



**CHRONOLOGY OF C. RUTLEDGE REQUEST – REVIEW OF WATER LEAK ADJUSTMENT POLICY D1.1**

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**RECOMMENDATION**

1. That the “Chronology of C. Rutledge Request – Review of Water Leak Adjustment Policy D1.1” report be received for information.

**BACKGROUND**

At its September 6, 2022, Board meeting, Clark Rutledge and Rhonda Leigh appeared as a delegation to the Board to request that the Board review its Adjustment for Water Leak Policy D1.1 (the “Policy”) (Attachment 1) and requested that the water bill for their property at 1541 Arbutus Drive, Nanoose, be reduced from \$6,400 due to a water leak stating the Regional District of Nanaimo’s (RDN) Policy is less equitable than other Water Leak Policies in various local governments on Vancouver Island. At the meeting, under business arising from delegations, the Board passed the following motions:

22-535

It was moved and seconded that Policy D1.1, Adjustment for Water Leak be critically reviewed and benchmarked to Vancouver Island's other water leak forgiveness policies. This policy was last reviewed 16 years ago before tiered water rates were put in place.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

22-536

It was moved and seconded that staff provide a report noting the implications of a reduction of the \$6400 water bill of Rhonda Leigh and Clark Rutledge.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Following Board direction, a report was brought forward to the November 24, 2022, Electoral Area Services Committee (EASC) meeting (Attachment 2 - Review of Regional District of Nanaimo Water Leak Bill Adjustment Policy D1-01). The EASC adopted staff’s recommendations unanimously which were brought forward to the December 6, 2022, Board meeting on the consent agenda and were carried as follows:

22-681

It was moved and seconded that the Regional District of Nanaimo Board support the continued use of Policy D1-01, Adjustment for Water Leak in its current form.

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

22-682

It was moved and seconded that the Regional District of Nanaimo Board uphold the decision by staff to not grant an exception to Policy D1-01, Adjustment for Water Leak as requested by Rhonda Leigh and Clark Rutledge and require the payment of their water bill without adjustment.

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

The Board passed an additional motion at its December 6, 2022, Board meeting as follows:

22-735

It was moved and seconded that staff prepare a report on options for amending Policy D1-01, Adjustment for Water Leak, to include a water bill repayment plan for Regional District of Nanaimo Water Service Area residents who experience a leak in the potable water system on their property but are not eligible for a water leak adjustment to their Regional District of Nanaimo water bill.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Following the decision of the Board at its December 6, 2022, Board meeting, Clark Rutledge wrote a letter to the Board requesting that the Board set aside the Staff Report (Attachment 2) and commission a new unbiased comprehensive report claiming that the Staff Report was misleading. The Board received Mr. Rutledge's letter at its January 10, 2023, Board meeting and made motions to reconsider the three above noted motions that were carried at the December 6, 2022, Board meeting. The motions to reconsider were all subsequently defeated.

For information, a staff report to propose a water bill repayment plan went to the Board on December 12, 2023, and the following motion was passed:

23-689

It was moved and seconded that the Regional District of Nanaimo Board endorse a two-year trial of an equal payments program allowing large utility bills to be repaid over a period of up to twelve months without the account being transferred to the Surveyor of Taxes for collection, for Regional District of Nanaimo Water Service Area residents who are not eligible for a water leak adjustment.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

As of the writing of this report, there have been no requests for a repayment program.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications with receiving this report.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT**

N/A

Please choose

## **ATTACHMENT(S)**

1. Adjustment for Water Leak Policy D1.1
2. Staff Report – Review of Regional District of Nanaimo Water Leak Bill Adjustment Policy D1.1