

BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES' STATEMENT REGARDING THE FRIENDS OF THE MIDDLEBORO PUBLIC LIBRARY, INC.

As part of the Middleborough Public Library Board of Trustees' (the "Board") commitment to transparency, accountability and the best interests of the Middleborough Public Library, its patrons, and its staff, we are hereby announcing that at its meeting on August 14, 2025, the Board unanimously voted to sever its relationship with the organization calling itself the Friends of the Middleboro Public Library, Inc. ("Friends"). This decision was not made lightly, but based on recent changes the Friends made to its corporate structure, its unilateral termination of its operating agreement with the Board, and concerns raised by members of the public, the Board finds that continuing a relationship with this organization is no longer in the best interests of the Town.

At its March 27, 2025, meeting, as a result of these concerns, the Board voted to suspend negotiations on a new operating agreement with the Friends and to suspend the operation of the Ex-Libris Bookstore. Notwithstanding this vote, Town officials attempted to communicate with the Friends about the matter, and it allowed the Book Store to remain open. Unfortunately, all attempts to communicate with the Friends about this matter were unsuccessful. Therefore, because it is apparent at this time that a new agreement will not be reached, the Board has made the final decision to sever its relationship with the Friends.

As part of this decision, the Board also voted unanimously to take the following actions to cut ties with the Friends formally:

- To authorize the Director to send formal notice to the Friends notifying them of the Board's decision and including a demand that the Friends immediately cease and desist from use of the Middleborough Public Library's name in their nonprofit's name, and/or for the purpose of soliciting donations and/or for any other purpose;
- To authorize the Director to close the Book Store and to require the Friends to vacate the Book Store area of the Library within thirty (30) days of the vote, by removing all of its property and that any property remaining after that date will be considered abandoned and may be repurposed or disposed of in the Director's sole discretion;
- To require the Director to remove the link to the Friends website from the Library's website and to replace it with a link for members of the public to make donations directly to the Library and informing members of the public that the Friends have no affiliation with the Library and that anyone wishing to support the Library should donate to the Library directly and not to the Friends;
- To authorize the Director and the Chair to issue a public statement explaining the reasons for the Board's decision to be posted on the Library's website and provided to local media as discussed at this meeting; and
- Authorize the Chair to file a formal complaint with the Office of the Attorney General concerning the Friends' changes to its articles of organization and bylaws and its alleged misuse of funds donated for the purposes of supporting the Library.

Middleborough Cable Access Television recorded the August 14th meeting and is available for viewing on [MCCAM](#).

Any questions about this matter may be directed to: James D. Okolita, Trustee Chair, Middleborough Public Library, 102 North Main Street, Middleborough, MA 02346

Anyone wishing to make donations for the support of the Library may do so directly to the Library. Checks should be made out to the “Middleborough Public Library” with “General Donation” written in the memo line. Any donation will be greatly welcomed and may be mailed to or dropped off at: Middleborough Public Library, 102 North Main Street, Middleborough, MA 02346.

We thank all the members of the Middleborough community for supporting us through this difficult time, and we look forward to an exciting new chapter for the Library.