

Tax rollbacks for all Incline Village, Crystal Bay

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The Incline Village-based League to Save Incline Assets barely averted having its property tax rebate strategy backfire Wednesday in Reno as the Washoe County Board of Equalization rolled back all property tax valuations for Incline Village/Crystal Bay, not the whole of the county, as the DA's office suggested.

Indeed, if current district court decisions stand, Terry Shea of the district attorney's office noted it could call into question the equalization of all property values in Washoe County.

Had the board of equalization decided the assessor's office's valuations on the entire county, tax revolters speculated it would then be entirely plausible that the county, in turn, could simply claim there is no possible way to pay back the money.

"We did the math for 17 parcels (to be rolled back) in Incline and estimated it will cost the county \$32 million," said Maryanne Ingemanson, Village League president. "The county (district attorneys) tried to get (the board) to roll back all of Washoe to make the elephant too big to eat so-to-speak.

"But the board wouldn't go for it."

Both those from the county DA's office and tax revolt attorneys have requested an expedited hearing before the state supreme court. If the court upholds two district judge decisions made in January, it will "only be a

matter of time" before refund checks find their way to Incline/Crystal Bay, Ingemanson said.

Last week, assessor's office spokesman John Faulkner said his office will continue to "follow the courts, and until they make a decision - we've been told not to change values."

When Carson City District Court Judge William Maddox ordered property tax refunds for 17 Incline Village property owners in early February, the county district attorney's office filed an emergency stay with the Nevada Supreme Court in the wake of Maddox's order. The stay was denied and eventually led to the board of equalization's decision to roll back all of Incline Village/Crystal Bay.

But tax revolters also know the long-term battle is far from over.

"The taxpayers of Incline Village and Crystal Bay need to realize that this roll back to 2002/2003 taxable values is only good for one year," said Incline resident and revolter Wayne Fischer. "For the following year, things start all over again. The assessors can come up with a brand new scheme for valuation of our property taxes. And we start this all over again.

"The good news here is that they will be much more cautious.... And, they will make sure the Nevada Tax Commission has fully approved their new methods."

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