



TOWN OF WINCHESTER

71 Mt. Vernon Street
Winchester, MA 01890
Phone: 781-721-7130

HOW WE GOT HERE

A time line of actions taken by Town of Winchester Retirees

2012

November

Nov. 5- The Board of Selectmen voted to increase the health plan premium cost splits to 50% retiree and 50% town; effective July 1, 2014.

Nov. 15- Retirees received a letter informing them of that action.

December

Agree to oppose the Nov. 5 vote of the Board of Selectmen.

2013

January

Met and formed the Winchester Retirees Health Insurance Committee.

It continued to meet regularly from January 2013 until May 2014.

February

Explored strategies to request the Selectmen to rescind their vote.

March

Identified Winchester residents who might be supportive of the Retirees issues.

April

Met with representatives from the MTA and the WEA

Met with the Winchester Town Manager for the purpose of discussing the action of the Board of Selectmen and the letter sent to each retiree in the health plan.

May

Collected Health Insurance information from other communities that Winchester compares itself to, as well as other communities throughout the Commonwealth and developed charts which demonstrated the financial significance of the increase to Winchester retirees.

June

Five representative retirees met with the Winchester State Legislative Delegation, Senator Clark, Senator Jehlen, Representative Lewis, and their staff members.

Sent letters to many school department retirees requesting support for the committee's efforts and a response post card (addresses of municipal retirees were not made available)

July

Refined information obtained from other communities and developed an action plan based on the comparison of Winchester to specific communities.

Town offered an expanded “Health Reimbursement Arrangement” which allowed non-medicare retirees to submit certain medical expenses for reimbursement.

August

Developed a petition to be presented to the Selectmen and determined how to obtain signatures. Met with MTA representatives.

September

Met with Shawn Duhamel, Legislative Liaison, and Retired State, County, and Municipal Employees Association of Massachusetts. The Retirees Committee had questions about the Selectmen’s vote to increase the percentage of retiree’s premium contribution to health insurance in view of the pending H59 bill.

Requested time on the Selectmen’s meeting agenda for the purpose of stating our position on the insurance issue.

October

Submitted letters to the Editor of the Winchester Star and Daily Times Chronicle (Winchester Edition) this continued weekly until May of 2014.

Retiree representatives spoke at the Winchester Council on Aging meeting for the purpose of presenting the concerns of the Retirees and delivering a petition, signed by more than 600 Winchester citizens, requesting that the Selectmen rescind their vote.

November

Composed and mailed a letter to each Town Meeting member explaining the position of the Winchester Retirees concerning the Health Insurance issue.

December

Composed a letter and sent it to residents of Winchester stating the Retirees position on the health insurance issue.

Collected information to be published in a flyer to be sent prior to Town Meeting.

2014

January

Met with Senator Ken Donnelly, Senator Pat Jehlen, and their staff.

Arranged conversations with “leading” Winchester residents seeking their advice.

Attempted to schedule conversations with each Winchester Selectman.

Met with the Winchester’s Senior Association and spoke about the Retiree’s concerns.

Met with William Rehrey, Executive Vice President/Legal Counsel, and Shawn Duhamel of the Municipal Employees Association of Massachusetts seeking advice as to health insurance changes in other communities in the commonwealth and any legal implications.

Met with Representative Jason Lewis.

February

Accepted Representative Lewis’ recommendation to form a working group with representatives of the Board of Selectmen and representatives of the Retirees Health Insurance Committee which he would convene.

Attended the first meeting with representatives of the Selectmen and Retirees which Jason Lewis convened.

Mailed a flyer to Town Meeting members and 2,000 Winchester citizens which presented the position of the Retirees.

March

Attended a Finance Committee meeting

Participated in the second meeting Jason Lewis convened with representatives of the Selectmen and Retirees.

Submitted a warrant article for Spring Town Meeting

Participated in the League of Woman Voters "Hot Topics"

Consulted with John Sullivan, retired Town Moderator.

April

Prepared information for Town Meeting Article 16

Attended a Town Meeting briefing

Attended a Personnel Board meeting

Attended Selectmen's meeting and responded to the Selectmen's vote to approve the 70/30 Mitigation plan.

Participated in Town Meeting and spoke to Article 16.

Withdrew Article 16 and planned to offer a motion under Article 40 to create a committee to study Retiree Health Insurance issues.

May

Town Meeting approved Article 40 motion to form a Town Retiree Health Insurance Committee.

WE HAVE ARRIVED