

Patience key with latest tax revolt vote

EDITORIAL

There's no doubt that Monday's unanimous vote from the Nevada Taxation Board to refund \$13 million in taxes to Incline Village and Crystal Bay is a big deal.

For all the tax revolt decisions handed down from various courts and equalization boards — and even the big Supreme Court orders — Monday's order from the State Board of Equalization meeting is the most important decision yet.

It's the first time in the history of the revolt — now going on seven years — that the state board has ruled in favor of the residents of Incline Village and Crystal Bay.

If Monday's decision was final, it means as much as \$13 million being refunded to 8,700 parcels, coming from Washoe County, through various agencies under its wing, including the Incline Village General Improvement District and North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District.

Broadly speaking, that's almost \$1,500 per parcel, which means more money for community services and for individuals in a time when many need a break.

But Monday's decision is not final, and given the track record of this almost-seven-year ordeal, it's going to take a while for that money, if ever, to come up the hill.

The ball now is in Washoe County's hands, and signs point to an appeal to Nevada District Court. After all, chief county district attorney David Creekman said before Monday's hearing the county had every intention to do so if the State Board of Equalization decided against the county.

Ever since this ordeal began, the county's stance, from the assessor's office to the county manager's office to the district attorney's office, has not swayed. Washoe County feels its assessments have not been unconstitutional in appraising property values because the county has not been provided with an adequate way to evaluate those parcels from the state taxation board — the same taxation board that just ruled in favor of Incline Village and Crystal Bay.

So don't expect money from the county anytime soon. In the meantime, keep paying your taxes, but do so under protest. To learn more about protesting taxes, read today's story on A1.

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