TWIN RIVERS FRIENDS STATEMENT REGARDING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE NEW BERN-CRAVEN COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY 2026

The TRF Board issues this statement in response to a WITN News Report:

The Friends of the New Bern-Craven County Public Library faced several difficult decisions in early 2026, including one concerning our long-standing relationship with the New Bern-Craven County Public Library, which we have supported since 1968.

The library is part of the Craven-Pamlico Regional Library (CPRL). The CPRL Board of Trustees required the Friends to sign a legally binding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Normally, an MOU is just a simple agreement, not legally binding. After carefully reviewing the proposed agreement and conducting our own research, we concluded that we could not sign it because we believed certain provisions would compromise our nonprofit's independent responsibility for managing its finances and affairs.

We informed the CPRL Board that we could not sign the MOU but hoped to continue collaborating with the library when appropriate. That offer was rebuffed, resulting in a significant change in our relationship. CPRL subsequently informed us that the library would no longer accept donations on our behalf, provide books for our book sales, or provide meeting space for Twin Rivers Friends or other unaffiliated Friends groups.

Because the proposed MOU required the Friends to remove references to the New Bern-Craven County Public Library from our name if the relationship ended, we adopted the assumed business name Twin Rivers Friends (TRF).

Despite these changes, our commitment to the New Bern-Craven County Public Library remains strong. To demonstrate that commitment, our Board unanimously agreed to establish an endowment with the North Carolina Community Foundation to benefit the library. The CPRL Trustees were initially asked to sign paperwork in May 2026 accepting the endowment but did not do so. After the August 20 deadline passed without action, the Twin Rivers Friends Board voted to establish the endowment with the New Bern-Craven County Public Library located at 400 Johnson St. as the recipient of the annual distribution. The Board also voted to continue growing the endowment so the library can benefit from it in the future.

People continue to ask, “Is Twin Rivers Friends still supporting the library?”

The answer is YES!

Only the funding methodology has changed. The library remains an important part of our mission and the community we serve.

It is also important to remember that our nonprofit has never exclusively supported the library. For many years, we have supported projects benefiting the larger community, including Little Free Libraries, StoryWalks, and books for elementary school students at Christmas, among other projects.

Twin Rivers Friends remains committed to its mission: to advocate for the freedom to read; support the development of library resources and services; develop and support a community of readers and lifelong learners; and collaborate with other organizations to enrich our community and achieve these purposes.

We thank our members and donors for their continued support as we move forward and continue our work on behalf of libraries, readers, and our community.