

# Tax revolt group keeps fighting

League to Save Incline Assets waits for word from supreme court;  
still fighting assessments

**Andrew Pridgen**

Bonanza News Editor,  
apridgen@tahoebonanza.com  
December 17, 2006

Incline Village's tax revolters are back at it.

Still waiting for the state supreme court's ruling on a district court decision in their favor (which they feel would ostensibly roll back property taxes to 2002 for all property owners in Incline Village/Crystal Bay). The group is now petitioning to stop the assessor from sending this year's valuations based on a system that is "incorrect and much higher assessment than is accurate."

"It is an unusual filing," said Village League to Save Incline Assets president Maryanne Ingemanson. "But the statutes are so time-specific that we had no alternative than go ahead with the petition for judicial review and a petition to the tax commission."

The group since 2003 opposed the steady increase in property valuations for some 7,000 residents who own property.

That October, tax revolters filed two lawsuits to protest an average 31 percent hike in their property taxes.

The group has long accused out-going Washoe County Assessor Robert McGowan and his office of arbitrarily assigning high values to homes with views of Lake Tahoe, as well as general inconsistency in the office's appraisal process.

In June, the state supreme court was asked whether to uphold a district court decision to roll back taxes for 17 property owners.

"If (the court) were to affirm (the district court decision), it would certainly go a long way in furthering what the league is pursuing," McGowan said. "If it doesn't, I guess it'll go the other way."

If the district court decision is upheld by the court, tax revolters feel a wholesale rollback and rebate of property taxes back to 2002 that is in the \$30 million range, would be in order.

And this year's valuations could also be rendered moot one revolter said.

If the state supreme court's decision does not go in the tax revolt group's favor, the process ostensibly starts all over again, as they've filed grievances with district courts on 2003-'04 assessments, 2005-'06 assessments and so forth - and hint the process will continue.

Revolters wanted to underscore the fact the their most recent filing is part and parcel from any upcoming state supreme court decision.

"This (filing) is a for the '07-'08 year based on the tax commission hearing in November," Ingemanson said. "They adopted the assessors proposal to increase the land values in all of area one by 15 percent - which is a horrendous amount - that's the assessment we're trying to stop and at the reconsideration hearing have them roll that back."

In January, a pair of Carson City district judges also sent property tax appeals to the State Board of Equalization for further scrutiny and review.

Some do not feel the revolter's opinion is gospel.

"First of all they've misrepresented what happened in the court," said John Faulkner, chief deputy assessor. "The judge remanded the case back to the state board to ask for information as to whether or not they did review the different counties to see if there's an equalization issue

"That's it."

*News editor Andrew Pridgen may be reached at (775) 831-4666 ext. 111 or at apridgen@tahoebonanza.com.*