

Incline Village Taxpayers Win Another Round Washoe County Doesn't Understand Concept Of "No"

While Washoe County Commissioners were attempting another end run around court decisions involving several thousand property owners at Incline Village on the shores of Lake Tahoe, Senior Judge Charles McGee handed down another decision favorable to the taxpayers. The county has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on these cases that the Supreme Court and District Courts have refuted for more than three years. There is still at least one more case pending in the ongoing fight.

The Washoe County assessor had made up new rules for assessing property in the high end community, rules that aren't used anywhere else in Washoe County or the State of Nevada, including taxing such things as the view of the lake and the number and size of trees on the property. The current case goes back to the 2005-06 tax year, and McGee ordered the assessor and treasurer to immediately start the refund process, those refunds to include at least six percent interest.

The Washoe County board of equalization is still working to revalue several thousand pieces of property under court guidelines, which could bring even more refunds. There have

been questions concerning the way the rest of the county properties are assessed, and indications that more court cases could be on the dockets in 2009. In just this case, according to court records, millions of dollars in tax refunds could be due during a time that the county is facing economic problems and a lack of funds in budgets.

The Washoe County District Attorney, Richard Gammick has continued the fight for these last three years, losing at every case and the county is now going to be held responsible for interest costs that may total as much as \$200 per day. It appears that Gammick may finally back down from his heavy approach to the tax program.

The Village League to Save Incline Assets is planning federal suits and continued suits in state district courts. The tax years 2006-07 and 2007-08 have not been fully adjudicated according to the League. It is believed that the county has already spent well over \$1.25 million in refunds and another \$12 million may yet be due.

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