

Town Retiree Health Insurance Advisory Committee

June 15, 2022 – MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 7:05 PM on June 15, 2022 via Zoom.

Present: Peter Cheimets, Personnel Board Representative; Committee Chair
Brian Vernaglia, Finance Committee Representative
Janice Dolan, Retiree Representative
Ginny Laats, Retiree Representative
Stacie Ward, Ex-Officio; Town Comptroller
Sheila Tracy, Ex-Officio, Treasurer

Not Present: Richard Mucci, Select Board Representative
John Frongillo, Employee Representative

There were no members of the public present. There is a Citizen at Large member vacancy.

1. **Welcome:** Chair P. Cheimets welcomed the Retiree Health Insurance Advisory Committee (the Committee) and called the meeting to order.
2. **Minutes:** The group reviewed the minutes from the February 16, 2022 meeting. Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes were unanimously approved. The group then reviewed the minutes of the April 13, 2022 meeting. Ms. G. Laats recommended one minor word change. Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes were unanimously approved as amended.
3. **Appoint a Secretary:** It was discussed to appoint a Secretary once the official new bylaw committee is established.
4. **Discuss the outcome of Town Meeting and the next steps:** Chair P. Cheimets informed the Committee that Town Meeting passed the bylaw article to create a standing committee with little resistance or questions. We now have to wait for the State to approve the bylaw before the new committee is official. Ms. Ward noted that she would let the Committee know the outcome when she finds out from the Town Clerk. New committee appointments can start after the official notice is received.
5. **Discuss the Town's health insurance carrier decision:** Ms. Ward explained that since the last meeting, the Town changed health insurance carriers from Harvard Pilgrim Health Care to Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) through MIIA. As Ken Lombardi explained at the last meeting, the changes in coverage were minimal and for the better in most cases. There was very little disruption with providers and specialists. The Committee discussed some of the concerns about doctors being covered and if the staff (Ms. Tracy &/or Ms. Ward) could follow up on whether Mass General Hospital was covered (as part of the HMO plan). It was noted that due to a retirement in the Comptroller's Office, all benefits are now being administered by the Human Resources (HR) Department. All questions regarding the new BCBS plans should be

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directed to the HR Director, Michael Towne, going forward, but the Comptroller's Office will provide assistance due to their past involvement and understanding of the benefit process. The HR office and MIIA sent out notices to retirees regarding the change in the carriers and new cards should be received by all members within the next week. Ms. Laats and Ms. Dolan will let the Committee know when they receive their cards. They have received their prescription drug cards already.

6. **New Business:** Ms. Dolan asked about the 5% COLA increase noted in *The Voice* article and whether it impacted the retirees or not. Ms. Ward assumed it related to an increase to the State of MA pensions (including MTRS pensions), but she wasn't certain. There was a significant Social Security COLA increase as well as an increase in Medicare part B premiums. Ms. Ward mentioned the Medicare part B premium reimbursements will be processed by the end of next week.
7. **Next Meeting:** The next Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday September 14, 2022.
8. **Motion to Adjourn:** Motion to adjourn was made, seconded and approved unanimously; meeting adjourned at 7:45.

Respectfully Submitted,
Stacie Ward

Documents Distributed (via email prior to the meeting and shared on the Zoom screen):

- DRAFT Minutes of the February 16, 2022 Meeting
- DRAFT Minutes of the April 13, 2022 Meeting