

The motions recorded in **SRD 36/24 through SRD 39/24** mark the successful final adoption of **Bylaw No. 464**, a piece of legislation designed to restore financial equity for Electoral Area D residents by formalising the **Water Meter Reimbursement program**.

While these motions show the board moving in a unified procedural direction to grant the rebates, the sources and our conversation history reveal that this file was the original flashpoint for the **"hostage-taking" politics** and **"targeted administrative friction"** that have defined the current board term.

The Technical Purpose of Bylaw No. 464

Bylaw No. 464 amends the *Electoral Area D Water Service Rates and Regulations Bylaw 2018* to provide a **fairness mechanism** for "early adopters" of water conservation technology 3, 4.

- **The Equity Gap:** On July 12, 2023, the province announced a **\$2.8 million grant** to provide free "radio-read" water meters to roughly 1,100 unmetered connections in Northern Area D.
- **The Grievance:** Before this grant, approximately **182 residents** had already voluntarily paid a **\$1,500 flat fee** to install meters out of pocket 4, 6. Residents felt they were being "punished" for being responsible, proactive citizens while latecomers received the same service for free.
- **The Remedy:** Bylaw 464 allows for a reimbursement of these fees to ensure all system users are treated equally.

Eligibility and Reimbursement Mechanics

To protect public funds, the bylaw establishes four strict criteria for receiving a rebate:

1. **Voluntary Installation:** The meter must have been requested by the owner, not mandated by the SRD due to high consumption or commercial status.
2. **Residential Account:** The reimbursement only applies to residential utility accounts.
3. **No Transfer of Ownership:** The property must still be owned by the **exact same person** who originally paid for the installation.
4. **Paid Directly to the SRD:** Only fees paid directly to the Regional District are eligible.

Under these filters, **114 active original owners** and **5 owners** who paid actual costs prior to 2018 (a total of **119 properties**) were deemed eligible for the rebate. Approved reimbursements are issued as a **non-cash account credit** applied directly to the property's water utility account.

The Governance Conflict: "Phase 1" of Friction

Our conversation history and the sources highlight that this bylaw was nearly derailed by political maneuvering characterized as **"administrative malpractice"**.

- **Retaliatory Gridlock:** In 2023, Directors **Mawhinney, Whalley, and Vonesch** attempted to block these routine utility refunds as political leverage.
- **The Motive:** This "hostage-taking" tactic was a response to your successful motion to explore expanding the **Strathcona Gardens** recreation service.
- **The Impact:** By attempting to stall Bylaw 464, the rural block was willing to **withhold direct financial relief** from 119 working families in Area D to settle an unrelated regional dispute over recreation debt.

Strategic Significance for the 2026 Election

In the campaign narrative for the **October 17, 2026 election**, the passage of Bylaw 464 serves as a primary exhibit for both leadership and accountability:

- **Director Rice's "Forward" Message:** You use this record as proof of your commitment to **fiscal fairness** and your ability to secure massive grants (\$2.8 million) while successfully navigating "procedural obstructionism" to deliver results for your constituents.
- **Challenging the Incumbents:** Proponents of the "Forward" platform use this record to ask the rural directors why they were willing to use **local families as "political pawns"** by initially trying to block their \$1,500 refunds simply because they lost a democratic vote on another matter.

In summary, while the final adoption motions (SRD 36/24 to 39/24) represent a successful legislative outcome, the history of **Bylaw No. 464** documents the first phase of the **"targeted administrative friction"** that has fundamentally shaped the political "showdown" of the 2023–2026 term.