

Board agrees to hold future hearing on Incline taxes

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The Washoe County Board of Equalization on Friday agreed to hold a future hearing to consider rolling back property values to 2003 for all of Incline Village and possibly all of the county, potentially costing the county and the school district several million dollars in property taxes.

The board did not set a hearing date but was advised by deputy district attorney Peter Simeoni to hold the hearing, if possible, before March 10, the deadline for property owners to file tax appeals to the state board of equalization.

And before that meeting, chairman Steven Sparks will conduct a meeting on procedures.

The hearing stems from a case decided by Carson City District Judge William Maddox in January. He nullified lake view ratings and other factors used by the county assessor's office to appraise Incline Village and Crystal Bay properties.

Applying Maddox's reasoning, the county board of equalization has rolled back property values to 2002-03 for the new tax year in July in at least 40 cases where lake views, beaches or the other factors were previously used. Panel B of the tax board will hear 200 more Incline cases on Tuesday.

Washoe County has since appealed Maddox's decision to the Nevada Supreme Court.

In a Feb. 14 order, the Supreme Court said the county board could continue to decide tax appeal cases based on the reasoning of the Maddox decision. But it ordered that there be no rollbacks on taxable land values until it rules on the county's appeal.

About 100 property owners from Incline crammed into the hearing room in the health department Friday for the board's vote on the future hearing.

"In dealing with taxes, it is very important for people to have faith in their government. That faith is absolute," Kathryn Carter told the board.

Tax board member Philip Horan was the only one of 10 board members opposed to holding the hearing. He would have preferred to wait until the Supreme Court rules on the county's appeal. He also questioned putting possible rollbacks for all of county properties on the upcoming agenda.

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