



## **MAYOR DAVID J. NARKEWICZ**

**City of Northampton**

**Office of the Mayor**

210 Main Street Room 12

Northampton, MA 01060-3199

(413) 587-1249 Fax: (413) 587-1275

[mayor@northamptonma.gov](mailto:mayor@northamptonma.gov)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Statement by Mayor David J. Narkewicz on Forbes Library Lawsuit**

I am disheartened by the decision of the elected Trustees of Forbes Library to file suit against the City of Northampton. I have been a strong supporter of Forbes Library both as Mayor, as City Councilor, and as a city resident and library patron. My proposed FY2017 city budget would appropriate over \$1.2 million in tax dollars to Forbes Library, which would represent a 3.2% increase and over 95% of its operating budget. My administration has also provided hundreds of thousands of dollars for capital improvements to the library.

Since becoming Mayor, I have been engaged in a dialogue with the Trustees of Forbes Library about how to properly fund and maintain this beloved institution. I felt that we were having productive conversations. Unfortunately, the Trustees have unilaterally terminated those discussions and chosen to litigate instead.

My administration has no interest in usurping the authority of the Trustees in the day-to-day operations of the library. One of the longstanding challenges that pre-dates my administration, is how an institution initiated by a 19th century will and now funded almost entirely by city tax payers interfaces with the requirements of 21st century open government. Despite the unnecessary and potentially costly actions taken by the Trustees, I stand ready to continue our discussions toward what I know is our shared interest in the future vitality of Forbes Library.