

One step closer to refunds

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A special hearing at county offices Friday showed the immediacy of a pair of district judges' decisions to roll back property tax valuations for a handful of Incline-based tax revolters in January.

The county board of equalization decided it will hold future hearing to consider rolling back property values in Incline to 2003 at a yet-to-be-disclosed date.

Some tax revolters speculated the board of equalization's hearing will coincide with a state supreme court ruling next month on whether to uphold district court rollback decisions.

The supreme court's decision could result in tax refunds by local governments for the entire county, possibly the state.

According to members of the Village League to Save Incline Assets after Friday's meeting, the county is "waking up to the notion that they may have to be sending out rebate checks very soon."

The official line from the county is that rebate checks aren't coming just yet.

"Until we hear differently, we'll be business as usual," said John Faulkner of the assessor's office after the initial district court decisions.

Washoe County finance director John Sherman this month said it was still premature to talk about rollbacks, and eventual financial

impacts to the county - especially before the state supreme court hands down its decision.

Earlier this month the county's DA office filed an appeal of the district court's decision and sought a stay disputing the tax revolters' assessment of wrongdoing by the county assessor's office.

Both failed.

"The assessor's office respectfully disagrees with some of the court's rulings," said Terry Shea, Washoe County Deputy District Attorney said.

Upon discovering that the hearing would go onto the supreme court as planned, Shea said his office "would prepare for the hearings status quo."

"People need to remember, just because the (state) supreme court allows it to go forward, does not mean it's a legitimate claim - they are just allegations," Shea said.

Notwithstanding the county's reaction, the Incline tax revolters took today's news as yet another victory.

"The county board (of equalization) agreed with our attorney that something will be done sooner than later (in regards to actual rebates) if the supreme court does not overturn the (district court's) decision," Ingemanson said. "200 people broke into applause on our behalf."

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