subjects such as reading, writing and math. This process of kinesthetic learning has also been proven to work in helping children

with special needs such as ADD, ADHD and autism. Freenotes enable children to discover confident self-expression that is accessible and enriching. Making music simple and readily available to young children often develops their interest in pursuing music in a more traditional sense. Musical play allows children to make choices and to enjoy themselves in a spontaneous, intuitive manner. Coupled with the outdoor environment and all that it encompasses, Freenotes deliver a rare and exciting learning opportunity that is child focused and socially dynamic.”

The estimated cost for this project for three instruments with shipping and installation is \$15,217; the decorative concrete base cost is \$2,000; and the fencing cost is \$2,783 for a total cost of \$20,000.

ECDI will seek grant funding; private funding; corporate funding and possible tourism funding.

The Finance Committee discussed this matter during the meeting held on February 20, 2013 and recommends approval.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

By motion, support the Harmony Music Park project, but delay any financial commitment until after the preparation of the fiscal year 2013-2014 budget.

RCO/vdw