
Media Inquiry

2 messages

Ruth Rasmussen <rasmussen@eastbaymediagroup.com>

Fri, Nov 10, 2023 at 1:43 PM

To: "cherrmann-trustee@tivertonlibrary.org" <cherrmann-trustee@tivertonlibrary.org>, "cdamiani@tivertonlibrary.org"

<cdamiani@tivertonlibrary.org>

Cc: "administrator@tiverton.ri.gov" <administrator@tiverton.ri.gov>, "ddemedeiros@tiverton.ri.gov" <ddemedeiros@tiverton.ri.gov>

Hello Ms. Herrmann and Ms. Damiani,

I am a reporter for the Sakonnet Times and am working on an article relating to the newly installed fence on library grounds. My purpose in writing is to ask if you would respond to a few questions for the article. I originally emailed these to Chris Cotta and he recommended, per the response below, that I contact you directly.

1. Has the fence been in the planning stages for a while?
2. What is the cost, and was the expenditure part of the current year's budget?
3. If they are relevant and you can forward me a copy of the meeting minutes that Chris refers to in his email below, I would appreciate it.

I plan to submit the story Monday evening and expect it will be published at some point online and also in the 11-16 (or a later) print edition.

Thank you for your assistance.

Ruth A. Rasmussen

Sakonnet Times

360-927-0803



These questions are better suited for the Library director and trustees as the town only provides a grant in aid which is very similar to school funding. The fence was not part of any Capital request concerning Gaming funds so this topic was never presented to the Council with regard to Capital Funding. The Town does not have oversight of their operational budget or endowment funds. The Library Board of Trustees has total control over the available funds similar to how the Tiverton Schools operate.

I am aware that the Library Trustees voted sometime this past spring. I believe it was noted in their meeting minutes for which I'm sure Catherine can provide a copy. I think Catherine can give you a clearer picture as to the rationale and contract than I can at this stage. The Town Administration was not involved in the decisions or planning of said fence. I have no comment as to the public commentary on social media.

Regards,

Chris Cotta

Catherine Damiani <cdamiani@tivertonlibrary.org>

Fri, Nov 10, 2023 at 6:24 PM

To: Ruth Rasmussen <rrasmussen@eastbaymediagroup.com>

Cc: "cherrmann-trustee@tivertonlibrary.org" <cherrmann-trustee@tivertonlibrary.org>, "administrator@tiverton.ri.gov" <administrator@tiverton.ri.gov>, "ddemedeiros@tiverton.ri.gov" <ddemedeiros@tiverton.ri.gov>

Hello Ms. Rasmussen,

Thank you for your inquiry. I have answered your questions below and any documents that are referenced in my response are attached in the order in which they are mentioned.

1. Planning Stages

- Last year on April 2, 2022, the Library Board of Trustees met with David Paull at the entrance to the dog park. During this meeting, Mr. Paull agreed to build a fence bordering the dog park entrance path so that visitors would not be crossing the lawn to access the park and would instead use the already established entry path. Minutes from this meeting are attached and also available via the RI SOS website. I have also attached email correspondence regarding this plan from April 14, 2022 where Mr. Paull, the Town Council, and other town officials were cc'ed.
- According to the Dog Park Advisory Committee's meeting minutes from this year's Thursday, April 13, 2023 meeting, there was a conversation regarding fencing pending a discussion about feasibility with the Town Administrator. Minutes from this meeting are attached. They are not available on the RI SOS site, but are on the Tiverton ClerkBase site as a consent agenda item from the May 11, 2023 Town Council meeting (item 4.B.1).
- At the Library Board of Trustees June 24, 2023 meeting, the Board unanimously voted to furnish and install fencing along the southern property border. For context, the "existing fencing" referred to in the meeting minutes is the already established stone wall that ends near the park's pergola. These meeting minutes are attached and are also available from the RI SOS site.
- The contract for the fence was signed on September 11, 2023 and I was informed in mid-October that the project was scheduled for the week of November 6.
- In Ms. Herrmann's email to the Town Council on September 19, 2023 regarding the upcoming dog park special event, she made note of the fencing project (paragraph 4). She wrote, "We'd like to stress that both the dog park committee and the library have always been in agreement about the need for the fencing and additional landscaping. Although the dog park originally committed to doing the work, the library is now in a position to assume responsibility for it. The library director also discussed our current fencing and landscaping plan with the town administrator, who has encouraged us to move forward with it. As a result there should be nothing controversial about the plan." This email is attached and was also a consent agenda item from the September 26, 2023 Town Council meeting (item 4.D.1).

2. Cost

- The cost of the fencing is \$3,489.83. Three bids were obtained before signing a contract.
- The funds used for this project do not come from the library's town appropriation or capital funding. The funding source is the library's Bank Newport checking account. This account consists of program funding from the Friends of Tiverton Libraries (donation), general donations, and income from fees. While we did go "fine free" on all library materials starting in 2020, we still assess fees for printing services, private meeting room rental, and lost library materials.
- To provide additional background on this account and how funds from this account are utilized, I have attached the library's FY24 budget report that was distributed to the Town Council at their April 17, 2023 meeting. Page 9 (last paragraph) states, "The library has a checking account with Bank Newport totaling \$94,303.81. Of this amount, \$20,053.85 is restricted for programs and book donation funds (includes Friends of the Library donation and John Fitzgerald Memorial Fund). The remaining fund balance of \$74,249.96 is used for expenditures beyond what the town allocation may cover. In FY23 and FY24, our priorities for these funds will include a hiring a consultant for our long-range plan (current plan expires in December 2023), funding for a new library website, any unanticipated health plan increases (ex. change from individual to family), and continuing the design planning process for the outdoor program space project."

3. All documents referenced in #1 and #2 are attached.

Please let me know if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,

[Quoted text hidden]

--

Catherine Damiani, MLIS, MPA

Library Director

ALA Council 2021-2024

Tiverton Public Library

34 Roosevelt Avenue

Tiverton, RI 02878

cdamiani@tivertonlibrary.org

6 attachments


 **04.02.2022 TPL Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes.pdf**
71K

 **Email Correspondence - Re Dog Park Progress and Site of Entrance Path.pdf**
141K

 **04.13.2023 Dog Park Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes.pdf**
44K

 **06.24.2023 TPL Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes.pdf**
89K

 **Email Correspondence - Dog Park Special Event and Library Landscaping Project.pdf**
140K

 **FY24 Budget Report.pdf**
1371K